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DESIGN FEATURE OF THE MOMENT

colourful glass

NOT JUST FOR CHURCHES, STAINED GLASS HAS BEEN REINTERPRETED
IN A VERY MODERN WAY TO BRING A VIBRANT LOOK HOME

FEATURE Keith Flanagan



Stained-glass windows are an age-old art form, but they haven't been left in the dark. Often associated with churches, the craft is a surprising match for contemporary spaces thanks to updated shapes, patterns and palettes – plus, designers are increasingly dabbling with colour-drenching by using large panes of tinted glass to flood interiors with an energising glow.

'Plain glass feels like a cold aesthetic nowadays; it no longer feels contemporary, nor has it a relevant personality,' say Luis Laplace and Christophe Comoy, partners at Paris architectural firm Laplace. 'It feels dated, while coloured materials bestow a fresh, creative potential in spaces.'

A renewed interest in colourful glass accents makes new interpretations of stained glass all the more exciting. 'Unlike traditional leadlight windows that often have floral, organic reliefs, we're seeing more geometrical experimentations,' says Yasmine Ghoniem, director at YSG Studio. 'Colours tend to be lighter, too, rather than the more traditional deep burgundy and blues, so more sunlight bounds through them.'

At the other end of the spectrum, designers also take a more minimalist approach by using uninterrupted tinted or filtered glass features, installed anywhere from room dividers to interior windows, shifting the entire mood of a scheme. 'Tinted glass adds interest to spaces by diffusing light and creating an ethereal glow,' says Fiona Stone, design development director at Dublin firm Róisín Lafferty. 'Traditionally used for windows and doors to allow light to filter through, glass – whether tinted, textured or patterned – has become a lot more versatile in its application.'

At the end of the day, colourful glass accents can transform light and ambience – here are just a handful of ways to use this design feature to add brilliance to your space. ►

1 WARM SPOT

While most tinted or stained glass is purposefully within view, this project in Mexico by César Béjar Studio takes a different approach: a thin layer of amber paper tints a window in the uppermost part of the house. While the window is out of sight, it adds warmth by flooding lower levels with yellow light. For his studio, this enhanced colour represents the mood of design today. 'Current architecture bases its experience on natural and less-industrialised materials, resulting in atmospheres that are naturally warmer for human life,' says César, noting how tinted glass helped his studio shift the tone and ambience of the minimalist home.

PROJECT BY César Béjar Studio

2 STORY TELLING

It's perhaps easy to forget that you can tint glass in a variety of hues that match the colour scheme of your interior. This was the case for YSG Studio, which had full control with a new living room extension for

a Victorian home in Melbourne. 'One of the owners is Egyptian, so the coloured panes perfume the kitchen-diner with the aromatic shades of turmeric and saffron, also reflecting the colours of the tiled floor,' says Yasmine Ghoniem, director at YSG Studio.

PROJECT BY YSG Studio

3 LIGHT UP

To zone off a walk-in closet, architect and interior designer Maksym Dietkovskiy used textured glass to create an abstract wall and door behind the headboard. While colourful geometric shapes add interest, it keeps the visual weight light and airy. 'We needed to conceal the wardrobe while still allowing light to pass through, and in the evening to benefit from additional light coming from the wardrobe,' explains Maksym, also noting how the stained-glass panels look just as retro as relevant in the modern bedroom scheme. 'The fluted glass perfectly accomplished this task.'

PROJECT BY Modektura





INTO THE BLUE

The central staircase of this Dublin home was always going to be a focal point - it spans four levels, after all. But Róisín Lafferty went one step further, enveloping nearly every surface in blue, even across a glass railing that radiates colour on a whole other level. 'The use of tinted blue glass for the balustrade further enhances this effect, echoing and spreading from the core to create the impression of a glowing blue cube,' says Fiona Stone. 'This installation serves as a dramatic visual centrepiece in each zone, saturating the space with its striking hue.'

PROJECT BY Róisín Lafferty



PHOTOGRAPHS (INTO THE BLUE) BARBARA CORSICO;
(CROWN JEWELS) FELIX DOL MAILLOT

CROWN JEWELS

Paris studio Uchronia went multifaceted with this gem-inspired Haussmannian flat, designed for a jewellery designer and her partner. While a palette of jewel tones abounds throughout the apartment, it shines brightest en route to the kitchen thanks to a rainbow-hued rounded window. 'If there's one thing I love about this home, it's the vitrail that leads to the kitchen,' says founder Julien Sebban, noting how his studio customised the window with polychromatic glass. 'This creates a place of passage that's quite timeless, like a little sanctuary.'

PROJECT BY Uchronia >



SUNNY DAYS

Channelling the sun-drenched environment on its doorstep, a yellow-tinted shower screen creates a glowing atmosphere for this brilliant bathroom in Spain's Balearic Islands. 'The yellow glass behaves like a lens, bestowing a shade of modesty to the shower space, and also adding interest to the minimal interior,' explain Laplace's Luis Laplace and Christophe Comoy, who happen to call this residence home. 'It also reflects the golden light in Menorca, which softens the space and is gentle on the eye, while effectively segmenting the room.'

PROJECT BY Laplace

PHOTOGRAPH DANIEL SCHÄFER