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A History of American Art

second edition

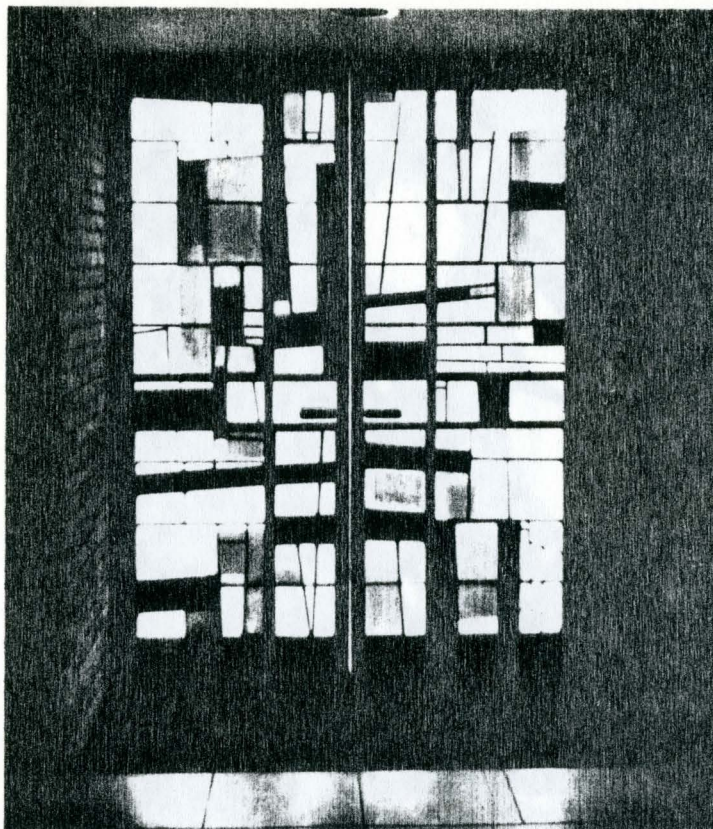
Daniel M. Mendelowitz

Stanford University

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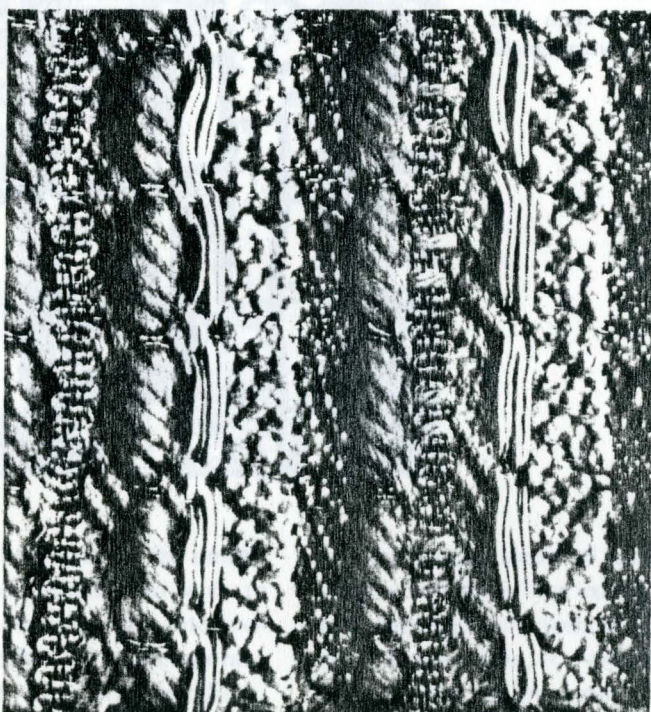
New York Chicago San Francisco Atlanta Dallas

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above : 527. ROBERT SOWERS. Chapel door. 1956. Stained glass. Stephens College, Columbia, Mo.

below : 528. DOROTHY LIEBES. Hand-woven textile (detail). c. 1946. Cotton, wool, chenille, silk, and metal.



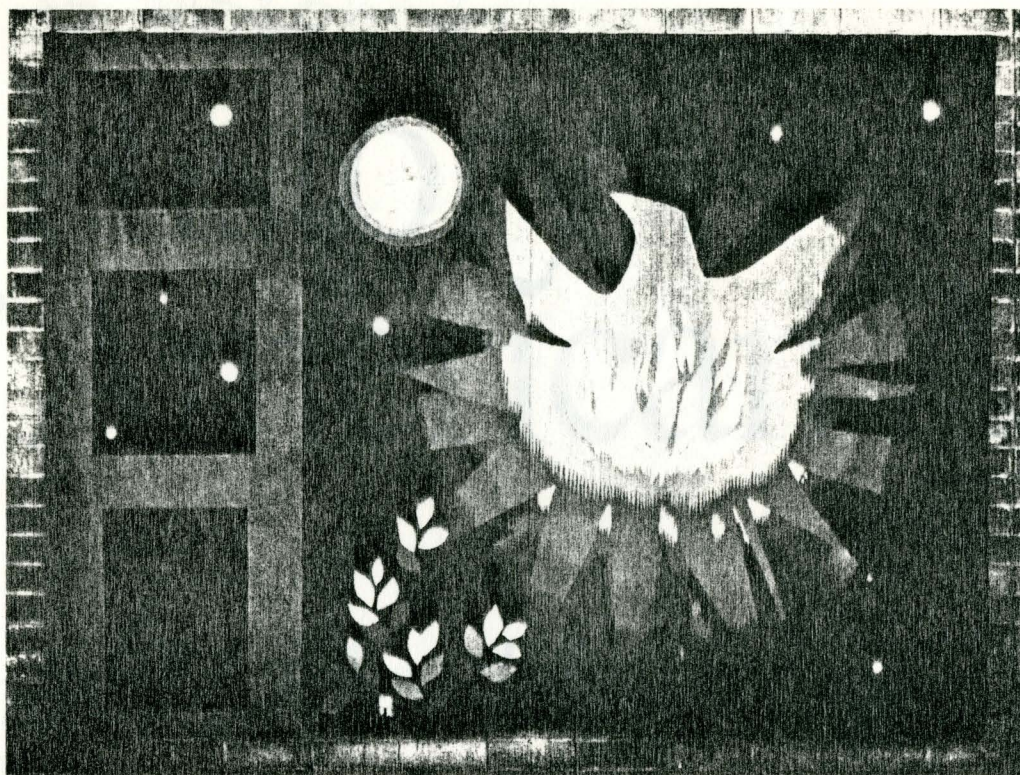
Stained glass is another medium that is being revived by modern craftsmen and being adapted to the requirements of modern architecture. Robert Sowers designed a stained-glass door (Fig. 527) for the chapel of Stephens College at Columbia, Mo. The large translucent areas contrast with the heavy leaded divisions to form a thoroughly contemporary architectural decoration.

Textiles

Never before in history have the textile arts displayed the variety of today. To satisfy our many needs modern textiles are woven in every conceivable combination of natural and man-made fibers to create textured effects that range from silky smoothness to an almost sculptural roughness. The fabrics are decorated by an equal variety of printing, embroidering, weaving, and dyeing techniques. Both the textural character and the decoration of modern textiles have been strongly influenced by current art trends, handwoven textiles providing models for commercial production, and manufacturers tending to draw upon the more imaginative hand weavers for their ideas and inspiration. The designers of contemporary woven textiles strive to achieve surface interest through subtle and varied textures, and handicraft weavers have led the way through their use of unconventional materials. A number of hand weavers create striking fabrics by combining a variety of materials in a single textile. A hand-woven fabric (Fig. 528) by Dorothy Liebes combines wool, cotton chenille, raw silk, three types of metal strips, and silk cord; thus crinkly, rough, smooth, sparkling, and dull effects are achieved in one cloth. As the hand weavers expand the range of textures, the commercial weavers adapt the innovations to the mechanical looms, often with surprising success.

The renaissance of textile arts in our day has brought about a revival of such traditional arts as appliqué and tapestry weaving, with their sumptuous colors and rich textures. *The Phoenix and the Golden Gate* (Fig. 529), by Mark Adams of San Francisco, provides a brilliant example of a tapestry designed to be an integral part of the reading room of a library. Robert Pinart designed for Congregation B'nai Israel of Bridgeport, Conn., an ark curtain (Fig. 530) which achieves a rich variety through its combination of appliquéd silk materials and embroidered stitches. Intriguing both as a decoration and as religious symbolism, it illustrates a phase of the contemporary revival of liturgical arts.

Contemporary craftsmen make no attempt to compete with the machine. Instead, they supplement its somewhat standardized output by producing objects which are



above : 529. MARK ADAMS. *The Phoenix and the Golden Gate*. 1957. Tapestry (executed by PAUL AVIGNON, Aubusson, France), 7' 10" × 10' 9". San Francisco Public Library, Marina Branch.



left : 530. ROBERT PINART. *Ark curtain*. 1958. Silk appliqué and embroidery, 9' 6" × 12'. Congregation B'nai Israel, Bridgeport, Conn.

and distinguished because they reflect the unique
s and ideas of creative individuals who wish to
beyond the common denominator of contempo-
ste. While a limited number of contemporary
en make a living through their craft products,
re amateurs who enjoy the doing as much as the
In this age when mechanization takes over an

ever-increasing share of human activities, people derive
great satisfaction from exercising their manipulative skills.
Distinguished achievement in the crafts, as in any other
field of expression, is a matter of taste and creativity and
draws on the full potential of the craftsman.

The activities of the contemporary amateur and pro-
fessional craftsmen also have a vital relationship to the