

Brief Biography of Sarah Hall, RCA

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SARAH HALL was born in Hamilton, Ontario, in 1951 to Clifton Leonard Howard Hall and Laura Eveline Hall (Walsh). She grew up in the family home on a ravine near Dundas, Ontario, and it was there that she first developed her love for nature and landscapes. Sarah developed a deep affection for the rugged Niagara Escarpment, which encircles the Dundas Valley with a ring of waterfalls on its way from Niagara Falls to Tobermory.

When Sarah was nine, her father chaired the Building Committee for St. Mark's United Church in Dundas, and during the design phase she accompanied the committee as it studied church architecture. During this time, as she watched the movement of coloured light through buildings and spaces, she fell in love with stained glass and decided to make it her life's work. When she graduated from high school there were no stained glass courses available in Canada. She spent five years pursuing other artistic interests, including a project photographing ghost towns for the Provincial Archives of Alberta.

In 1974, Sarah attended Sheridan College in Ontario, taking an introductory stained glass course. She then moved to the UK to study full time in the Architectural Glass Department at Swansea College of Art in Wales. After receiving her Diploma in Architectural Glass from The City & Guilds of London Institute, she assisted Lawrence Lee, ARCA, Master of the Glass Department at the Royal College of Art in London. She completed her studies with a year in Jerusalem researching Middle Eastern techniques and gold leafing on glass.

In 1980, Sarah established her first studio in Toronto, Ontario. She resolved early in her career to focus on architectural projects based exclusively on her own contemporary artwork and committing to a personal, authentic approach to religious themes. This wasn't an easy road for a stained glass artist, but over time Sarah built a network of architects and clients who recognized her unique vision and talent. Opportunities opened across North America and into Europe. As her commissions grew, she expanded her studio space and workforce to meet the demand. When the scale grew too vast, she began working with fabrication studios in Canada and Germany. For the past seventeen years she has worked closely with Peters Studios in Paderborn, Germany.

Sarah's exceptional contribution to the built environment has been recognized through many awards, including "Honor Awards"



from the American Institute of Architects and the "Allied Arts Award"

from the Ontario Association of Architects. Sarah's artistic achievements were acknowledged by her induction into the Royal Canadian Academy of Art in 2002, and by her annual inclusion in the *Canadian Who's Who*.

In addition to projects, lectures and exhibitions throughout North America and Europe, she has co-authored 35 published articles on glass art and published three books: *The Color of Light* (1999), *Windows on Our Souls* (2007) with Bob Shantz, and *Transfiguring Prairie Skies* (2012) with Donald Bolen. Her work was the subject of J.S. Porter's 2011 beautifully illustrated *The Glass Art of Sarah Hall*. Sarah has also lectured on the history of stained glass at Regis College, University of Toronto, and conducts tours of stained glass for the Royal Ontario Museum.

Throughout her career, Sarah has been committed to artistic innovation and pioneering new glass techniques. In 2005, she was granted an Arts Fellowship from the Chalmers Foundation to support research into the integration of solar cells in art glass installations. This opened the door to a decade of exploration in building-integrated photovoltaics, and a series of groundbreaking commissions in Canada and the US. Her revolutionary work was featured in the CBC documentary series "Great Minds of Design." Through her commitment to large-scale contemporary work, her pioneering use of artistic and technical innovations, and her uncompromising creative vision, Sarah Hall has carved out a unique and prolific career in architectural glass art. *A Thousand Colours* is a record of her many accomplishments in this challenging field.

In 2019 Sarah was inducted into the Order of Canada for her significant contributions as an architectural glass artist and for her environmental innovations in glass production.