

SUMMARY

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OLD IMAGERY FOR A NEW CENTURY

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Nineteenth-century glass painters admired medieval art for its decorative brilliance, but for the image itself, the art of Europe from the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries provided the most appropriate themes and figural models. Their reliance on art of these eras reflected the bias already effective in their patrons. The foundation of the great nineteenth-century public collections was the art of the Renaissance from the Lowlands, Germany, and Italy. Nineteenth-century artists inspired by the Renaissance and Baroque, such as Ernst Deger, Anton Dietrich, Gustave Doré, Heinrich Hofmann, William Holman Hunt, and Bernard Plockhorst could also become universally recognized across denominations and media. Their rendering of the themes of the *Boy Jesus in the Temple*, *Flight into Egypt*, or *Christ Knocking at the Door* become standard ‘icons’ of Christian instruction. To understand the climate in nineteenth-century concerning art, religion, and replication for the public, we must remember that our public institutions of art were populated with copies in painting, print and plaster cast. Museums have changed, but in many ways the churches built by the patrons of this era remain time capsules preserving the ideas concerning art, public service, and morality. An inventory of such works in glass includes virtually every studio, including Louis Comfort Tiffany, J and R Lamb, and Charles J. Connick, and the lesser known such as the R.T. Giles and Co. of Minneapolis or the Ford Brothers Glass Company, Kansas City, Minneapolis, Chicago. The conflux of patron, artist, and shared views of past models operated even for the most prestigious commissions such as the complex opalescent creations of John La Farge in the late nineteenth century.