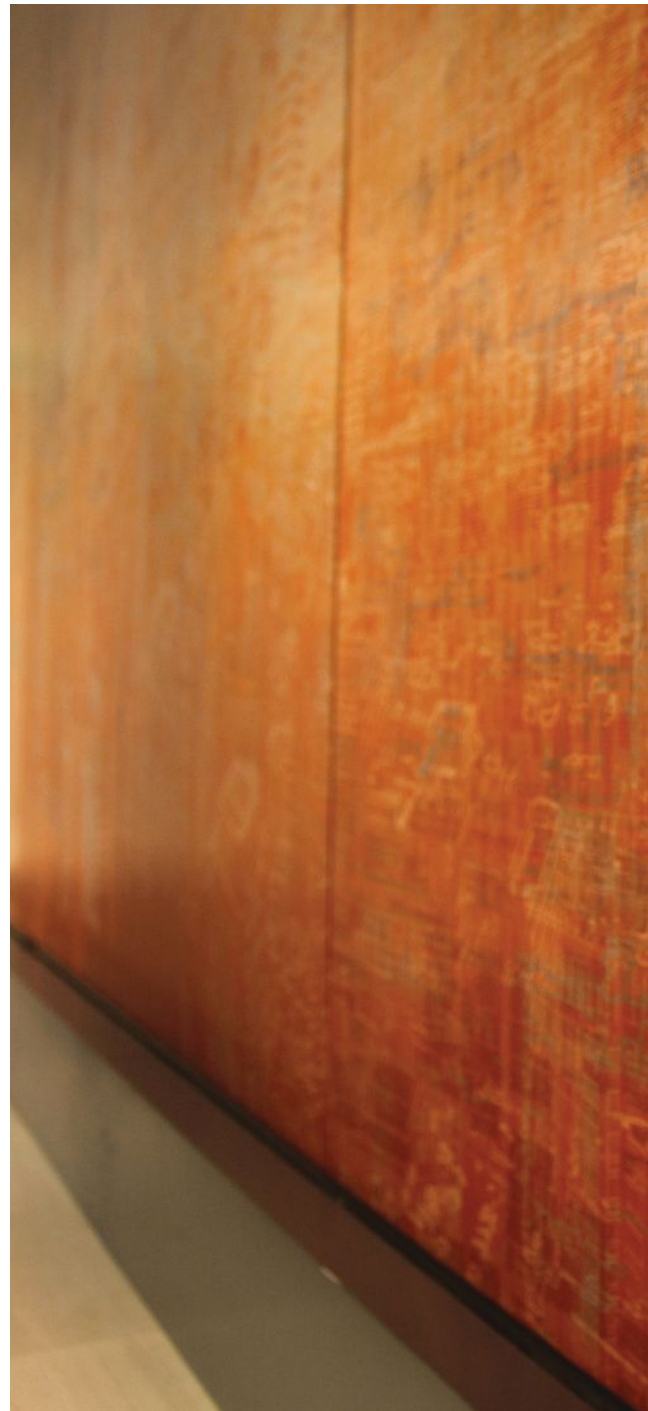


# "IMPRINTS" ON GLASS

CREATIVITY AND FABRICATION  
PRECISION COMBINE FOR INTERIOR  
ART GLASS FEATURE WALL

BY **BETHANY STOUGH**



**T**he 28th floor reception area of the new headquarters for the Cozen O'Connor law firm at One Liberty Place in Philadelphia features a 65-foot long art glass wall, designed to serve as both an inviting and intriguing introduction to the office, and as a partition for dividing the space.

Serving as the first impression for guests and staff alike, the reception area offers plenty of natural light, but the space was challenged with an unattractive view of a large neighboring building through the east-facing wall of windows. In re-



"Imprints" features an interlayer of photos and city plans from Philadelphia, encapsulated into 17 glass panels. Photography by Shuli Sadé/ Sadé Studio.

sponse to this challenge, Gensler, gensler.com, the architect for the full office renovation, developed a concept that directed focus into the space. The team proposed a feature wall that would create a beautiful backdrop to the reception area while also providing privacy for the clear glass fronted meeting rooms behind it.

Glass fabricator Galaxy Glass & Stone, galaxycustom.com, and artist Shuli Sadé of Sadé Studios, shulisade.com, collaborated to provide a glass wall solution to meet Gensler's require-

ments. The result is "Imprints," a striking centerpiece art wall installation of 17 decorative, laminated glass panels, each measuring 48 inches by 98 inches.

#### **Design phase**

Sadé Studios developed a custom, complex design for the "Imprints" installation that is intended to enhance the office space, while connecting visitors to the surrounding Philadelphia landscape, Sadé describes. Visible from front and



**Far left:** Galaxy Glass employees send the laminated panels through the washer before preparing them for shipment. **Center:** Completed custom Galaxy Glass panels await shipment. **Far right:** “Imprints” art glass feature wall introduces visitors to the space, while separating public and private areas.

USING DIGITAL MANIPULATION, REPETITION AND RETRIEVAL OF THE PHOTOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, SADÉ PROCESSED THE PHOTOGRAPHS AND THE CITY PLANS, AND CREATED SEVERAL PHYSICAL MODELS IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THE PROJECT AND ITS RELATION TO THE SPACE.

back, “Imprints” features photography, images of city plans and varied color opacity, encapsulated between clear glass lites. The photographic interlayers channel views of cityscapes taken from the city center in a 360-degree rotation.

“Following my ongoing interest in physical and digital memory, urbanism and site-specific projects, I took aerial photographs of the city of Philadelphia from the top of [One Liberty Place], located in the heart of Philadelphia’s central business district,” says Sadé.

After selecting the images for use in her art, Sadé created composed images layered with urban landscape and urban data of the specific site. Drawing inspiration from the geography of Philadelphia, particularly its setting between two rivers—Schuylkill and Delaware—she incorporated urban plans of neighborhoods situated between the rivers to highlight their role in the city.

Using digital manipulation, repetition and



retrieval of the photographic information, Sadé processed the photographs and the city plans, and created several physical models in order to understand the project and its relation to the space. “My work is layered: from figurative and recognizable elements to a language of codes and color,” explains Sadé.

#### **Fabrication phase**

After completing the design work, Sadé worked directly with Galaxy Glass & Stone to create the glass wall. First, the Galaxy project team and Sadé printed samples and mockups—small and full-scale—before finalizing the printed panels. During the printing process, Sadé Studio made frequent visits to Galaxy’s factory to examine the final glass panels, notes Sadé.

Galaxy fabricated seventeen panels—34 lites of glass—each approximately 48 inches by 98 inches, with 1/2-inch overall thickness. Complex graphic designs combined with photographic

imagery were printed as a custom interlayer using the Galaxy + Level Design Collection. Galaxy Glass & Stone chose Starphire Ultra-Clear float glass, fabricated with its proprietary semi-matte finished surface to encapsulate the art interlayer.

The project team chose this combination specifically for this project due to its clarity and ability to show true color, says Eugene Negrin, president of Galaxy. “The surface diffuses light and allows for maximum viewing of the art interlayer,” says Negrin. “[Starphire] provides true color fidelity while remaining crystal clear as thickness increases.”

Galaxy also worked with Sadé to produce the precise transparency for the wall. “To highlight ... the flow of the rivers, I [chose] a level of transparency which allows visibility of movement behind the glass wall,” says Sadé. A low iron glass product helped light to shine through while allowing the specific colors of the piece to stand out, in the