

**ALEXANDER BELESCHENKO**

**GLASS ART COMMISSION FOR CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS' HALL:  
THE INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS IN ENGLAND & WALES,  
1 MOORGATE PLACE, LONDON EC2R 6EA**

**CURATOR: MODUS OPERANDI**

**ARCHITECTS: DONALD INSALL ASSOCIATES**

**Introduction to the Commission:**

The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales commissioned Alexander Beleschenko to design, create and install an integrated permanent artwork in glass for the Institute's Members' Room, as part of the refurbishments of their building, Chartered Accountants' Hall, in the City of London, by Donald Insall Associates.

The brief was to contribute to the distinctive architectural environment, with the intention that the glass artwork would engage its members' and visitors' attention and imagination and provide a memorable new element within the building. The commission complements the complex interior of the Members Room, rich in architectural features, strong tones and colours. The work was developed in collaboration with the architects Donald Insall Associates and curated by Modus Operandi Art Consultants.

Realised in a combination of traditional glass working techniques, the work is constructed using contemporary materials and processes and was fabricated by the artist in his studio in Swansea. The commissioning process began in Autumn 2019 and the final work was installed in Summer 2022.

Dimensions: Three framed glass panels, approximately 3.5 metres in height, 1.7 metres in width.

**Artist's Description of the Work:**

*The artwork is a combination of realism and abstraction. The realism aspect is of the three repeating motifs - depictions of the original window fenestration that existed in the same wall as the artwork before the extension was built. Interwoven and layered with these images are details taken from the decorative aspects of the building. The grid*

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*geometry is generated out of a flooring pattern in one of the corridors. The ribbons and allied artefacts are inspired by some of the decoration seen in the stained glass sited in the main hall.*

*The small bridge that sits in front of the work is seen very much as a positive aspect - rather than being something that obstructs it plays a role of inviting a view beyond. The sky blue colours in the upper areas of the art work panels lend an illusion of space beyond. The fluid elements of drawing act as a counterpoint to the coloured geometric areas that acknowledge and play with the grid drawing. All these aspects are a part of a visual layering strategy that invites the onlooker into the piece. All done with a light touch to be expressive of a positive feel overall to the artwork.*

*The structural aspect of the artwork is that the glass is a composite of three layers. The back two panes are of toughened glass laminated together. The front layer is a configuration of a multitude of glass pieces bonded onto the backing pieces.*

*Within the composite the two layers of the backing glass play an important role in dealing with the major challenge of enlivening the work so as to mitigate the flat and even back illumination of the LED lights. For this the painted white background of the panels played their part in two ways. These surfaces are on the third and back most pieces of glass of each panel composite. On the very back layer of glass of each panel white enamel paints applied. They were painted with five different grades of opacity starting with the uppermost panels being less opaque than the lower panels. Thereby the upper panels are the brightest by being the most light transmissive.*

*On the front surface of the middle placed piece of glass composite white paint is applied but in a textured manner and done with a variety of modulation suggestive of movement. Added to this painted surface of the middle panel is the painting of the window fenestration motif and the grid outlines.*

*The front surface of the composite is a jigsaw of over a thousand pieces of hand-made glass precision cut and ground to fit together. The colours are either chosen and cut from pre-coloured glass sheets or is applied by method of painted enamel. Complexities of drawing are also augmented with acid etching work that erases certain colours so that others can be*

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Director Vivien Lovell BA Hons FRSA Hon FRIBA

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*inserted. All of these worked elements are then bonded to the toughened laminated glass backing sheets with an optically clear two-part silicone adhesive.*

### **The Artist:**

Alexander Beleschenko was born in Corby in 1951, of Ukrainian parents. Beleschenko trained at Winchester School of Art and The Slade School of Fine Art and went on to study Architectural Stained Glass at Swansea School of Art. He lives and works in Swansea where he established his architectural glass studio in 1986.

Previous commissions include the cone wall in Southwark tube station in London, the Heart of Wales in the Senedd Welsh Assembly Building in Cardiff, the façade portal doors for Herz Jesu Kirche in Munich and glazed facades for the Forum Building, University of Exeter. He was also commissioned for the glazed facades of the Garden Quadrangle and the Kendrew Quadrangle, St John's College Oxford.

Alexander Beleschenko has twice been awarded the Art and Architecture Award from the Royal Society of Arts. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects, an Honorary Fellow of Swansea Metropolitan University and an Honorary Doctor of the University of Exeter.

### **The Commissioner:**

ICAEW is a world leading professional membership organisation that promotes, develops and supports over 181,500 chartered accountants and students worldwide. It provides qualifications and professional development, shares its knowledge, insight and technical expertise, and protects the quality and integrity of the accountancy and finance profession.

It was founded in 1880 and its headquarters is Chartered Accountants' Hall, Moorgate Place, London EC2R 6EA. The ICAEW has offices in the UK, Beijing, Brussels, Dubai, Hong Kong, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Shanghai, Singapore and Vietnam. There are over 153,000 chartered accountants and 28,000 students around the world. 16% of its members and 28% of its students are located outside the UK.

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### **The Curator:**

Modus Operandi is a leading independent agency for art in the public realm. It aims to deliver excellent art integral to architecture and the public realm, matching the vision of artists to client, audience and place.

Modus Operandi curates and delivers permanent and temporary art commissions, collaborations and interventions, based on creative strategies and appropriate selection procedures.

**[www.modusoperandi-art.com](http://www.modusoperandi-art.com)**

**Further information from Vivien Lovell, Director, Modus Operandi:**

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