



JAMES O'HARA AND DAUGHTER VALERIE



VALERIE

Artists in Glass

When there's any daylight at all in Rochester the Pike Stained Glass Studio gets its fair share through two parallel rows of tall windows set in white walls. Sun reflected on snowbanks filled the room with light the day the Courier visited. It was a strangely quiet place. Five young people worked silently, at some distance from each other, concentrating on separate projects, while James O'Hara, artist and studio owner, showed us around.

"The craft hasn't changed much in 800 years," O'Hara said. "Craft, art? Someone — I forget who — has called stained glass the 800-year-old fad."

The studio, recently moved to a rehabilitated building in downtown St. Paul Street, was established in 1908 by O'Hara's uncle, William Pike, who had been apprenticed in his youth to the Louis Tiffany studio in New York. Business is good, O'Hara said. It boomed in the 1950s, when many new churches were going up, then it slumped around 1970; now it's coming back. Fifteen or 20 orders, large and small, are on the books on one-year contracts. Clients include Park Church and Our Lady of Lourdes in Elmira,

Christ Church in Corning, Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, a Watertown synagogue and Casa Italiana on the Nazareth College Campus. The Lourdes order is for 12 pairs of pictorial windows. Park Church is having windows repaired and copied. O'Hara has designed a stairway window for Casa Italiana that is 12 feet high and one and a half feet wide. It features portrait medallions and Renaissance decorative motifs in delicate pastels.

The top left photo shows O'Hara watching his daughter, Valerie, work on "a little project of her own." She has been working with glass since she was 12 years old, he said. Valerie is testing color against the light — the color is dead in glass on the table. The abstract design which she is working out in pale, cool tones shows above her head against the window, where she is pasting pieces of glass to a paper pattern. At top right, she begins cutting another piece. Pictured below her is Margaret Kollar putting glass together with lead, and next comes another O'Hara girl, Megan Ferrari. At lower left, David Spitali prepares to cut a pane he has taken from storage shelves behind him. The best glass is the hand-blown material from Europe, O'Hara said.



MARGARET KOLLAR

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DAVID SPITALI



MEGAN FERRARI