

MERCHANT TAYLORS HALL YORK

Celebrating 600 Years of the Hall - East Window of the Great Hall (6.5m x 2.9m) 2016

I was commissioned to depict the Coat of Arms of the Company of Merchant Taylors of York, to celebrate 600 years since the Merchant Taylors Hall was built around 1415. The window was officially unveiled by Dame Judi Dench, actor, author and daughter of York, on 7 April 2017.

My design encompasses all three windows in the east end of the Great Hall, creating a strong and bold backdrop on entering the room. In the central window, the Merchant Taylors Coat of Arms creates the focal point, depicted as if sown onto silk. The surrounding fabric flows across the remaining glazing and into the flanking windows,

embedding the Coat of Arms into the fabric of the building. The anniversary dates, 1415 – 2015, are shown embroidered in gold thread below the coat of arms, with a silver needle, bottom right, finishing the stitching. Lines of gold stitching running across the fabric hint at the skill of Taylors through the ages, working with the fabric to create a garment.



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The design and techniques of the new window follow in the footsteps of a window created by the noted York stained glass artist Henry Gyles in 1662, and now in the Little Hall.

In 2008 the Gyles window was conserved by Barley Studio and re-installed with a newly designed commemorative inscription panel.

The new window follows the style of the Gyles window with its glazing pattern of rectangular squares, and uses no coloured glass - only yellow stain, glass paints and coloured enamels. Bringing the design forward to the present day are the contemporary setting of abstracted silk and the sculptural elements of the needle and thread, formed in tinned copper and brass, and 'sown' onto the window.



Detail: Sculpted needle and thread in tinned copper and brass



Detail: Coat of Arms of the Company of Merchant Taylors of the City of York