

Stained Glass On Exhibition At Art Gallery

By JEAN CHARLOT

One of the goals of artists has been to paint light, and what better means to paint light than light itself. Thus have reasoned the great anonymous artists who gave us the cathedrals of the Middle Ages—the architects who replaced the walls of stone of the romanesque buildings with walls of glass of Rheims and Chartres. Unlike the modern glass wall, which prides itself on being invisible, stained glass windows act as giant prisms that reduce white sunlight to its jewel-like primary components: ruby red, “stratosphere blue,” ocean green and the many hues that have no name.

For the first time in Honolulu, art lovers will see stained glass made by a living artist, combining exquisitely the old and the new, and with local aptness, the Occidental with the Oriental. Erica Karawina gives us, in capsules as it were, the great cathedral windows. With materials, come by with difficulty, and treasured all the more for their makeshift inventiveness, she equals the work of past masters. She proves in so doing that the fabled secret of the medieval stained glass, considered by some art critics as lost to us, does not reside in secret processes, but in an application to one's craft.

Those who like to understand before they can admire will discover with what artistry Karawina shapes the bits of glass and with what boldness she joins them. They will appreciate the subtle distortions towards spirituality and the compositions that make ready to take their place in an architecture as glass murals. Those who love first and understand after will enjoy these glass pictures without need of an explanation, tiny window that they are, opening on vistas outside space and time.



STAINED GLASS ON VIEW
—Blessed Are the Meek, a design by Erica Karawina for one of her collection of stained glass windows which will be on exhibit at Gima's art gallery in Waikiki until April 18.