



Domed Delights at Sea

BY DORI SALTZMAN



While the beauty of a cruise ship's atrium often takes our breath away, and we stand in awe of the sunlight pouring through the stained glass windows, transmitted rays of color pooling at our feet, most of us have never stopped to ponder just how on earth those stained glass windows came to be there.

Angelique Jackson, one half of the duo that make up Jancik Arts International, a stained glass arts studio, knows exactly what goes into the beautiful glasswork that passengers marvel at nearly everyday.

Jancik Arts International has been working with the cruise industry since the early 1990s to create massive stained glass domes and vertical glass artwork for more than 20 cruise ships.

Though the first cruise line call, from Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines in 1992, came from out of the blue, the request for an atrium dome made sense to the artists, Angelique Jackson told *Travel Trade*.

"Royal Caribbean asked us to do a ceiling dome, which we were already specializing in," she said.

That dome was for Royal Caribbean's Sun Viking and the experience, Jackson said, was challenging and interesting, but also fun.

Jancik Arts only created the one dome for Royal Caribbean, before starting to work, almost exclusively, with Princess Cruises in 1995. Jancik Arts has so far done work for 18 Princess ships and is currently the latter stages of creating about two dozen pieces for the line's new Ruby Princess, scheduled to debut in November 2008.

"It's incredible the amount of glass that we're doing on the Ruby Princess," Jackson said. "It's a lot of glass — ceilings and vertical glass, and the sandblasted

frosted glass."

Although the atriums are the largest and most dramatic pieces that Jackson and her partner, JoAnn Jancik, create for the ships, they also do numerous vertical glass pieces and sandblasted frosted glass panels. The vertical glass pieces can be found in the common rooms, while the sandblasted frosted panels are found primarily in the restaurants.

But it is the atrium domes that are the most impressive. A typical atrium dome is 30-feet in diameter and weighs approximately 3,600 pounds.

A Complicated Process

During the design process, Jackson works very closely with Teresa Anderson, in-house director of interior design for Princess Cruises.

The entire process usually takes about a year, with close to three months just for the design phase, six to eight months for the creation of the pieces and three weeks

for installation.

Jackson said that Jancik Arts has never been promised work when a line contracts for a newbuild, so they never know ahead of time what will be required of them. When they do receive the call, from Princess or like two years ago from Cunard for the Queen Victoria, the first pieces of information they are given are what areas of the ship and what design elements are needed.

They also give Jackson design direction. "For example," she told *Travel Trade*, "one room might be art deco or one ship might have an atrium that is going to have Italian-detailing.

"And particularly they give me color direction because, of course, they want it to look good with the other interior elements."

After receiving instructions regarding design elements, areas of the ship and artistic theme, Jackson creates two or three designs to show to Princess' interior design team. The final designs will often include elements from each of the initial designs.

After the designs have been approved, Jackson needs field measurements. Often she will travel to the shipyard to take her own measurements.

Once the pieces are created and shipped to the shipyard, Jackson and a small crew of installers fly over to the yard for installation.

The only time Jackson has ever actually "sailed" on a cruise was during an installation, and it's an experience she never wants to repeat again.

"I went out onto the Adriatic Sea on a sea trial mission. We were installing and we continued to work as the ship was taken out. Over the PA system, we heard that in five minutes time the ship was

going to go through an inclination test, which is where they rock the ship way over to one side. We jumped off the ladders, ran to get the glass and put it back in the crates and prop the crates between columns before they did the test.”

Jackson said that although she never wants to go on a sea trial again, she would like to go as a passenger to hear what other passengers have to say about her work.

She has met people who, upon hearing what she does for a living, have told her that they’ve been on one of the cruise ships, remember the atrium dome and have photos with the dome in the background.

Comments like these are what Jackson, the artist, lives for. “It makes me feel like all the deadlines and hard work and worry if its going to fit or if its going to break before it gets there, all that stress is worthwhile when I hear that,” she said.

Her Favorite Design

Jackson’s favorite ship that she designed for is the Sea Princess.

The theme given to Jackson for the Sea Princess was a crashing wave, and the

dome was one of the largest, with a 30-foot diameter. “That was pretty dramatic in and of itself,” she said.

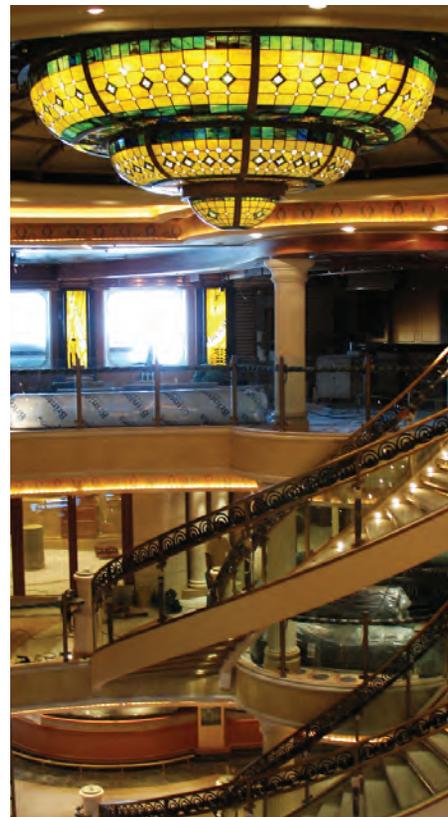
But the main reason the Sea Princess holds a special place in her heart is that while onboard the ship she first saw and truly appreciated her own artwork.

It happened after a special Thanksgiving dinner that the crew provided for Jackson and her installation team.

“The guys on the installation crew told me; they wanted to show me something. We left the dining room, went into the atrium and we looked up at the ceiling dome. And they said, ‘Look at what you did.’ And I looked at it for the first time without thinking of all the headaches and the stress; and I think that was the first time in my 25 years in business, at that time, that I really looked at my work and appreciated it.”

Since that night, Jackson has taken a moment at the end of every installation to step back and look at her work objectively.

And like all of us who have ever stepped foot beneath one of these magnificent domes, she is always touched by their beauty.



Emerald Princess Chandelier