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INSPIRED

Tom Patti, B.I.D. '67, M.I.D. '69: *Periodic Motion*

Known for his pioneering use of architectural and industrial sheet glass in small-scale sculpture and large-scale public artworks, Tom Patti has received international acclaim as one of the world's most highly regarded contemporary artists working with glass and is a leader in the field of high-performance glass technology. His explorations into the relationship of art to science and technology have yielded a body of work comprising visionary architectural systems, for which The Corning Museum of Glass and Corning Incorporated selected him as their 2015–16 Specialty Glass Artist-in-Residence to work with scientists at Corning's research and design facility, Sullivan Park.

Patti's work is included in numerous prominent permanent collections, such as those of the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Louvre. His innovative architectural and industrial glass processes have also attracted the attention of major transportation agencies, including San Francisco's Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), which commissioned the site-specific installation *Periodic Motion* for the Oakland International Airport station. *Prattfolio* spoke to Patti about the process of creating this work.

P: What inspired your design for *Periodic Motion*?
I have always been interested in the concept of space and how technical and scientific discoveries influence our understanding of distance in the universe. As a passageway for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic, the BART train terminal at Oakland International Airport provided an ideal site to explore these ideas in a large-scale, three-dimensional art space that the viewer is passing both by and through.

P: What impact do you want the piece to have on travelers?
Travel is often a pathway to insight. With its location at a major international airport, I want the piece to extend the experience of flight by transforming the station from a transitional, structural, and functional space into an experience that surrounds viewers and alters their sense of reality.

P: What challenges did you face while working on the project?
Satisfying the California Building Code and Federal Aviation Authority requirements provided some of the most interesting challenges. I designed and had custom manufactured two new types of glass, on which we conducted full-scale impact and seismic studies. I also used a combination of diffused and scattered reflectance to avoid flash blindness and the danger of distracting pilots during final approach and landing.

Right: The 8-foot by 250-foot *Periodic Motion* consists of 38 glass panels, each weighing more than 375 pounds.