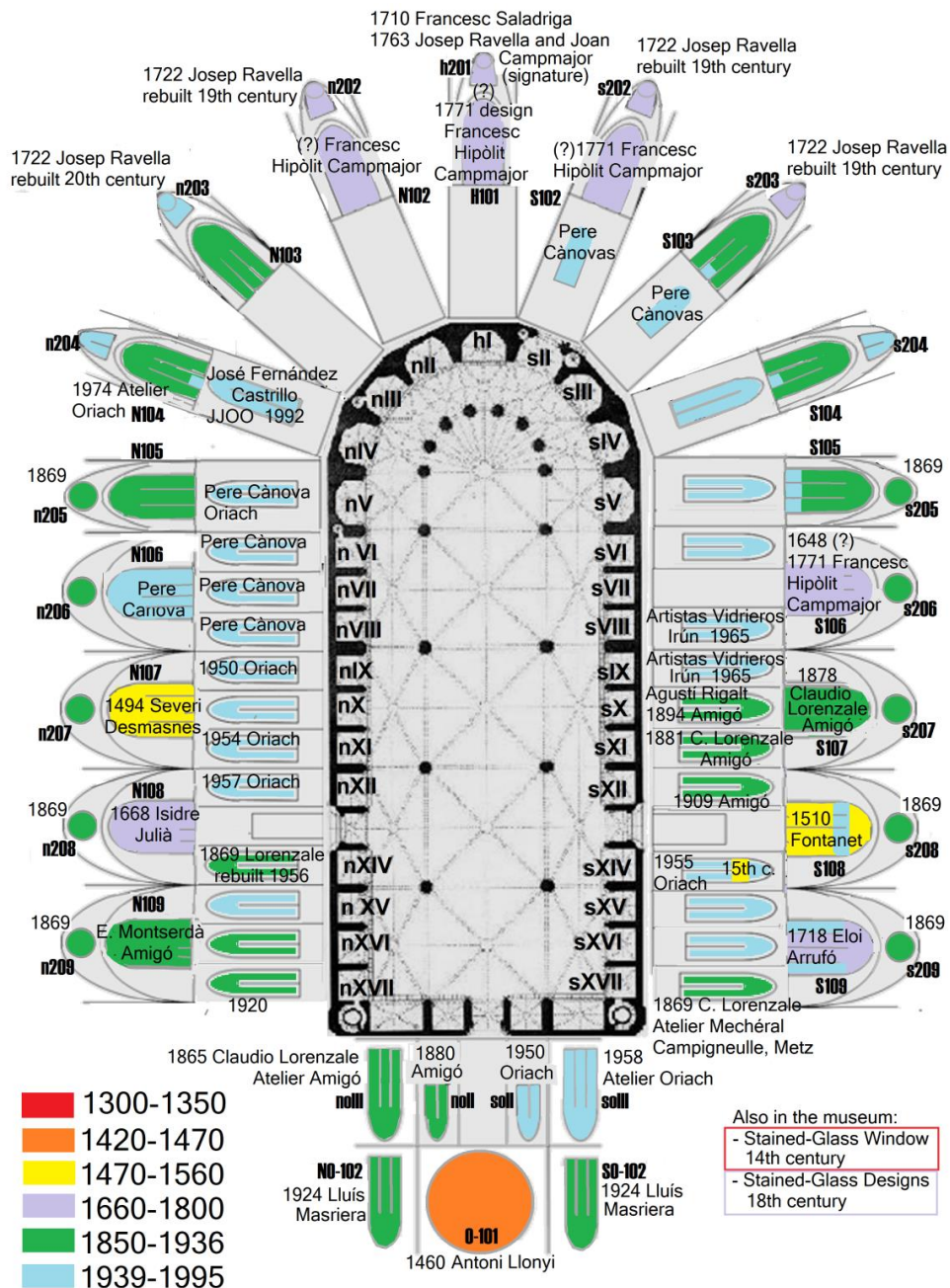


VISITS

The Stained-Glass Windows of Santa Maria del Mar, Barcelona

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See also: <https://sites.google.com/view/vitrallshistorics/p%C3%A0gina-principal>

Berenguer de Montagut and Ramon Despuig were the architects behind the church of Santa Maria del Mar (St Mary of the Sea), and the guilds of the La Ribera neighbourhood were involved in its construction. Built in just 50 years (1329–1383), it shows unusual uniformity in the Southern Gothic style in which it was constructed. The church is a basilica consisting of three naves, with ambulatory and radiating chapels, as well as chapels in the side naves. The initial impact inside the large uniform space is the result of various factors: on the one hand, the disappearance of many of the interior features (choir, altarpieces, etc.) due to problems encountered over the centuries; and on the other, the great height of the side naves, which are not very dissimilar from the central one. Thus, the impression upon entering is of a single nave, which

is accentuated by a lack of visual obstacles. Within this structure, the larger windows are not located between the naves but on the wall above the chapels.

Santa Maria del Mar is the church with the broadest stylistic range of stained-glass windows in Barcelona, with examples spanning the 14th century to the late 20th century, including notable Baroque works.

### Gothic stained-glass windows

Santa Maria del Mar's oldest panels are no longer in their original place but can these days be found, quite well preserved, in an exhibition at the church. They consist of panels of *Jesus Washing the Apostles' Feet* and of the *Ascension*, dating from the early 14th century.

The church was set on fire at the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War (1936) and the stained-glass windows suffered greatly. Fortunately, however, two exceptional Gothic pieces were preserved in place: the large rose window and the window representing the *Last Judgment*.

On 2 February 1428, an earthquake caused stones from the rose window to fall, resulting in thirty fatalities. The stonework was later rebuilt, before a new stained-glass window was made by the Toulouse-born painter Antoni Lonyi in 1460. In the centre, a representation of the *Coronation of the Virgin* can be seen, around which the angels sing. The Evangelists and the main saints appear in the next circle, while local saints can be seen in the outer circle. Trained as a painter in Burgundy, several altarpieces, embroidery cards and illuminated books have been attributed to him in Burgundy, Barcelona and Piedmont. In 1446 he collaborated with the glassmaker Euvrad Rubert (Chalon-sur-Saône) in a project in the castle of Authumes commissioned by Nicolas Rolin, Chancellor of Burgundy and Bramante and Lord of Authumes. However, of his stained-glass windows only the rose window of Santa Maria del Mar has survived.

*The Last Judgment* window, made in 1494 by Severí Desmasnes, features highly expressive naturalism. When fire broke out at the church in 1936, it happened to be being restored elsewhere. Desmasnes would travel from his town of Chalons to Avignon (1485–1492), Carcassonne (1492–1493) and Toulouse, where he worked, and was also active in Tarragona (1496) and Zaragoza (1500). The stained-glass window is notable for its great compositional uniformity, without respecting the strict division of the lancets. The gates of heaven are guarded by St Peter, who holds the keys in his hands. The Pantocrator presides over the central lancets and St Michael is seen weighing souls, while the damned are burnt in hell and other mortals await the divine judgement. One of the monsters of hell contains an example of insertion: a small red piece of glass inserted into an uncoloured head.

Since the 15th century, the *Virgin Mary and St Michael* have been preserved in a window in the southern chapel XIV among other images from the 20th century, made by the Antoni Oriach atelier.

In the tribune above this, there are also *Four Apostles* made by the Fontanet atelier, perhaps in 1525 (S108). Between 1477 and 1580 the Fontanet atelier dominated production of stained-glass windows in Catalonia. Founded by Gil Fontanet, the atelier was later taken over by his brother Jaume, followed by his son, also called Jaume, the wife of the last Jaume, called Elisabeth, and the daughter of the couple, also called Elisabeth.

### 17th- and 18th-century stained-glass windows

*The Last Supper*, made in 1668 by Isidre Julià (N108), is, despite having undergone many interventions, the only 17th-century stained-glass window that has been preserved in the church.

The church boasts several stained-glass windows from the 18th century. The window in the centre of the apse (*The Immaculate Conception*, h201) was originally made by Francesc Saladriga in 1710 but has undergone much repair work, with many pieces of glass having been changed (such as the saint's face). In this window there is a piece of glass, which is not original, featuring the signature of Josep Ravella and Joan Campmajor, together with the date of 1763.

The two windows on either side of it (n201, n202, s201, s202), remade by Ravella in 1722, underwent changes in terms of the saints to which they were dedicated during the 19th century and some were completely remade. Francesc Hipòlit Campmajor is considered responsible for the three windows in the centre of the ambulatory, dedicated to *Communion* (H101) and the *Adoration of the Virgin* (N102, S102). The church still retains a drawing of the central windows dating from 1771. One window, in the southern nave, of the *Fountain of Living Water* (S106) is thought to date from 1648, but it is possible that it was

made along with those in the ambulatory in the following century, also by Hipòlit Campmajor. In 1954 it was remade by the Antoni Oriach atelier.

Two more 18th-century saints are preserved in a window in the southern nave. They were made by Eloi Arrufó in 1718. All the aforementioned stained-glass painters were members of Barcelona's guild for their specialization, and descendants of large families of stained-glass window painters.

### 19th- and 20th-century stained-glass windows

In 1865 Eudald Ramon Amigó (Barcelona) made traceries for one stained-glass window on the front façade. Jules Decoin (Boulevard Contrescarpe, Paris) also made three images (*St Mary de Cervellione*, *St Eularia*, and *St Isabel of Portugal*) in the lancets. That same year, the Mechéral Campigneulle atelier (Rue de Paris, Metz), made one stained-glass window in the sXVII chapel (*St Sever and St Medir*). All these images were made from vidimuses by the painter Claudio Lorenzale.

The late 19th century was a time of much repair work and the creation of new pieces. To begin with, local ateliers were more expensive than foreign ones, but architects, intellectuals, institutions and glass makers were beginning to re-establish local production. The Amigó atelier made most of Santa Maria del Mar's windows during this period, as well as those of many other churches in Catalonia and Spain. The church of Santa Maria del Mar still retains several stained-glass windows from the atelier in the chapels of a southern nave, following vidimuses by the painters Agustí Rigalt (sX), Claudio Lorenzale (sXI) and Enric Monserdà (sXII).

Eudald Ramon Amigó was also the atelier that made the rose windows in the central nave (1869). The window depicting *The Four Prophets* in the southern triforium (S107) is also by Lorenzale and the Amigó atelier (1878).

A stained-glass window in the northern triforium (*The Coming of the Holy Spirit*, N109) was thought to date from the Baroque period but is in actual fact a Neo-Baroque work made by Amigó, possibly following a drawing by the painter Enric Monserdà (early 20th century), which is preserved in a private collection.

There are other late 19th- and early 20th-century stained-glass windows in nXVII (old baptistery) and the nXVI chapels. The last of them shows pieces of glass that come from different windows.

Geometric windows in the nave date from the 19th and 20th centuries and show the coats of arms of the donors. Furthermore, on the main façade there are two identical small windows featuring the coats of arms of Santa Maria del Mar; one made in 1880 by Amigó and another by Antoni Oriach in 1950.

On the same façade, there are also two stained-glass windows made by Lluís Masriera (1924) depicting the *Annunciation* and the *Marriage of the Virgin*. They are both beautiful examples of the changes in aesthetics at the time.

Slightly more recent is the window of *St Joaquina Vedruna*, in the nX chapel, made by Antoni Oriach following a vidimus by the painter Jaume Busquet. Oriach was the most important stained-glass maker in Barcelona after the Spanish Civil War (1936–39), responsible for rebuilding most of the stained-glass windows in Barcelona in the 1950s. In Santa Maria del Mar there are windows designed by Carles Alavedra and others by Pere Canova, made by the Oriach atelier.

Another atelier that worked in Santa Maria del Mar was Vidrieras Artísticas de Irún. In 1965 they made windows featuring kings and local Catalan saints (sIX, sVIII). One of them (sVII) is covered by the organ. The stained-glass window in the southern IV chapel, depicting four sainted nuns, is perhaps by the same workshop (1961).

The chapels also boast other stained-glass windows that were made in the second half of the 20th century (nIX, sV, sVI). In 1956 Vidrieras de Arte remade a window created by Amigó following an old vidimus by Claudio Lorenzale (*St Juliana and St Semproniana*, nXIV).

José Fernández Castrillo is, finally, the creator (1998) of the last stained-glass window to be installed in Santa Maria del Mar: the window of the *1992 Barcelona Olympic Games*. Use of modern techniques and representations of the Olympic flame and rings, a map of Barcelona's Eixample district, and the sea are its key features.

In summary, Santa Maria del Mar is the church with the most extensive range of stylistic stained-glass windows in Barcelona.

