



## Contemporary Glass Blooms in the Garden with the Contemporary Glass Society

Dawn Nettleberry,  
Wildlife Window  
on the World

Featuring the latest from the Contemporary Glass Society

by Susan Purser Hope

Photos by Gabrielle Argent

What can be better than strolling around a beautiful garden on a summer's day? Wandering through the Sussex Prairies in West Sussex, England, will let you interact not only with an array of beautiful flora and fauna but also with a dazzling array of glass art created by members of the Contemporary Glass Society (CGS).

### The Expressions of Nature

Sussex Prairie Gardens, Britain's largest Prairie or Naturalistic garden, has eight acres of stunning garden to roam. The CGS *Expressions of Nature* three-dimensional sculpture exhibition features established and emerging glass and mixed media artists from around the UK. In addition to stunning freestanding glass artworks, there are combinations of art glass with wood, metal, and stone that look spectacular placed among the drought-resistant perennials and grasses.

Gabrielle Argent, glass artist, curator, and CGS Regional Coordinator shared: "This immersive exhibition invites visitors to explore art in the landscape. Each sculpture has been placed to interact with the plants around it, complementing the colors, textures, and life cycles of the prairie planting. The artwork is placed in sync with the orientation of the sun to make it sing with color, texture, and meaning, resulting in a glorious experience for visitors."



Steven Robinson, *Ocean Haze and Koi Dance*



Helen Twigge-Molecey, *Orange Fungi*

## A Wide Array of Contributing Artists

The exhibition represents a remarkably wide range of glass art techniques including fused, lampworking, leaded, stained, copper foiled, etched, mirrored, screen printed, sandblasted, and hand blown glass from the following artists.

- Gabrielle Argent created her *Glass Garden Design* in 2022 and this year has organized and curated the *Expressions of Nature* exhibition for Sussex Prairie Garden. She works in many techniques including fused, stained, and furnace blown glass.
- Susan Purser Hope, Chair of CGS, shares her *3-D Glass House*, which represents the stunning Suffolk country. It was created in panels within a metal frame, with each wall and roof section created individually and carefully put into place.
- Isobel Brunsdon of Labyrinth Glass is a stained glass artist whose *Paradise Garden Shrine* consists of a wooden frame with leaded stained glass panels. The design depicts an olive tree, grape vine, pomegranate, and fig tree with birds flying across the roof. The back wall and entrance doors are based on a Persian tile design of peacocks and other birds.
- Emma Butler-Cole Aiken is a stained glass artist and restorer. Her exhibition piece is a trio of leaded, stained glass leaves created by sandblasting mirror and combining it with antique glass to create an eye-catching garden stake designed to move with the wind.
- Dawn Nettleberry, a mixed media and glass artist, used a painterly process to create pictures and textures in glass using enamels and colors to build a landscape of abstract and floral themes.
- Ian Godfrey and Gail Boothman of Galiani Glass created two flameworked sculptures inspired by the rich habitat of the Sussex Prairie Gardens—*Kaleidoscope Butterflies*®, a brightly colored group of hand cut glass butterflies, and *Barley Flame*® with three

barley corn heads in a mix of hot red, orange, and yellow colors to contrast with the surrounding greenery. Their *Mystic Ocean*® is a rondel comprising green and blue transparent fused glass, allowing light to pass through and cast shadows and colored light mounted into a sturdy stainless steel frame that is easy to reposition around the garden.

- Magda Gay of Magdooshka Creates was inspired to design and make work in her garden studio, motivated by a desire to add more color, light, and movement into any garden or home. She mainly uses traditional lead came and copper foiling techniques, together with some etching and engraving details and enjoys the challenge of making 3-D pieces, creating organically driven work to hang or stand using wire, wooden, and metal bases or stakes.
- Gay Hutchings' inspiration for her glass flowers comes from her work with landscapes, plants, and flowers throughout her nearly 50 years as an artist. She is inspired to create imagined flower sculptures to place in borders among real plants to add color and interest to the garden, particularly in winter.
- Lisa Pettibone has an interest in astronomy and physics and creates sculpture, installation, and print to explore areas where humans and nature intersect through the lens of science. Using a variety of materials, including glass, she records spontaneous phenomena, and in February 2022 her work was sent to the International Space Station as part of the Moon Gallery ISS Test Mission.
- Steve Robinson works in kiln-formed glass, using techniques he has developed as a professional artist. He specializes in the use of enamels that are fired into the glass to create vibrant and original tactile works and particularly enjoys taking inspiration from oceanic and aquatic themes to create designs with movement and fluidity.

- Clare Summons is inspired by her garden and childhood memories at the seaside. When working with fused and cast glass, she enjoys the challenges between form, function, and leaving room for memory and imagination. Her work refers to the relationship between land and sea, exploring color, texture, and pattern through the forms found in her chosen landscapes.

- Helen Twigge-Molecey's long-term fascination with the magical qualities of hand blown glass led her to begin the process of learning to blow glass. Her new work *Fungi* reflects her growing fascination with this under-explored kingdom. Each mouth blown glass sculpture is unique and can stand alone or work well as a collection. **GIA**

The *Expressions of Nature* exhibition continues through mid-October 2023. Be sure to enjoy the glorious glass artwork blossoming in the Prairie Gardens. To learn more about this remarkable display, visit [www.cgs.org.uk](http://www.cgs.org.uk) and [www.sussexprairies.co.uk](http://www.sussexprairies.co.uk).



Susan Purser Hope, Glass House Landscape of My Dreams

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