

Featuring the latest from the
International Society of Glass Beadmakers

The 2017 Gathering

by Jeri Warhaftig

In March 2017, the International Society of Glass Beadmakers (ISGB) will come together for The Gathering, the organization's annual conference. Members and followers of the ISGB might immediately realize that the date of this conference is a departure from recent years, when The Gathering was typically held in July. This year, for the first time ever, the ISGB is partnering with the Glass Craft & Bead Expo (GCBE) and holding its conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, to coincide with portions of Expo events.

Although the GCBE and The Gathering will remain two separate, independent events, the new partnership offers ISGB attendees the opportunity to participate in their usual educational and fun-filled Gathering, as well as sample and enjoy the events offered by GCBE. The Gathering will run March 29 through April 2, 2017, with preconference workshops beginning on Tuesday, March 28. The addition of the GCBE class offerings and the vendor-packed show floor means participants will have access to diverse and novel glass-related instruction and materials. These offerings showcase virtually every topic of interest to glass enthusiasts.

Celebrating 25 Years of Bead Making

The ISGB is the leading organization for the promotion, education, and appreciation of the art of glass bead making for wearable, sculptural, and functional art. Its mission states the organization's goals—to preserve the rich and diverse traditions of the art of glass bead making and glassworking techniques, promote educational initiatives and professional development, and encourage the innovative use of complementary mediums among artists and craftspeople. Las Vegas is a terrific opportunity for the organization to pursue its mission, both because of its long-standing embrace of the glass arts and, in particular, because of its longtime support of Glass Craft & Bead Expo.

The theme for the upcoming Las Vegas Gathering is *25 Years Strong*. The conference will showcase art that pushes the boundaries of glass and glass bead making in celebration of the 25th consecutive year of The Gathering. The ISGB has announced that well-known teacher and glass artist Sally Prasch will be this year's keynote speaker. As an established glassworker in both the artisan and scientific glass specialties, the artist brings a blend of advanced technical skills and intuitive creativity to her body of art. Prasch's remarks will enhance the strong educational content that is a feature of every Gathering.



Glass art by Sally Prasch.

An Opportunity to Grow

The Las Vegas Gathering will also mark the launch of *Hands of the Maker—Avant Garde*, the latest installment in a series of exhibitions that focuses on the interplay of artists' physical engagement in their work with the creative output that results from it. This well-received series launched in Albuquerque, New Mexico, at the 2015 Gathering, continued in New Orleans, Louisiana, in 2016, and will be completed in Las Vegas with this third and final installment. Photos from these and previous ISGB exhibitions can be seen on the organization's website.

A highlight of every Gathering is the Glass, Bead, and Jewelry Bazaar, a one day pop-up sale of member's art. A special feature of the Las Vegas Gathering will be the inclusion of the Bazaar on the GCBE show floor for one day only, Saturday April 1, 2017. The Vegas crowds will be treated to a sale of handmade artisan pieces made by Gathering attendees from around the world.

There will be a wide variety of events at the conference to satisfy many interests. It is an opportunity for attendees to network with each other, gallery owners, collectors, technical vendors, and suppliers. It also gives technical vendors an opportunity to showcase new equipment, tools, supplies, and glass. Through demonstrations, lectures, panel discussions, and more, attendees can learn new techniques and business skills to further their glass knowledge. **GA**

Visit www.isgb.org to find out more about the International Society of Glass Beadmakers upcoming events and how to become a member.

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