

Glass Art Society's 43rd Annual Conference

by Shawn Waggoner

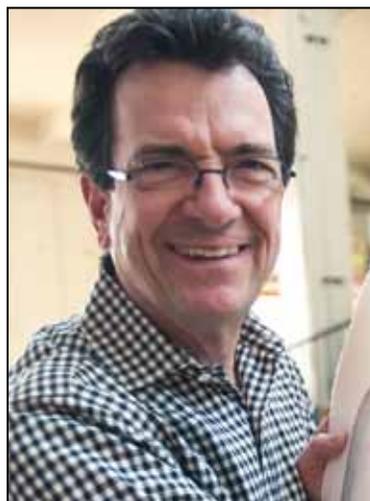
The Glass Art Society's (GAS) 43rd annual conference, "Strengthening Community, Collaboration, Forging New Bonds," lived up to its name. From March 19–22, this melting pot of glass artists, collectors, students, and other industry professionals turned Chicago, Illinois, into a hotbed of mutually beneficial artistic and social activity for 1,054 attendees from 20 different countries.

The Windy City's restored Palmer House, with its combination of Gilded Age glamour and green energy concepts, provided the ideal hub for the conference. GAS partnered with Ignite Glass Studios as its major sponsor, as well as West Supply, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events for the Chicago Cultural Center. These additional locations afforded unique opportunities for interpersonal exchange and professional collaboration. "Engage, make new contacts, inspire others, and be inspired," said GAS president, Jutta-Annette Page.

The 2014 GAS conference convened the morning of March 20, with opening ceremonies. Albert Paley, professor and Artist in Residence at the Rochester Institute of Technology, opened with an in-depth look at his personal involvement with process and understanding of material. Featured was a compelling keynote address by Chicago-based installation artist, Theaster Gates, who showed a sampling of slides donated to him by the University of Chicago's art department. Gates spoke on the subject of art that promotes social change and understanding of self in the world, expanding content, and finding new ways of making.

2014 Lifetime Achievement and Honorary Lifetime Membership Award Recipients

One would be hard pressed to think of any other glass artist whose work reflects as many varied and compelling styles as those of Dan Dailey, GAS 2014 Lifetime Achievement Award recipient. Born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1947, he attended Philadelphia College of Art, where he encountered glass through ceramic teacher, Roland Jahn. He later completed graduate studies at Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) as Dale Chihuly's first graduate student. Following graduate school, with the support of a Fulbright fellowship, Dailey moved to Italy and worked in Murano's famed Venini Factory. In 1973, he returned to the United States and established the glass program at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston, which he headed until 1985.



Dan Dailey

Photography by Heather Ahrens,
Courtesy of Glass Art Society



Shane Fero

Now Professor Emeritus, he recently transitioned into a new relationship with MassArt and created a lecture series titled *Materialism* in collaboration with Joe Rapone, a professor of design at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. In four presentations a year, with video interviews edited by Rapone, the series to date has looked at seven artists—Gary Knox Bennett, Wendell Castle, Dale Chihuly, William Daley, Albert Paley, Arline Fisch, and Patti Warashina—who speak directly about the art movement they helped to establish.

Among his many awards, Dailey was elected a Fellow of the American Craft Council in 1998, honored in 2000 with the Libensky Award, and in 2001 with the Masters of the Medium Award by the James Renwick Alliance. Dailey showed slides of his work and talked about his many artistic influences including Caravaggio, Russo, Lichtenstein, Galle, Barovier, and Lalique.

The 2014 GAS Honorary Lifetime Membership recipient, Shane Fero, served two consecutive presidencies for the society. "The sharing philosophy and model of GAS as a totally open organization is novel and very American. The Studio Glass movement has done so well because of this openness," said Fero, who will continue to work for GAS in his role as co-chair of the History Project.



Joe Cariati



Rich Royal



Shelley Muzylowski-Allen



Kristina Logan

Demonstrations, Lectures, Lec-Mos, and Panels

The most difficult part of surviving the GAS conference was determining which demo, lecture, or panel to attend, while squeezing in visits to the tech display or neon exhibition. Getting around to various demo locations was just a shuttle trip away. Ignite Glass Studios, West Supply, and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago provided venues for a mind-boggling array of demos on sandblasting, flameworking, glassblowing, cold working, fusing, kiln forming, kiln casting, and more.

Watching artists collaborate is both entertaining and informative. Such was the case with the Preston Singletary and Dante Marioni demo. These longtime Seattle friends and glass compatriots blew large glass vessel forms, relying upon time-honored and developed skills in the context of lifelong friendship. Dailey and Richard Royal treated the crowd to a behind-the-scenes look at how the two work together to create Dailey's diverse body of work.

Inspiration for better ways to create was offered in panel discussions including that of the Green Panel. Moderated by BioGlass founder Julie Conway and Chris Clark of Pittsburgh Glass Center, this discussion provided GAS attendees with updates on various developments in sustainable equipment and practices.

Following the last demos and lectures of the day, everyone headed over to Preston Bradley Hall at the Chicago Cultural Center for the Closing Night Party. Under the exquisite Tiffany domes and chandeliers, attendees ate, talked, danced, and drank the night away in the company of hundreds of other glass artists.

19th Annual Goblet Grab, International Student Exhibition and Sales, and GAS Silent and Live Auctions

Promptly at noon on Friday, March 21, the 19th Annual Goblet Grab was held. Goblets are lined up on a table and priced at \$50, \$100, \$150, and \$200. When the whistle blows, you gingerly "grab" your goblet from the table. This fast-paced spontaneous event raised money to allow students of at-risk youth programs from Chicago and around the country to attend the conference.

On March 21 and 22, the International Student Exhibition and Sales was held. The exhibition featured the work of 113 GAS members currently enrolled in full-time, accredited degree programs. Six companies donated more than \$3,710 in awards. The first place winner received a \$1,000 cash award from the Corning Museum of Glass, among other prizes.

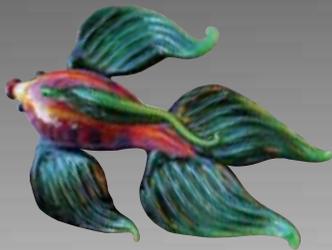
Sarah Vaughn, Rochester Institute of Technology, was awarded first place for *Lost in a Little World*; Ryland Gulbrandsen, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, was awarded second place for *Apis Collective*; and Meng Du, Rochester Institute of Technology, was awarded third place for *Imaginary Friends*. Honorable Mentions were awarded to Adam Cohen, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, for *Boat*; James Downey, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, for *The Condition*; John Jordan, University of Texas at Arlington, for *Caged Desire*; Namdoo Kim, Rochester Institute of Technology, for *Mommy will always be here for you, my baby*; James Labold, Ball State University, for *Capitol Restorations 1 & 2*; Lily Rawson, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, for *Worry Dog: Bitterness*; Shaheen Salehi, Sheridan College, for *Organic*; Madeline Rile Smith, Tyler School of Art, for *Arthropods*; and Gina Zetts, Rochester Institute of Technology, for *While He Sleeps*.

The GAS Auction has become one of the highlights of the annual conference. Donations and purchases help subsidize low student conference fees and keep all registration fees affordable. It also provides conference attendees with an opportunity to see the cutting-edge work created by presenters and members while letting collectors take home a piece of the conference. Both auctions were held Saturday, March 22, at the Palmer House Adams Ballroom. GAS thanks all who participated in the auctions.



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Dante Marioni, center, and Preston Singletary, far right.

Pre- and Post-Conference Events

The Pre-Conference Reception to support low conference registration fees for student members of GAS was held at Ignite Glass Studios on Wednesday, March 19, providing a unique opportunity to dine on a sampling of delights from some of Chicago's best culinary artists while watching world-renowned glass artists create. Attendees delighted in a glass-inspired, special GAS cocktail designed by Danielle Pizzutillo, beverage director, and hors d'oeuvres created by Chef Thai Dang, both of Embeya, recently named best new restaurant of the year by *Esquire* magazine. Dinner was created by Matthias Merges, chef extraordinaire and owner of Yusho, Billy Sunday's, and newly opened A10, inspired by the work of GAS Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, Dailey.

The Collectors Tour took place March 19 to 22 and included the Pre-Conference Reception complete with Chicago celebrity chefs Merges and Dang, plus a collectors' dinner with the GAS Board of Directors, hosted by Deb and John Gross, and a viewing of their spectacular collection in their Lincoln Park residence. Collectors also enjoyed a private tour of select showrooms in the famed Chicago Merchandise Mart; a private tour of *Louis Comfort Tiffany: Treasures from the Driehaus Collection*; and a special lunch at NAHA, a Michelin star restaurant, among many other events.

The Day of Glass, held on March 19, was free and open to the public. Conference attendees as well as the general public toured the city's most influential glass art studios as an exciting preview for the conference. Visitors who completed the tour by visiting all participating locations were eligible to win signature works from hosting studios. This event provided an opportunity to visit glass art making facilities in each of Chicago's distinct and vibrant neighborhoods.

GAS 2015

The 44th Glass Art Society Conference, "Interface: Glass, Art, and Technology," will be held in San Jose, California, June 5–7, 2015. GAS is excited to invite its membership to interface with the city's unique tech culture centered in the capitol of the Silicon Valley. A largely walkable area, San Jose will give conference attendees a pleasant and sunny commute between venues. In a slight shift from previous conferences, presentations will take place from Friday, June 5, through Sunday, June 7.

GAS invited proposals that explore the many ways in which glass and technology can foster connectivity and infuse one another with innovative possibilities. This conference strives to bring together the opposite ends of silicon, from soda lime glass to semiconductor electronics, and will require truly unique content, venues, and partners. **GA**

Visit www.glassart.org for more information on the Glass Art Society and its upcoming events or to becoming a member.

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