

GLASS ART

For the Creative Professional Working in Hot, Warm, and Cold Glass

January/February 2018



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Volume 33 Number 1



www.GlassArtMagazine.com

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GLASS ART

January/February 2018

Volume 33, Number 1



Above: Sunfish detail by Milon Townsend.

On the cover: Memory Keeper's Daughter detail by Jenny Pohlman and Sabrina Knowles.

Photo by Russell Johnson.

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Glass Art

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Publisher ~ Maureen James

Editor ~ Shawn Waggoner

Copy Editor ~ Darlene Welch

Accounting ~ Rhonda Sewell

Circulation Manager ~ Kathy Gentry

Advertising ~ Maureen James

Graphic Artists ~ Dave Burnett

Mark Waterbury

Contributing Artists and Writers

Denny Berkery, Colleen Bryan

Joseph Cavalieri, Pamela Figenshow Koss

Megan McElf, Pam Reekie

Karina San Juan, Steve Shupper

Staff of the Corning Museum of Glass

Milon Townsend, Jörg M. Unger

Mark Veit, Shawn Waggoner

Darlene Welch

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Letter from the Editor

Endless Possibilities

This January/February issue of *Glass Art* magazine includes a cornucopia of information on hot, warm, and cold glass. Our hot glass cover artists Jenny Pohlman and Sabrina Knowles believe that collectively humanity can affect change and create something more beautiful together than separately. This feeling of reverence and solidarity is the thread that connects all of their work in sculpted hot glass from their *Homage* series and their *Wheel of Liberation* to their latest portraits in glass.

Whether gallery work or public installations, Susan Hirsch's Fire Fusion Studio in Southern California produces warm glass art that reflects the endless possibilities of her material and techniques. The artist's signature line of fused and slumped glass sculpture features poetry, lyrics, or other messages embedded in multilayered patterns, textures, and finishes. She believes these words help viewers think differently and more deeply about the work than is possible when using color and form alone.

For Nancy Gong, her creative process in cold glass involves identifying an artistic problem and choosing a medium and approach to best advance its solution. The artist discusses the technologies she has found useful to date, key challenges and opportunities with respect to each, and the way she evaluates emerging technologies in an ever changing artistic environment. Artist Joseph Cavalieri also demonstrates the benefits of digital designs including importing and combining found images and drawings, updating the colors in your work, and transferring the image to a silk screen for printing on glass.

Technology introduces endless possibilities to the way we make art, but also to the way we access information and learn new skills. Though polling suggests that most readers continue to prefer the print version of *Glass Art* magazine, subscriptions are also available digitally. Learning online is one of the most popular means of acquiring new skills, which is why *Glass Art* also offers its Glass Expert Webinars™. Visit our website to see the complete list of exciting online workshops for growing your glass skills without ever leaving home.

As 2018 begins, our nearly 11,000 Instagram followers and 4,000 Facebook followers prove that technology now plays a vital role in the advancement of the glass arts. Our *Talking Out Your Glass* podcasts have attracted more than 34,000 downloads in the first two seasons. Subscribe on iTunes or Stitcher to hear fascinating interviews with glass artists worldwide by visiting the "Talking Out Your Glass Podcast" link under "What's New" at www.glassartmagazine.com.

Supporting glass art through technology,



Shawn Waggoner



Victorian Lady and Child
by Susan Hirsch.

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May/June 2018

Ad Closing	March 20, 2018
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Jenny Pohlman and Sabrina Knowles

Reflecting Our Common Humanity

by Shawn Waggoner

Photography by Russell Johnson

While their sculptural forms and assemblages evoke the sensuous curves of the feminine, Jenny Pohlman and Sabrina Knowles provide a narrative that embraces our common humanity. Drawing on inspiration from day-to-day life, travel, or studies of ancient and contemporary cultures, Pohlman and Knowles have blazed a trail as women working in hot glass through their successful and cutting-edge artwork.

"From our earliest collaborative efforts, we have explored the feminine fluidity, curvature, strength, and plasticity inherent in glass. The innate three-dimensionality of molten glass assists with our design visions, and we often see new forms emerging from the forms we are working on in the hot shop. These glimpses into the next possibility fuel our enthusiasm and the direction of our designs."

The Pohlman Knowles collaboration spans two decades. As seekers, they have undertaken multiple international two-month journeys to developing nations absorbing religious beliefs, political histories, current affairs, architecture, social structure, and people's personal stories. After a lengthy incubation, Pohlman and Knowles morph their experiences into sculptural stories to share what they have learned about healing, self-empowerment, and the power of the human spirit.

Pohlman and Knowles have been honored with numerous awards including Pratt Fine Arts Center's Service in the Arts Award in 2011 and Service in Education Award in 2000. The artists received a Saxe Fellowship award from the Bay Area Glass Institute, San Jose, in 2009; a 2015 residency at Pilchuck Glass School; and residencies at Museum of Glass, Tacoma, 2014, 2007, and 2003; as well as Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center in 2004 and 1999. Their work can be found in the collections of the Museum of American Glass, Weston, West Virginia; the Museum of Glass and the Tacoma Art Museum, Tacoma, Washington; the National Liberty Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and the Racine Art Museum, Racine, Wisconsin, among many others.

In 2000 Pohlman and Knowles established the Pohlman Knowles High School Scholarship at Pratt Fine Arts Center, where they continue to sponsor the scholarship annually. Pohlman is in her second term on the board of Pratt and currently serving as a president. Pohlman and Knowles also served as trustees for the Bellevue Arts Museum from 2009 to 2012. Both artists continue to support these and many other organizations annually through auction contributions.

Pohlman and Knowles, Red Bird in Willow, off-hand blown, sculpted, and sandblasted glass, artificial sinew, beads, 35" x 13", 2008.



Pohlman and Knowles, Medicine Belt, off-hand blown, sculpted, and sandblasted glass, metals, beads, 26" x 32" x 7", 2004.

From Solo to Duo

It was an auction contribution that set Pohlman and Knowles on their path to collaboration. Originally from Seattle, Washington, with its vibrant glass scene, Knowles worked as a volunteer at Pratt Fine Arts Center until 1985 when she received a call from Alice Rooney, then director of Pilchuck Glass School, Stanwood, Washington, who offered her a summer job in the office.

Knowles recalls: "At Pilchuck there was a group of women on staff, independent and powerful, who came from a belief system that we were good enough and could do anything we wanted to. It's not that we didn't encounter sexism, but we were insistent on our success."

On scholarship, Knowles attended a Pilchuck class on Venetian glassblowing taught by Lino Tagliapietra and Dante Marioni. She fell in love with the material, however, during a subsequent scholarship course with Italian master Pino Signoretto, discovering that glass sculpting best served her aesthetic direction.

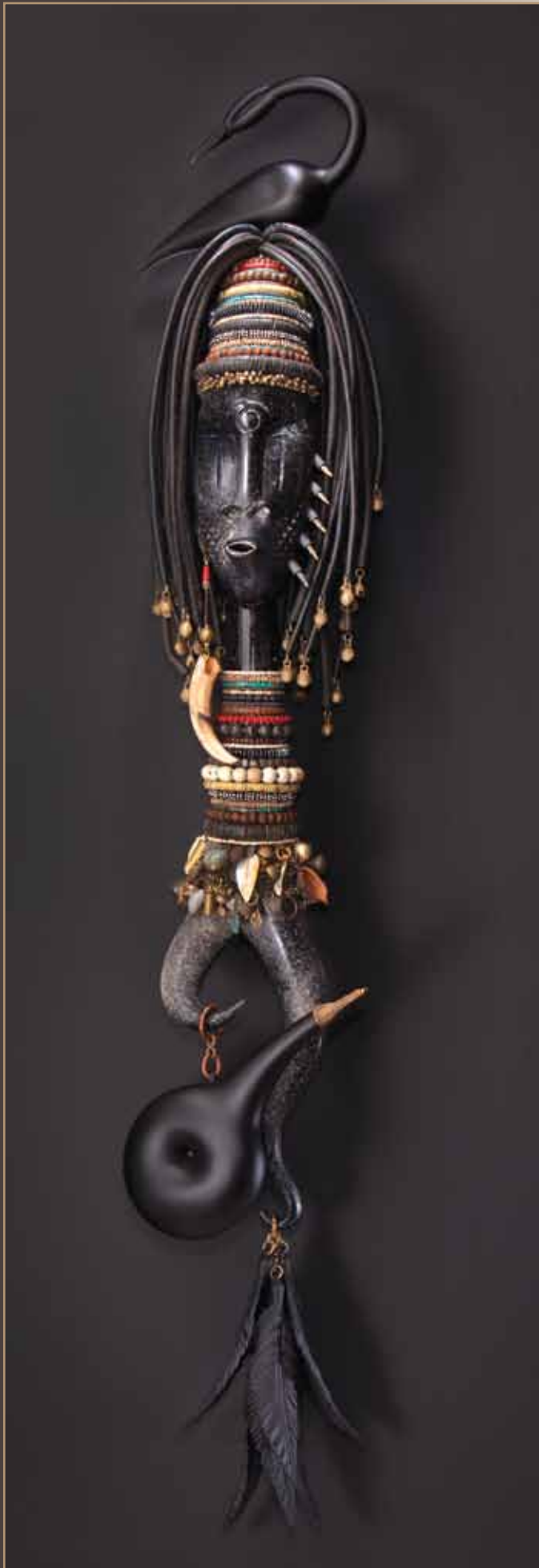
At age 28, Pohlman worked in the corporate sector but changed her professional direction when cousin and glass artist Karen Wilenbrink-Johnsen introduced her to glass. Pohlman began working at Pilchuck, experimenting with hot glass and meeting Knowles in the process.

Working with artist Hank Murta Adams, Pohlman learned to trust her intuition, problem solve on location, and work with assemblage. Adams, a student of Dale Chihuly at the Rhode Island School of

Design, built a cast concrete oval building, the Trojan Horse, on Pilchuck's campus. Pohlman assisted in the creation of this revered landmark, studded with cast glass inclusions and windows.

Pohlman and Knowles worked on staff at Pilchuck from 1985 to 1999, and during this time established a studio together. After sharing a studio for a year and a half, Pohlman and Knowles found that they were each being influenced consciously and unconsciously by the other's work. Knowles began putting copper powder and patina on glass, creating a lush turquoise crust. Pohlman polished wood to a glassy finish. Eventually the artists abandoned the extremes of their aesthetics and found a middle ground. They began to allow glass to still feel like glass, but without its hard sheen. Aesthetics and skill sets slowly fused together.

In 1993 the artists were asked to donate a piece to Pratt Fine Art Center and decided to try a collaborative work featuring Knowles' long figurative *Homage* figures sculpted in glass and installed in a wooden base carved by Pohlman. Pohlman and Knowles enjoyed the collaboration and resulting work so much that they left their solo careers behind and began to work exclusively as a team. "I did not imagine life as an artist at that time, much less collaborating with someone as talented and visionary as Sabrina," says Pohlman.



The Venus of Willendorf Blesses This Union

Every Pohlman and Knowles piece begins with one artist having an idea and the other responding to it. In the early 1990s, Pohlman began to make oversized glass beads in the Italian tradition of mandrel wrapping. She brought that technique into the hot shop, creating glass beads the size of cue balls on punty rods with the initial intent of making architectural adornment. At the same time, Knowles was working with archival female forms, specifically her adaptation of the *Venus of Willendorf*, a Venus figurine estimated to have been made between 28,000 and 25,000 BC.

Pohlman hung a few strands of beads on the wall just above Knowles' Willendorf sculpture. "Before we knew it, we had assembled what some thought was a giant necklace, three strands of beads anchored by the *Venus of Willendorf*. In our mythology they were prayer beads. We considered the culture 25,000 years ago that could support a stone carver to carve female deity forms," says Pohlman.

Independent Cultural Studies, Rich Fodder for Art Making

Initially Pohlman and Knowles made art with the goal of being able to pay rent and bills every month. That soon transitioned into a goal of securing their first solo exhibition, which they did in 1997 at Ochi Fine Art, Sun Valley, Idaho.

The show was still on view when Pohlman and Knowles took their inaugural backpacking trip to Zimbabwe, Africa. Curious by nature, both artists credit a healthy skepticism with fueling their desire to get out and see for themselves. "It was about having a firsthand experience in a life that was not ours and to seek the truth about what was happening on the planet and with indigenous cultures around the world. Our goal became to express those stories through our work," says Knowles.

Their independent cultural studies have resulted in visual souvenirs of many countries. After their journey to Zimbabwe, Pohlman and Knowles introduced their *Liberation* series honoring the memory of Nehanda, a reincarnate spiritual leader among the Shona people. "The Shona culture is agricultural, not spear wielding. But we chose to make a set of five spears titled *Nehanda's Uprising* to salute her leadership and strength during combat with British forces in the late 1800s," says Pohlman.

Sometimes their independent cultural study process works in reverse. Before going to Zimbabwe, the artists were making large pots with big open necks. "The first thing we saw at the Harare airport was a giant clay pot, very similar to the one we had made. Immediately we felt a connectedness to this culture. Ideas come to us, but also as we travel we begin to find meaning in what we're already making," says Pohlman.

Their world-culture aesthetic, though widely popular now, was trend-setting in the 1990s. Upon their return from Zimbabwe, Pohlman and Knowles created visual stories of memories and experiences inspired by the two-month excursion. The *African Daydreams Through a Seattle Winter* exhibition opened in May 1998 in the Pratt Fine Arts Center gallery at the Center On Contemporary Art, Seattle. This launched the series of work they would focus on for the next 20 years.

Pohlman and Knowles, The Omniscient, off-hand blown and sculpted glass with scavo finish, ferrous and nonferrous metals, beads, antique West African findings, found objects, 63" x 13" x 8", 2009.

Carved Heads, Tapestries, and Glass Portraiture

During traditional dances in Zambia, masked dancers become spirit entities imparting moral stories and histories. Through these ceremonies Pohlman and Knowles began to realize that the mask served as a vehicle or spirit entity to impart wisdom to its people, inspiring the artists' desire to carve glass heads. There were no manuals, however, for the instruction of pulling facial features from a bubble of molten glass. In 1999 at a three-month residency at Wheaton Village, Pohlman and Knowles tried making the sculpted heads for the first time. Though their early work was garish, Pohlman was excited by the possibilities. To increase scale she began to incorporate a bubble in the hot glass.

Once the work was perfected, Pohlman and Knowles knew they had to find a way to mount it on the wall. Each head was custom sculpted, so no standard brace or bracket would suffice. After consulting with metalsmiths, Pohlman designed a tension-set custom mount with a retractable arm, which they've been using since 1992. Not only did this solve the problem at hand—how to display the carved glass heads—but wall mounting opened up a whole new venue for storytelling. It wasn't an easy sell early on, however. Some galleries were taken aback. "They tried to persuade us not to wall-mount the work, but they also tried to convince us to not work together," says Knowles.

One of the artists' most successful and subsequent series, *Tapestry*, makes use of wall mounting for the display of multiple objects and the telling of a complex story. Inspired by a visit to a Zimbabwe bush doctor's market in 1997, the *Tapestry* series provides the artists with both the intensity of making objects in the hot shop and the contemplative, restorative time for assemblage.



Pohlman and Knowles, Red Warrior Dancing.

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Artwork by Kent Lauer



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Pohlman and Knowles, I Saw . . . original image, kiln fired, blown, mirrored, sand-carved, and sandblasted glass, screen-printed enamels, steel with patina, 27" x 18-1/2" x 4-1/2", 2017.



Pohlman and Knowles, Child Namibia original image, screen-printed enamels, kiln fired, blown, sculpted, sandblasted, found and mirrored glass, metals, patina, 31" x 24" x 7", 2016.

Pohlman and Knowles exhibited their recent work at Schack Art Center in Everett, Washington, last year in a show titled *Lodestar*. Defined as a principle, interest, or person serving as an inspiration or guide, *Lodestar* featured an installation of signature compositions and works from the artists' latest series integrating photographic images in blown glass. This process was inspired by the strength, grace, and beauty of the Himba women, whom the artists briefly met in Northern Namibia in 2008.

Knowles displayed her portraits of the Himba women in the studio for a year, inspiring her to find a way of capturing their beauty in blown glass. Once both Pohlman and Knowles began working toward that common goal, in 2013 they discovered and perfected the necessary techniques. The first exhibition of the new work was held in October 2016 at Duane Reed Gallery, St. Louis, Missouri.

Intuitively, Pohlman and Knowles knew how to approach the work in the hot shop. "The biggest challenge was to keep the image from distorting during the blowing process. These are the most time-consuming pieces we've ever made," says Knowles. Pohlman designs and creates metalwork that accompanies the glass images, loosely influenced by Victorian and Georgian jewelry designs absorbed during travels in Central Europe in 2015.



Pohlman and Knowles, Memory's Ghost original image, kiln fired, blown, sculpted, and sandblasted glass, screen-printed enamels, metals, patina, beads, 43" x 21" x 6", 2016.



Pohlman and Knowles, Wings of Change, off-hand blown, sculpted, and sandblasted glass, ferrous and nonferrous metals, beads, antique West African findings, 72" x 96" x 9", 2010.

Magnitude of the Multitude

Pohlman and Knowles believe that collectively humanity can affect change and create something more beautiful together than separately. This feeling of reverence and solidarity is the thread that connects all of their work, from the *Homage* series and their *Wheel of Liberation* to portraits in glass.

A work from their *Tapestry* series is on view at Bellevue Arts Museum, Bellevue, Washington, in *Making our Mark: Art by Pratt Teaching Artists*, which began on November 9, 2017, and will run through April 9, 2018. In July 2018, The Bainbridge Island Museum of Art, Washington, will present *Journey: 25 Years of Collaboration—A Mid-Career Survey of Works by Sabrina Knowles & Jenny Pohlman*.

In a cynical time, the work of Pohlman and Knowles is the visual equivalent to the Beatles' "All You Need is Love," infusing the viewer with hope and renewed vows of kindness toward humanity. "We have met the most beautiful, generous, kind, truthful, innocent human beings in our travels. Despite the hardships people have endured worldwide, we have been graced with smiles and compassion unparalleled," says Pohlman. "We chase that. Our culture has become so crass and callous and mindless. To be traveling in a remote place touched by extreme poverty and have someone offer you something to eat changes you. And that makes us want to wake up every day."

GA

Visit www.pohlmanknowles.com to learn more about the artists and their work and sign on to their blog for up-to-date postings on shows and advancements in their work.

Pohlman and Knowles were recently guests on Glass Art magazine's Talking Out Your Glass podcast. Subscribe on iTunes or Stitcher to hear this and many more fascinating interviews with glass artists by visiting the "Talking Out Your Glass Podcast" link under "What's New" at www.glassartmagazine.com.

**Jenny Pohlman
Sabrina Knowles
Pohlman Knowles Studio**
3824 SW Morgan Street
Seattle, Washington 98126
(206) 933-7450
info@pohlmanknowles.com
www.pohlmanknowles.com



Pohlman and Knowles, *Transparent*, off-hand blown, sculpted, and polished glass, steel with patina, 31" x 28" x 8", 2017.



Pohlman and Knowles, *Wheel of Liberation*, off-hand blown, sculpted, and sandblasted glass, ferrous and nonferrous metals, beads, 100" x 100" x 4", 2011.

The National Endowment for the Arts Sharing Grants for Arts Projects Nationwide



Boyd Sugiki.

by Karina San Juan

Jane Chu, chairman of the The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), has approved more than \$82 million to fund local arts projects across the United States. This will be the NEA's second major funding announcement for fiscal year 2017.

The NEA received 1,728 Art Works applications and will make 1,029 grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$100,000. "The arts reflect the vision, energy, and talent of America's artists and arts organizations," said Chu. "The National Endowment for the Arts is proud to support organizations in serving their communities by helping them to provide excellent and accessible arts experiences."

A Lasting Tribute

Included in the funding is an Art Works award of \$15,000 to Pratt Fine Arts Center, Seattle, Washington, to support the center's Master Artist and Artist in Residence programs. Founded in 1976 to provide high-quality visual arts education, Pratt serves as a lasting tribute to Edwin T. Pratt, who relentlessly championed open and equal access to educational and housing opportunities for all Seattle residents. Pratt honors his memory by making art education accessible to people of all ages, backgrounds, and skill levels.



Robert Mickelsen.

The only facility in the Northwest where absolute beginners work side by side with established professional artists, Pratt Fine Arts Center provides an opportunity for artists to create art in glass, sculpture, jewelry and metalsmithing, painting, drawing, and printmaking. The Center provides affordable studios with unparalleled state-of-the-art equipment and professional artist instruction to create an environment where students can learn, experiment, and create.

An Enriching, Dynamic Exchange

“The generous support from the NEA allows Pratt Fine Arts Center to bring renowned master artists to our campus so they may share their unique perspectives from all around the world,” said Executive Director Steve Galatro. “Pratt’s Master Artist and Artist in Residence programs promote an enriching, dynamic exchange between distinguished working artists and our creative community.” Glass Master Artists who participated in this past year’s NEA grant included Kait Roads, Katrina Hude, Leslie Speicher, Lisa Zerkowitz, Robert Mickelsen, and Boyd Sugiki.

This award makes it possible for Pratt to invite six nationally and internationally renowned artists to teach workshops in jewelry and metalsmithing, glass, sculpture, wood, painting, or printmaking. Each participant will also present a free public lecture. One additional artist will be selected for a monthlong artist residency and in-studio exhibition in printmaking. **GA**

To join the Twitter conversation about this announcement, please use #NEASpring17. For more information on projects included in the NEA grant announcement, go to www.arts.gov.



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The New Corning Museum of Glass David Whitehouse Artist Residency for Research

by The Staff of
The Corning Museum of Glass

A new research residency program for artists that will allow them to utilize the Museum's resources has been announced by The Corning Museum of Glass (CMoG). To inform their practice, access to the permanent collections and the holdings of the Rakow Research Library are included in the program.

The Museum is home to the world's most important collection of glass, including the finest examples of glassmaking spanning 3,500 years. Live glassblowing demonstrations, which are offered at the Museum, on the road, and at sea on Celebrity Cruises, bring the material to life. The campus in Corning, New York, includes a year-round glassmaking school, The Studio, and the Rakow Research Library, the world's preeminent collection of materials on the art and history of glass.

A New Kind of Glass Art Residency

Named for CMoG's former executive director, the David Whitehouse Artist Residency for Research will enable artists to be in residence to explore materials at the Rakow Library, the world's foremost collection of materials covering the art and history of glass and glassmaking, and to use the other extraordinary scholarly resources available at Corning. The focus for this new residency will be on exploration, whereas CMoG's two other residencies are geared toward artists creating new work. The knowledgeable staff serve in all parts of the organization and will be available to help the artist-residents make the most of these excellent resources.

"This residency is the first of its kind at The Corning Museum of Glass," said Amy Schwartz, director of The Studio, CMoG's internationally renowned glassmaking facility. "It was inspired by the number of artists who have told us that they want to spend time at the Museum just looking, thinking, and taking advantage of all things glass that we offer."

Participating artists will have the chance to step out of their studios and spend some time studying topics they feel will further their knowledge of glass. One resident will be selected for the first year and will be in residence for up to three weeks in 2018. While in Corning, the resident artist will be asked to give a presentation about his or her work and research.



Looking at old plans.



David Whitehouse

Additional Residencies and Grants

There are two additional residencies available at CMoG. The Studio collaborates with the Kohler Arts Center to offer a joint residency for artists interested in working with glass, iron, brass, or clay. The Specialty Glass Residency, a partnership with Corning Incorporated established in 2014, allows artists to experiment with specialty glass materials in the creation of new work.

The Museum also offers the Rakow Grant for Glass Research, which is awarded to one or more scholars annually and fosters scholarly research in the history of glass and glassmaking from antiquity until the mid 20th century. These awards have been granted to scholars working in archaeology and anthropology, art history, and conservation, as well as science and technology.

"This new residency will essentially serve as a Rakow Grant for glass artists," said Karol Wight, president and executive director of CMoG. "David Whitehouse was a highly regarded scholar and worked to build the incredible resources of the Rakow Library, but he was also a major supporter of artists working in glass today. The idea of bringing artists to CMoG to use the Rakow Library is exciting. We hope it will nurture their curiosity and inspire new lines of inquiry in their work."

The idea for this residency was inspired by the Rakow Library's new exhibition, *Curious and Curiouser: Surprising Finds from the Rakow Library*, which focuses on the ways in which artists and scholars have been inspired by their surprising finds in the Library's collection. The exhibition is on view through February 17, 2019.

GA

Visit www.cmog.org to learn more about these programs and all of the other exceptional offerings from The Corning Museum of Glass.

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Il Percorso di Vetro—The Glass Path

by Pamela Figenshow Koss

The Glass Art Society (GAS) is making an epic journey following a path to a glass center like no other. Murano, Italy, will be the host city for the organization's next annual conference to be held May 16–19, 2018.

Exploring Murano

The island of Murano will host the 47th annual Glass Art Society conference, *The Glass Path*. The conference will lead attendees through the winding path of the island's remarkable history while exploring the future of glass and discovering the hidden routes connecting the conference venues.

A selection of Murano's glass factories and studios will provide the Glass Art Society with the incredible opportunity to use these facilities as venues for the conference. Attendees will also partake in highly anticipated GAS conference programs including glass demonstrations and lectures on inspiring glass topics, and also enjoy special programming unique to Murano while surrounded by the beauty of the region of Venice.

It is believed that glassmaking in Murano originated in 8th-century Rome, with significant Asian and Muslim influences, as Venice was a major trading port. Murano has been a commercial port since as far back as the 7th century A.D.

A Vision for the Glass Path

All conference activities will take place on Murano, with attendees staying on Murano and in Venice. GAS will provide periodic vaporetto shuttles back and forth from the Fondamente Nuova stop in the Canneggio District of Venice to the Faro stop in Murano. The trip is about 15 minutes across the lagoon.

The heart of the conference will be the historic and lovely Santa Pietro Church and grounds. This location will offer the main hot glass stage demonstrations, lectures, a film theater, and conference registration. Attendees can gather there to get a bite and visit until the late evening hours.

GAS is fortunate and profoundly grateful to be welcomed to Murano by our Italian host committee, led by President Lino Tagliapietra, Cesare Toffolo, Lucio Bubacco, Davide Salvatore, Adriano Berengo, the Consorzio Promovetro Murano, and Marina Tagliapietra. The 2018 GAS Conference is sponsored in part by Fondazione Berengo, Corning Incorporated, AACG, and the artists of the Italian Steering Committee.



Lectures, Demos, Exhibitions, and More

The first day of the conference will offer free demos at the main stage exploring a variety of talents in glass as well as tours (at an additional fee). Each discipline will have its own path winding throughout the island to various studios. Disciplines include hot glass, flameworking, engraving, and history.

Hot glass demos will be held in some of Murano's most illustrious glass factories including Venini, Nason & Moretti, and Effetre, each offering its own flavor and history. Attendees will also have an opportunity to witness hot glass demos by the independent artist studios of Dino Rosin, Berengo Studio, and Simone Cenedese.

Flameworking fans will be delighted with many performances, since we are creating two venues. One is in Fabbrica, a repurposed glass factory, and the other in the Palestra school, where multiple presentations will ensue. The Abate Zanetti School will host lectures and the International Student Exhibition.

The Berengo Studio will be presenting lectures and exhibitions of glass. Lectures at the Palazzo da Mula and tours at the Museo del Vetro, both of which are located in remarkable palazzos, will allow attendees to experience the historical connection of these sites to glass on the island.

A Dazzling Finish to a Fabulous Weekend

On the last evening of the conference, a special Glass Fashion Show (GFS) led by Laura Donefer, the Diva of GFS, will showcase costumes fashioned from glass. The costumes will be modeled by 25 artists sailing in 11 boats down a Murano canal to delight conference goers and the evening crowd. There will be a number of Venetian and Muranese glass artists creating some amazing costumes.

Throughout the four days of the conference, attendees will have the freedom to explore the paths of glassmakers from Murano's celebrated history. Please understand that the island and venues are intimate. With a myriad of conference offerings, it won't be possible to see everything, but we are confident that you will have the experience of a lifetime.

Notes for Attendees

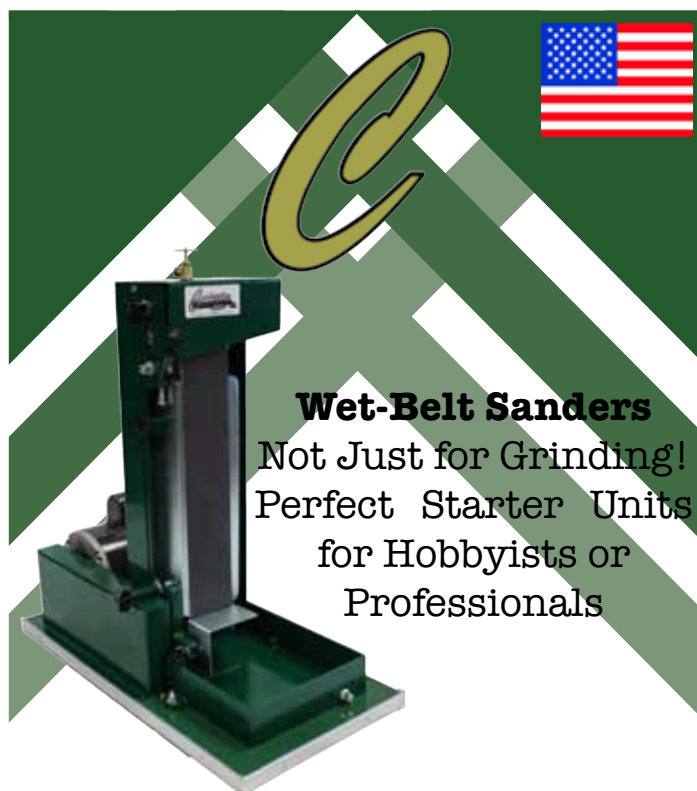
Please note that you must be a current GAS member to register for and attend the conference. Be sure to register early to reserve your spot, since spaces are limited. Register by March 2, 2018, for the lowest conference fees.

A Note about ADA Compliance: Due to the historic nature and age of the buildings in Murano, very few venues for the 2018 Glass Art Society conference are ADA compliant. We are sorry that we cannot accommodate handicapped accessibility and apologize for any inconvenience.

GAS members interested in reducing their conference fees are also encouraged to apply for the work exchange program. GAS student members are invited to apply for scholarships to alleviate some of the expense of attending the conference. **GA**

Visit www.glassart.org for more information on the upcoming Glass Art Society conference and other events as well as becoming a GAS member.

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Creativity

—AN INTRODUCTION

by Milon Townsend

Creativity is like light. Light cannot itself be seen. It makes all things visible, but is itself invisible. We can see the way that sunlight reflects from the surface of the moon, making the moon a bright orb in a darkened sky. Sunlight does not illuminate a vacuum, where there is nothing for it to reflect upon. It is a paradox, an oxymoron that makes sense.

Creativity is like love. Love is not a self-existent entity or substantive quality. Love can only exist within the context of a relationship. Love can act, can only be observed, when two or more beings engage in some kind of give-and-take activity. In order to exist as a noun—something that we can point to, take note of, respond to—love must first exist as a verb.

Creativity is like happiness. It is a self-generated, peripherally derivative fruit of the happy intercourse between a person and desire. Happiness is best approached as a flanking movement, a sidestep around, a side effect of other-centered activity.

Creativity, like hot glass, needs to be persuaded. We need simply to identify and set up the right conditions within which to suggest and cajole it to act in a way that will serve our ends. As Steven Sondheim says over and over again in his musical *Into The Woods*, “Children are always listening, though they may not obey.”

Creativity may be observed only within the context of a human being facing limitations, solving a problem, skewered squarely on the horns of a dilemma. Creativity is nothing if not a highly personal set of preferences. I promise that you will not like some of these ideas or approaches, but if all I do is irritate you to the point of a better understanding of what you *do* prefer, then I will not have wasted my time.



Milon Townsend, (left) *Inner Space*, reverse relief kiln cast glass, LED illuminated, 28" x 10" x 6", 2010;
(top right) *Doing Time from the Body Language series*,
flameworked and coldworked, 10" x 6" x 5", 1998;
(bottom right) *Islands from the Body Language series*,
flameworked and kiln cast, 10" x 10" x 8", 2012.

The Creativity Dilemma

In the introduction to his book on design, Louis Wolchonik says, "Pay special attention to the things that *do not* interest you." This is probably the most important thing that I learned from the entire book.

There is a creativity dilemma. Creativity is a restless seeking to discover, to explore, to solve, to uncover the new. What happens when we find something good? What if we find it right away? What if we find or create something that is very well received? It is very tempting to glom on to that good thing and make it our sum and substance, to make what we do the identity of who we are.

Our external economic circumstances typically require of us a dependable output that will generate a dependable income, and yet . . . what are we leaving undiscovered because of just that lack of forward movement on our part? What would we have created if we had kept going instead of stopping at the good, the acceptable, the successful? What is the cost of continuing beyond to the uncomfortable, the risky, the commercially unviable?

We must beware of ignorant praise as much as uninformed criticism. If we do the same thing over and over—something successful that people happen to desire to experience or share in or own—that benefits us all. New people for years tell us how new and creative we are, and we know full well that this is not at all the case. What is the point at which we'll be willing to walk away from that all-too-familiar ground and look for something that will excite, stimulate, and energize us anew?



I do not "think up" my best ideas . . .
I become aware of them as they come to me.
Some are bold as brass,
And intimidate me with what they require of me,
While others are shy,
And tiptoe around the
Periphery of my subconsciousness.
These, like happiness,
May not be approached directly,
But must be tickled, teased, and enticed into view,
Into full sight,
Until I can capture them
With a stroke of my pen.

We seek the wild idea,
The untamed imagination,
Fertile, untrampled, virgin ground,
Streaming richly in the slanting rays of the morning light
As it releases its heated energy into the chill air
When we awaken.

We want to believe that creativity, like alchemy,
Can turn the leaden weight of our difficulties
Into the gleaming bright lightness of beaten gold,
Heaviest of metals
Yet thin enough to waft away on the lightest breath.

or ideas. I cannot take credit for them, but for the fact that I write them down and act upon them. For that I take full credit.

Perhaps there is a relationship between inspiration and creativity. Perhaps, by posing a question, we invite inspiration to illustrate, inform, and infuse us with an answer or image or idea. Perhaps by thinking, wondering, challenging, struggling, we tear loose a corner of the fabric separating our consciousness from some larger pool of awareness, of ideation, of conceptualization. Perhaps by tussling with ideas and problems, our minds continue to try on different approaches on some deeper, unseen level and kick up to us the solutions that seem to work.

Perhaps it is up to us to be still enough on the boiling, roisterous surface of our existence to hear "that still small voice." I'm interested in results. As a great teacher of mine once said, "There is no freedom without actual results."

GA

The Relationship between Inspiration and Creativity

I'd like to separate "creativity, the restless searching of the soul" from "creativity, the ability of the human being to come up with new ways of solving vexing problems." The first is a personality type, and I'm not going to be able to do anything about that. It's hard enough to change myself. I'm not about to start on anyone else. Creativity as a set of tools that any and all of us can access, however, is a completely reasonable proposition that we can spend some worthwhile time exploring.

Creativity has been historically difficult to pin down. What of the role of inspiration? Inspiration means "to be filled with the spirit of." Is this creativity? I think not. In my own experience, inspiration comes unbidden, provides complete images, answers,

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Milon Townsend

Pioneering Flameworking, Casting, and Education

by Shawn Waggoner

Through the course of over 45 years, Milon Townsend has produced a vast body of work, from perfumes and paperweights to one-of-a-kind sculpture. Whether his current flameworked decanters or a narrative piece from his *Body Language* series, Townsend's objects pay homage to form, balance, and harmony.

A tireless educator, Townsend's contribution to teaching is as noteworthy as his mastery of material. He has authored numerous books and hundreds of articles on the topics of the glass process, creative thought, and career development. The artist has also produced a series of videos demonstrating the techniques he developed, making them available to other artists.

A former board member of The Arts Business Institute, a non-profit organization that assists artists in acquiring the skills to succeed in their careers, Townsend has spoken and taught at seminars and workshops worldwide on glass technique, marketing for artists, and living a fulfilling life. He has taught at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) School of American Crafts, Rochester, New York; Urban Glass, Brooklyn, New York; and at The Studio of the Corning Museum of Glass (CMoG), Corning, New York.

Townsend's flameworked and cast glass sculpture can be found in the collections of the National Liberty Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and CMoG. He has also created works for clients including President George H.W. Bush, Arnold Palmer, and Cyrus Vance.

Early History

In 1973, before annealers, colored glass, or instructional materials on flameworking, teenaged Townsend transformed his bedroom into a makeshift studio and began working glass in a Bernzomatic torch. His first body of work was made from a shoebox full of rejected glass thermometers.

While still young, Townsend was flameworking glass at a mall when he met Bill Burke. Impressed with the budding artist, Burke set Townsend up with a National 3A torch, a bottle of oxygen, and a bottle of propane. Townsend began woodshedding to learn ways to infuse his glasswork with motion, action, and intriguing lines.

His father a music teacher, Townsend trained in classical tuba, flute, and voice. "I learned how to practice, and that has been useful to me my whole life. If you invest enough time in something, you can become excellent at it. With music, a composer assembles a series of notes or melodies that interweave and harmonize with each other. As an artist working with glass, I do the same thing visually."

Unlike most torchworking glass artists today, Townsend made sculptural objects first, then moved on to functional work. Up until recently, he was much more interested in solid objects than hollow. Early functional objects were based on a hollow component with solid embellishments.



Milon Townsend, *Spiral #2*, flameworked and cold worked, 30" x 12" x 12", 2003.

Dance, Body Language, and Deco Series

Townsend sold his glass art at craft fairs and art shows until 1980, when he opened a series of stores in New York City (NYC). Eventually the artist managed two Manhattan locations, requiring a full-time crew of 26 people in his retail/wholesale operation.

Twelve years in NYC exposed Townsend to the world of dance, which quickly found its way into his sculptural aesthetic. "Dancers from the Joffrey Ballet School frequented my first location. These ballerinas were brutal in their critique of my work, which was both painful and useful. It inspired me to make work they would approve as anatomically and kinesthetically correct."

Townsend developed his *Dance* series in the early 1980s. Though the figures weren't very detailed, they spoke well of movement. By the time his *Body Language* series was introduced in 2005, the artist's figures were much more realistic. By studying the images of photographer Howard Schatz and observing dancers firsthand, Townsend deepened his knowledge of and ability to emulate anatomy in flameworked glass, including detailed muscle groups. These evolved figures built on his earlier studies of motion, proportion, and line.

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"My *Body Language* series evolved in the context of working seven days a week, 52 weeks a year, 8 to 14 hours a day. That time invested gives you a profound technical ability, so that when you actually have a good idea, you can execute it without spending a lot of time thinking about how to do it."

Two developments helped define Townsend's *Body Language* series as groundbreaking. One, his new anatomically refined figures now existed within the context of cast glass archways, doors, windows, and stairs that were cut with a water jet and cold worked. These vignettes represented portals through which humanity moves from one state to another, representing change, development, growth, and giving the work content.

"I was interested in human relationships and development, and used the figures in my pieces to look at how we grow, change, influence, and are influenced by our environment. I used both positive and negative forms within the glass sculptures that I made. The glass itself appeared either solid or insubstantial."

The second important development brought about by *Body Language* was proof that Townsend was capable of making one-of-a-kind sculpture. "I was reticent—unsure if I'd have enough original ideas. Making the decision that these would be one-of-a-kind pieces flipped a switch in my subconscious, and I began looking at the world differently. I soon had more ideas than I had time to make."

Townsend's *Deco* series followed, described by the artist as "beautiful, but not profound. If you have enough beauty, that alone can be profound." He also created work for Tiffany's five famous display windows on Fifth Avenue in NYC. Townsend's glass homage to Botticelli's *Prima Vera* included figures 12.5 inches tall, complete with robes, flowers, and all of the painting's detail. "I would come into town at night after working all day and listen to the people looking into the windows. It was interesting to me, because I learned people aren't necessarily thinking what I was thinking when I made the work. It freed me to allow my audience to come up with their own ideas and conclusions about my art."

In 1992, Townsend moved from NYC to his hometown of Rochester in upstate New York and cut back to a smaller team of only 10 associate artists. "We were actually doing much better, much smaller."



(Counterclockwise from top) Milon Townsend, Deco Study #16 in Blue Moon, *flameworked figure with dichroic wrap*, 18" x 12" x 6", 1997; *Ascension*, *flameworked and cold worked*, 14" x " x 6", 1995; *Temple Duties #2*, *flameworked and cold worked*, 20" x 10" x 8", 1996.

Casting

From 2005 to 2015, Townsend put flameworking on the back burner and began kiln casting, which led to large-scale, architectural commissions. For the first time the artist had access to scale, allowing him to produce commissions that included an 8-foot-tall by 12-foot-wide wall that weighed 2,200 pounds.

Over a four-year period, Eric Lovell of Uroboros Glass provided Townsend with literally tons of material for his experimentations with casting. Townsend wrote a series of articles on what he was learning. "My wife said, 'Most people write what they already know. But you develop a new technique in order to write.' For me, writing articles and books was and is a very powerful motivator.

"Casting is not about making a mold and producing the same piece over and over again. It's exactly the opposite. I was free to do different iterations based on the same idea or image, much like a musician writes variations on a theme or series in the same key."

Some of Townsend's most successful cast works included reverse relief pieces. He flame-worked a figure on the torch, produced a silicone mold of that, poured casting refractory investment in that mold instead of wax, then cast the glass around the investment figure. Once the glass cooled, the investment was removed, creating a figurative negative space in the solid mass of glass. Townsend used LED lights to sidelight some of these sculptures. "I like pieces that have an inner veil swirling around the figure that is internally illuminated."

For another large cast commission, Townsend was able to use glass from an unsuccessful project. Artifacts cast in the original glass took on an interesting quality when recast, creating flowing veils in a 7-foot-tall by 8-inch-wide glass with illuminated koi as reverse relief figural objects. "It looked as though the koi were swimming through flowing water."

Currently pulling back from casting, Townsend is refocusing on flameworking and has released a decade of pent up energy, leading to rapid growth and development as seen in his current *Decanter* series.



(Left to right) Milon Townsend, *Bridge*, lost wax kiln casting, 18 panels in powder coated steel frame", 8' x 12' x 1", 2016; *Koi Column*, kiln cast reverse relief with internal LED illumination, 72" x 16" x 16", 2015.



The Art of Teaching

A descendant of a long line of teachers, Townsend has teaching in his blood. “To me, publishing something, getting it out there to the people—that’s the completion of a thing. Teaching is part of being human. Writing is thinking—keeping track of and developing your thoughts.

“When you write a book or article and somebody reads it tomorrow, next year, or 50 years from now, it’s you in your own voice speaking directly to that person, with no intermediaries, with no dilution or filters. I love that. Wherever I go, people thank me for writing the books. I’m grateful to have been an agent for change that could bring useful information to artists.”

In addition to writing over 180 articles, producing 17 videos, and giving more than 100 oral presentations, Townsend has published myriad books including *Advanced Flameworking, Vol. I* (2001); *Advanced Flameworking, Vol. II* (2017); *Lost Wax Kiln Casting* (2010); and *Making and Marketing Better Artwork* (2001).

Townsend taught flameworking at CMOG for the first time in 1993, which he continued for the next 12 years. He also taught casting there for 5 years. One of his most enjoyable experiences as an educator came at CMOG’s 2300 Degrees, a series of free, themed events featuring live glassmaking demonstrations by guest artists, live music, and regional fare. At the height of Townsend’s *Body Language* series, CMOG built lifesize sets based on his sculptural doorways, windows, and stairs. The artist’s friends Eddie and Endalyn Shellman, ballet dancers from the Dance Theater of Harlem, extemporaneously performed on the sets while Townsend made figures based on their moves.



In addition to selling work in CMOG’s marketplace, Townsend has a piece in Corning’s collection. Susanne Frantz, then curator of contemporary glass, was giving a talk at the Glass Art Society convention in Tucson, called *Famous People and Glass*. “She noted that famous was right between toilet tank floats and fishing lures in the dictionary. So I made a glass fishing lure—a red devil popping bug with treble hooks and articulated swivels. It was cold worked, ground, and polished. I sent it to Frantz as a joke and received a request for documentation so they could catalog the piece for the museum’s collection. There are no straight lines, right?”

(Left to right) Milon Townsend, *Decisions, Decisions*, flameworked and cold worked, 12" x 10" x 10", 1998; *Octopus Decanters and Goblet*, flameworked hollow blown, 16" x 10" x 10" and 8" x 5" x 5", 2017.

From Flameworking to Casting and Back Again

After having known her for only a week, Townsend married Kiyoko Motokawa in 1982 at Madison Square Garden along with 2,074 other couples in what was at the time the largest wedding in human history. The fact that the couple celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary this year speaks volumes about Townsend's ability and desire to commit and dedicate himself to what he loves.

Flameworked glass has lived several lives, and Townsend has been a firsthand witness to the evolution from mall art, to high sculpture, to the strongest and fastest growing segment of the glass arts, pipe making. "I love those guys. They are across the board working 18 hours a day, pushing the envelope, and doing a lot of collaborative work. Functional glass is the reason that colored glass companies are making oodles of product. It's not going away, ever."

In the early 2000s Townsend wrote a book called *Making a Living Without Making Pipes*. "People who haven't read it think it's a polemic against pipe makers. It isn't. Following 2003's Pipe Wars, many artists who made pipes were fearful to continue their artwork. A lot of people were arrested, and their assets confiscated. Some in flameworking encouraged people to keep making pipes. My approach was to say if you can't make pipes, what *can* you make?" In three weeks Townsend put together his 100-page book.

Though he made pipes in the 1970s, Townsend's current functional glass takes the form of decanters in octopus, crab, and dragon figures. Inspired by the work of Micah Evans, the flameworked hollow vessels hold about a bottle of wine or distilled spirits. He sells them at three Renaissance festivals around the country. These events provide Townsend with opportunities to meet and interface with clients. "One of the things I like about doing commissions is being asked to make things that I would not have made otherwise. That will often take me in a new direction I want to explore."

The call to teach remains. Townsend will present a three-day workshop on the big island of Hawaii in January 2018 at the House of Fire. He also looks forward to beginning his new book, *Flameworking the Human Figure*. "Making something today that I last made 20 years ago is like seeing an old friend again."

At 61, Townsend's goal is to be able to cut back to working five days a week. "I'm starting to get the hang of this, and it would be stupid to stop just when I've figured it out. I now have the ability to make almost anything I can envision. I believe it's the artist's role to create well-made objects that are symbolic, but it's up to the audience to interpret their meaning."

Milon Townsend was recently a guest on Glass Art magazine's Talking Out Your Glass podcast. Subscribe on iTunes or Stitcher to hear this and many more fascinating interviews with glass artists by visiting the "Talking Out Your Glass Podcast" link under "What's New" at www.glassartmagazine.com.

Milon Townsend
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New Online Courses for Glass Artists from the Contemporary Glass Society

by Pam Reekie

The Contemporary Glass Society (CGS) is launching new online courses for glass artists that can be accessed worldwide. CGS is proud to present these online professional development programs that were specifically created for CGS members. The organization has been working closely with The Design Trust to create a course that covers all of the main topics to make businesses even more professional.

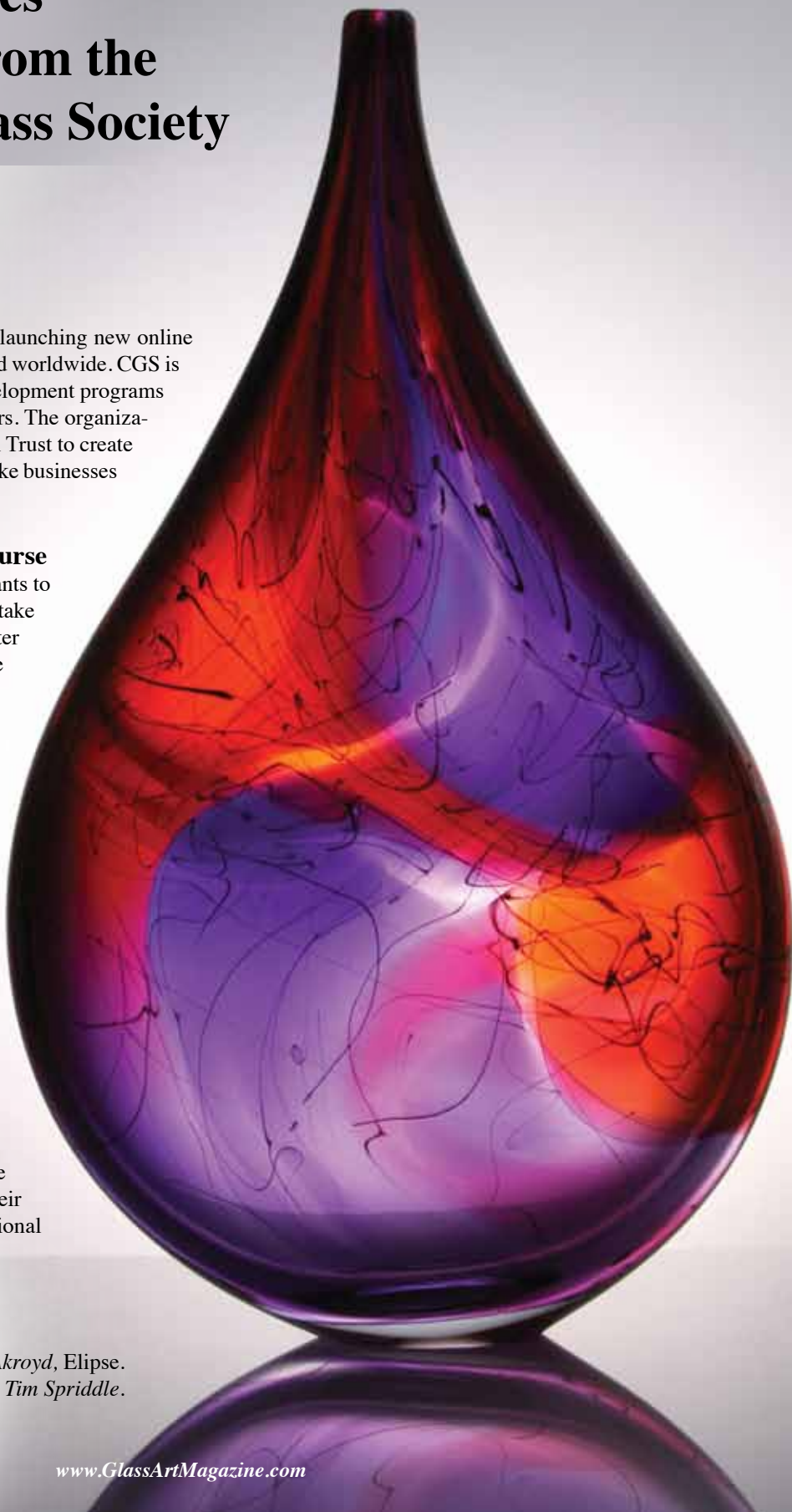
The CGS Glass Business Booster Course

If you are an artist working in glass who wants to earn a better living from your craft, be sure to take part in the upcoming CGS Glass Business Booster Course, a collaboration between CGS and The Design Trust. Set up in 1994, The Design Trust was created to provide business training to craftspeople and designers.

In 2011, creative business adviser and trainer, Patricia van den Akker, turned the organization into an online business school for designers and makers, providing specialist and practical business training to makers across the United Kingdom and overseas. To find out more about Akker and The Design Trust, please visit www.thedesigntrust.co.uk.

This unique online course is aimed at both new and more established glass artists who want to develop their business and marketing skills, make more sales, improve their presentations, and upgrade their level of professionalism. It will run between February and May, 2018, with 4 live sessions covering the key aspects that will help attendees improve their business skills. There will also be two additional sessions with special guest speakers.

*Stuart Akroyd, Elipse.
Photo by Tim Spriddle.*





Sue Sinclair, Big Fish Little Fish. Photo by the artist.

Each Webinar session is a live, audio-visual presentation, accessed through participants' own computers at home or in their studios. The sessions take place in the evening, which makes it very easy to join CGS for the classes. In addition, each one will be recorded, and attendees have access to the entire course for 12 months, enabling them to watch again at any a time.

An added benefit for participants is that they will be able to have access to a private online community hub of fellow glass designers and makers. Not only will they have the opportunity to network with other members of the community, but they will be able to ask questions to Akker and other creatives.

A List of Courses

The following is a description of the courses that will be available, all of which will meet from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.

- **Your Business Model** (Thursday, February 8, 2018) Is your glass business sustainable? In this session, CGS talks money in terms of setting financial goals, reviewing pricing, and discussing how to position yourself in your market.
- **Marketing Fundamentals** (Thursday, March 1, 2018) Not feeling comfortable while trying to market your business? Don't know where to start? In this session, CGS will cover the basic but most powerful marketing principles and activities for creative businesses.
- **Branding & Positioning** (Thursday, March 22, 2018) Want to get to know your ideal clients better plus attract and present yourself better to them? In this very practical session, participants will learn how to stand out from the crowd.

- **How to Sell More** (Thursday, April 19, 2018) Do you want to sell more to shops, online, at events, and get more commissions? In this final session, CGS will take a look at just what you need to do to get more sales.
- **Presentations plus Q&A Sessions with Two Professionals within the Field of Glass** (April and May 2018) To complete this professional development program, CGS will present two sessions with two glass business experts in April and May.

Program Benefits

This exclusive professional development program includes:

- Six online workshops.
- Presentations and other resources from the sessions.
- Access to the online community of fellow glass participants.
- The option to post business questions and your action plans for feedback.
- Access to the course and community until December 2018.

Booking for the courses opened on October 15, 2017, on Eventbrite, and payment can be made by credit card or PayPal. You can cancel and will be fully refunded up to two weeks before the course starts. Visit www.timezoneconverter.com/cgi-bin/tzc.tzc to determine what time these classes will be available in your area. CGS looks forward to helping glass artists everywhere improve their marketing skills.

GA

Visit cgsandtdtglassbusinessbooster2017.eventbrite.co.uk for prices and more details or to book a course.

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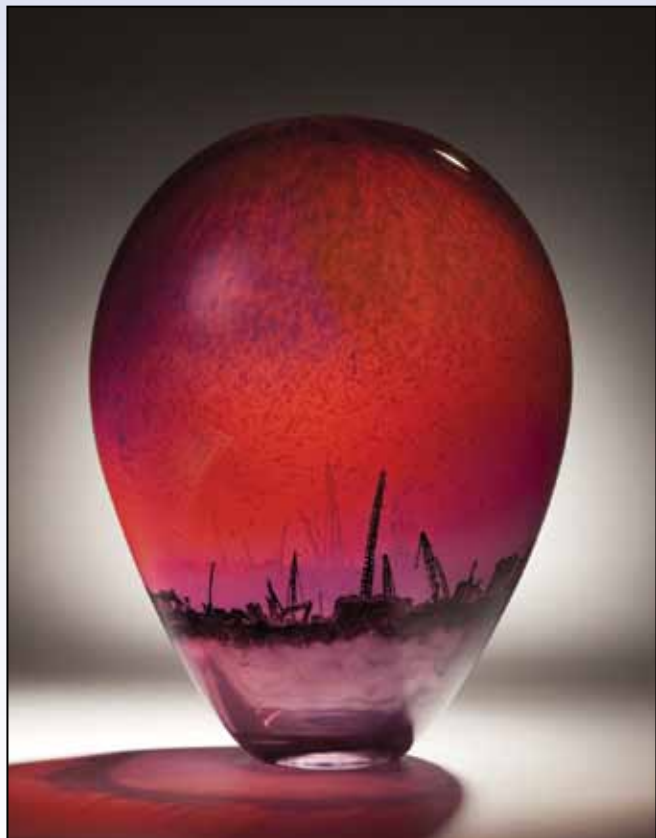
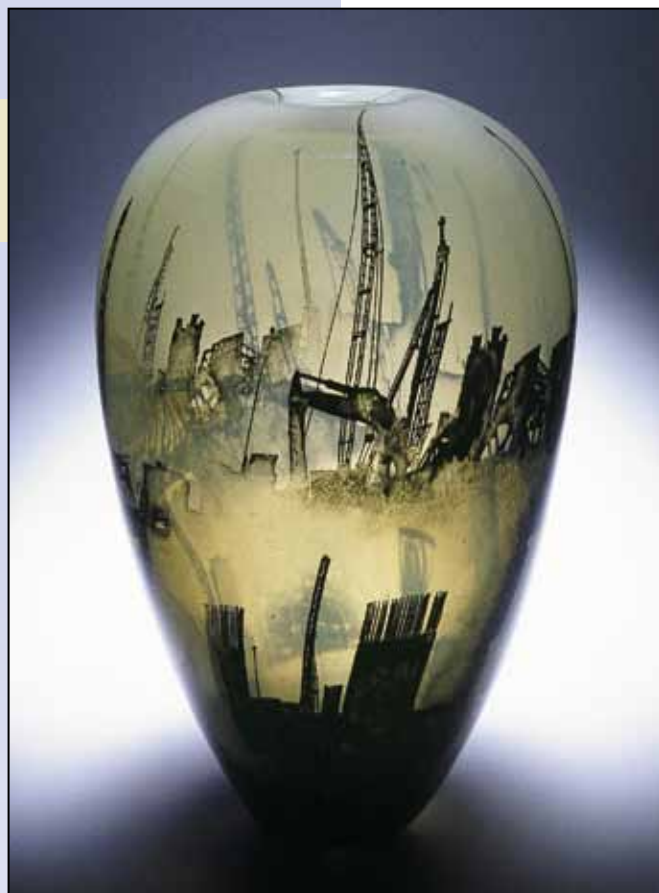
Peter Houk and Shaun Conroy

The Glassmen behind the MIT Glass Band

by Colleen Bryan

The November/December 2017 issue of *Glass Art* featured a story on the Glass Band at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). As with many great stories, sometimes the behind-the-scenes and tangential stories can be as equally fascinating as the original subject. Such was the case with the collaborators who lead the MIT Glass Band.

This article explores the uncommon career trajectories and artwork of the two principals—Peter Houk, glass artist and Director of the MIT Glass Lab, and Shaun Conroy, the glass artist and scientific glassmaker whose technical skills and expertise extended the range of possible glass instruments. Neither man followed a typical career path to studio glass, yet each route produced specialized skills and unique sensibilities that were pivotal to the success of the Glass Band. Those skills set exciting directions for their personal explorations in glass art.



(Top to bottom) Peter Houk, Big Dig 33, 14" tall x 8" diameter, 1999, and Big Dig 72, 12" tall x 8" diameter, 2014.

Peter Houk, Career Founded in Imagery

Peter Houk, the Director of the MIT Glass Lab, is the behind-the-scenes orchestrator who keeps all the energy of the lab moving forward. This scope includes the Glass Band, but also a host of other projects and explorations. Like Conroy, Houk had played with several bands over the years, so the Glass Band provided an opportunity to revive and integrate separate enthusiasms. He also maintains a glass studio outside of MIT where he pursues his own personal design work, sandblasting, and painting.

Houk attended art school for painting and printmaking, not glassblowing. His earliest series in glass focused on ways to bring printing and glass together in a single piece. Toward that end, he developed a process that involves etching or sandblasting, painting into the etched areas, and reblowing the glass to achieve a mix of paint and glass. "I still mine that territory, the synthesis of printmaking and blown glass, in my off-campus studio."

The artist also pursues architectural glass. "I fire vitreous enamels onto sandblasted windows or other surfaces that can be fit inside a tempering furnace. I've also taken images from construction projects at MIT and have started putting them into recent work."

Houk's position at MIT is three-quarter time, and the balance between what he does there and at his off-campus studio shifts through time. "At first, mine was entirely a studio career, making images on and in glass. Early on, the MIT position was not primary to my own artistic pursuit. As I've gotten more involved in running the Glass Lab, the Glass Band, and now 3-D glass printing, I've started to spend more of my life and time on the MIT side, watching the exposure integrate with and influence my own artwork."

Changed by Environment

Houk particularly appreciates how his studio and lab work inform each other. "Being in this environment of scientists and engineers has changed the way I've thought about glass over the years. Science and engineering have crept into my thinking and into my artwork during my career at MIT," the artist reflects.

One example is a sculpture Houk designed as a chandelier for a scientist in 2016. The installation evokes the phenomenon of Rayleigh Instability, which describes how a falling stream of fluid breaks into smaller packets and individual droplets, changing shape as it moves. The chandelier fits into a 24-foot-tall, three-foot-diameter space.

Thirty different glass elements transform as they descend the vertical span of the chandelier. Toward the ceiling, the elements have a straight-sided columnar shape and become rounded and more spherical, like droplets, toward the bottom of the sculpture. About one-third of the elements are illuminated from the inside and reflect on and illuminate the elements around them. Houk enjoys observing that the same principle of fluids that applies to water also pertains to viscous substances, such as glass in its melted, fluid state.

Another project celebrates the phenomenon of spaghettification, which is how physicists describe what happens to all matter in the vicinity of a black hole. "I was invited by fellow MIT lab director Seth Riskin, who runs the MIT Museum Studio, to collaborate on an installation that would visually illustrate the momentous discovery of gravitational waves achieved by the LIGO experiment. We decided to make a curved cone shape using the Venetian *reticello* technique and to shine a powerful light through the cone to project a geometric pattern from the glass onto a flat surface."

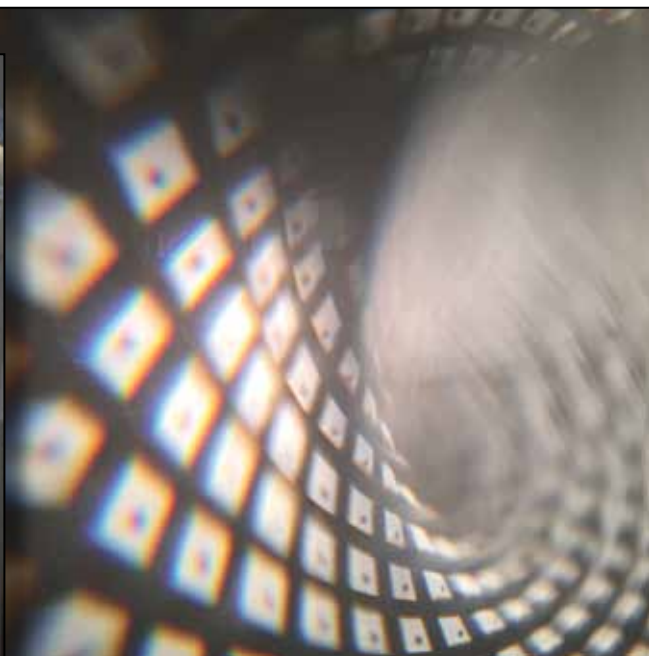
Riskin made the final object rotate so that it appeared to be a slowly moving vortex, part in focus and part out of focus. The installation was mounted for several months at the Museum Studio, near the center of MIT's campus. "This conceptual work is very different from the image-based work I've done for most of my career, and which itself evolved out of my history with printmaking."



(Top) Shaun P. Conroy performing on Clyde-Stew#1 (bottom), an interactive sound sculpture created by Conroy, 5' x 5' x 7'1", 2016. Photos by Jeff-Hewitt.com and Glass Wheel Studio, respectively.



Peter Houk,
Rayleigh Instability chandelier
2015–2016.



Peter Houk with Seth Riskin, Spaghetтификация, 2017.

Light as an Element of Glass Design

Houk has recently been absorbed with the interaction between light and glass art. “I am interested in light as another element of design, light as part of the object, as distinct from functionally illuminating a room. What happens in the human brain when a person walks into a space without much light? How is that different from walking into a room with bright windows or colored glass? I’m more interested and want to work in the low-light end of the spectrum—the more meditative, less highly excited brain space.”

MIT’s invention of a 3-D glass printer offers new possibilities to that exploration. As part of the team that developed the printer starting in 2013, Houk worked on an installation that the MIT Mediated Matter Group took to Milan Design Week in Italy in 2017. The installation featured lighted glass columns. “We printed a series of glass objects with the 3-D printer, stacked them into columns, and lit them internally with bright LED lights that moved slowly up and down within the columns. Brightness levels were tuned until the space cycled from bright light to nearly complete darkness within the space of a minute or so. The light pulsed almost like a heartbeat.

“Visitors entered a dim space that transitioned incrementally from bright to dark. Since the 3-D printed glass has a lens-like geometry, undulating light emanating from the columns projected dynamic, complex patterns all over the floor and walls. The glass objects were always the brightest part of the room, with the effect of making light integral to each piece. It felt like being underwater.”

Looking forward, Houk anticipates more projects with glass and light as he contemplates further use of 3-D printed glass. “This technology brings light and glass together in ways I’ve not seen before and could provide artists lots of versatility. When printing glass, the 3-D printer extrudes a bead of optically clear glass in a coiled fashion to build a shape. The printer can achieve resolution to within about one-quarter of an inch, and the specific shape of an object is only limited by the roughly 10 millimeter turning radius and as-yet-unknown draft angles. The printed, slightly ovoid layers pile atop each other, and light concentrates and scatters, forming patterns like light reflected on waves.”

Shaun Conroy, Glass Mediating Sound

Shaun Conroy did not attend MIT but graduated in 2000 from the Massachusetts College of Art with a degree in 3-D fine arts and a concentration in glass. He views the medium as a beautiful material for making otherworldly sound. His affiliation with MIT came in 2013 when Houk recruited Conroy’s expertise for students making glass instruments who wanted to start a glass band.

Conroy entered college intending to work in industrial design. “I had a glass guy as my 3-D foundations teacher early on who liked a sculpted anatomical crystal skull I made and urged me to get a job with his friend, Steven Weinberg.” A glass sculptor in Rhode Island, Weinberg had studied under Dale Chihuly and was himself a highly recognized and collected glass sculptor.

The job in Weinberg’s studio consisted of Conroy cutting and polishing lead crystal. “I was always around cutoff pieces of crystal, and when you’d bang into them they made the most amazing sounds. I began designing hollow-formed glass castings as percussive instruments and picking scrap crystal chunks out of the oven, then blowing them to make delicate sound sculptures and instruments of crystal glass.” By his junior year, the artist’s focus shifted from industrial design of household products to three-dimensional fine arts.

Conroy graduated having found his passion, but he was unsure what to do beyond experimenting with glass and sound. As many throughout the glass art industry have experienced, the promising artist had to figure out how to survive financially while working toward his artistic vision. “I finished school as the art market was slowing down and found a job at Finkenbeiner Glass, which had built a reputation for merging art and precision scientific glassmaking. There, I made glass harmonicas and spent seven years essentially apprenticing as a scientific glassblower. On my own, I continued making glass musical instruments—handheld sound that could be struck or played or bowed.”

The role of a skilled, elite scientific glassworker was but temporary shelter for the young glass artist fascinated with sound. The experience, however, gave him the valuable ability to work with lathes and torches and higher temperatures. This ability would be

important to his instrument making, since quartz glass has a different density than the soda lime glass generally used in glass studios, and it resonates more purely.

These days, Conroy continues scientific glassblowing to provide for his family, but he also maintains an active glass art studio in North Kingstown, Rhode Island. Since 2013, he has been a valued mentor and collaborator with students in the MIT Glass Lab and a member of the MIT Glass Band.

Prizewinning Sound Sculpture

One of Conroy's inventions known as Clyde-Stew #1 has raised the profile of its maker among the broader glass art industry. The sound sculpture was awarded First Place in the juried member exhibition at the 46th annual Glass Art Society (GAS) conference in Norfolk, Virginia, in 2017. Conroy acknowledges the role of the MIT Glass Lab in providing inspiration and impetus for the piece.

"Musician Mark Stewart brought in some silicon superballs attached to wires and started playing a hip-hop beat with two of them. The big one had a low tone like a bass drum. The other had the high pitch of a snare high hat. We started making our own friction mallets, dragging them across cymbals and all kinds of objects. It was a beautiful sound similar to that of a violin bow. Mesmerizing!"

The students began experimenting with the mallets and one day, in a class that Conroy missed, used them on a large piece of plate glass in the building and reported back to Conroy about the wonderful sound. "I was so upset that I wasn't there to hear it. I went over to MIT to figure out why the students experienced the sound as so incredible. Then I went back to my studio to design a piece to mirror their discovery."

Conroy had been saving a giant plate glass tabletop while considering what to do with it. Perhaps, he thought, he could construct his own version of the classroom experiment using the tabletop as the glass "drum." Fabricating a base out of heavy I-beam, the artist anchored the tabletop in the channel of the beam. The resulting sound was good but not quite finished, so he started playing around with alternatives.

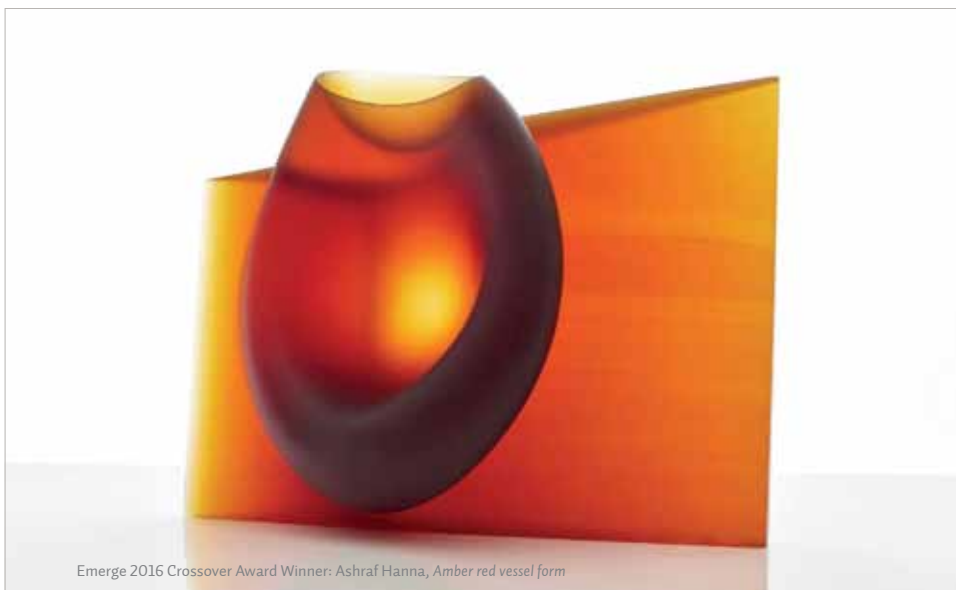
Attaching metal resonator clamps pinched the glass so that the low sound resonates and amplifies when the glass is played. "It sounds almost like a whale singing in the ocean." Conroy attached a stainless steel sheet that produces a higher, thinner sound. Finally, he designed silicon balls into friction mallets that can be used to play music on the sculpture. "The idea is to invite the audience to participate in making art with the artist. I brought together all of these influences and fabricated an instrument sculpture that can be played by several people at the same time."

Conroy and Houk attended the closing show of the GAS Conference, where they performed using Clyde-Stew#1 and other glass instruments. "The sound sculpture and my other glass instruments exist to connect the viewer to the artist across space allowing both to participate in ongoing performance and in making art."

For Conroy, the exploration of glass and sound, whether at the MIT Glass Lab or in his own private work, is all about the challenge of discovery. "Everything starts with a question or an idea: What do you think about glass strings? Or I had an idea I want you to test out. I go to my studio and find materials that I think will make a sound. I try something, experiment, fail, and try again until I happen onto something I think is worthy of bringing to others. The whole process is an awful lot of fun."



Shawn P. Conroy fine-tuning a glass instrument.



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*Peter Houk, Aqueous,
40" x 72", 2013.*

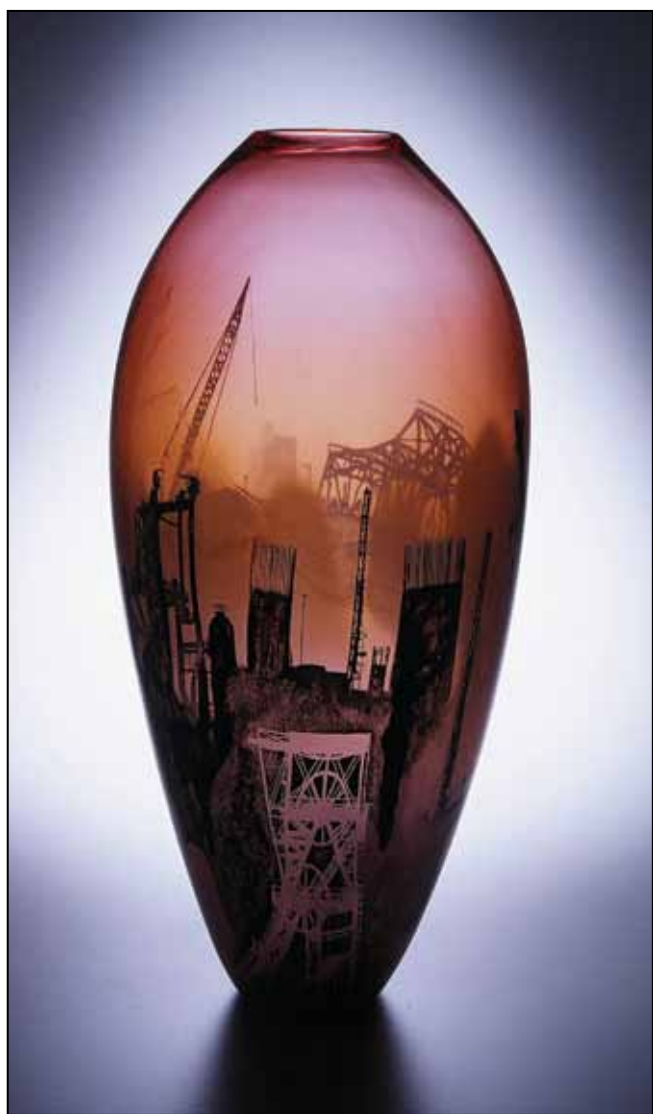
Alternate Trajectories

Both Conroy and Houk have solid educations in the arts. Both have leveraged their experiences to push the boundaries of their art in unexpected ways. Each has pushed past the material, beyond imagery and form, to explore the ways glass stimulates the senses through sound and light.

Houk views his own career trajectory against the frames of other artists, including that of his friend and teacher Lino Tagliapietra, who visits MIT periodically. "Since emphasizing his individual studio practice over that of intensive traveling, teaching, and gaffing for others, Lino has done phenomenal things. Many artists struggle to free up time from their day jobs to pursue their own personal work and vision, as though the deep dive into the personal is the singular path to authentic artistry. That's one model, but what I'm doing is different. Now I am deeply involved in helping to catalyze some of the ideas that students came up with and that I thought had tremendous potential." Seeing growth and development in his own artwork over time, Houk is not unnerved by the alternate path he follows.

Conroy may sometimes feel uncertain about whether his fascination and inquiry will give him a sufficient perch for his chosen field. Houk, on the other hand, is untroubled by the ebb and flow that pushes him toward the campus, then toward individual studio work and back again. One informs the other. "Work is coming out of my collaboration with students and other faculty members at MIT. Work is coming out of my personal studio. I like both enough that I don't want to say no to either."

GA



Peter Houk, Big Dig, Aurora, 2009.

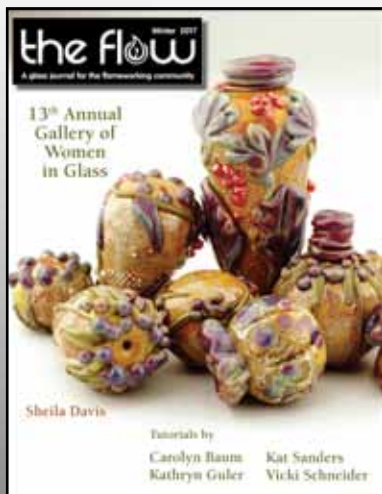
Peter Houk, Director Glass Lab

Department of Materials Science and Engineering
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
77 Massachusetts Avenue
Building 4, Room 003
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139
(617) 253- 5309
pbhouk@gmail.com
glasslab.scripts.mit.edu

Shaun Peter Conroy ConroyGlass

215 Shady Lea Road, Building 223
North Kingstown, Rhode Island 02852
(508) 333-3186
conroyglass@yahoo.com

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Fired Up — Contemporary Glass by Women Artists

Focusing on Women in Glass at the Toledo Museum of Art



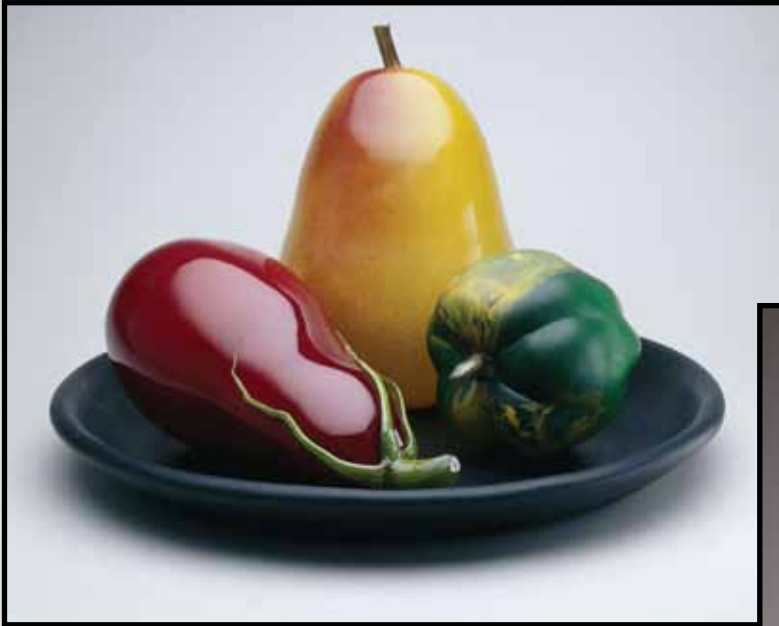
Karen LaMonte, Dress Impression with Train, glass, cast, sandblasted, acid-polished, 58-1/4" x 22-1/2" x 43-1/4", 2007. Purchased with funds from the Libbey Endowment, Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, by exchange. © Karen LaMonte.



Emily Brock, The Counterman-Diner, glass, fused, slumped, lampworked, metal, 14-1/8" x 17-15/16" x 10", 1991–1992. Purchased with funds given in memory of Judie Chatreau by friends and co-workers at Society Bank & Trust and funds from the Libbey Endowment, Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey. Photo by Tim Thayer.

The Toledo Museum of Art (TMA) has launched a celebration of the critical contributions made by generations of female glass artists. Drawn from the Toledo Museum of Art's internationally renowned glass collection along with key loans from notable private collections, *Fired Up: Contemporary Glass by Women Artists* presents more than 50 stunning objects by women who now rank among the most innovative and celebrated glass artists in the world. Ranging from small scale to life-size in a variety of glass techniques, the works document nearly six decades of unwavering dedication to glass art, from early studio glasswork to the ingenuity shown in 21st century innovations. The exhibition began on September 2, 2017, and will run through March 18, 2018.

*Toots Zynsky, Serata, filet de verre
(glass threads), fused and thermoformed,
10-3/4" x 17-1/4" x 10-7/8", 2000.
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. William Block.*



*Flora C. Mace and Joey Kirkpatrick, Still Life with Pear,
blown glass, painted alderwood, 22-1/4" high, 1992–1994.
Gift of Dale and Doug Anderson in honor of Dorothy
and George Saxe.*

*Ginny Ruffner, City of Broad Shoulders,
glass, flameworked, with applied pigments,
1989. Gift of Dorothy and George Saxe.
Photo by Richard Goodbody Inc.*



Recognizing a Significant Contribution to Glass

The discovery of glass as a serious artistic medium—sparked in the 1960s during the Studio Glass movement, which originated at the Toledo Museum of Art—was important. Yet in its earliest decades, women faced an uphill battle in their demand for fair recognition of their significant impact, vision, and work.

The exhibition is co-curated by former TMA Senior Curator of Decorative Arts and Glass Jutta Page, now Executive Director of the Barry Art Museum at Old Dominion University, and Mint Museum Senior Curator of Craft, Design, and Fashion Annie Carlano.

A Visually Compelling Exhibition

“The illustrious achievement of women in glass can be more fully understood through this comprehensive and visually compelling exhibition,” said TMA Director Brian Kennedy. “These objects also bridge the fields of art, craft, design, and sculpture in pathbreaking and exciting new ways.”

Fired Up: Contemporary Glass by Women Artists is sponsored by O-I; Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick; and the Ohio Arts Council. It is also supported by funds received in memory of Dr. Edward A. and Mrs. Rita Barbour Kern. Admission to the exhibition is free.

GA

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GLASS JEWELRY BY MAGDALENA PAUKNER

*Text and Photography
by Jörg M. Unger*

The sun tilts through the window of a small house on the outskirts of Lindberg near Zwiesel, Germany, in the Bavarian Forest and makes Magdalena Paukner's colorful glass jewelry glint and glitter in the morning light. The shelves display necklaces with cherry blossoms and small-flowered forget-me-nots, necklets with juniper and strawberries, and ear studs and hooks with currants, hops, and blackthorns. Then there are the barrettes with tiny roses and sunflowers, clasps and brooches with holly leaves, red peppers, and carrots, and bracelets with blueberries and elderberries. Even a small black beetle can be found among all the green, white, red, yellow, orange, blue, purple, and turquoise glass fruit, blooms, and vegetables.

Borrowing from Nature

The young glass artist, born in 1985, has grown up at the edge of the woods and manages a large vegetable garden and pastures for ducks and sheep together with her partner, who is also a glassmaker and artist. "Nature is the best model for my ideas," Paukner says, as she presents her latest daisy collection, which she designed for the wedding of one of her customers. It never was her intent to produce glass jewelry. However, after she had made a necklace with little glass strawberries for her mother's birthday, family and friends loved her ornaments, and word of her creations got around. She decided to design other decor, and demand for her glasswork increased.

Descending from a family of glassmakers and being the daughter of a glass grinder, she soon knew that she would follow in the footsteps of her ancestors when she stood in front of a glass furnace for the very first time in her life. After finishing the public middle school, she started an apprenticeship at the renowned *Glasfachschule* (professional glass school) of Zwiesel to become a glass former. She worked at the furnace, practiced glass grinding, learned how to mold glass in wooden casts, and studied glass design. Fascinated by the material, she broadened her knowledge about the theory of glass and spent five years as an assistant to Cornelius Réer, a well-known Nuremberg glass artist.

*Magdalena Paukner,
glass necklace
with cranberries.*



*Magdalena Paukner's
Sprouts from Primeval Times
consists of several handmade
glass tubes joined together.*



*Magdalena Paukner,
glass necklace with
blackberries, blueberries,
and other fruits and
blooms from the woods.*

The Call of Home

Early in her career, Paukner participated in exhibitions and competitions. She was selected from about 150 applicants to participate in the international project, *Gläserne Gärten von Frauenau* (Glass Gardens of Frauenau) that surround the glass museum of this small Bavarian town, which lies only five miles southeast of Zwiesel. Since 2010, three of the artist's oversize *Sprouts from Primeval Times*, which consist of several handmade hollow vessels in different green colors with additional glass decoration, adorn the 20-acre-wide park. Additional work on display at the park includes 27 glass projects and objects designed by well-known artists from England, France, Spain, Italy, Belgium, Estonia, Poland, Germany, Australia, the Netherlands and the Czech Republic.

In 2011, Paukner obtained her master craftsman's diploma and decided to go back to Zwiesel. "Home is still home," a Waidler, that is a Bavarian native from the woods, likes to say. She loves making glass mugs, bowls, decanters, vases, lamps, and garden objects in bright and luminescent colors and fanciful patterns in front of the furnace. She also fashions detailed and delicate designs that she creates in her tiny workshop under the roof of her house next to the woods.

Since September 2013, when Paukner became a member of the Professional Association of Artists of Lower Bavaria, the young lady has been working as an independent glass artist and organic farmer. She also holds several awards including the Rheinbacher Nachwuchsförderpreis promotional award to junior artists and three audience awards by Zwiesel Kölbl. Her work is presented in public exhibitions and museums in Bavaria and the Czech Republic. Visit www.magdalena-paukner.de for information on her glass art. **GA**



*Magdalena Paukner,
glass necklace with
apple blossoms.*



Jörg M. Unger is a freelance writer and photographer living in the state of Thuringia, Germany. Unger is interested in all sorts of art and craft and has worked since 1999 for English language travel and consumer magazines, papers, and websites. In 2008, he became part of the editorial team of Das Fenster, the most widely distributed German language magazine in North America.

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Susan Hirsch

Seeing and Standing into Business Opportunity



by Colleen Bryan

Susan Hirsch came to glass art from a fine arts education and a 30-year career in advertising and design, elements that combined to sharpen her perspective for developing business opportunities. That ability led her to found her private Fire Fusion Studio in response to a recession and keeps the studio thriving in Southern California.

After high school, Hirsch earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a concentration in printmaking and painting. From there, she built a 30-year career in fashion advertising as a creative director for several companies. “As a graphic designer, I developed catalogues for direct mail, which was a big industry before 2000 and is now essentially gone with the Internet.” Afterward, a random class in fusing led her back to glass art.

Hirsch has operated her 1,800-square-foot studio for eight years and says diversification is key to financial viability. “Our industry fluctuates with the economy. During the down part of a business cycle, even wealthy people don’t spend on luxury items. I couldn’t have maintained this studio through the ups and downs without other business lines that helped pay much of the rent.”

The economy is stronger now and transformed. Hirsch’s business model incorporates the lessons and flexibility she learned during the down cycle and recovery. These include reaching for public offerings and commissions, developing a signature line of artwork for release through galleries, and aligning with a manufacturer whose products and methods she uses extensively in her work.

Susan Hirsch, *Baby Baby*, fused glass self-portrait, 13" x 24" x 3/4", 2013.

Opportunity with Rayzist

As most artists, Hirsch continually seeks out new revenue streams to elaborate her core studio undertaking. In 2012 at the Glass Craft & Bead Expo in Las Vegas, Nevada, Hirsch came across a booth for Rayzist. The company, which manufactures equipment and supplies, featured sand carving rather than highlighting its photomask products. “I saw fusers as a part of the market that could use their photomask products and equipment. My college printmaking helped me recognize the opportunity to use enamels with etching.”

The next year at the trade show, Rayzist doubled its booth size, and Hirsch introduced imagery into glass fusing with Rayzist photomask and equipment. In that capacity, she has demonstrated and taught at the trade show for each of the past four years. She has also developed and marketed workshops that teach others how to use Rayzist products and generate income that helps support her studio.

“Having a vendor as a sponsor is a great way for an artist to expand her palette while demonstrating to others how the vendor’s materials can be used. I took a class with an internationally known artist who had used Rayzist methods and materials for years but had no formal relationship with the company. I was the one to identify that teaching their methods could be an opportunity to support me and my work. Utilizing practical marketing and business ability can help artists identify business opportunities as they develop their careers.”

Hirsch's personal artwork falls into three distinct categories—ancestry work, gallery work, and public installations. The ancestry work has the tumbling, deep, fragmentary quality of memory. Hirsch's aesthetic in gallery, public installations, and personal work is contemporary and minimalist. That spare aesthetic appeals to an exclusive group of contemporary art collectors. She makes extensive use of Rayzist masking in much of this work, as well as powder sifting, engraving, and enamel imagery to produce contrast and texture.

Ancestry Work

The ancestry work was borne of an embarrassment of riches. "My grandmother and great-aunt spent years putting together the family history, the product of which came to me upon their deaths. I have a deed from five generations back concerning a land transfer that was a wedding gift in 1837. I have my great-grandparents' pocket watches, pens, and glasses. I have a treasure trove of Civil War papers. But all these things are fragile and bulky and deteriorate over time. I thought it would be wonderful to bring this history into a more concise and permanent heirloom that could last for generations. Glass provided a perfect way to preserve it."

Hirsch started by scanning the deed, doctoring the image, and photographing the three-dimensional items to edit in Photoshop. Then she printed a transparency, somewhat like a negative, and developed the masks, exposing them to ultraviolet light and immediately rinsing the image. The technique uses multilayer sandblasting using Rayzist photomasks, which permits the etching of tiny lettering and fine detail like that found in family trees and maps to create an historical context for an ancestral piece.

Hirsch fills in cracks or etched areas with fusible enamels. Each layer is fused separately then fused together, one layer on top of the other, incorporating words, fonts, images, and patterns to create dimension and detail through the layers. The final product is vaguely evocative of collage, though rendered more permanently and with greater visual depth and artistry. Hirsch confesses she has loved this work.

Beyond preserving her own family history, Hirsch teaches in-depth, two-day imagery workshops at the studio. Classes focus on how to transfer and preserve old photographs and documents in glass using Rayzist photomask materials and equipment. She reassures students that they need not be accomplished artists to make beautiful artwork, since they can purchase a huge variety of vector imagery from Adobe Stock.

As a graphic designer familiar with Illustrator and Photoshop software, Hirsch does most of her design on a computer to give her clients a good representation of the final product. "Designing in a vector program such as Illustrator transfers smoothly to water jet, where computer aided design (CAD) software can read and cut intricate patterns. I teach people to get beyond their fear of computers and use the design software to assist them in their artwork."

Susan Hirsch, Trees, slumped and sandblasted float glass and aluminum, 9' x 34' 2017. Installation at Kaiser Permanente, San Diego, California.



Gallery Work

Priced between \$2,000 and \$15,000, Hirsch's objects are too expensive for street fairs, so she continues to use a local art gallery with a broader regional market as a main avenue for selling her work. "Their marketing and display capabilities let me focus on what I prefer to be doing—teaching and making art." She refers all prospective buyers of finished work to the gallery. Generally, buyers of Hirsch's work collect other sculpture and paintings as well as glass art. In a world where Internet retail is becoming normative, this artist still finds that loyalty pays, and the gallery has access to clients who work only with art reps or interior designers.

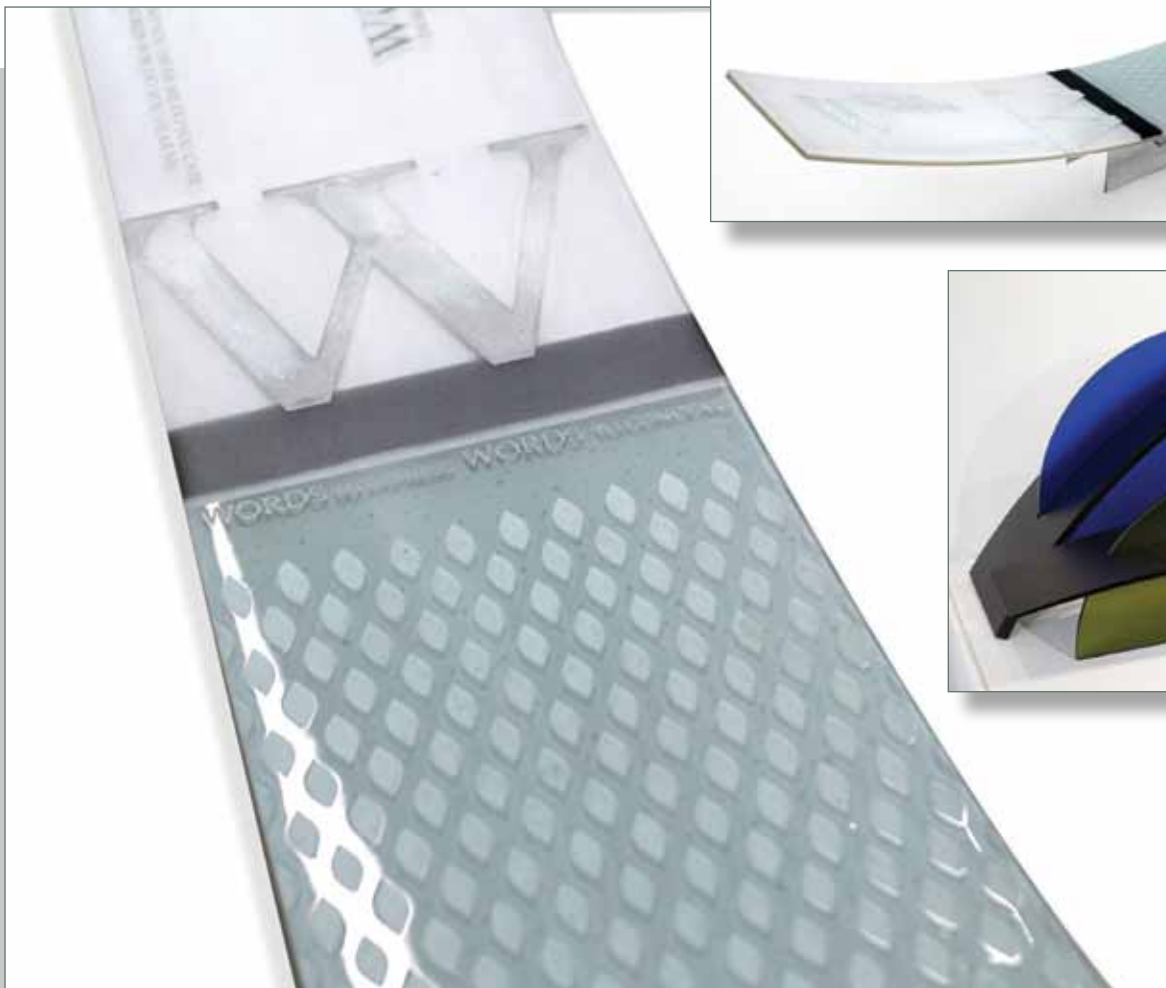
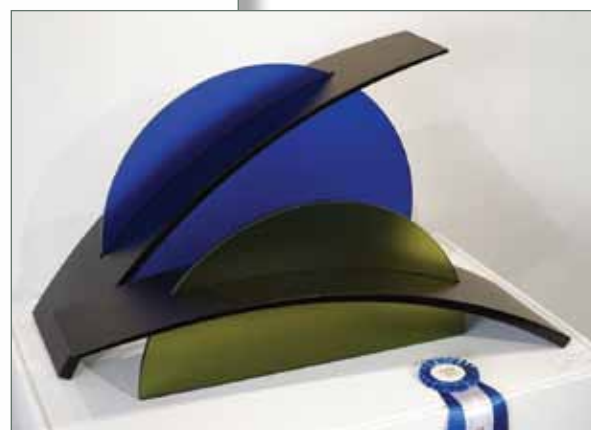
Hirsch's signature line of sculpture features poetry, lyrics, or other word messages embedded in multilayered patterns, textures, and finishes. She enjoys pulling words into her sculptures. "Segments of lyrics or poems help people think differently and more deeply than is possible when simply using color and form."

The artist's fine art is inspired by the high-end minimalist art of Australia and Czechoslovakia. "Their work has beautiful attitude with lots of curves and suspensions but not much imagery. I am architecturally inclined and like to integrate metals with glass sculpture and wall panels."

(Clockwise from left) Susan Hirsch, Words (detail and full view), sage and white engraved fused glass on stainless base, 24" x 6"x 3/8", 2014; Passing Through, cobalt blue and green circles with black wedge, fused and slumped matte glass, 42"x 22", 2015.

Thematically, Hirsch's explorations range widely in conceptual pieces that are more concerned with message than technique or craftsmanship. Two gallery pieces entitled *Words* used lyrics from a 1990s song to question the purpose of words when no one listens anymore. An object called *Latitude* combines graphic imagery and text to depict the history of migration from the European continent to North America. Another piece she designed for the gallery is called *Illusion* and theorizes that light is an illusion that is only revealed in the darkness of night. That piece is made of glow-in-the-dark glass, and the phrase etched into the sculpture foreshadows the secret that is only visible when the lights are extinguished.

Hirsch designed a tribute to Edgar Allen Poe's "The Raven" poem in a triptych of 4 -foot panels with bird images. "I chose an old-fashioned font with smoky, eerie-looking glass that echoed the feeling of the poem. Using stock vector images of birds and computers for the words allowed me to efficiently make a piece that would have taken a long time to render by hand. And since the gallery keeps 50 percent of every sale, labor and production cost is always a consideration. That piece only sat in the gallery for a couple of weeks. Incidental to gallery placement, these explorations produce samples for my workshops and help me demonstrate the breadth of what can be done with Rayzist materials."



Public Installations and Commissions

Fire Fusion Studio produces public artwork and installations and responds to requests for commission artwork. "These are generally not pieces that I'd make for myself. Given my business background, I like to make things that sell, so I specifically choose color palettes and designs that both respond to requests and appeal to the broader public." Hirsch collaborates with another artist friend on jobs that are larger than she is comfortable doing alone and uses a professionally licensed and insured installer for all installations.

Hirsch's first major artwork using Rayzist photomask was titled *Go Ask Alice* for a group show, *Through the Looking Glass*, presented by Art Glass Association of Southern California members. The artist chose to reference the Jefferson Airplane lyrics, representing an acid trip with acidic-green dichroic glass. "One pill makes you larger, one pill makes you small. If you go chasing rabbits and you know you're going to fall, tell 'em a hookah smoking caterpillar has given you the call." That piece sold quickly to a Jefferson Airplane fan.

At the other end of the spectrum, a series of fused trees line a wall of one Kaiser Permanente facility. Another installation for a hospital includes 40 panels etched with positive, peaceful, health-promoting sayings that make extensive use of Rayzist photomask and etching. A third installation features nine panels with "Welcome" written in different languages. Hirsch has installations in Houston, Texas; Sacramento, California; and England.

"When I design for a commission, I tailor my style to the demands of the specific space and customer. Those decades in graphic design gave me valuable experience in designing for other people, so I enjoy lots of commissions."

There is little that is haphazard about the artist's process. Early in the project she determines whether she is making a piece for herself, for a commission, or for the gallery. That clarity informs her choice of style, color, material, size, and theme.

Hirsch notes that she completes all of her design work in Illustrator or Photoshop software. Facilitating both on-site client presentations and easy transfer from CAD to water jet, that technology allows her to be more price competitive when bidding a project.

Susan Hirsch, Generations, fused and engraved glass, 12" x 22" x 5/8". Representing the artist's family history of five generations.

Selective Diversification

Teaching adds income to the studio over and above what Hirsch realizes from the artwork. As a creative director with a large staff for many years, she was already comfortable making presentations when she started demonstrating on stage at glass trade shows or being filmed for later posting online. She also enjoys teaching private classes and workshops at the studio. In addition to her own classes, she makes her studio available to the Art Glass Association of Southern California (AGASC), which has hosted three or four big-name artists offering four- and five-day workshops. Previous students and other artists in the area rent studio time and equipment.



The daughter of a tool and die maker and herself an avowed inventor, Hirsch maintains other businesses not involving glass that adjoin the studio and help pay the rent for the entire enterprise. "Having other businesses to support two-thirds of my studio costs allows me to maintain it at its current size."

Unlike many glass artists, Hirsch has little ambition to use teaching as a vehicle for travel. "Our students come from all over. They see us in Las Vegas or find me on the Internet and see that I do workshops. Travel is hard, and the equipment is not so portable. I prefer to teach at home or in Las Vegas, where I offer an abbreviated version of my local workshop."

Despite the push to diversify lines of business, Hirsch steers clear of making smaller functional items. "I do occasionally make plates and bowls as gifts or to sell through the Art Glass Association, but I don't sell those in any gallery. It is hard to maintain a foothold in both the handcraft and fine art worlds. You have to pick and choose. In the same way that writers might adopt a pseudonym for different styles of writing product, I make sure not to devalue my gallery art by showing it alongside lower priced utilitarian pieces."

Nurturing Continuity

Hirsch considers the future of those who work in her studio. "You can't get someone to take really good care of your work if they are 'just a worker.' Assistants need opportunities to grow and build a future for themselves. Mentoring and teaching them as you work together helps keep them around."

A good example of this principle can be found in Denise Nelson, who joined Hirsch as an assistant a couple of years ago. She helps to sandblast, cut, assemble, and wash the glass. "Denise has learned a lot and now creates her own artwork." The two produce Hirsch's fine art and market two-day fusing workshops through the firefusionstudio.com website. They also developed a second website to promote lessons, blasting parties, craft glass, a catalogue of masks, enamels, and custom sandblasting products under the title 2girlsglass.com. The pair post how-to videos on YouTube under 2girlsglass and Susan Hirsch. "We're trying to cultivate parties and other offerings that Denise can use to build a foundation of her own."

Hirsch frequently posts current work at Susan Hirsch Fused Glass Art on Facebook. There, she also shares the techniques and processes of each project and responds to questions and inquiries. Such arrangements create a valuable cauldron for developing and transferring the skills and artistry that sustain the art form. **GA**

Susan Hirsch was recently a guest on Glass Art magazine's Talking Out Your Glass podcast. Subscribe on iTunes or Stitcher to hear this and many more fascinating interviews with glass artists by visiting the "Talking Out Your Glass Podcast" link under "What's New" at www.glassartmagazine.com.



Susan Hirsch
Fire Fusion Studio
 968 Rancheros, Suite S
 San Marcos, California 92069
susanthehirsch@gmail.com
www.firefusionstudio.com

*Photo of Susan Hirsch by Eric Gilliat,
 Level One Art Installation.*

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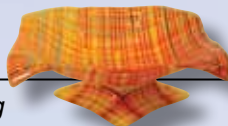
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Small Art Business Marketing Ideas

by Mark Veit

Sometimes we think we have tried every marketing tactic in the book and there is nothing left, which can be frustrating. I call it marketing block, something similar to writer's block. I'd like to share some inexpensive marketing ideas for small glass art businesses that might give you a jump start. You may or may not have tried these marketing ideas. Either way, there are several approaches to many of these topics, so feel free to add your own twist to any of them.

I am of the mindset that any publicity is good publicity for the most part. Don't be afraid to try something new. Even if it doesn't work as well as you had anticipated, you can learn from the experience and apply that newfound knowledge to your next marketing campaign.

Quality Content Is King

Back in the "olden days" of the Internet, it was common to hire a search engine optimization (SEO) company to plug in key words throughout your website to maximize search engine optimization. The quality of the content didn't matter back then. Simply inserting key words into the right spots on a Web page was good enough. That practice, however, is no longer acceptable by search engines such as Google and Yahoo.

Today, these search engines are continually updating their algorithms to penalize this type of behavior and reward websites with quality content. You can look up "Google Panda" and learn more about how this works. Trust me when I say that there is no shortcut for climbing the SEO ladder anymore.

Quality content is key to search engine optimization success. Keep this in mind when you are writing content for your website. Be sure to use key words throughout your content, but use them in a way that they flow within the content. Quality content should be the foundation of your descriptions and your website as a whole.

A Two-Layered Marketing Approach

One inexpensive online marketing campaign is to offer a contest of some sort. Build this promotion backwards. Ask yourself what you are looking to achieve from a marketing sense with this type of campaign. If your goal is to get more people to visit your e-commerce website, you can do something as simple as choosing a winner from among those who share your website via social media. This is easy for you to track, and by having your customers share your information with their contacts and friends, you will gain more exposure in a short amount of time.

A way to increase the effectiveness of this type of promotion is to offer a simultaneous incentive—a promotion or sale for new customers who sign up at your website. That way, when these new customers visit your website for the first time, they have a reason to give you an e-mail address. This is a two-layered marketing approach geared toward getting new and potential customers to interact on your website. New customers will have a great first impression of your website, and they are more likely to return in the future.



Teaming Up for Live Events

If you are looking to sell your glass art pieces in person, hosting a gathering is always a good way to attract new business. If you don't have space in your own home or studio to host a live event, look to collaborate with another artist who has the same intentions but different products. I have heard many success stories of glass artists teaming up with other small business owners who sell essential oils, skin care products, and other similar products. These small businesses are growing by the day, and it is a great way to build your client list.

Why would someone who uses essential oils or skin care products not want to peruse your glass art? Chances are they will. Even if they don't buy something that day, you can have business cards available and encourage everyone to take two cards—one for themselves and one to give to a friend. Don't get frustrated if they don't buy anything right away. The goal is to build your contact list, and you will have more opportunities in the future to make a sale.

This approach also offers an inexpensive way to gain exposure, since hosting an at-home party can be very economical. You can offer light refreshments and maybe a demonstration of some sort. If you show how much time and effort it takes to make your glass art, that will build value into your product right in front of the potential buyer's eyes.

New Ways with Old Content

Lastly, if you are having a hard time coming up with a fresh, new marketing plan, try reinventing some old content. Chances are if you have been doing this long enough, you have tried several marketing plans in the past. Some have no doubt worked better than others.

It's time to go back through your history. Pick out two or three successful campaigns that have worked for you in the past and find ways to update them. Putting a new twist on them can remind people of how much fun they had the last time you offered a similar promotion and give them the incentive to join in once again. **GA**



Glass Jewelry by Tanya Veit

Mark Veit currently owns and operates www.aaeglass.com along with partners Tanya and John Veit. They create enamel waterslide decals for glass artists and sell them on their website along with unique silver settings for glass. They also wholesale their fused glass jewelry to galleries and boutiques.



Constantly attending workshops, seminars, and classes with master artisans helps Veit and his partners evolve their work and makes it possible for them to offer glass and jewelry artists a unique medium to maximize their sales. Visit www.aaeglass.com or e-mail info@aaeglass.com for more information.

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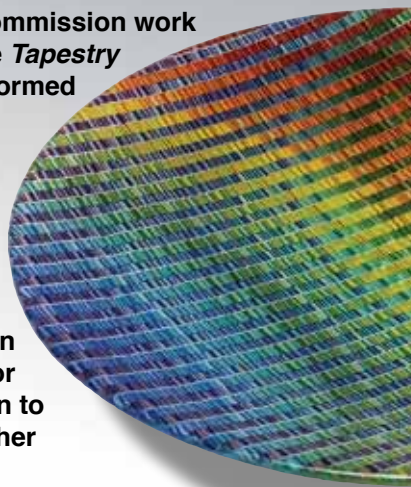
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The Benefits of Redrawing Designs Digitally

by Joseph Cavalieri

When I am designing work, there are steps I take personally that I would like to share. These steps, I feel, will result in art that is made in an organized, fast, and direct way. I use this “digital method” in my own work and teach it to others as well.

Simply put, we start with a strong concept, then draw a pencil sketch of that idea, scan the sketch, and finally redraw it digitally. It works best for the type of work I make—silk screened and painted stained glass—but I can see that this method would also work well for other disciplines.

Why digital designs? You will quickly have precise ninety-degree corners, and you can import and combine your own photos and illustrations as well as found images and drawings. You can also easily change where the cut lines are and update the colors in your work. If the digital design is high resolution, you can transfer the image to a silk screen to print it on glass.

Step 1: The Sketch

Once you decide on a theme and concept on which to base your work, I recommend drawing five different pencil sketches. These are 2-inch-high, black-and-white, loose designs drawn on paper, often called thumbnail sketches. Choose the sketch you are most excited to work with, draw it larger, and decide on the colors.

There are a few reasons I work this way. For one thing, pencil sketches are easy to change and rework. Some students say they can't draw, but everyone can draw to a certain extent. You don't need to show anyone your sketches if you're apprehensive about revealing the quality of your drawing skills to others. This first step is important, though, since practice and patience are needed to sketch, and once you have your ideas on paper, you free up your brain so that new ideas can surface.

I tape my sketches on the wall and live with the work for a while—seeing them fresh, revising them, and adding color over time. I write notes on the sides of the sketches, listing the theme and story behind the work as well as possible titles for the art.

The most important part of hanging my sketches is that it allows me to see them in a fresh way. I may pass by an hour or a day after they are hung, and it feels as if I am seeing them again for the first time. This helps me immediately choose which work I like best.

Once I choose my favorite sketch, I redraw the design with more details on an 8-1/2-by-11-inch sheet. At this point, I decide where my lead lines will be in the design along with the colors of the paints and glass. I like having emotion in my work, and the colors I choose must relate to that emotion.



Joseph Cavalieri, *The Grainer*, silk screened enamels on glass.

Step 2: The Digital Design

When the large sketch is finished, I scan it or take a clear photo with my iPhone. Now it is time for me to redraw it digitally. I recommend that my students use any computer program they are comfortable with to redraw the image. My favorites are Photoshop, InDesign, and Illustrator.

For those reading this article who have limited computer knowledge, don't struggle. Find a teacher and set up a private class. Don't take a 12-week class filled with lots of other students or try to learn on your own by watching YouTube. Simply find a designer friend, bring your sketch, and learn only the steps you need. Scan and redraw the design at the keyboard with your teacher sitting next to you while directing you on the computer. Choose your most difficult design to work on so you get the most out of your time and redraw it twice to best learn the program.

Once your design is finished, print it out and hang it. When working on a commission, I print the design in different sizes to see which one my clients like best, then bring it to their apartment with some color glass samples and get approval way before I cut any glass. If they have changes, I will update the digital design, print it again, and come back a second time.

I often bring glass samples along with the design printouts and let my clients help choose a particular color. This makes them feel more involved in the creation of the work. If you are making the work without a client to show it to, print the design on paper as well, hang it, and decide if you are ready for production.



Figure A, the separate digital elements used to create the finished design.



Figure B, the silhouetted pencil drawing.

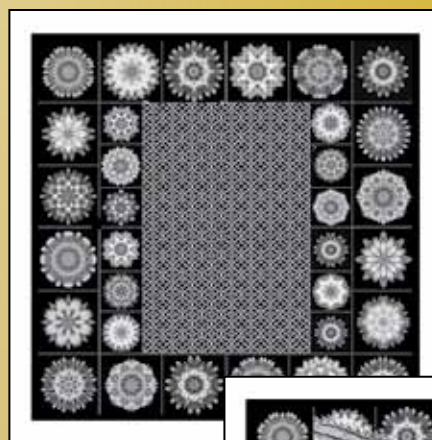
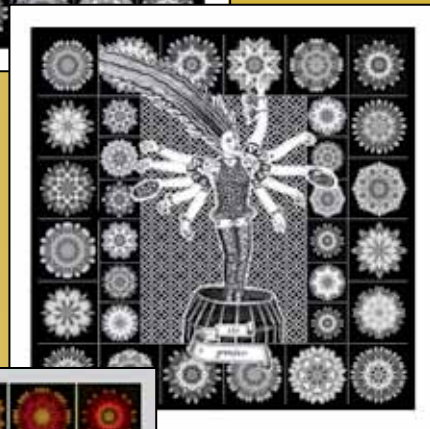


Figure C, patterns used for the background.

Figure D, the black-and-white digital design.



Step 3: Production

The process of hanging a color printout of the work insures that there are no surprises for the client. My work is backlit with LED lights, for example, so I am careful to explain that the finished work will look different when it is lit and will look similar but not exactly like the digital print when it's not lit.

Once the digital design is approved, you are ready to create the work. It's always nice to take photos of the steps of cutting, painting, and soldering the work that you can share with your clients or online with your friends. Sharing the process is a fun and exciting way of marketing your craft.

My Sample

The example shown here titled *The Grainer*, French for the baker, is a silk screened, hand painted, kiln formed enamel work on layered glass measuring 20-by-20 inches. It is set in a stainless steel frame and backlit with LED lighting. I have worked with digital design methods to the fullest in *The Grainer*, using different programs and high-resolution images. The elements I started with include a scan of a pencil drawn figure, a background pattern I created in Illustrator, an historic scroll engraving found on the Internet, text I drew by hand, and kaleidoscope flower images (figure A, clockwise from top left).

Using Photoshop, I enlarged and added contrast to create a silhouette (figure B). Still in the black-and-white stage, I used my InDesign program to arrange the background patterns (figure C), then added the silhouetted figure and title on top (figure D).

When I had the final design ready and colored (figure E), I printed it out with a color printer and took it to the clients' home to hang for approval. This was followed by another visit to show them glass samples (figure F) of a section of the work so they could see exactly how the work would look when the design was fired onto the glass. Once I had approval from the clients, I was set to fabricate the piece, light and frame it, then return to hang the finished work. The main benefit of working this way is that it forces you to decide on your best design from the get-go and results in a work of high-resolution art that can be used in many ways.

GA



Figure E, the final approved design.



Figure F, glass samples to show the client.

Joseph Cavalieri
cavaglass.com

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Glass Experience Madison II, 2017



GEM Participants and Staff.

*by Steve Shupper and Denny Berkery,
Co-Directors, KBW Foundation*

The Kay Bain Weiner Glass Art Educational Foundation (KBW Foundation) held its second annual Glass Experience Madison (GEM) event at the world-famous Vinery Stained Glass Studio in Madison, Wisconsin, August 10–13, 2017, and it was *awesome!* How so? A star-studded lineup of instructors, incredible staff from The Vinery, generous volunteers, and a 12,000-square-foot facility with all of the resources imaginable at your fingertips made for an incredible experience. As was noted by a GEM 2017 attendee: “An excellent mind-expanding event. The Vinery was friendly and inviting. It was an excellent thing to do this event to help others—a very exciting idea.”

Encouraging Growth among Glass Enthusiasts

GEM’s primary purpose is to raise money to support the KBW Foundation’s mission. In pursuit of this goal, the organizers view GEM as the new premier art glass educational event in the Midwest offering classes to excite new artists and experienced professionals alike. This year featured techniques such as painting, cold working/beveling, three-dimensional multimedia mosaics, working with tempered glass, and fusing. Attendees had an opportunity to take many of these classes, since they varied in length from half-day to two days. Some also repeated, which allowed for options in scheduling.



*A beveled charm from
the Kent Lauer Faceted Dichro
Pendant class. Photo by Steve Shupper.*

It’s clear that the venue is perfect for hosting GEM, but the instructors—Denny Berkery, Tony Glander, Patty Gray, Mark Hufford, Josh Krogman, Kent Lauer, Laura Rendlen, and Charlene Stevenson—are what drew over 80 glass enthusiasts to Madison in early August. If you were putting together an all-star team for glass art teachers, this group would be a top contender. There was also a solid crew of volunteers who came from near and far to support the effort and were a key component to the event’s success.

The Incredible Value of Donors

Another addition to GEM II is the acceptance of financial assistance from extremely generous donors. Cascade Metals, Olympic Kilns, Mark Hufford, Charlene Howe, Retailers of Art Glass and Supplies (RAGS) and some of the attendees made significant cash contributions to the Foundation. Instructors donated back a share of their fees plus some of the profit from items they sold. The Vinery donated a portion of sales made during GEM, all of which turned this year’s event into a financial success.



*A participant from the Ornament Blowing class.
Photo by Steve Shupper.*



Three students from the Multimedia Mosaics with Laura Rendlen class sharing their work. Photo by Steve Shupper.

Many product and advertising donations were also received from industry leaders. The event's profits will be used to fund classroom scholarships and help KBW attend Art Education Association conferences around the United States and Canada. We are humbled and grateful for the generosity shown by all involved.

Finding the Fun in Glass

GEM aims to not only offer a first-class learning experience but add a fun social setting as well. Students can visit the other classes to see what else is being done, then socialize in the evenings at the programmed or spontaneous happenings. Instructors and students alike were treated like royalty with every need attended to, including the afternoon pick-me-ups—caffeinated slushies à la Charlene—that were delivered to each classroom.

All but one of the out-of-town instructors were new this year. Some of the evening activities, however, were repeated from the first GEM, such as the visit to Frank Lloyd Wright's famous Monona Terrace and a closing night barbecue at The Vinery. GEM is more than art. It's about creating community.

We know 2017 will be hard to beat, but we have an exciting lineup of instructors for 2018 that will take your skills to new levels. Plan to join us August 16–19 and prepare to have a great time while pushing yourself and your art to a higher level.

Stimulating Interest in the Art Glass Industry

The KBW Foundation's mission is to stimulate interest and growth in the art glass industry through educational projects. This is fulfilled by providing scholarships, supplies, and books to schools and other educational venues to attract more people to create art with glass. Grant applications are available on the KBW Foundation website and are accepted year-round. For more information, visit www.kbwfoundation.com/pdfs/kbwgrantapp.pdf.



A student from the "Bas Relief Mosaic with Laura Rendlen" class. Photo by Denny Berkery.

Interested in getting involved in the KBW Foundation? We are looking for people who believe in our mission and have the desire to lend a hand. There are currently opportunities to fill positions on the Foundation board, Glass Experience Madison committee, and the art education outreach program. Contact Steve Shupper at steve@kbwfoundation.com to find out how you can get involved.

GA

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Nancy Gong

Exploring Emerging Technologies in an Artistic Environment

by Colleen Bryan

Nancy Gong, artist/owner of Gong Glass Works studio in Rochester, New York, is the epitome of a hungry artist. Not a financially starving artist, but one whose endless curiosity makes her yearn to test boundaries, to move each project beyond what she knows well or has done before. For the past 10 years or so, the veteran artist has felt this need especially keenly. “I haven’t left my roots. I have been aggressively pushing to expand my technical options while also expanding my artistic vocabulary.”

For Gong, the creative process involves identifying an artistic problem and choosing a medium and approach to best advance its solution. The artist discussed the technologies she has found useful to date, key challenges and opportunities with respect to each, and the way she evaluates emerging technologies in an ever changing artistic environment.

Laminating

Gong began her glass career, like many of her colleagues, with leaded stained glass. She soon began to explore architectural lamination, already well established in Europe and a growing trend in the United States. She was attracted to the use of transparent mouth-blown sheet glass in colored architectural art glass lamination. The process is similar in design, cutting, and preparation to that used for a leaded glass window, even while it speaks with a contemporary voice.

“The first laminating project I did was *Femata Rapture*, a vivid contemporary abstract designed to evoke diverse cultural gestures in music without musical notes.” The piece consists of four panels set in windows and an entryway in two perpendicular walls of the client’s residence. The panels are comprised of tempered and hand cut blown sheet glass that is painted, etched, and laminated. “My artistic vocabulary uses large elements that pose particular challenges in cutting and firing the uneven blown glass. I faced both with fearlessness.

“*Femata Rapture* was interesting to me because of its size, scope, and use of bold, saturated colors. I was able to employ some processes that I knew combined well with new ones. The piece was tricky, because I was still learning the boundaries of working with the lamination process. I found them, conquered them, and now have one very expensive sample to show potential clients. The clients for that project still send me e-mails to let me know how much they love living with the color—seeing it every day and in all seasons and times of the day. It adds a positive dimension to their lives and makes them smile. That is why I love doing what I do.”



Nancy Gong, *Blissful Strand (detail)*, etched and chipped glass with lead extensions, 6' 8" x 6', 2003. Design for a home near the Intercoastal Waterway. Photo by Nancy Gong.

Gong’s next lamination project was an installation outside the Rochester Museum and Science Center. That design was part of a campus-wide infrastructure greening project. The project exhibits examples of storm water management combined with the installation of pervious pavement that soaks up water and slowly filters it rather than channeling polluted runoff to storm drains. A pavilion at the site features two large glass panels with regional geographic imagery showing the phases of the water cycle—where the water comes from and where it goes.



Nancy Gong, War Bride, 20" x 22", 2012. Designed for an invitational, Art Reflected at the Memorial Art Gallery. The partial repeal of the U.S. Immigration's Chinese Exclusion Act of 1950 provides the background story of this war bride, the artist's mother, of her life in the East, travels to the West, and life in the West. Three layers of laminated glass and the choice of dichroic laminated film plus what appears to be faded photographs is etched to create a sense of depth that refers to times past. Meanwhile, vitreous paint brings the viewer closer to the present. Photo by Christopher Maggio.

This project brought its own set of challenges. "I chose Lamberts glass, which is mouth blown. The installation was going outside, so it needed to withstand extreme temperature variations. I wanted the glass to be water jet cut for design reasons. I have had blown sheet glass water jet cut before, but we had not cut such large pieces of out of mouth-blown sheet glass. There was breakage. The problem was resolved after meticulously leveling the glass surface. The finished glass fits together like a puzzle and looks fabulous."

Gong finds lamination to be a temperamental and meticulous process. "I was forced to install air conditioning in my studio," she all but chortles, "to achieve the control over temperature and humidity that lamination requires."

Fusing

After working in glass for 37 years, Gong feels comfortable reaching for new technologies and mediums to better express herself on a given project. Her first fused glass project was made for patrons who had already accepted a 54-foot by 10-foot etched and chipped glass wall from the artist. They wanted another smaller wall and were thinking of more of the same, but with a conceptual design approach. Gong suggested introducing color into the smaller project.

"I worked with fellow artists who have an incredible knowledge of fusing. They sold me materials, rented me kiln time, and fired the piece for me. I made a sample that the client loved, so I completed the panel and it turned out beautifully.

"The final product was a five-layer panel with two layers of color and one layer of vitreous paint fused together. My fusing friend thought it was beginner's luck, but I felt familiar enough working with the materials to be confident that I could learn new ones. After that project, I started to learn more about fusing and am now firing works on my own, with testing as needed."

An aspect of working with frit and fusing that Gong most appreciates is that it allows her to be more conceptual and spontaneous. "All of the other work I do is *so* planned out that there is little room for spontaneity beyond the drawing, painting, and etching phases. Frit leaves room for spontaneity. A lot of the geometric work I've done is a bit more playful and animated in fused glass."



Smalti Mosaic

When Gong first started to explore mosaic as a means of expression, early examples she saw were not very inspiring. “The objects seemed contrived, like a bunch of flashy, colored glasses thrown together to resemble rather rudimentary painting. The process didn’t sing for me.” But then Gong saw an example of smalti mosaic and quickly became excited.

Smalti glass is traditional to basilica windows throughout Europe, and old recipes for it are still used for restoration. It is melted in a furnace and poured hot from a ladle onto a steel table, where it spreads into a round shape. The smalti round is actually called a pizza in Italy and a tortilla in Mexico. Handmade smalti varies in thickness, incorporates tiny air bubbles, and is manipulated with a tool suggestive of a pizza paddle. After annealing, the rounds are cut into standard sizes. In the studio, the artist splits it further with a hammer and hardie (anvil).

All of the surfaces except the bottom of the smalti are textured and useable. “Where the glass breaks, the cuts produce tiny oysters that catch the light in different ways. Smalti mosaics are assembled without grout. I appreciate that when you walk past a smalti mosaic it doesn’t scream at you.”

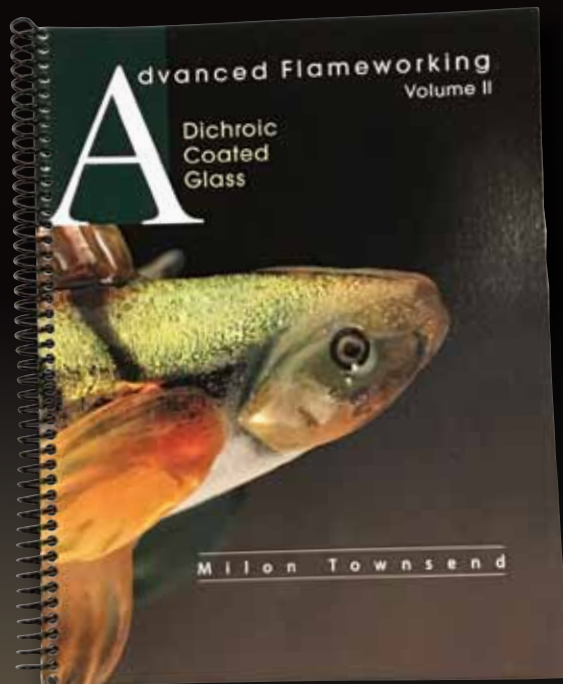
Along with the different material, Gong notes that classic mosaic making has its own language. One key concept, *andamento*, refers to the flow of the tesserae in the design. “The flow carries your eye in a particular direction chosen by the artist. It is the quality that keeps the image from being just an assemblage of broken pieces arrayed on a flat two-dimensional drawing. *Andamento* is critical to the lifeblood of the design and is what makes the finished mosaic a joy to look at. It’s the brush stroke in the artwork. It’s the soul.”

*Nancy Gong, Tibetan Prayer Flags, 16" x 24", 2010.
The artist learning the language of andamento in
her first smalti mosaic. Photo by Nancy Gong.*

At the time Gong first encountered smalti in 2010, few artists in the United States were working with it. “I had a gap in my schedule that allowed me to delve into the material, but there were no classes scheduled in the U.S. during that window of time. So I went to Venice and studied at the Orsoni School. That school was started by Lucio Orsoni, and his 30-year protégé taught the class. Orsoni came into the studio a couple of times over the period to critique our work and talked to the students about what we were doing with our projects.”

Her initial foray to select smalti material was less than inspiring. “Smalti is opaque and very heavy, and I had been trying to avoid those properties for most of my career! I was accustomed to working with transparent material. It was disheartening to realize that this new form was going to take even longer than the approaches I already used. I heard my inner voice chastising me: ‘Couldn’t you have found something simpler?’”

Indeed, in Gong’s experience, smalti does always take longer to complete, with a commensurate increase in cost. She has a flood of ideas about how to integrate smalti with other glass techniques and is actively seeking commissions that will open up those opportunities. “Clients who have seen enough of my previous work to trust me to explore materials often provide the opening to push my creative work in directions I haven’t gone before. I’m looking for such a client to use smalti again.”



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Salt, 2017

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From Gong's perspective, the challenge with glass as a creative material stems from the same quality that attracts people to it. "Artists are drawn to glass for its characteristic ability to catch and reflect light. There is a fine line between what works and what doesn't with regard to its reflective properties. I love seeing light transmitted through glass, but I don't want to be blinded by it. I want to be able to see the design in the artwork, and too much reflection can detract from that."

One of the properties Gong most appreciates about smalti is that it is not total glitz. "It shimmers subtly on the wall. I don't think glass needs to scream to be compelling."

Technology

While Gong has confidence in the solid combination of processes and approaches that are now in her toolbox, she is always itching to experiment with new concepts, techniques, and placement. "Right now I am eager to explore the technical and design challenges involved with placing glass outside in freestanding pieces." So she is particularly attuned to prospective commissions or public art projects that will make that possible.

Using different techniques gives Gong an array of options for making really good artwork. Competence with a range of artistic processes lets her offer different options to address her clients' needs in both budget and aesthetic terms. Even as she is receptive to new technologies, though, Gong retains a critical stance. "I have seen some good applications but many bad applications of printed technologies—laminating on film, decals, and such. But over time they may improve, so I keep an eye open. Bill Destler, President of the Rochester Institute of Technology, put it nicely. 'Technology is nothing without the gift.'"

While new technology can be a welcome addition to an artist's toolbox, it should not be used just because it is available. Its novelty value is only one factor to consider in choosing an approach. The context of a project and the environment it will eventually occupy should ultimately drive the artist's choice of methods, techniques, and materials. This goes beyond simply employing favored techniques in all circumstances.

"Art Femenella is a nationwide consultant for historic architectural stained glass. I remember once disparaging a window we were looking at by remarking, 'Oh, it is cold painted.' He responded, 'I've seen a lot of cold painting that has survived for 100 years. Generally cold paint will hold up if it is not in prolonged direct sunlight.'"

On the other hand, one of the reasons Gong learned vitreous painting and laminating was to find an approach that can endure ultraviolet sunlight. It opens exciting possibilities and solutions for landmark structures, sculptures, and other work beyond simple curtain walls. "I've chosen techniques that allow me to place artwork outdoors in northern climates. That brings color to places where there is not a lot of color, especially during the wintertime."

At the Center of Change

Materials and processes, though, are almost certain to undergo change. Gong believes that leaded glass will continue as a medium for restoration and conservation work, but she is less optimistic that contemporary leaded work will continue to thrive. "In Germany, they are already migrating to laminated colored or painted glass. I'm not sure how I feel about the painted glass or about the removal of individual cut pieces, but I suspect that laminated glass will continue to grow for modern and contemporary work."



*Nancy Gong, Our Special Place, etched, chipped and cold painted glass, 4' 6" x 12', 2011.
An interpretation of Letchworth State Park for a private residence to provide privacy, daylight, and a view.
Photo by Christopher Maggio.*



Nancy Gong, *TeloMeMitoWho*, blown sheet glass, vitreous paint, dichroic film, fused glass, and gold leaf, 30" x 18", 2016. The design takes an abstract microscopic view of various types of cells and the structures within them. Photo by Nancy Gong.

Although new technologies make replication relatively cheap and easy, Gong still emphasizes uniqueness in her designs for two reasons. First, she is easily bored and would tire of producing similar work again and again, and from a market perspective, uniqueness adds value. "People who commission me to make artwork don't want to see their pieces someplace else."

Additionally, artists must address the question of durability in a disposable era. Their answer will significantly influence their choice of tools, techniques, and materials. Gong observes: "Even major public spaces now are only designed for 15 to 20 years of serviceable life. As artists we must decide if we simply design for that life span or focus on making really good art that can extend for hundreds of years like the reservoir of artwork and history that fed our own artistic sensibilities. I have chosen the latter." Every artist in every prospective project makes that same choice anew.



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Reaching Out to New Possibilities

At this point in her career, with her studio on solid footing, Gong feels that she can take more risks in reaching out and expanding her world of possibilities in glass. “I like to attend conferences and intensive workshops where I share, learn, and interact with other artists. That way, I am exposed to new materials and techniques as a way of keeping my work fresh.”

In spring 2016, Gong attended the first Transatlantic Stained Glass Symposium hosted by Bendheim and Lamberts Glass. Attendees met in Germany and traveled around Munich and Prague, Czechoslovakia. They saw fabulous examples of architectural and other colored glass artwork, visited the Lamberts glass factory in Waldsassen, and listened to a variety of speakers in the glass field. “The goal of the symposium was to encourage designers to work with colored glass in different ways. I had already been on that track, so the experience affirmed and fueled the direction in which I was heading.”

Gong is a member of the Glass Art Society, the Stained Glass Association of America, an Affiliate member of Rochester AIA, and an on-again, off-again member of the Society of American Mosaic Artists. While she values the opportunity such organizations provide to talk to her peers about day-to-day issues, she acknowledges the reality that her hungry, curious nibbling at the edge of what has been known or tried before contrasts with how many artists seek to define themselves through specialized techniques, approaches, or expertise. “I think differently. I often find myself not completely understood even within a group of other artists.”

As a member, the artist is energized by the opportunities that the American Glass Guild presents to exhibit work. The Guild hosts an annual conference and, as part of that, the *American Glass Now* juried exhibit. In 2015, the juried exhibition was staged at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. “It is such a perfect place to feature an exhibit of leaded glasswork! This juried exhibit provides a catalyst for me to make the time to create independent work. It is all about keeping things fresh.” One of the Guild’s missions is education and awareness, not only for people who are designing artwork, but also for the public. “That awareness is crucial if we artists and studios are to continue what we do.”



Nancy Gong, ABVI Donor Wall, *smalti and UltraGlas®*, 5' 6" x 12' 6", 2011.
A *smalti* mosaic adds life to a donor wall for the Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Photo by Christopher Maggio.

Finding Joy in Deeper Understanding

Gong created an architectural art glass prototype design she dubbed *TeloMeMitoWho* for a hospital competition. The design explores intricate cellular life and the breadth of information carried within each cell to promote the health of the whole. The perspective is the abstract microscopic view of cellular detail. She loves that the project gave her an opportunity to extend her understanding of life at a cellular level, beyond any artistic or technological challenges it presented.

“Learning about structural elements such as mitochondria, the main energy source of a cell, and how vital that is—telomeres as protectors of chromosomes and their role as indicators of health—DNA and ribosomes—they sparked my fascination with the orchestrated flow of how all the parts function within and for the whole of the cell.” She lost the competition but gained a renewed sense of the profound beauty of life at its most elemental level.

Gong submitted her glass prototype for *TeloMeMitoWho* to The *American Glass Now* exhibit at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., for the summer 2015 exhibition. She feels that the leaded glass profession as a whole benefits from more opportunities for artists to do independent work that shows more of who they are as individuals and artists beyond what they produce in response to bids or for mass distribution. She also encourages glass artists who work in two-dimensional leaded and stained glass to submit to broader audiences.

Gong is on the board of the Guild serving as marketing chair and was the 2017 conference and program chair. “Being involved in this way allows me to see what everybody is doing across the industry by scouting out who might be good presenters to make it a fabulous conference. I get to meet a lot of incredibly talented people. That’s a lot of fun.”

GA



Nancy Gong
Gong Glass Works
42 Parkview Drive
Rochester, New York 14625-1034
(585) 288-5520 (Phone)
(585) 288-2503 (Fax)
nancy@nancygong.com
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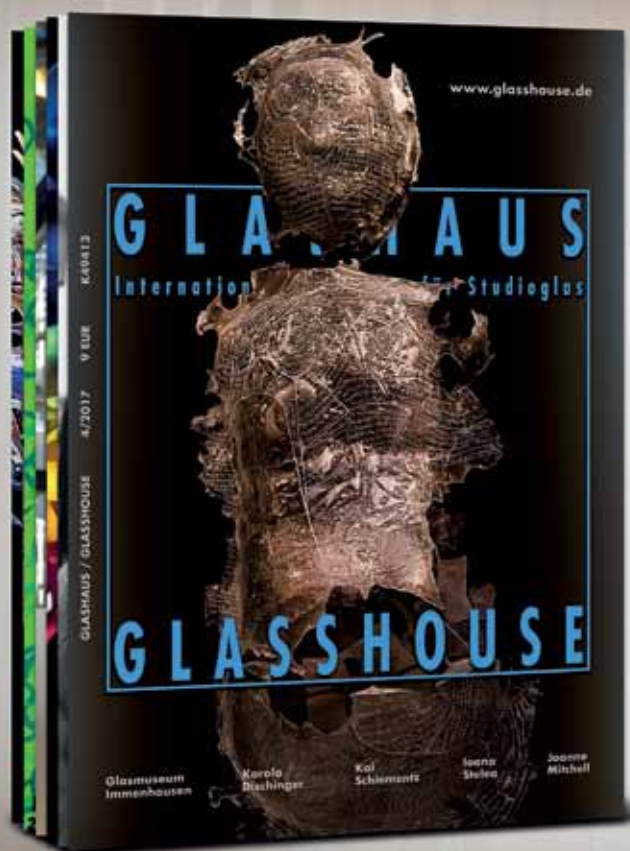
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Embracing Our “Fellows” SGAA Marks Its 108th Summer Conference

The 2017 Stained Glass Association of America (SGAA) Summer Conference was held from July 31 through August 2 in Raleigh, North Carolina, marking SGAA's 108th meeting. Interestingly enough, in its 114-year existence, the organization has only missed having conferences for six years from 1932 to 1937 since its establishment in 1903.

A Call from the Past

In an article published 81 years ago, a plea went out to SGAA members in the Winter 1936–37 issue of *Stained Glass: A Quarterly Devoted to the Craft of Painted and Stained Glass*. “How could the glassman educate his public? How could he help buyers and their advisors, the architects, to gain a genuine working knowledge of the craft? How could real values be made to replace the accidental and the whimsical in designs and prices together? . . .

“They are live questions now, and first among them is still the consideration of goodwill and the understanding that follows friendly association. So we come naturally to an issue we have long avoided. When shall we have the long postponed national convention in Boston? It has been put off from year to year in response to sentiments implied and expressed by many of our members. So its consideration should also be left to those same members.

“A call for a convention that could be a simple and inexpensive meeting together once more would enhearten [sic] and encourage both officers and members. Who can get along as he should in any association without seeing the faces of his fellow members and without sharing ideas and convictions, man to man, upon reasonably frequent occasions?”



Autonomous panel by Richard Millard from the private collection of Peter McGrain.

SGAA members did heed the call and held the convention in Boston in 1938 and again in 1939. In spite of world events, we have managed to meet yearly ever since. So here we are 81 years later, still having our conferences answer the questions, “How could the glassman educate his public?” and “Who can get along as he should in any association without seeing the faces of his fellow members and without sharing ideas and convictions, man to man, upon reasonably frequent occasions?”



*Victoria Kearney, Glass Man I.
Photo by Debora Coombs.*



Richard Millard—artist, glass painter, and founder of the Antrim School. Photo courtesy of Geoffrey Wallace.



Richard Millard, Untitled, independent framed panel, direct painting of created work traced over an Umber Brown matte on window glass, 15" x 20", 1998. From the private collection of Shawn Waggoner.

Keeping Up with New Techniques

In reviewing the Raleigh Conference, our focus, *Conversations and Education with Our Fellows*, extended into every facet of our weekend. We witnessed a record number who signed up for classes and stepped out to throw themselves into learning and bettering their processes of working in glass. We are seeing a trend of people wanting to learn more and more skills. As techniques and mediums advance, we discover new ways of expressing our art. Steve Cowan traveled across the pond from England, not only to share his knowledge and incredible skills in traditional stained glass painting, but also to remind us of the natural ebb and flow that has existed for centuries in our field.

We heard from Judson Studios and The Holdman Studios on their recent respective groundbreaking installations—*The Resurrection Window* in Leawood, Kansas, and *The Roots of Knowledge* at Utah Valley University. The stories and slideshows were rolling from sunup to sundown in an attempt for every possible molecule of information and inspiration to be absorbed.

New Fundraising Efforts for the Stained Glass School

Amidst the usual format of presentations, auction, and sponsor showcase, a new addition to our Stained Glass School (SGS) conference efforts completed the circle on education, sharing, and fellowship. During most of the Conference, the SGS put together a "Stained Glass Store." Just recently, Victoria Millard gifted much of her late husband Richard Millard's books, tools, supplies, even glass, to the SGS, to use in fundraising efforts. Through the great efforts of School Director Sister Ann Therese Kelly and her wonderful network of volunteers, those and other donated materials—even sheet glass!—were transported from all over the East Coast to Raleigh. There they were carefully unloaded and transformed into the Stained Glass School Store for all conference attendees to browse.

Many of us wonder what will happen to our treasured things when we come to dust. The collection of Richard Millard was vast, truly vast, and he loved it. He shared his love for decades with students and many of us other fellows. We had seen all of these materials and tools in his own studio on visits there and were familiar with the brush sets he used when teaching. The "Fred Head" was a standard part of our Dick Millard education. It was interesting to see the reverence with which his tools were treated—to see his legacy continued on as his brushes, his tools, his books, and his samples found new homes.

Honoring Member Commitment to the Art of Stained Glass

SGAA members were especially excited to bestow the honor of Fellow Award to C. Robert Markert at this year's conference. His health kept him from us physically, but not spiritually! Markert's lifetime of enthusiastic, selfless service to the art and craft of stained glass and the education of future generations has been an inspiration to our entire organization, and we were delighted to recognize his profound influence. Upon receiving the award, Bob, as he is known to all of us, shared these thoughts on his life's work.

"Glass is a major part of who I am. It is and has been one of my most powerful ways to find God in my life—being blessed with life and meaningful friends to journey with me, especially my brother of the heart, Peter Eichhorn, and my precious wife of 52 years, Patsy. My windows are my children. I adopt them out to others, but they are still mine. You know how that feels. This craft and art have given me much more than I've given to them and have enriched my days with friends and stories.

"I cannot thank you enough for this honor. I hope that some of you who are here have found in me a mentor and fellow artist who shared his excitement—his passion for this forever-new craft—caught by open minds courageous enough to challenge that medium called glass. God bless you, with all my heart."

Looking Forward

What an amazing thing that through the continuing efforts of our annual conferences, our educational programs, and our continuing conversations between, our members can continue to pass the torch of inspiration from master to apprentice. The love for what we do grows, the knowledge has been dispersed, the joy expands, and the ideas now go out into the world until we meet again.

Our new President, David Judson of Judson Studios, will be hosting the SGAA Conference in Long Beach, California, in 2018. Please join us June 18–20, 2018, for *Experience Glass* and be a part of the amazing convention of fellows who strive to ensure that we light the way for the next generation.

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Visit www.stainedglass.org to learn more about the Stained Glass Association of America, its upcoming events, and how to become a member.



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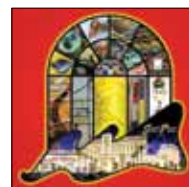
What's New

The Stained Glass Association of America (SGAA) and the Stained Glass School (SGS) have moved to Buffalo, New York, and welcome new Executive Administrator **Megan McElfresh**. The

Association has enormous gratitude for Katei Gross, who served the SGAA and SGS for 25 years. The e-mail and phone numbers for the SGAA headquarters will remain the same. Their new address is 255 Pratt Street, Buffalo, New York 14204. 800-438-9581 headquarters@sgaaonline.com www.sgaaonline.com

Glass Craft & Bead Expo has opened registration for 278 classes at the 2018 Expo.

There will also be loads of glass companies, equipment, and tools represented plus many artists selling their completed glasswork. The Gallery of Excellence, an adjudicated competition for professional and amateur glass art, will also be returning. Register on the Expo website to attend this great event in Las Vegas, Nevada, April 4-8. 800-217-4527 av@lvmanagement.com www.glasscraftexpo.com



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Readers' Forum

In the Glass Quest article on page 16 of the September/October 2017 issue of *Glass Art*, the artist collaborating with Leslie Perlis was inadvertently given as Stephanie Sersich instead of Heather Trimlett. We apologize to the artist for this error.

Glass Art would like to extend a sincere thank-you to our readers who take the time to let us know how we are doing. You can share your opinions by contacting us via postal mail, e-mail, or phone.

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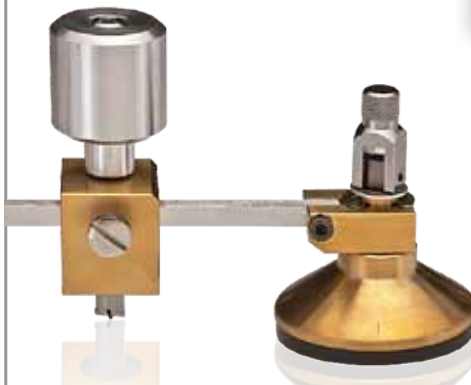
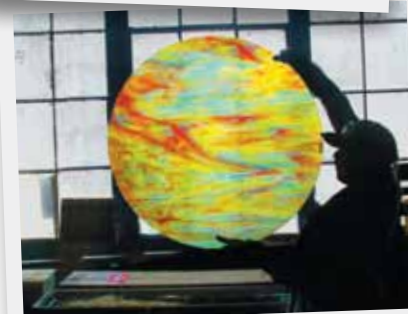
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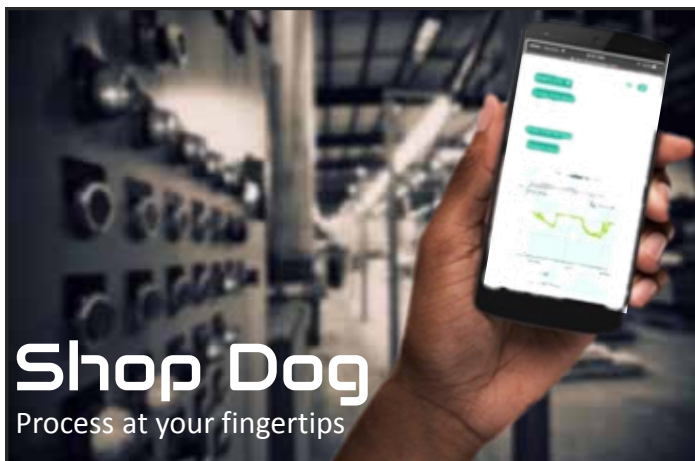
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CS-5630 Dimensions

- Exterior with top closed: 70 ½" W x 53" D x 52" H
- Exterior with top raised: 70 ½" W x 63" D x 76" H
- Interior: 56" x 30" x 17" (15 ½" deep when measuring from quartz tube surface)
- Flat load floor, 30" from ground level

Introducing the Paragon CS-5630 clamshell kiln with quartz tubes

Deluxe quartz tubes

Imagine the huge glass pieces you could make inside the new Paragon CS-5630. Enjoy complete access to your artwork from the sides and front. Add delicate stringers or frit without having to move the shelf into the kiln later.

The roof elements are protected in 10 quartz tubes for a cleaner kiln interior. There is less dust in the kiln, because there are no element grooves in the top.

Heat from the top, walls, and floor

The CS-5630 is 56" x 30" x 17" high. With elements in the floor, walls, and roof, you will enjoy unsurpassed heat distribution. The digital controller uses Power Ratio technology to vary the heat output between the top and bottom elements.

Extra insulation and woven gasket

Lift the kiln top section with handles in the front and sides and with assistance from gas springs. The roof is 3" thick ceramic fiber, and the walls are 3" firebrick backed by 1" of ceramic fiber board (4" of total wall thickness). The extra insulation helps to maintain even temperatures. A woven gasket between the kiln top and floor helps to hold in the heat. The floor

surface is a convenient 30" high from ground level. The 4 ½" thick firebrick floor includes two expansion joints.

Watch the glass through 2" x 3" peep-holes mounted in the left and right sides. The kiln includes locking casters.

Motorized vent for firing molds

If you fire molds, you will welcome the motorized Orton Vent Master, which is mounted in the back wall of the kiln. The vent, mounted on rubber isolators to prevent vibration, removes moisture from the kiln to reduce rust. The vent is standard on the CS-5630 and plugs into an auxiliary output in the back of the kiln. This allows you to turn on the vent through the digital controller.

Low maintenance

Deluxe, long-lasting mercury relays are standard. Gain convenient access to the electrical components by removing a single panel. The kiln includes access panels for replacing quartz tubes.

Rugged

The CS-5630 is the very picture of ruggedness. A ledge in front of the kiln protects the brick floor from damage caused by leaning into the kiln. The digital controller is mounted away from the

heat for long life. The kiln base is welded from 2" x 2" steel tubing; the upper kiln frame is welded from 1" x 1" steel tubing.

Optional touch screen controller

Order your CS-5630 with the optional Sentinel Smart Touch controller. The Sentinel can check the voltage and amperage and can be programmed with easy-to-follow screen descriptions.



For more details, please visit our website or call 800-876-4328. We look forward to hearing from you.

**Constantly finding
ways to make
better kilns.**

Paragon Industries, L. P.
2011 South Town East Blvd.
Mesquite, Texas 75149-1122
800-876-4328 / 972-288-7557
www.paragonweb.com
info@paragonweb.com

**Better
Designed
Kilns™**



Petra Kaiser

The Paul Wissmach Glass Co. Inc.

**420 Stephen St.
Paden City, WV 26159 - USA
Telephone: (304) 337-2253
Fax: (304) 337-8800
wissmach@frontier.com**

www.wissmachglass.com

For this piece d'art Petra used several techniques. Strips on edge are fused together, cut apart, fused together again and then draped and stretched in a 3rd firing to create this interesting shape. Please visit our website to see more images and instructions. www.wissmachglass.com

