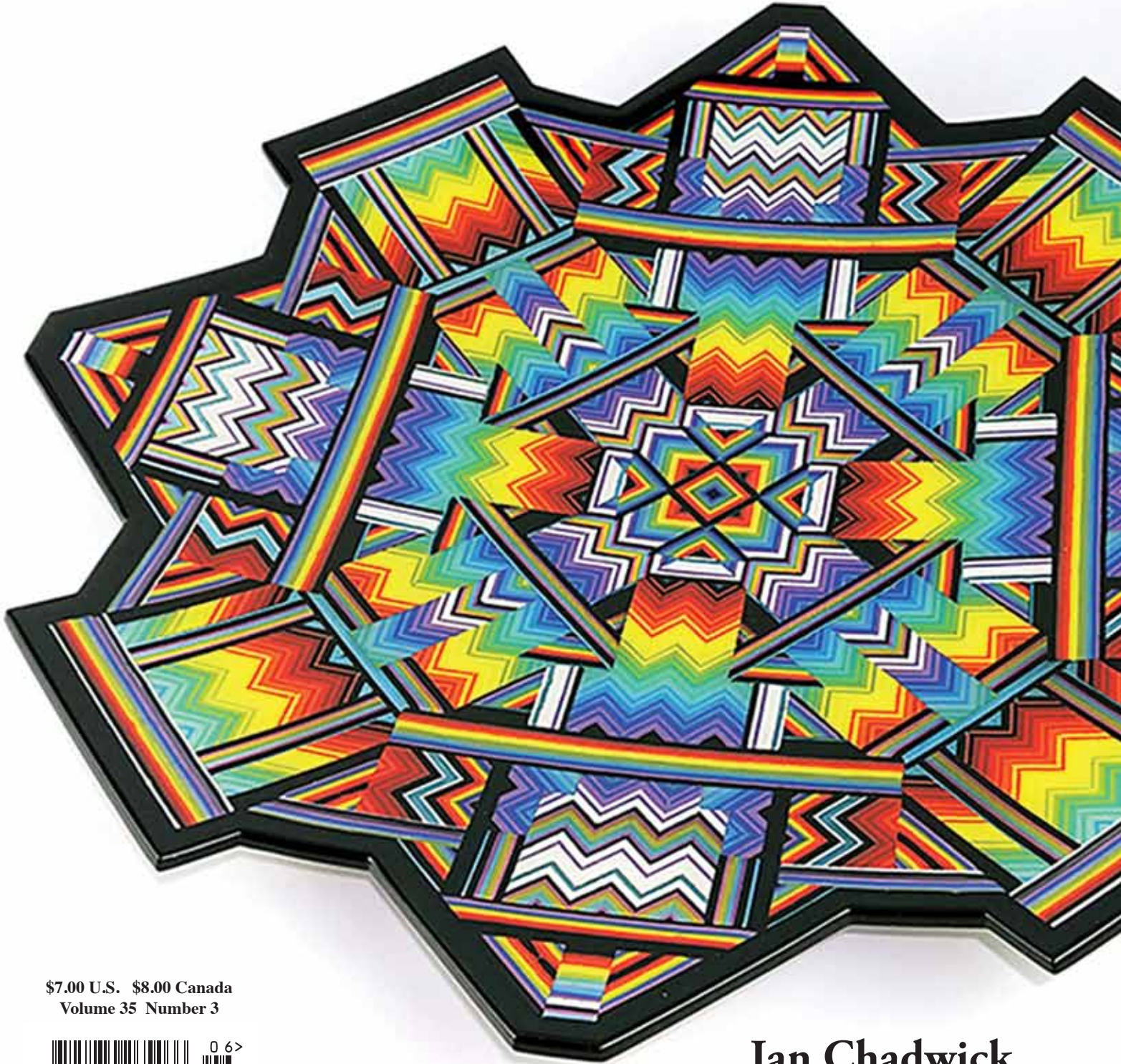


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Ian Chadwick



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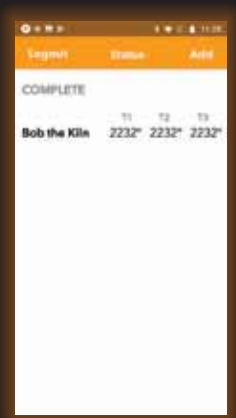
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Above: David Graeber,
Tidy Cats.

On the cover:
Ian Chadwick, Rainbow Platter.



Ian Chadwick

Social Media Fuels a Leap to Art

by Colleen Bryan

Ian Chadwick trained as a fine artist, but when he left the university, the work he undertook was decidedly craft. Fine craft. Craft steeped in ritual, in ancient mathematical codes reaching across time and cultures. Craft exquisitely executed. Craft. Working from Manchester, England, the fused glass maker concentrated on unique geometric designs rendered as jewelry, bowls, vases, platters, and wall art, which he sold through local fairs and markets.

Chadwick maintained two product lines, both with a strong geometric aesthetic, but one decidedly less complex. In time, he began to create visually stronger, mesmerizing, densely patterned objects of a type that do not sit comfortably within every cabinet or household. His passion lay with this more complex work at the leading edge of his creativity.

While the fine art training was evident in his design sensibilities, it also nagged at him to pull his work from something driven by process toward something that emphasized ideas and feeling—more toward art. Social media became the catalyst for making that leap.

New Markets through Social Media

When Ian initially set up his fusing studio in 2003, his work fed craft markets and small exhibitions. “I did the Christmas market in Manchester, which ran five weeks long. It required my dedicating at least one-third of each year to producing work to sell at that market. While I was and am still hugely grateful for the livelihood it provided, that meant long periods of time spent away from work I felt passionate about.”

Social media helped Chadwick identify a market that was thirsty for his finer work. “I was late to social media, but Instagram sparked my career overnight. Almost as soon as I joined, some of my work was noticed by a collector of borosilicate glass. My pieces with more hypnotic qualities seemed to appeal to fused glass collectors within the American borosilicate pipe making community. I was able to tap into the burgeoning new glass scene that exists in America around the cannabis culture.”

The initial collector bought several pieces of Ian’s work and introduced it to a photographer friend who took excellent pictures and shared them on his Instagram page. Within the space of two days, the number of Chadwick’s followers on Instagram increased from 300 to more than 3,000. (It now exceeds 7,000.) “That opened up my work to the larger borosilicate glass community. Now my work is in big-name collections within the pipe making community in America. That transformed my career in the short space of three years.”

Increased demand for his more intricate work freed Ian’s time from making the smaller, more affordable pieces he could sell at craft fairs. The ability to concentrate on more complicated pieces also turbocharged the development of his work.

Developing Self-Confidence as an Artist

Ian was self-conscious about his work in the early years, aware that he was making a fine product that carried little meaning. Now he is more confident about discussing his work professionally.

“I exhibit at a gallery in Manchester with a group of artists whose work is strongly driven by technique. Often, when you’re immersed in the process, you don’t spend time analyzing the reasons you do what you do. I was recently interviewed by an art historian in front of invited guests. Interviews allow one to reflect and express oneself, to understand more about what is going on in subconscious shadows with the work. This can be important in understanding one’s own artwork.”

Appreciation by the borosilicate community and the improvement he could observe in what he made combined to increase Chadwick’s confidence. He began to push his work toward galleries and competition. In 2019, he entered a piece in the British Glass Biennale, a prestigious show representing the best of current British glass. Delighted to be selected by the jurors, Ian traveled to the opening weekend of The Festival of Glass in Stourbridge, only to find that he had unexpectedly won a prize!

(Clockwise from bottom left) Ian Chadwick portrait and a sheet of fired Bullseye glass stringers, 2020; three Sculptural Portal Chargers in various sizes, 2019; kiln formed Portal Platter, 35 cm x 35 cm x 4 cm, 2019.





Chadwick was awarded the Worshipful Company of Glass Sellers (WCOGS) Arts and Crafts Prize. The WCOGS guild was chartered in 1664, established to protect quality in the making and selling of glass in London. They cosponsor the biennale and put up money for the prizes. The winner is chosen by guild members who have all been active within the glass industry. “At the guild’s annual dinner, I was introduced to one of the members who had helped select my piece as a prize winner. He introduced himself as the Official Glassmaker to the Queen and informed me that he had made all the chandeliers that hang within the Lord Mayor’s Mansion House where I stood in white tie and tails to collect my award.”

Early Exposure and Influences

Ian’s fascination with glass has roots in his childhood on the Isle of Wight on the south coast of England. The year he was born, internationally recognized U.K. glass artist Michael Harris set up a glassblowing studio on the island. “As a kid I regularly watched the blowers there, so I was exposed to glass from an early age.”

The family moved away from the Isle of Wight, eventually arriving in Aberdeen, Scotland. There, at the age of 16, Chadwick won a local art exhibition with a sculpture of Narcissus manufactured from shards of smashed glass bottles bonded with UV activated glue. This experience firmed his resolve to center his future on creativity and glassmaking. He developed a portfolio to apply to the only art college in Scotland with a glassblowing department. “I didn’t get in, but instead attended Gray’s School of Art in Aberdeen.”

Without access to a formal glassworking education but granted a well-equipped sculpture department, Chadwick adapted. He focused on sculpture combining plastics, acid-etched mirrors, and plate glass in geometric designs. “Pattern making and optical sculpture have long been my fascination. Dad was an engineer, and I spent my childhood playing with technical drawing — compasses, protractors, geometric shapes. I grew fascinated with Russian Constructivist sculptures. This interest spilled over into my design aesthetic in art school. My sculptures were always concerned with geometry and optical qualities, and my degree show featured linear, geometric, and transparent forms.”



(Top to bottom) Ian Chadwick, kiln formed portal bowl, 45 cm x 7 cm, 2013; kiln formed glass wall panel, 70 cm x 27 cm x 3 cm, 2014.
Photos by Julie Jones Photography.

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Following art school and still eager to pursue his interest in glass, Ian completed evening classes in stained glass design at a college in Aberdeen. At the end of class, the instructor offered him a job at her well-established studio.

"My first assignment as a stained glass apprentice was to cut several hundred diamond pieces for windows at Elgin Cathedral." The ruins of the beautiful medieval cathedral, widely known as the Lantern of the North, required precise cutting skills and allowed the young artisan to achieve the high level of precision in glass cutting that would become foundational to later personal work.

Chadwick's mother, who is a ceramicist, gave him access to her pottery kiln where he gained rudimentary experience in melting glass. The learning curve was steep, he recalls, with lots of messy mistakes as he learned about coefficients of expansion. From there, he poured over books on fusing to learn the underlying scientific principles and constraints. That was his introduction to kiln forming, which remains his chosen method within the medium of glass.

Roots of a Signature Aesthetic

Ian's defining visual style is notably geometric. He preforms sheets of glass with deliberately ordered stripes and colors. He then deconstructs the patterned sheets into smaller elements as one might put together stained glass patterns. Although most of his work is scaled below one meter, he is eager to approach the challenge of a greater scale.

Chadwick's work employs mathematical and geometric principles known to scholars and artisans stretching back to the beginnings of art, design, and architecture. A primary motif in his aesthetic is the geometric device known as "squaring the circle." He came upon it through an interest in esotericism and secret mystery schools, which understood the importance of mathematical proportions, geometry, and their links to nature and the universe. These harmonies were encoded within the art and architecture of pre-Christian and early Islamic culture as well as the structures of cathedrals. "They discovered underlying laws and patterns in Nature and encoded the mathematical representation of those laws within their architecture and decoration as a means of linking mankind to nature."

Much later, psychologist Carl Jung used ancient mandalas as archetypal representations of the self in an effort to help his patients understand and order the Self. "In my work, I look to create mandalas by squaring the circles. Jung called it the archetype of wholeness. Within my work, I use these basic geometric motifs along with linear symmetry to create harmonious optical patterns with a depth and complexity that can take some time to appreciate."

Ian believes that every person is involved in art, whether or not they earn a living from it or consider themselves artists. A major function of art in human society is to imagine and point a way forward. "The beginnings of art were

paintings in the darkest recesses of caves. They weren't put there as historical records or to be viewed by posterity, but rather as magical sigils, symbolic representations of the desired outcome. When ancient man painted buffalo being hunted by the tribe, he was trying to ensure that an upcoming hunt went well. Art from the beginning of time was a magical tool. My work extends that connection. My patterns are mandalas or portals, primarily for me, but hopefully for whoever views them as well."

Selecting Elements

Chadwick primarily uses handmade Bullseye glass in his work. "Sometimes I battle with its handmade nature. It doesn't always have the perfect precision I seek, so that can be a challenge. But I've worked with Bullseye for 23 years, and the quality and range of their color palette have helped me extend my abilities considerably."

One might imagine that color choice could be an essential element of geometric design, but Ian says it is not. "I was schooled in color theory whilst at art college, and I understand those principles. Originally, I concentrated on working with all-cool or all-fiery palettes, but I've discovered that contrasting colors that shouldn't exist harmoniously together, colors that ordinarily fight rather than complementing each other, seem to work well together once inside the symmetrical pattern. They achieve a kind of coherence. By now, color selection is almost an unconscious process for me."



Pattern and Form

Ian concedes that his ritualistic approach to making and his centering designs drive his work rather than it being driven by narrative. “Everyone has struggles, and I struggle with anxiety. Mandalas have a way of centering thought and emotion, and I find my process of constructing them useful for that purpose.”

At this point, Chadwick’s work is more committed to pattern than to form. “Production of design within the glass is my primary concern. I use simple forms that maintain the pattern. I deliberately choose forms that don’t distort the pattern I spent so much time carefully constructing,” although looking to the evolution of his aesthetic, Ian is intrigued by the idea of disrupting or destroying his carefully constructed patterns. He reflects on the sand mandalas produced by Tibetan monks, who take many days to construct intricate, symbolic patterns by dropping individual colored grains of sand onto the floor. Just as they sprinkle the last grains of color, they swipe their hands through it to destroy the image. Theirs is a commentary on the transitory nature of life. The meditation is the object of their work, a step along their journey toward enlightenment, not admiration for the finished result.

In the same vein, Chadwick contemplates producing his patterns, then finding ways to disrupt them, perhaps returning the object to the kiln and raking through the pattern while it is hot. “In the past, I’ve put all my effort into making precise, precious work and have been most fearful of messing it up. Now I’m looking at my work more as art than decorative object and giving more thought to the messaging behind it.”



(Left to right) Ian Chadwick, *Dualism*, kiln formed two-part wall panel, 65 cm x 85 cm x 3 cm, 2017; *Singularity Index* Number 0001, kiln formed portal platter with sculpted edges, 25 cm x 25 cm x 4 cm, 2018.

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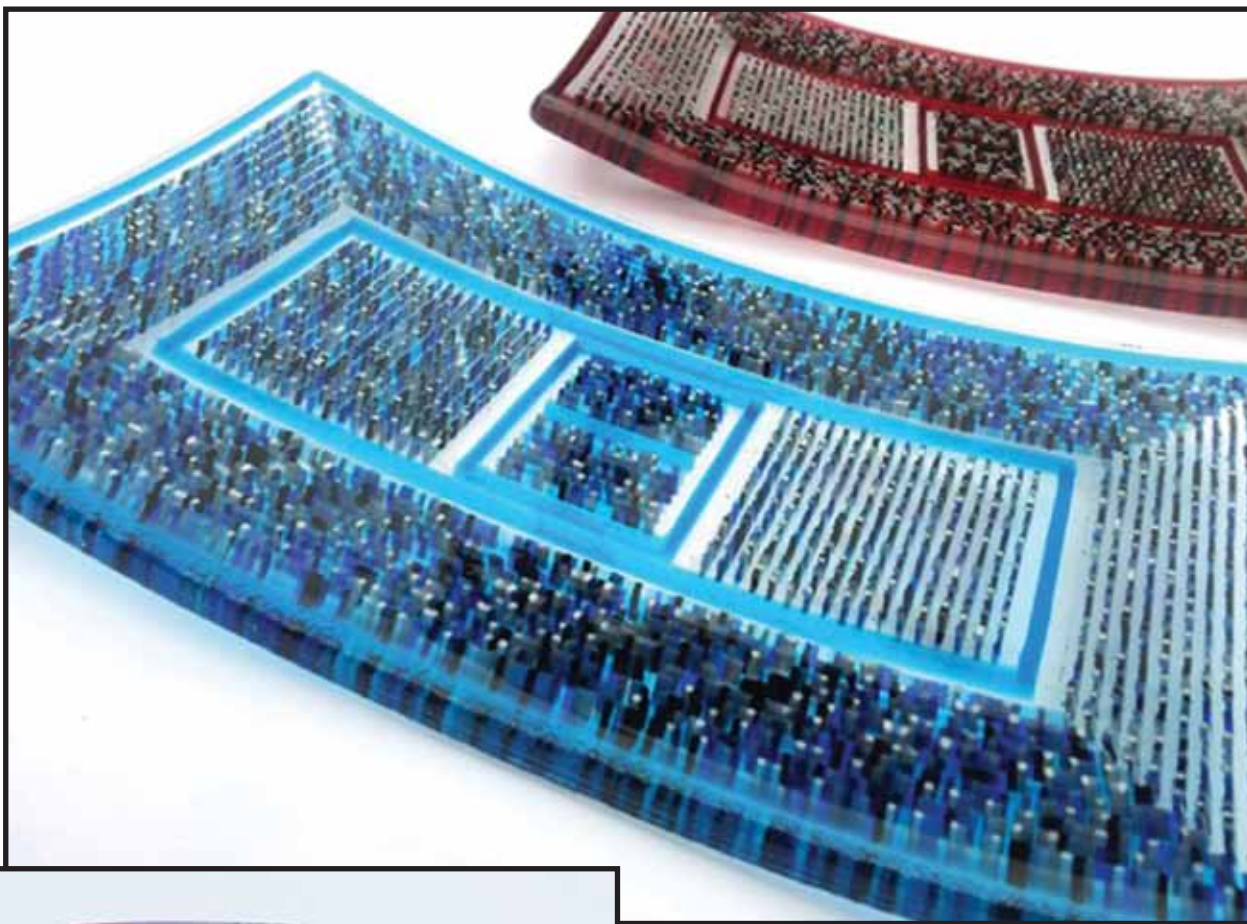
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(Top to bottom) Ian Chadwick, *Pins in Red and Blue*, kiln formed platters, 25 cm x 16 cm x 4 cm (each), 2015;
kiln formed drop vase, 18 cm x 18 cm, 2016.

Singularity versus Replication

German philosopher Walter Benjamin wrote an essay entitled “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” in 1935 that has been meaningful to Chadwick. The paper generally describes how mass reproduction of art in the modern age diminishes the aura of the original piece and thereby dilutes its impact. That idea resonates with Ian. He acknowledges the practical reality that he could develop and construct a basic pattern for his designs. His choice not to do so is important to the unique construction of each piece.

“I go through a ritual of preparing my workspace at the beginning of each new project. I ritualistically tidy my workspace and cover my workbench with fresh paper. I arrange and lay out all of my tools and materials almost as though I was preparing a religious rite. I plot points on paper using eight-fold symmetry. Beyond that, everything grows organically in a nearly automatic, unconscious way. Decisions are made at the threshold of awareness, and work progresses without my having a finished result in mind. The outcome is that each piece is anchored in a specific moment in time and space—a unique, singular event.”

Chadwick is not a fan of titling work. “Coming up with a title for a piece is a chore. I prefer the modernist technique of using codes or reference numbers. I refer to my larger pieces as ‘singularities.’ When I do title something, it generally relates more to my headspace than to anything about the work itself.”



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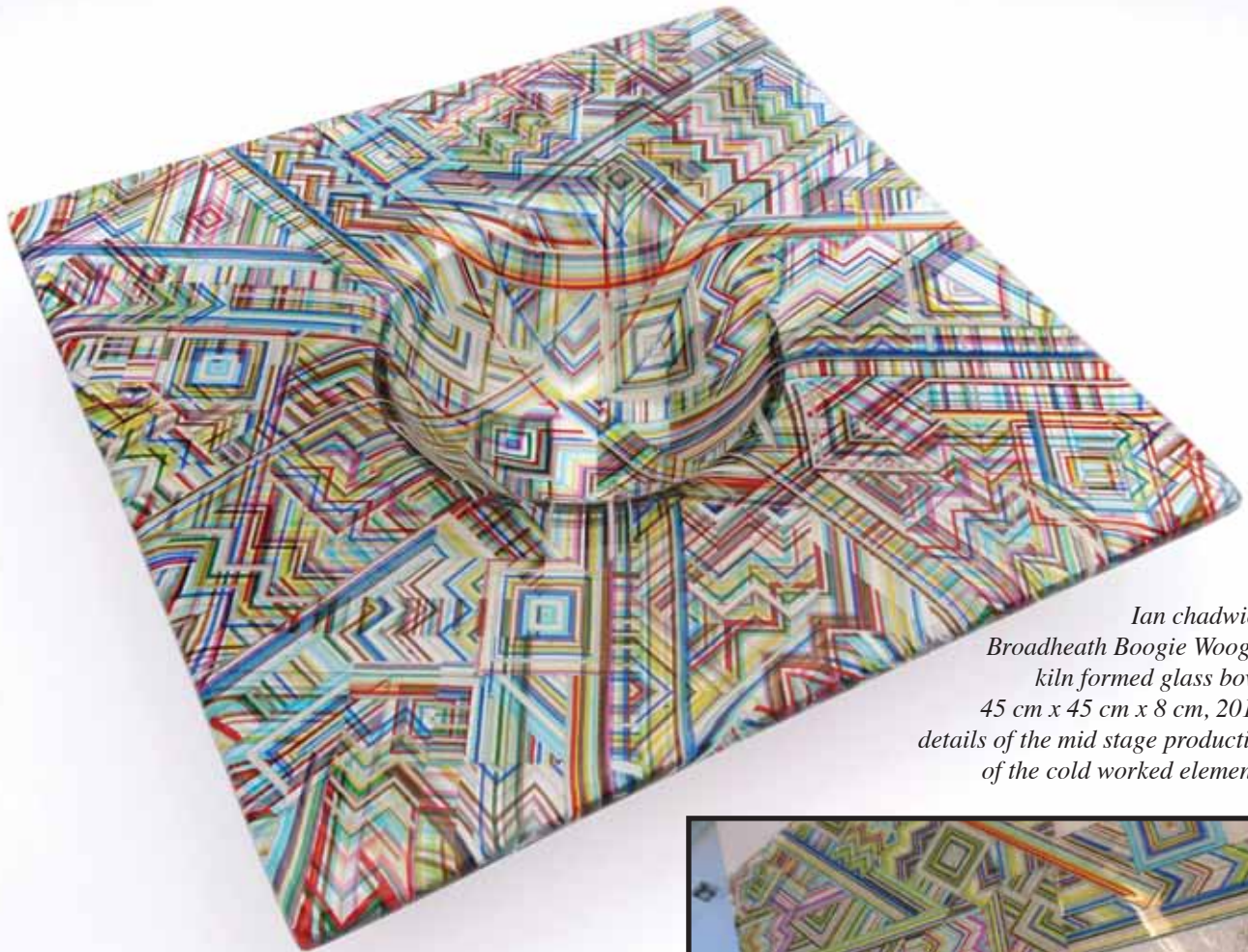

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*Ian chadwick,
Broadheath Boogie Woogie,
kiln formed glass bowl,
45 cm x 45 cm x 8 cm, 2017;
details of the mid stage production
of the cold worked elements.*



Time for Sharing and Growth

Prior to Ian's being discovered on Instagram, when his time was absorbed making pieces for smaller markets, he regularly got requests to teach his technique but refused for lack of time. Having changed the way his career is structured, he now feels able to take blocks of time away from production to travel and teach. "I took my first trip to New Jersey in September 2019 to teach for 10 days at the Glass Underground. While there, I took a bit of a glass pilgrimage to The Corning Museum of Glass, a wonderful full day." Then he flew to Ashville, North Carolina, to visit Level 42 Gallery, which sells pipes and paraphernalia but also takes on international artists like Chadwick who make nonfunctional work. In January, Ian flew to Florida to teach a sold-out class at Tanya Veit's AAE Glass. He expects to teach at other private studios in the United States and Australia later in 2020.

In retrospect, Ian reflects that he might initially have been reluctant to teach because of uncertainty about whether his technique was teachable, his designs too complicated, or whether the specialized equipment he uses would be widely available. Going out and teaching has relieved those concerns and given him insight that the rigid instructions and ritualistic approach he applies to his own work may not be essential in teaching others. "Happily, I'm learning things whilst teaching that will allow me to evolve with my personal work."

As he transitions from craft to fine art, Chadwick is gratified to note that the art college training that didn't seem hugely important while he was in school nonetheless sank in. Those lessons have become more relevant with maturity and experience in the art world. "My advice to all beginner art students is this: Take more notes in art theory and trust that meaning is a journey and understanding will come in time."

GA

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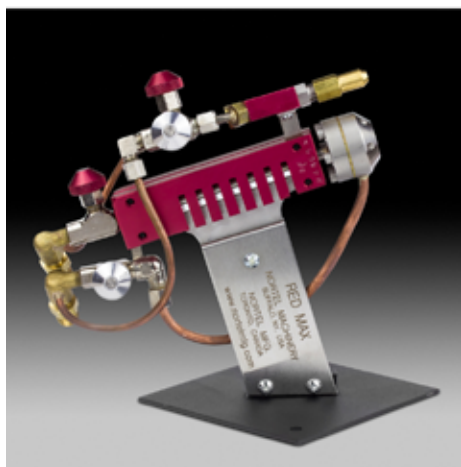
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Erica Rosenfeld

Erica Rosenfeld, The Edge of the Forest, original wallpaper, blown glass, mixed media, 9' x 18' x 3', 2019. Photo by Andrew Smenos.

Exploring Glass Art That Conveys History

by Sara Sally LaGrand

The world is full of curious things, and if you are like me, you store the myriad of wonderful artists and their work in your mind, like your own personal museum. At some point, you develop a curator's eye. Erica Rosenfeld falls into the parameters of my own personal museum. I have been lucky enough to view many of Erica's works, especially during her tapestry years, when fusing, cutting, cold working, and assembling her tiny pieces into dramatic larger "wholes" were the focus of her work.

"Since childhood I have found that piecing together and making my own order to smaller parts has been calming and therapeutic. At this point it is second nature, and my brain is just wired to work that way. I am very inspired by labor-intensive artwork that expresses time and conveys a history. I can imagine that my attraction to these things has to do with my love of ritual and a need to put together hundreds or thousands of parts to make a larger whole." A larger whole is what she does, from jewelry to clouds to tapestries.

Falling in Love with Glass Art

Erica was already making jewelry in her mid-20s when she took a class at UrbanGlass in Brooklyn, New York. "I had experimented with glass briefly in college at a local craft center but only took a shallow dip. During that time, I wanted to incorporate glass into my line of jewelry and took a class at UrbanGlass. I immediately fell in love and dove into the material.

"I had always been inspired by turn-of-the-century Viennese design as well as mid-century modern jewelry and found that the kiln forming process lent itself to create patterns and forms that touched on these eras. I was also immediately drawn to the culture and community of the glass world as well as the physicality of different glass processes. Shortly after I began to use glass, I started to see my jewelry on a larger scale. I began to make sculptures similar to my jewelry, and the jewelry served as a memory of its counterpart."



Erica Rosenfeld, Lemon-Dog, acrylic on canvas, glass lemons, glass crystals, acrylic frame, 11" x 8.25" x 1.75", 2019. Photo by the artist.

Four Women on a Mission

Of course, there is the community. Erica is a founding member of the glassblowing performance group, The Burnt Asphalt Family, born out of a residency at Wheaton Village in New Jersey. Wheaton Village is a curious entity in itself—part old western town, part glass museum, and part glassblowing exhibition space. It was in that space in 2007 that Rosenfeld found herself in the residency with three other women, all blowing glass and forming a bond like family.

They were being teased that they would end up fighting like cats, just as a family might do. That didn't happen, but it inspired Rosenfeld and co-founder Jessica Jane Julius to dress up like 1950s housewives and blow glass, then while it was still hot, cook food for the onlookers in the exhibition space.

"We decided to dress up as 1950s housewives and cook a turkey dinner for the audience with real food. This was a way to break down the barriers between the viewers and the glassblowers, which we thought of as a rare thing. Glassblowing is very esoteric, and the audience usually feels a separation. Feeding the audience allows them to participate in a way. We don't consider a piece to be finished until the audience eats our food. Our intention at first was not to do performance, but just to play together and not focus on objects as we did in our own bodies of work. We have evolved over the years and have redefined our original ideas."

The Burnt Asphalt Family took the show on the road after that and amassed many more members as they performed in venues including The Studio at The Corning Museum of Glass, The Chrysler Museum, and UrbanGlass. "I consider The Burnt Asphalt Family as one of my three bodies of work. I think that my jewelry, sculpture, and performance/participatory art all influence one another at different times."



Erica Rosenfeld, Kinetic Pixelated Necklace, fused, hot-worked, carved, and sewn with glass seed beads, 3.5" x 18" x 0.25", 2009. Photo by Echard Wheeler.

Embracing Cultural History

Rosenfeld views her work as embracing the cultural histories of glassmaking, cooking, and crafting, celebrating a community centric, obsessive, labor-intensive ritual. Her current work includes a throwback to the days of paint-by-number craft kits combined, in some cases, with the tiny parts of glass she has become known for.

"Around 10 years ago, I went to a friend's house to meet her newborn. The baby's room was decorated with around 12 paint-by-number pieces. I was very taken with those. Not only was I drawn to them aesthetically, but I was also drawn to the fact that they were born in the post-World War II era, a time in America that I have been fascinated by since childhood.

"Around four years ago, I began a new body of work where I was using a lot of fabric. I was trying to find a hunting scene pattern on eBay and stumbled onto paint-by-number kits. I impulsively bought one and sat with it in my studio for about six months. I began to read more about the phenomenon and learned that they were invented in the early 1950s at the same time that the House of American Activities and McCarthyism began. This led me to investigate more and begin to use them in my work.

"I was thinking about how paint-by-number kits were invented at a time in America when a political system that couldn't tolerate opposition existed. Much like today, the government recklessly preyed on people's hatred for outsiders and fear of losing their freedom. I see these paintings as a window into the culture of the early 1950s, since they speak to mindless conformity consuming national life and culture, as well as mechanical performance."

Creating a Forest Refuge for Strange Creatures

Rosenfeld has incorporated the paintings into a new body of work for her at the Heller Gallery in New York City. "As I began to work on an upcoming show at the Heller Gallery, I decided to set the characters in the paintings I was making in a forest, as it describes many dualities of life. It can be a place of danger and asylum, wild and calm, eerie and familiar, earthly and spiritual, deadly and beautiful—all simultaneously. These dichotomies create an unknown magical environment that can lead its inhabitants into transformative emotional places.

"I have altered, painted, and collaged paint-by-number imagery to create a forest for *Strange Creatures*, beautiful mutants and unknown species, to live there safely without fear of judgment or shame of their 'freakishness.' All creatures are welcome in this sanctuary and can find refuge from societal constraints and social punishment. I like the idea of 'staying out of the lines' and altering the imagery from these paintings to create a new context for its subjects."

In 2015, *Modern Magazine* dubbed Rosenfeld as having "an artisan's hand, a magpie's eye, and a knack for the surreal." Once you view her work, I think you would be inclined to agree. You can experience this firsthand at Heller Gallery New York or through her website.

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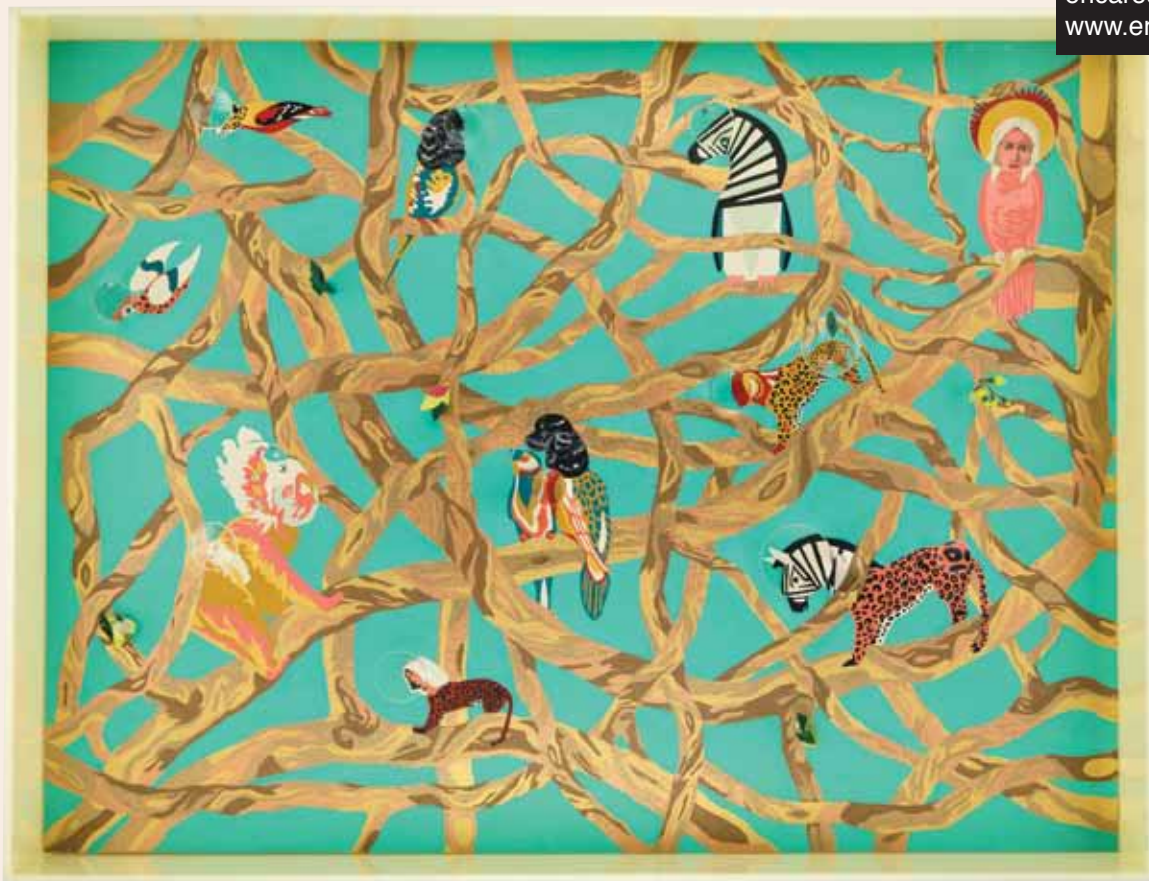
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Erica Rosenfeld, *Reverie Forest*, acrylic on canvas, glass lenses, mixed media, 20.25" x 26.25" x 2.75", 2019. Photo by Jason Bauer and Romina Gonzales.

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The Stained Glass Association of America Settling In to New Headquarters



by The SGAA Headquarters Staff

Photos Courtesy of SGAA Headquarters

The board of the Stained Glass Association of America (SGAA) shuffled off to Buffalo, New York, in January 2020 for the organization's annual winter board meetings. While many had been to Western New York previously, this was the first time the entire board gathered in Buffalo since the SGAA headquarters relocated to the city in January 2018.

A Great Year for SGAA

"It was fantastic for the board to be together in Buffalo, not only because of the achievements of the association itself, but also because the association members have had such a good year," SGAA Executive Administrator Megan McElfresh shared. "Coming together, we were able to celebrate everyone's accomplishments."



*SGAA Board members photographed at Trinity Buffalo, January 2020 (L to R, back to front):
The Rev. Matt Lincoln (rector at Trinity Buffalo), David Judson, Sr. Ann Therese Kelly, James T. Piercey,
Ed Gilbertson, Bryant J. Stanton, Jerome Durr, Ralph Mills, Tom Holdman, Kathy Barnard,
Megan McElfresh, Courtney Nelson, Ariana Makau, and Ron Weaver.*



A hanging fixture designed by Dard Hunter ca. 1908 seen on the SGAA board's tour of the Roycroft Inn during their winter retreat and meeting.

"This board has now been together for several years, and we're achieving a huge synergy that we hope translates into a larger sense of community among our members. We're not afraid to throw out big ideas and dig into projects that would have seemed unattainable just a few short years ago."

Welcome to Buffalo

Several board members arrived early to visit the Roycroft Campus, a popular pilgrimage for those in the traditional Arts and Crafts movement. They also toured Graycliff, the first of two Frank Lloyd Wright houses the board would see in Buffalo. Graycliff was the summer home of Darwin and Isabelle Martin, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and built between 1926 and 1931.

The board met with members of the Buffalo community who have supported the work of the SGAA. Around 40 people were at an official "Welcome to Buffalo" reception held at the Western New York Book Arts Center. Among the supporters were members from Explore Buffalo, an historic tour organization, and Preservation Buffalo-Niagara, a preservation and conservation advocacy organization.

It was also an opportunity to meet with local financial sponsors, including Rigidized Metals, AMJ Insurance, Jude's Luxury Travel, Michael A. de Freitas, Techniglass, Bison Scaffolding, Ken Fisher/Edward Jones, Interior Design Association of Western New York, and Matthew Whitehead.

Exploring the Local Arts

On Saturday, the board had the opportunity to hear from Dr. David Pye, professor emeritus of glass science at Alfred University, who is working with the International Glass Commission on a United Nations resolution to designate 2022 as the Year of Glass. The SGAA has already sent a letter of support, and Dr. Pye discussed the process for the U.N. designation and a variety of opportunities for the SGAA to be involved in events in 2022.



John La Farge, The Sealing of the Twelve Tribes, 1889. Trinity Episcopal Church, Buffalo, New York.

The board meeting concluded with a visit to Trinity Episcopal Church, one of only two ecclesiastical sites in the United States to house works by rivals Louis C. Tiffany and John La Farge. To round out the evening, the board took a tour of Frank Lloyd Wright's newly restored Darwin D. Martin House Complex then headed back to the heart of the city to enjoy dinner at the Hotel Lafayette, another important historical and architectural landmark for Buffalo. A French Renaissance-style building, it was designed principally by Louise Blanchard Bethune of the respected Buffalo architectural firm of Bethune, Bethune & Fuchs. She was the first professional woman architect in the country, the first female member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA), and the first woman to be made a Fellow of the AIA.

Our SGAA board members have now returned home. However, thanks to the delights of 21st-century technology, the conversation hasn't slowed at all.

GA

Due to current COVID-19 restrictions, the June 2020 SGAA conference in Philadelphia has been rescheduled for June 2021. Visit www.stainedglass.org for more information on the upcoming conference and to learn about becoming a member of SGAA.

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The Path to Paradise Judith Schaechter's Stained Glass Art

by The Memorial Art Gallery Staff

Photography by Dominic Episcopo

Judith Schaechter (b. 1961) has stretched the medium of stained glass into a potent and incisive art form for the 21st century, boldly paving her path in the diverse arena of contemporary art. Her work is represented in over a dozen museums including the Museum of Art and Design, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, and the Toledo Museum of Art, as well as in major exhibitions around the world.

Honoring a Stellar Career in Contemporary Glass Art

The Path to Paradise: Judith Schaechter's Stained Glass Art is the first survey and major scholarly assessment of this groundbreaking artist's 37-year career. The exhibition will be on view at the Memorial Art Gallery of the University of Rochester, after which it will travel to two additional venues in the United States.

In addition to her artwork, Judith has furthered her influence to her peers and younger generations of artists through her extensive teaching. Her awards include two National Endowment for the Arts Visual Artists' Fellowships, a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award, and a Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors Grant Award. She has also received a Guggenheim Fellowship Award, a USA Artists Rockefeller Fellow, and an American Craft Council College of Fellows Award.



Exhibition Details

The Path to Paradise: Judith Schaechter's Stained Glass Art was organized by the Memorial Art Gallery of the University of Rochester located in Rochester, New York, under the direction of Curator in Charge Jessica Marten. The exhibition premiered in Rochester on February 16, 2020, and will run through May 24, 2020. After that it will travel to the Toledo Museum of Art from June 27 through October 2, 2020, and the Des Moines Art Center from February 5 through May 9, 2021.

The exhibition will feature approximately 45 stained glass panels by Schaechter drawn from both private and institutional collections. In addition to the panels, the display will include drawings, sketchbooks, support materials, and a five- to eight-minute in-gallery video. A 160-plus-page catalogue published by RIT Press in conjunction with the Memorial Art Gallery will also be available.

A sincere thank-you goes to the sponsors that have helped to make the exhibition possible. They include the Henry Luce Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Gallery Council of the Memorial Art Gallery, the Corning Incorporated Foundation, and the Art Alliance for Contemporary Glass.

GA

(Far left to right) Judith Schaechter, *The Battle of Carnival and Lent* detail, 56" x 56", 2010; *Three-Tiered Cosmos*, 23" x 28", 2015; *Immigration Policy*, 26" x 20", 2017; *The Florist*, 30" x 30", 2017; *Feral Child*, 25" x 43", 2012; and *A Play About Snakes*, 27" x 52", 2013. Loans courtesy of Memorial Art Gallery (The Battle of Carnival and Lent); Claire Oliver Gallery, Harlem; and artist (*Immigration Policy* and *The Florist*), and private collections (*Three-Tiered Cosmos*, *Feral Child*, and *A Play About Snakes*).

Due to the current COVID-19 restrictions, the Memorial Art Gallery is currently closed to the public. Visit www.mag.rochester.edu for updates on when the museum will reopen. In the meantime, the 166-page full-color exhibition catalog is available and can be purchased at www.rit.edu/press/path-paradise.

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American Glass Guild Conference

by Troy Moody

The assorted far-flung members of the American Glass Guild will come together in Baltimore, Maryland, for their 15th annual Conference. Once again this lively gathering will be chock-full of engaging speakers, enlightening tours, demos, and other educational opportunities for its diverse membership from around this great nation.

A Perfect Location

For this year's event, Conference Chair and Past President Tony Glander has secured a truly unique event space. The Maritime Conference Center and Hotel is situated close enough to Baltimore proper to allow for plenty of exploration whether individually, in impromptu groups, or through ever-popular organized bus tours. The center offers all the obvious essentials of our annual congress—a comfortable auditorium, general session spaces, quality dining, and a well-appointed bar.

The location is convenient and affordable, but more importantly, it will provide an intimate space to gather, network, and learn. The AGG conferences have always provided, first and foremost, opportunities to meet and mingle with like-minded individuals as well as laugh with friends new and old in the ever-expanding world of glass art. To quote current AGG President Kathy Jordan: "Our AGG conferences are built on the collective experiences and inspiration we gain from one another. Rewarding interactions in our lives occur in our social and personal space. Cultivating an environment that fosters shared interests ensures the continued growth of the American Glass Guild."

Opportunities to Learn and Grow

The 2020 list of speakers and instructors is truly exceptional and includes experts in everything from stone installation and lamination repair to some of the most celebrated designers working in glass today. Anyone who has attended an AGG conference can attest that it would be impossible to fit a description of every lecture or presentation into this brief article, so I am limiting myself to just a few of the notable highlights.

• **Michael Janis**, our keynote speaker, enjoyed a 20-year career as an architect practicing in the United States and Australia before re-focusing his creative and mental energies on working with glass. He is co-director of the Washington Glass School, has twice been featured in *The Corning Museum of Glass New Glass Review*, teaches workshops worldwide, and has been awarded impressive awards including the Florida Art Glass Alliance Emerging Artist Award, the James Renwick Alliance Distinguished Artists award, and the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities Mayer's Arts Award.



Detail of Christ depicted by Tiffany at Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church.

• **Andy Young**, a prolific artist working in glass for close to 50 years, will share recent projects with Pearl River Glass Studio that will be particularly relevant to the spirit of the AGG. He will discuss how the cross-pollination generated by surrounding ourselves with talented artists and craftspeople who are passionate about glass as an expressive medium challenges us to expand our notions of what is possible while staying true to proven craft practice.

• **Art Femenella** will discuss two interesting restoration projects he consulted on with Amy Valuck. Any dialog centering on restoration tends to get plenty of attention from a dedicated segment of the Guild. The depth of knowledge to be found among those members on ensuring the longevity of masterworks of the past is sure to lead to spirited discussions.

• **Tim Carry**, a gifted painter and designer for Judson Studios, is increasingly being recognized for his independent projects and autonomous work as well as being a star pupil of the Narcissus



Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church of Baltimore houses an impressive collection of Tiffany windows.

approach. Tim is offering not only a highly informative lecture but a look into his design process and the use of computers to convey his ideas to the client.

Some of the most celebrated working art glass designers in America will also be on hand for the Baltimore Conference, five of whom are being assembled into a remarkable design workshop. **Narcissus Quagliata** has been a highly sought after artist for decades and recently began teaching his refined approach to a new generation of glass artists. **Helen Whittaker** is part of the workshop team offering a nuanced look at designing with an eye on historical approaches. **Charles Devillier** will contribute an analytical approach with his “design bootcamp” format. **David Fode** will share his invaluable experience in navigating clients through the commission process, from initial conversations to watercolor renderings and fabrication. The final slot in the design team workshop was filled graciously by the phenomenal **Judith Schaechter**, who will make her wit, intellect, and skill available to all in attendance.

A Purpose Beyond Ourselves

In addition to these and many more wonderful lectures, the AGG will host kids from The Stained Glass Project (SGP). Now in its 14th year, this after-school arts program introduces underprivileged Philadelphia public high school students to the art and craft of making stained glass. This volunteer-run organization has provided more than 100 young people with the opportunity to explore their own self-expression while developing the discipline required by this technically demanding art. The SGP holds a special place in the collective hearts of the American Glass guild. It will be a treat to host its enthusiastic members and a joy to see youth so engaged in this beautiful medium.

During the Auction to help raise art glass scholarship funds, members and visitors will clamor for the winning bid on a wide selection of donated items ranging from books and tools to glass. Exquisite works of glass art have also been donated, including the highly sought after *Bird in Hand* by Silvia Nicholas, AGG senior advisor and living treasure for the stained glass community, and a beautiful portrait window of Louis Comfort Tiffany donated by Kristopher Tiffany.

AGG members are joining together for a purpose larger than ourselves. We always look forward to feeling rejuvenated and inspired by a genuine friendship of fellow glass-afflicted individuals and an appreciation for the opportunity to dive deeper into this odd subculture that is the American Glass community. **GA**

Shortly before *Glass Art*® went to press, AGG announced that the 2020 Conference unfortunately has been cancelled due to ongoing Covid-19 restrictions. However, the same conference is moving to 2021 at the same location. For more information on becoming an AGG member and for continuing updates on the conference, visit www.americanglassguild.org.



Auction Panel: Bird in Hand by Sylvia Nicholas

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What Sells?

by Dennis Brady

If you hope to sell your glass art, you can't assume that because you like to make it people will buy it. Not everything sells. There is no simple, easy answer to the question, "What sells?" There are many answers.

Cheap sells. Good sells. Unique sells. If you hope to make things to sell cheaper than others do, you're facing competition you can't hope to deal with. You will never be able to compete with Asian imports or factory production. The same is true if you expect your work to sell because your workmanship is superior. You can set your selling prices expecting to be paid for your time, but you'll be competing against hobbyists who have no concern for how long something took to make or don't care about being paid for their time. They just enjoy the experience of making it and will often be happy to sell their work for just the cost of the materials.

If you hope to sell your work, instead of trying to do it cheaper or trying to do it better, make something different—things that the cheap sellers and the hobbyists don't make. If you create something different that nobody else makes, you have no competition. Remember the old adage, "The easiest way to win a race is to be the only one on the track."



Larry Zgoda, Seed, 2012, leaded stained glass in bubinga frame with live edge, 16"h x 19"w x 1.5"d (frame).

Photo by Richard Bruck.

Visit www.larryzgodastudio.com for more of the artist's work.



Larry Zgoda, Sacred Grove, 2011, leaded stained glass in oak. Photo by Richard Bruck.

Big Market or Small Market

Perhaps the most common mistake that artisans make is producing work for what they see as the larger markets. The problem with making things for large markets is there is almost always an equally large supply for them. If you offer work that is similar to work offered by other artisans, why would a customer choose to buy something you made instead of something made by someone else?

In the auto industry, for example, the greatest market demand is for cars like Chrysler, GM, and Ford. If you want a vehicle built by one of those car makers, there is always inventory available in a variety of models and colors and lots of supply. You go to the car lot, pick out what you want, pay for it, and drive away. If you want a different kind of vehicle for which there is less demand, there is also less supply. If you want a car like a Ferrari, you order one in advance, pay a deposit, and wait for the car maker to build it for you. Even if you want a used one, you probably have to bid for it at an auction. Ask yourself if you would rather be building Fords for customers who expect you will always have a ready inventory or for customers who are looking for something special to be ordered and paid for in advance.



(Left to right) Jon Erickson, *Insomniac*, 15" x 15", and *Last Gasp*, 15" x 11". Visit www.auroraglass.com to view more of Jon's art.

Artisans who make jewelry usually avoid working with gold, because it's so much more expensive than silver. As a result, there is lots of silver jewelry available to choose from for those who like silver jewelry. Not so much with customers who prefer gold. Usually, those customers are unwilling to consider silver. The market for gold jewelry is a lot less than for silver, but so is the supply. With silver jewelry there is more supply than demand. With gold jewelry there is more demand than supply. Thus, it's sometimes easier to sell gold jewelry at a higher price than to sell silver jewelry at a lower price. If you choose to travel along the same road as everyone else, you'll be unnoticed in the crowd. If you choose the road less traveled, you're more likely to be noticed.



*James A. Veenstra, (clockwise from bottom left),
The Cub Scouts, Kara's View, and Risin' at Sunset.*

James utilizes sandblast etching and a sculpted copper overlay technique that he pioneered over 30 years ago to create his art. Visit www.eaglass.com to view more of the artist's work.

Test Your Market

Don't assume that because you like something you made means it will sell. Also, don't assume that because it sold in one place it will sell in other places. A product that sells exceptionally quickly in one place might do nothing more than collect cobwebs in another place.

Test different products in different markets to learn what sells. Retail craft shows provide an exceptional way to test markets.

Functional Versus Artistic

Many artisans think they should always make things that are functional. That seems reasonable, but functional things are already widely available. If someone wants bowls or dishes or trays, they can find lots of them to choose from at Costco or Walmart. If you make bowls or dishes or trays, why should they buy yours instead of the probably much lower cost ones at large retail stores?

You might consider instead making things that have no function other than to be admired and appreciated. Functional things are more likely to be perceived as craft than as art. Here's another adage to remember: "People don't buy art to use as a fruit bowl."

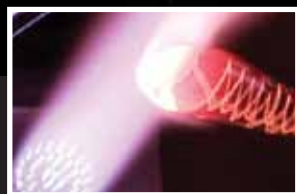


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GAI

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Be Special

Perhaps the second most common mistake artisans make is trying to sell work that is easy or inexpensive to make. If you hope your work will be noticed in a crowded market, you'll have to step it up to something above average. Here are some things you can do to be special.

- **Use special equipment.** Make things that require special equipment to produce. This is especially true when it's equipment or tools you created yourself specifically for things you make.
- **Employ difficult techniques.** Experiment with new ways to make things. Also practice techniques that take a long time to master.
- **Build skills.** Invest time in mastering the skills needed to do exceptional work.
- **Put extra time into experimentation and finishing the work.** Do the extra work that can make your designs special and distinctive. A good example of that is putting extra time into cold working, which is an effective way to turn average work into exceptional creations. What you do to glass before or after it's in the kiln, for instance, is often as important as what happens in the kiln.
- **Create unique designs that are your own.** Doing good work isn't enough. Do something that is special and different than what is offered by others. Be original. Be innovative. Be distinctive.
- **Embrace production.** It doesn't need to be large-scale production. A percentage figure that can be relied on is the "factor of 4." No matter how long it takes you to do one piece, doing a dozen or so at the same time can reduce the time for each to a fourth or less. If your prototype took an hour to make, you can rely on reducing your time to 15 minutes per item.
- **Finally, ignore the critics.** In the end, the only opinion that really matters is that of the person willing to buy your work. Ignore the opinions of the many self-appointed experts. After all, "A critic is someone who owns a road map but can't drive the car."

GA



Above, Lotus Flower by Sally Prash.
 Photo by Mike Brandt.

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On the Cover, Fish Sculpture
 by Mauro Vianello.

Dennis Brady has been a full-time professional glass artisan since 1980 and currently works with stained glass, fusing, casting, glassblowing, and sandblasting. He has authored and published six books of stained glass patterns plus A Lazy Man's Guide to Stained Glass. Along with his sons, Dane and Jason Brady, he operates several companies. DeBrady Glassworks produces glass art; Victorian Art Glass sells tools, equipment, and supplies; and Master Artisan Products manufactures molds and tools for glass artisans. He has also created the website Glass Campus, which offers over 100 tutorials and videos teaching numerous glass art techniques as well as tips on how to make a living as a glass artisan.

Dennis teaches extensively in his home studio in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, and as a guest instructor in several other countries. He is also a contributing artist to GPQ's live and recorded Glass Expert Webinars® and Master Glass Artisan Lecture Series™. His "push the boundaries" approach to experimentation and innovation is always, "How fast can I go until I skid into the ditch?" Visit www.debrady.com to learn more about Dennis and his art.



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MICHIGAN GLASS PROJECT

ART THAT GIVES BACK

MGP was founded on the idea that by uniting as one community, as one being, as one soul we can enact huge change in the world. Our hope each year is that everyone who joins our mission takes that concept out into the world with them. Now more than ever, we are all being tested to apply it. We must think about our own well being while also thinking about how our actions affect the other humans in the world.

Our hope is that MGP has trained us all well in dealing with large scale change and that the feelings we all experience when we take part in the event have helped you transition into thinking about the community at large during this trying time and beyond.

Remember we love you and that one soul is capable of creating massive impact on the greater whole. Until we all meet again with hugs, fist bumps, and laughs. Stay safe and well, our friends.



#2020MGP

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Illuminating Glass Art in Sweden



Wayne Stratman, Blue Plasma Molecule Tree.

Exploring Illuminated Glass

Since the early '90s, GAS has been carving out space at the annual conference for unique exhibitions around illuminated glass art. We're working with the Glass Factory Boda in Småland for the *Upplyst Glas / Enlightened Glass Exhibition*. Featuring artists working with neon, plasma, incandescent, LED, EL wire, laser, and more, this juried exhibition will showcase GAS members from Sweden, other European countries, and across the globe.

GAS attendees will also have the opportunity to attend the "Ljus: Swedish Light & Glass Craft" presentation by Ben Orozco & Tommy Gustafsschiöld. Highlighting the history of neon, glass, and plasma techniques specific to Sweden, this demonstration will showcase processes and methods unique to the region.

"Neon Around the World" with James Akers will celebrate different techniques used for neon across the globe in his exciting lecture and demonstration. Located at the Glass Factory Boda in Småland, this presentation will be in close proximity to the only production neon shop in Sweden as well as to other countries in Europe that practice neon differently.



Percy Echols working on illuminated glass, 2019.

by The Glass Art Society Staff

Every year, the Glass Art Society (GAS) brings together the international community of glass artists and enthusiasts for a multiday conference featuring glass art from every discipline. This year, we're celebrating the 49th Annual GAS Conference in Sweden as we explore *RE:GENERATION – Innovation Through Tradition*.

Over the last decade, Swedish glassmaking has seen a resurgence, with artists developing new technologies and forging ahead with a new glass economy. One such revival has been seen in illuminated glass art, and we're excited to share a preview of what neon and plasma experiences are coming to the conference.



Historic Swedish Sign Restoration, Fröberg Skor (Fröberg Shoes), 30" x 24", double-sided neon signage from a 110-year old shoe store. Neon restoration and photo by Tommy Gustafshöjd.

Additional Conference Highlights

Where can you get the word out about illuminated glass art? Look no further than *Taming Lightning*, the podcast all about the world of glass art, scientific glass, plasma, and neon. Percy Echols, the podcast's creator, will present "Taming Lightning: Plasma in the Hot Shop" and share how he used Instagram to connect these diverse communities.

"Creating Large-Scale Flameworked Plasma Sculpture" by Wayne Stratman will explore the process of making large, stationary sculptures using a variety of flameworking techniques to join, blow, and stretch. Learn to defy gravity by working quickly without developing excessive strain on the glass and maintaining relatively consistent wall thickness.

As we approach our next international conference in Sweden, GAS members are also reminded of a truly memorable neon demonstration in Murano, Italy. Check out our 2018 *Murano Conference Journal* for Patrick Collentine's "Magic Light of Plasma/Neon" comic, featuring special guests from The Glass Factory Boda in Sweden. While you're at the Conference, don't miss your chance to explore Sweden's "crystal kingdom" and uncover all the hidden gems that Småland has to offer.

G.A

Shortly before *Glass Art*® went to press, GAS announced that the 2020 Conference unfortunately has been cancelled due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions and will not be rescheduled. The GAS 2021 Conference has not yet been announced but will take place in the USA. Visit www.glassart.org for information on becoming a GAS member and for continuing updates on the conference and other GAS events.

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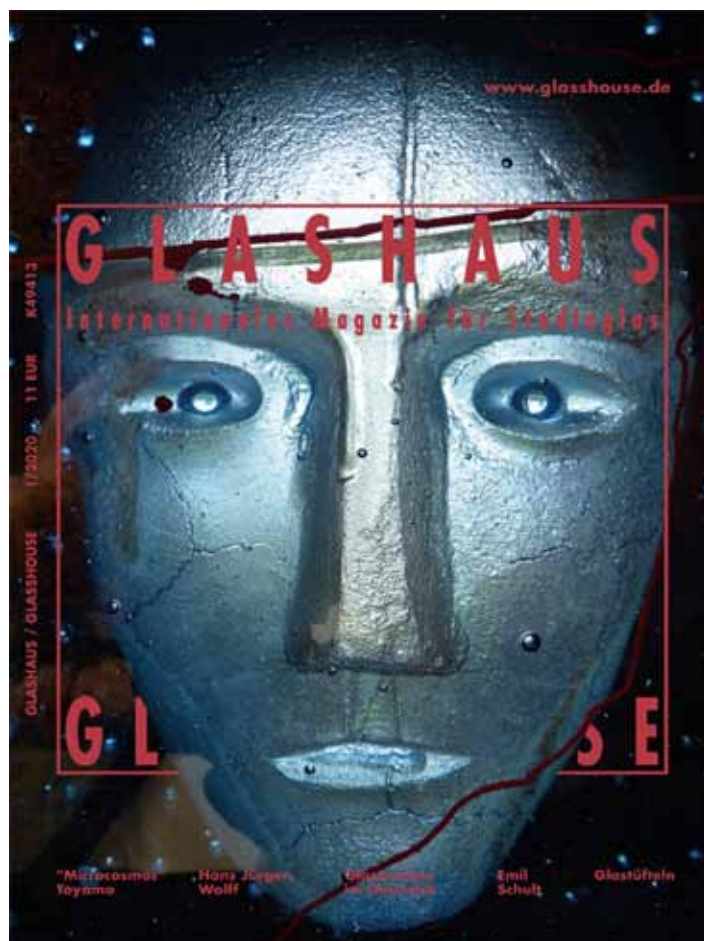
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Creativity FAILURE

FINDING THE GOOD IN THE UNEXPECTED



Running Cheetah

by Milon Townsend

What is failure? Things not working out just the way you wanted? Like the scene where the scientist proclaims, “The experiment was a failure!” Well, that would be true only if it was a poorly designed or executed experiment. The purpose was to learn what would happen when X, Y, and Z were combined in a certain way. Even though the result might not have been what was expected, that doesn’t make it a waste of time. It wasn’t a failure.

Learning to Redefine Failure

Years ago, decades even, I made a cheetah running at full tilt. I carefully annealed it in preparation for etching and mounting, but not carefully enough, it seems. When I took it out of the kiln, it had wilted sideways. Not what I intended. However, when I held it up and looked at it in its new orientation, it seemed to me that it very aptly represented the animal taking a turn at high speed. It was better than I had planned, but I had to take a minute to look at it and reevaluate it.

We need to train ourselves to be aware, to see, to recognize the good in the unexpected. “Failure” might be likened to working with a found object where you are suddenly faced with something you had not predicted or expected, and you need to decide how to deal with it. The fact that it might have been destined for a specific purpose, say an order due tomorrow for a client with certain expectations, might be a serious inconvenience. But don’t let the exigencies of the situation cause you to overlook something wonderful that may have occurred. Don’t allow the context of preset expectations to force you to give in to defeat.

Much of dealing with failure, which is an inevitable aspect of trying new things, is redefining it. If you test an hypothesis and it works out differently than you expected, is that a failure? Or did you successfully discover something not to pursue or that can be used for something else? Develop within yourself the ability to instantly repurpose the direction, redirect the energy, reconsider the idea, reshape the model, redesign the paradigm. Switch your way of thinking, because thinking of something as a failure is symptomatic of your having been too attached to the idea in the original way you’d conceptualized it.

I made a solid octopus to go with a hollow decanter and disliked it so much that I set it aside in preparation to throwing it away. It sat around the shop for a year, since I couldn’t quite bring myself to toss it. I reheated it in the kiln, reshaped the tentacles, and mounted it on a piece of pecky cypress wood that a friend gave me. That led to what has become a successful series.

The Benefits of Objective Evaluation

Don’t be attached to a tool or a result just because you have a lot of time or money invested in it. Your ability to objectively evaluate the quality of results increases in direct proportion to the length of time between making and considering the piece. It’s also useful to have points in the process at which you can tell whether or not it’s worth continuing to invest in that particular piece, in that predetermined way.

That being said, there is an argument to be made for continuing on through to the end, as you’ll never really know what would’ve

happened without trying. There's only one way to find out. Persevering until the bitter end often produces good results, although they may not be what you'd originally anticipated or planned for.

We were commissioned to produce a set of large cast panels of koi fish for a large hospital. Unable to finish on time in the manner agreed to, I changed the approach to give them something on schedule. After installation, I was contacted to remove them. I lost the job *and* the client. I didn't want to waste the \$3,000 in glass as well, so I busted them up with a hammer to recast them just to see if it would work, what would happen. It was much, much more effective due specifically to the recast glass, as the veiling from that first process acted just like flowing water and showed it.

Given how much we liked the look of the work with the twice-cast glass, I continued to pursue the series. We have produced panels in various sizes and proportions with the koi in the precast glass showing the swirls and veiling of water—definitely my most successful series and definitely because of the “failure” of the first project. It did cost me what would probably have been my biggest client, the successful direction of which would have guided my career in a very different path. I'll never know if that was good or bad, but it's an excellent illustration of what is meant by redefining failure.



Octopus on pecky cypress wood



Koi panel cracked



Koi panel rocks



*Koi panel detailed
with veiling*

Turning Off Failure's Emotional Noise

In 1982, I was given perhaps the most important commission of my young life. At the tender age of 25, I was asked to create a sculpture representing the love and respect held by myself and the 2,074 other couples being married—we say *Blessed*—in Madison Square Garden in New York City, my home at the time. This sculpture was to represent the love and respect we held for the Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon, the founders and leaders of our fledgling movement, the Unification Church. No pressure.

I spent three weeks working to create a globe of the earth composed of 6 mm glass rods representing the latitudes and longitudes, with a target overall diameter of 21 inches. I used borosilicate plate glass to represent the continents, attached to the outside of the gridded sphere. After the nearly three weeks of constant working on the project, I was finally at the point of assembling the two completed hemispheres. I rested one atop the other and joined them with a small torch, at which point the united world promptly rolled off the workbench and smashed onto the floor in a million pieces. Approximately.

The wedding was to take place in two days. A frantic phone call confirmed that the entire event, nor the presentation of the globe, could be postponed. I swept all of the remaining pieces off the table and kicked them under the workbench. I began again, working without stopping over the following 40 hours to complete the project, without pause for food that I can recall, definitely no sleep, and absolutely skipping the rehearsal.

I delivered the piece an hour before it was needed and went back to my Greenwich Village shop to change for the ceremony, of which I was a part. I hurried, as in a dream, into the Felt Forum next to the Garden, where our remarkable group had gathered prior to entering the main space. Running against the flow of thousands of figures in their wedding finery, I reached the Forum and saw amongst the remaining couples yet to leave an empty seat. My bride to be, whom I had met just the previous week, was waiting for me. We entered together and have been married ever since, 37 years as of this writing.

I have remembered this lesson many times since. Some call it compartmentalization. Some failures are simply too big to get upset about. When there is no assistance possible and the deadline is about to crush you into oblivion, it seems obvious that the only thing you can do is act. I did not have the luxury of taking time to get upset, of throwing a tantrum, of even cleaning up the mess. Ever since that day, I've found that there's a switch inside myself that I can throw, a switch that turns off the emotional noise. It allows me to rationally consider my possible options moving forward. Especially in making glass, there is a point that is unambiguously the end. Dropping a piece onto a concrete floor can definitely accomplish that.

It may help to know that in nearly every case, the next piece is always better than the one you lost. You will have learned something that will make the next one better in one or more ways. The cost may be high, but as long as you've paid it, you might as well reap what you can while you're there.

GA



Milon with globe at The Blessing



Photo of the couples at Madison Square Garden



Milon Townsend is a self-taught artist with over 45 years of experience in the field of glass artwork and education. He is known for his torch and kiln worked sculpture featuring the human form. Visit www.intuitiveglass.com or Google "Milon Townsend images" to view more of his work and go to thebluemoonpress.com for his educational materials. You can also e-mail milontownsend@gmail.com. The sequence presented here is excerpted from Milon's upcoming book on Creativity.

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Life Forms

CGS at the Pyramid Gallery, York

by Pam Reekie

A selected exhibition of glass inspired by structure, form, and evolution in the natural world will be presented by 34 members of the Contemporary Glass Society (CGS) May 2–July 12, 2020. The CGS invited its 950 U.K. and international members to submit for entry to the organization's fifth exhibition at Pyramid Gallery in York, UK. From a submission of 84, the selection panel offered the exhibition to 34 glass artists.

Pyramid Gallery, which goes back to 1982, has a long-standing reputation for showing and representing contemporary glass artists in York and has been working with the CGS since 2008. Gallery Owner and Manager Terry Brett was part of the selection panel along with glass artist Effie Burns and CGS Administrator Pam Reekie. "We have selected a variety of styles that represent different techniques, but with a view toward how the whole show will look," says Terry. "It is important to me that we include work by both high profile glass artists and those who are closer to the beginning of their careers. The standard is very high, as is the imagination of the artists in interpreting the theme."

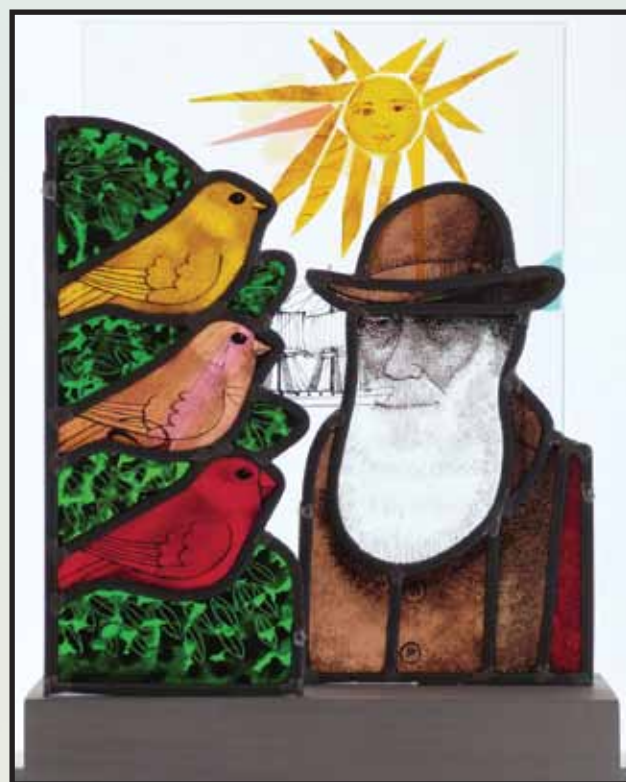
Celebrating Nature

Due to the many recent protests about climate change and extinction of species, the organizers wanted to celebrate nature and natural forms while marking the 200th anniversary of the May 11, 1820, launching of *The Beagle*, the ship that was to take Charles Darwin on his two-year voyage to the Galapagos Islands. Darwin eventually published his seminal work, *On the Origin of Species*, in 1859.

With the broad ranging title *Life Forms*, this show includes a great variety of interpretations of the theme in forms that include fused wall pieces, cast forms, pâte de verre sculpture and wall pieces, plus blown and cold worked vessels and forms. The exhibition will also include waterjet cut glass, painted and leaded glass, fused glass bowls, engraved bowls, lampwork, and mixed media sculpture.



Carolyn Basing, *Signa Vitae*, 2020.



Frans Wesselman, *Finches of the Galapagos*, 48 cm x 22 cm x 9.5 cm, 2019.

A Visual Lesson in Natural Science

York is a center of excellence for stained glass, so it is very appropriate that one of the central pieces of this show is *Finches of the Galapagos*, a painted and leaded glass portrait of Charles Darwin by Frans Wesselman. This beautifully made study includes three varieties of finches that gave Darwin the necessary data to help him formulate his evolutionary theory.

In contrast to the Darwin portrait, the plight of coral reefs is alluded to in *Porifera VIII* by Roberta Mason. She will be showing three vessels inspired by the marine animals known as *Porifera*, which are more commonly known as sponges. These creatures are recognized as the least evolved creatures in the animal kingdom, but they are also extremely numerous with about 5,000 different species.



Roberta Mason, *Porifera VIII*, 2019.

The exhibition, which promises to be something of a visual lesson in natural science as well as a treat for collectors of glass, opens on Saturday, May 2 with a public event that will be attended by some of the artists. It is then open every day between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., and Sundays between 12:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. Close to the Minster churches and situated on Stonegate, one of York's busiest streets, the gallery is housed in a 600-year-old building that is owned by the National Trust. The building is distinctive but small, with an overhanging first floor that is typical of medieval buildings in York. Because of its small "sweet shop" window, the building is easy to miss, but in the upstairs gallery, a great deal of glass will be on display in a charming setting. **GA**

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, the 2020 CGS Life Forms member exhibition at the Pyramid Gallery has been postponed until March 2021. There will, however, be an online showing. Visit www.cgs.org.uk for further details and to learn more about becoming a CGS member.

Artists Exhibiting in *Life Forms*

Carolyn Basing
Mim Brigham
Isobel Brunsdon
Tabitha Burrill
Helen Eastham
Dominic Fonde
Dot Hill
Catherine Hough
Katherine Huskie
Max Jacquard
Naomi Jacques
Susan Kinley
Yuki Kokai
Rebecca Laister
Monette Larsen
Nicky Lawrence
Jon Lewis
Roberta Mason
Anthony McCabe
Wendy Newhofer
Tracy Nicholls
Yoshiko Okada
Rebecca Rowland-Chandler
Helen Slater-Stokes
Nancy Sutcliffe
Angela Thwaites
Noreen Todd
Elizabeth Welch
Frans Wesselman
Sue Woolhouse
Sandra Young
Maria Zulueta



David Graeber

Masterful Paperweights

by Vicki Schneider

Photography by Ron Farina

Some people need the security of a 9 to 5 job with benefits, but David Graeber isn't one of those people. In 1989, with no experience in flameworking, David left a secure job as a foreman at a sign company and became Paul Stankard's assistant. Stankard is considered by many to be the father of the modern glass paperweight. One can only guess what Paul saw in the young Graeber. Perhaps it was his work ethic, his attention to detail, or his proven ability to do fine work with his hands. Whatever it was, that hire changed more than one life and, over time, brought us one of the world's best contemporary paperweight makers.

When David's uncle, a paperweight collector, recommended him to Stankard, he didn't even know what a paperweight was. David recalls, "I thought you painted a rock a color and you put those little fake googly eyes on it. Honestly, that's what I thought a paperweight was." His visit to Stankard's studio changed all that!

One of Stankard's root spirits was the first paperweight David saw, and he was overwhelmed by its minute attention to detail and

elegance. Two weeks after their initial meeting, Stankard offered Graeber the opportunity to work with him full time.

It was a big decision. Could David leave a job he was familiar with and was trained in to accept a new position in an entirely new area that he knew little about? This wasn't the first time Graeber had taken such a risk. He had previously accepted a three-year apprenticeship with George Vail, one of his college professors. Through that association, which had gone very well, David developed his strong work ethic.

Despite his father's reservations, Graeber accepted the job with Stankard. Just then, be it coincidence, fate, or divine intervention, David happened to see a recent feature article that *Time* magazine had run on Paul Stankard. When David showed the magazine to his father, it went a long way in relieving his father's apprehension. What initially started like an apprenticeship led to a friendship spanning decades and resulted in several collaborative creations between the two artists.

Dave Graeber, Lilac Memories, 4" x 4" sphere, created for the American Cancer Foundation Auction. The piece sold for \$4,000 and was dedicated to Dave's stepmother-in-law Marie who had bladder cancer.

Learning the Trade

Paul Stankard, an exceptional artist, believes an important way to learn is through trial and error. According to David, "Paul threw me in the deep end. He'd say, 'Heat up that piece of glass.' So I turned the flame on not knowing the temperature and boom! My first thing blew up." That happened over and over on his first day until an incredulous Stankard finally told him to use a lower flame. Graeber quickly realized that if he were to be of substantial assistance to Stankard, he would have to ask a lot of questions. As his technique improved, Graeber was able to help Stankard achieve his aesthetic. Over time, they became a team, with Stankard as the coach.

Perhaps one of the greatest compliments Graeber received from Stankard was when he encouraged Dave to establish his own studio. Graeber took his advice, and today his Westmont, New Jersey, studio is thriving.

In addition to running his own studio, Graeber continues to do a wide range of work with Stankard, from assembling some pieces to helping with equipment maintenance. "Stankard treated me nicely. He took care of me when I was raising my family. As you get older, you realize it's your turn to give back a little bit."

Success and Happiness

David has lived his life being true to himself and has a great sense of responsibility. "Success is following your heart, taking a chance in life, doing things that make you happy, and having the courage to keep doing it. If you can put money aside in the beginning and just focus on your passion, generally money will follow if you do something well enough. I don't like seeing people go through life angry and miserable. You're not trapped. I tell people that they can always find a job and make money, but there's a difference between making money with something you'd love, truly love."

One can gain insights into David Graeber's values by listening to the advice he recently shared with his son-in-law Joseph who is just starting out with a new family. "What's going to make you successful is responsibility—having your new son Dawson, going to work every day, providing, doing the best you can at your job. I do. As long as I go to work every day and do it the best that I am able, I can sleep better at night."

Graeber, happily married and father of three, is now mid-life. He readily admits he is not content to rest on his laurels. "I am a happy man. I continue to be motivated and enjoy the creative challenge that each day brings."



Dave Graeber, Hydrangea Bouquet paperweight, 4" x 4" sphere.

Creating Series

Graeber likes to create weights around themes based on places he's visited, experiences he's had, or people who matter to him. His themes evolve over time until he's ready to move on to something new.

One such evolution was his citrus theme. David and his wife Sandra went to Sicily to visit their daughter Karen who was deployed to Catania, Sicily. They soon discovered that Sicily is the lemon capital of the world. After eating and seeing lemons everywhere, he decided to do a series on lemons as a memory of their trip. Graeber called it *Fruits of Discovery*, because prior to his trip, he had no clue about the relationship between lemons and Sicily. He started off making lemons and lemon wedges in glass. Then he came across a unique tree that was grafted with lemons, limes, and oranges on the same plant. Inspired by this "cocktail tree," his theme expanded to a cocktail wreath.

(Top to bottom) Dave Graeber, Cocktail Weight, 4-1/4" x 4-1/4", part of the Fruits of Discovery series with citrus fruit expanded by adding limes and oranges; Basket Weight, 2-1/2" x 3-1/2", cut and polished with a gingham cut. Dave's first commissioned weight.



Following the devastation of Hurricane Sandy, Graeber did a *Rebirth* series in which he surrounded a seagull egg with a wreath of different indigenous flowers to signify the erosion of the New Jersey beaches and their vegetation. Another weight in the series showed a cranberry blossom growing out of a seagull egg. According to David, a significant percent of the cranberry farms was affected by the storm, and he wanted to create a tribute to them. He completed another series with a fleur-de-lis, a symbol of New Orleans, in honor of the victims of Katrina and donated one of his pieces to an auction to benefit them.



Personal Connections

Many of David's weights are inspired by people who are dear to him. Graeber's great-aunt Margaret MacBride, who lived to the age of 103, lived next door. David would maintain her property and vividly remembers the miniature tea roses that grew on a trellis next to her house.

When it came time for him to make his first weight, David drew a blank. He credits his wife with suggesting he do his great-aunt's rose trellis. His very first paperweight was roses on a trellis that he called *MacBride Bouquet* after Margaret. He cold worked each rod to resemble a lattice board, incorporating an illusion of his woodworking skills into the paperweight.

(Top to bottom) Dave Graeber, *Gratitude Heart*, 4" x 2-1/2" with doves incorporated for a wedding gift; *Chrysanthemum Bouquet*, 4" x 4" sphere with chrysanthemum flowers consisting of over 150 petals each; *Asian Rose Bouquet*, oval plaque with gingham cut by Jim Poore, 2-1/2" x 3-3/4" x 2-1/2".

Another time, Marie, David's stepmother-in-law, had bladder cancer, and her family asked David to make a piece to be auctioned off by the American Cancer Society. In considering what to make, he remembered all the times that Marie had talked about the annual Lilac Festival in Rochester, New York, where she lived. Inspired by his recollection, he decided to make all different colored lilacs and called it *Lilac Memories*. The night of the auction, Marie was very moved when she saw the orb for the first time and heard that David had dedicated the piece to her.

"When I can do something like that with my work and touch people, it gives me a warm feeling," David recounts. "I feel honored. I did something right. *I* didn't do it; my *work* did it. That's when I realized that I actually do have a pretty cool job here. I can touch people's feelings. I can touch their hearts. Once you see that happen, you know that you're doing your job."

Graeber made a dozen pendants with forget-me-nots in honor of his father-in-law Bill Flowers and his daughter, who both served in the military, and gave them to his family. Currently he's working on pussy willows at his mother's request. Graeber quips that his mother is his number one collector and owns more of his work than he does.

For David, making beautiful, nature-inspired paperweights isn't enough. Before he starts a weight, he immerses himself in his subject matter. In preparation for making his cranberry weights, he frequently visited the Rutgers University Cranberry and Blueberry Research Center. Similarly, his series with honeybees was informed by his internship at a honeybee farm.

He enjoys providing his collectors with detailed information about his subject matter from having experienced it firsthand.



(Top to bottom) Dave Graeber, *Never Forget*, 3-1/4" x 2-1/2"; *Cherry Blossoms with Honeybee*, 2-1/2" x 3-1/2", made for a paperweight convention held in Washington, D.C., to celebrate the cherry blossoms gifted from Japan.

Good Works

David's good heart and love of glass are evident in the support he provides to Project Fire in Chicago, Illinois, and the Perkins Art Center in Collingswood, New Jersey. Project Fire, part of the respected nonprofit ArtReach Chicago, strives to prevent violence in at-risk youth through a combination of glass arts education, mentoring, and trauma-specific psychoeducation.

About a year ago, Graeber helped establish Project Fire's flameworking studio. He spent a week there setting up their work space, replacing their old, worn-out tools, building a new flameworking bench, and creating a more organized and comfortable environment. It's challenging work, but David thinks Project Fire is making a difference. He spoke of two young men who had been in rival gangs and are now good friends working together in the hot shop. Graeber has traveled there a number of times to share his knowledge with the participants. He's also worked with Selman's Gallery to provide a retail outlet for some of the group's creations, with all profits going to the program.

David also speaks with pride about the flameworking workshops he helped establish at Perkins Art Center in a warehouse building they are converting into various art studios. He teaches groups of novice flameworkers and brand-new beadmakers how to work at the torch. Graeber enjoys the experience, which gives him a break from the small detailed work that usually consumes his day.

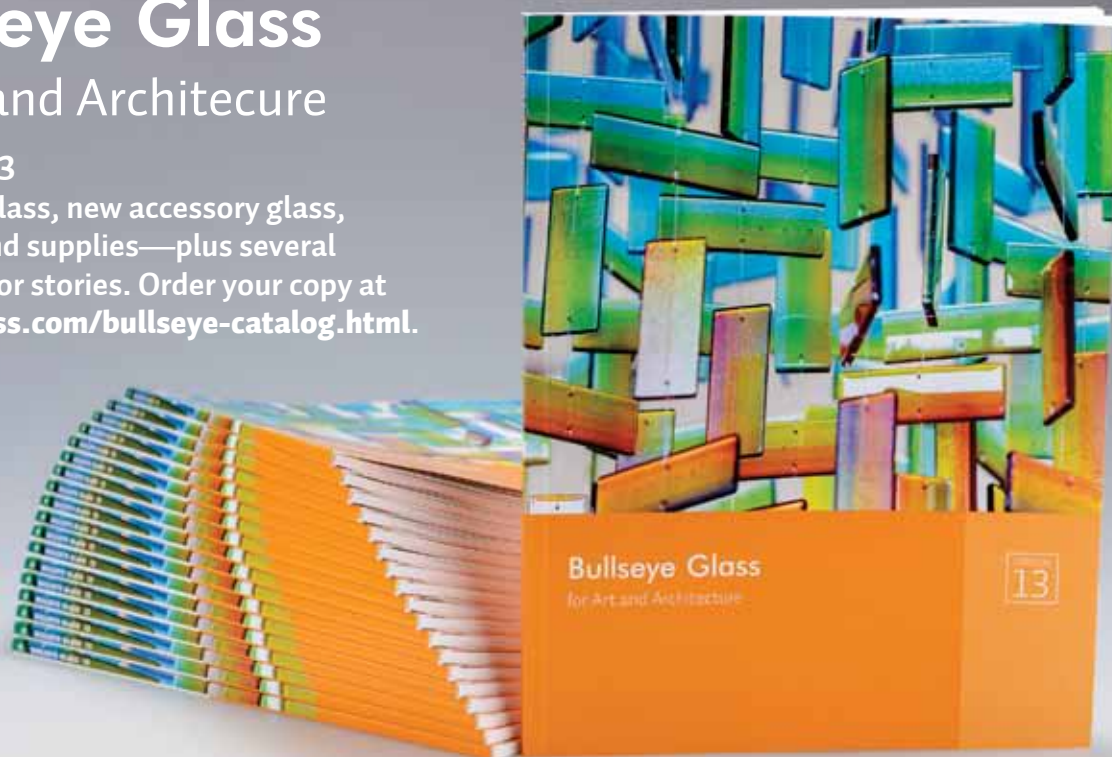
Graeber demonstrating for Project Fire students in Chicago.



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Dave Graeber, Spring Harvest Pedestal Weight, 8" x 4", created to expand the artist's weights by adding a foot plus merese techniques learned at a Corning William Gudenrath Venetian workshop.

Advice to the Next Generation

According to David, success as a flameworker is built on passion and discipline. "You have to have a good work ethic. You have to put in your time. In the beginning, maybe it's okay to mimic or copy artists you admire. Then you can slowly discover what is your own passion, your own interest."

Graeber understands that some people have a production mentality and focus primarily on the commercial aspect of their art. "For me," he explains, "I have more of a fine arts expectation. I don't want to do reproductions. I want to focus on doing unique pieces and then get paid accordingly."

David offers this advice to new flameworkers. "Mastering your craft is the main thing. If you're going to do something, find it, master it, and stick with it. I see too many people jump around to this and that, and they never achieve mastery."

Graeber puts in at least six hours a day in his studio, often seven days a week, no matter what. Even after 30 years, he still looks forward to going to his studio. "If I don't have that, that'll be the day I know to find a new career." Based on the new ideas and collaborations he's exploring, David will likely continue flameworking for years to come. His collectors, students, and the many people who are touched by his work will certainly be glad to hear that. **GA**



David Graeber

Graeber Art Glass

david@davidgraeber.com

www.davidgraeber.com

Graeber Art Glass (Facebook)

South Jersey Glass Artists and Flameworkers (Facebook)

Instagram @davidgraeberartglass

Vicki Schneider follows the tradition of Venetian flameworking artists to produce decorative solid and blown glass art. Mainly working off-hand in COE 104 soft glass, she is inspired by her childhood spent on the Jersey shore. Her current bodies of work include Mama's Garden, composed of lifelike blown and solid flowers, and Childhood, vignettes celebrating the innocence of youth.

In 2009, Schneider opened Expressive Glass, her teaching studio in Buffalo, New York, to share her passion for glass with novice and skilled glassworkers. Since 2006, the artist has introduced more than 500 students to the magic of glass art and has studied with and hosted many of the world's most respected artists. Learn more about Vicki's work and her studio at www.expressiveglass.com.



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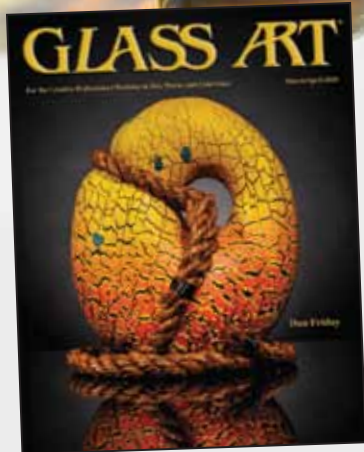
I wanted to thank you again. I really enjoyed my conversation with Colleen, and after reading the article I was reminded how thoughtful and thorough her questions were! I really feel that the article helped to share my story in glass in a way that I could not. Thank you very much!

Dan Friday

Cover artist for
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