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Volume 36 Number 2

Crista Matteson



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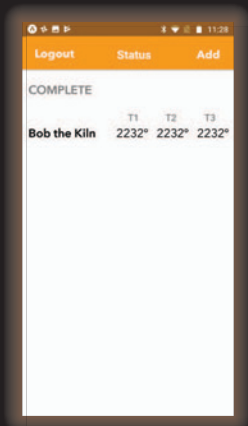


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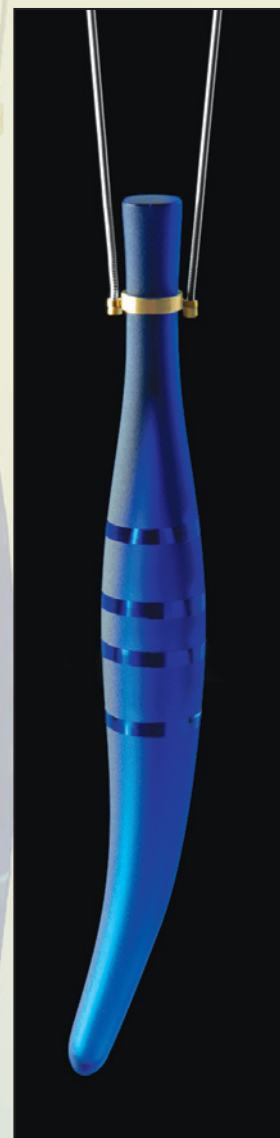
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Above:
Don Friedlich,
Amphora Series Necklace.
Photo by Sanders Visual Images.
On the cover:
Crista Matteson, Forest Watcher.
Photo by Daniel Fox.

Editorial Calendar / Advertising Deadlines

May/June 2021

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Crista Matteson

Cast Glass and So Much More

by Vicki Schneider

When people view Crista Matteson's evocative glass and mixed media pieces, they might never guess that it's only been about two years since she committed to making glass her primary medium. She has always been an explorer which, coupled with her artistic inclination, led her on an interesting path toward glass casting.

An Artistic Journey

Crista studied textile design at The California College of Art in San Francisco, California, and worked for a number of years as a costume designer. After awhile, she was ready for a change and decided to quit her job and go backpacking around Europe. Upon her return, she didn't have a job but had some experience making jewelry for herself and friends and was often stopped on the street with compliments, asking her where she got her pieces. That spurred her on to make jewelry to sell as a temporary solution to her unemployment.

Crista started going around to shops in San Francisco asking if they wanted to buy her jewelry. Eventually a sales rep who had seen her work called, and over time, her stopgap job evolved into a very successful 12-year business. At one point she had six employees and three of her own sales reps who represented her all across the United States. With the help of other artists who produced some pieces for her, the product line evolved to include picture frames, framed mirrors, chandeliers, and candleholders. As her business grew, her offerings incorporated a lot of mixed media. Today, those influences can be seen in her cast glass installations.

When Matteson had kids, she found her lifestyle needed an overhaul. She didn't want to work the required nine-to-five anymore but instead wanted to get back into art and not spend a lot of her time on the chores of running a successful business. Crista recalls, "I was getting burnt out, so I decided to stay home with my kids for a while and explore as many different art mediums as I could."



Fortunately for her, Seattle, Washington, where she was then living, has the Pratt Fine Arts Center, which offers a wide range of art classes for the community. She decided to start with painting classes and really loved them.

Tapping into her artistic curiosity, Crista applied for and received a scholarship at Pratt in metalworking. There she began forging and welding steel and doing bronze casting. She took a variety of classes in which she learned to weld armatures, sculpt in clay, and do encaustic painting. The more she studied, the more she applied her learning to her independent work. Crista put all of her skills with various media together to create a body of work entitled, *Free Range*. Those sculptures, which were encaustic painting on clay and fabric, with bones, sticks and steel, served as her transition into sculpture.



(Left to right) Crista Matteson, *Tenuous Connection*, kiln cast glass and ribbons, 27"h x 6"w x 8"d; *Winter's End*, 21"h x 10" w x 10"d, glazed ceramic, lost wax cast bronze, kiln cast glass. Photos by Daniel Fox. The artist divesting a bronze casting at the Pratt Fine Arts Center foundry in Seattle, Washington. Photo by Nancy Bocek.

About two to three years later in 2011, Matteson applied for a glass scholarship. She loved casting bronze from her wax sculptures, but she missed the colors she achieved in painting. Crista surmised that working with glass would allow her to apply the wax and casting processes she enjoyed to a medium that incorporated color. She learned the basics of casting glass and used her small castings in her multimedia pieces.

In 2018 Crista attended Pilchuck Glass School in Stanwood, Washington. Amazed and excited by all the things that could be done with glass, she decided she was going to stop being a jack-of-all-trades and focus her art on one medium—and that medium was glass. Two weeks after her return from Pilchuck, she got a job at The Corning Museum of Glass as an assistant for a casting class. There her love affair with glass continued.

Communicating a Message

When Crista began sculpting in clay, she naturally gravitated to human figures, the kinds of subjects she had concentrated on in school. When she switched to glass, Crista decided to change her subject matter as well. She started sculpting animal figures, working to capture what she calls “magical realism.”

The first piece Matteson completed with animals was called *Tenuous Connection*. It’s comprised of three deer heads connected by softly draped ribbons that are held at each end by human hands. She designed the composition and colors to communicate how people are losing touch with the natural environment and animals. “I was thinking about the rural area where I grew up. There were coyotes and deer everywhere, and now it’s all housing developments. There used to be deer in my backyard all the time, and it was really

beautiful. Now I see deer only when I go hiking in the mountains. The hands that are holding the ribbons are opaque made with white and pastel colors. The colors appear to be fading, signifying that our awareness is fading, and we are losing connection.”



(Left to right) Crista Matteson, *Autumn Deer*, kiln cast glass, 15"h x 16"w x 10"d; *Autumn Chipmunk with One Purple Ear*, 9"h x 4"w x 6"d, kiln cast glass. Photos by Daniel Fox.



Crista viewed her COVID-19 social isolation as the perfect time to start a new, massive project and learn about working with flat glass. Her new installation, a tribute to her father, is called *Outside In* and is inspired by her childhood home that her father designed. "My dad was an avid environmentalist and architect. Our house was unusual. It was like living in this giant sculpture in a really beautiful setting. We had floor to ceiling windows in every room that looked out onto picturesque views of Mount Rainier, Lake Washington, and lush pastures."

The footprint of *Outside In* is four feet wide, five feet long, and seven feet tall, making it big enough for an adult to sit inside. The flat glass side panels will be silk screened with Crista's photo collages, and the top of the structure will be wooden slats. "When you're inside, it will feel like you're under a forest canopy with the light coming through." Within the walls, she intends to have a big video screen playing her field recordings, videos, and nature photography. Though the concept is still in development, the artist wants her installation to advocate for everyone's need for urban green space, a critical and timely consideration as the Seattle region continues its rapid growth.



(Left to right) Crista Matteson, wood frame for *Outside In* installation in process, 7'h x 5'w x 4'd. Photo by the artist. Where the Dew Falls, 15"h x 11" x 11"d. Photo by Daniel Fox.

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(Left to right) Crista Matteson, *Squirrel with Fig and Flowers*, 6"h x 7"w x 13" long; *Pink Squirrel in a Squirrel's Garden*, 7"h x 8"w x 13" long; *Caught in a Whirlwind*, 14"h x 13"w x 10"d. Photos by Daniel Fox. The artist in her home studio sculpting a jack rabbit in oil-based clay, the first step in the kiln casting process. Photo by the artist.

The central figures in Matteson's pieces are animals. First, she sculpts many of her pieces in oil-based or water-based clay and then creates a rubber mold with a plaster backup around her central figure. She also makes molds of natural items such as shitake mushrooms, twigs, and other plant forms she's collected on her forays. Those additional components will be used to augment her main figure. Crista then fills the molds with molten wax. When unmolded she modifies the wax components to fit her vision. Often, for example, she may cut off the head of the animal to change its angle or where it's looking. Those modifications allow her to reuse the same mold many times with each resulting piece looking significantly different.

Crista thinks of her initial forms as "blanks." She changes the blanks by carving into the material or adding more wax to create details such as the animal's cheeks and expressions. Once she has a form she is happy with, she creates another mold over the entire piece using silica plaster and fiberglass strips. After steaming out the wax, which she recycles, she is left with a negative replica of her wax creation.

Before she fills her molds with big chunks of glass and frit, Crista has to make sure the mold is thoroughly warm. If that step is overlooked, the molten glass could hit a cold spot in the mold and not fill that section properly. Her firing and annealing process frequently lasts five days from start through annealing.

Crista often adds embellishments such as ribbons and small pieces of painted clay to her pieces. These components, which might represent details like dewdrops or vines, help her to tell her story. A lot of her pieces incorporate cast bronze, which she casts at Pratt, allowing her to combine her two favorite mediums into the same piece.

From Design to Execution

Matteson marries her love of nature, her comfort with multi-media, and her knowledge of glass and metal casting to create her impressive pieces. Each piece starts with photos and sketches that she creates from her time outdoors in the beauty of the Seattle area. "I generate ideas in my head by photographing nature. I spend a lot of time hiking, gardening, paddleboarding, and cross-country skiing. I'm outside as much as I possibly can be. I take a lot of photos and refer back to them all the time." She converts those photos into mixed media collages overlaid with chalk drawings, which she uses to spur on new pieces and series.

Crista's works contain many sections that need to be positioned and joined. She doesn't flesh out all the details of her pieces in advance. Rather, she relies on small thumbnail sketches that act as mini blueprints to illustrate how and where she is going to connect her components. "There's a lot of engineering in putting the pieces together. All of that needs to be considered throughout the casting process."



A Day in the Life

Matteson currently lives in the city in a secluded area that gives her a sense of the semirural area in which she grew up. Her location gives her the best of both worlds, an area where she can hike and paddleboard while she maintains access to places like Pratt Fine Arts, museums, and the energy of urban life.

For Crista, creating art is her job. She works from her in-home studio five days a week and proudly refers to herself as “a maker.” Starting out around 6:30 am with a cup of coffee, she catches up on administrative tasks like emails, show applications, and website updates. She then goes for a long walk with her dog.

At any given time, Crista has several projects in various stages of completion and happily jumps back and forth among the tasks of designing, casting, sculpting, and firing. Depending on the process she’s working on, she may prefer quiet or listening to mellow background music or podcasts. On sunny days, she works overlooking her garden with her sliding back doors open, enjoying the comings and goings of her dog. She also takes advantage of her adjoining patio and uses it as a safe place on which to melt wax. Weather permitting, Crista typically takes several hours off in the afternoon to go for another walk or paddleboarding. Her studio day ends around 6:30 p.m.

Commitment and Urgency

When Crista was in high school, she thought she might become a veterinarian, but her parents encouraged her to become an artist. “I grew up in a house of makers. Everyone in my family has made a living doing art. I have one sister who’s a chef. My brother was a sportswear designer, then owned a construction business, and another sister is an interior designer. My dad was an architect. My mom sewed, knitted, and embroidered. I didn’t really know how to do anything else.”

When Matteson was in art school, she remembers reading an article that said only 10 percent of people who graduated college with an art degree actually ever make a living doing art. Being stubborn, she always thought, “That’s going to be me. I’m going to be one of those 10 percent. I’m proud to say that I had a waitressing job when I was in college, but as soon as I graduated, I got a job working in costuming. Since then, I’ve continued to work in the arts.

“I always try to push myself to do more. I took a lot of time off to raise my kids. That brought so much joy to my life and greatly influenced my art. I feel like I’m just getting started as a glass artist. There’s so much more to explore. My work is constantly evolving.” For Crista’s current and future admirers, it likely will be an exciting journey to watch.

G&A



Crista Matteson

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Instagram @Crista_Matteson

www.facebook.com/cristavanslyckmatteson

www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNiLPZjAp7M

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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Impression Wafers



A Mashup of Block Printing and Hand-Colored Monoprinting

(Figure 6) Fish wafers tack fused onto the rim of the bowl

by Bob Leatherbarrow

Let's explore a new method for printmaking with glass powders that combines block printing techniques and monoprint coloration to create design components called "impression wafers." The steps involve carving a design into a flexible linoleum mat and pressing the mat onto a thin layer of powder to create an impression. The powder is then fired to a light tack fuse, the design is trimmed to shape, if desired, and the color is added. Finally, the wafer is re-fired, and the completed wafer is fired into a piece. Be sure to wear a respirator mask to prevent inhalation of airborne glass particles, enamels, or micas.

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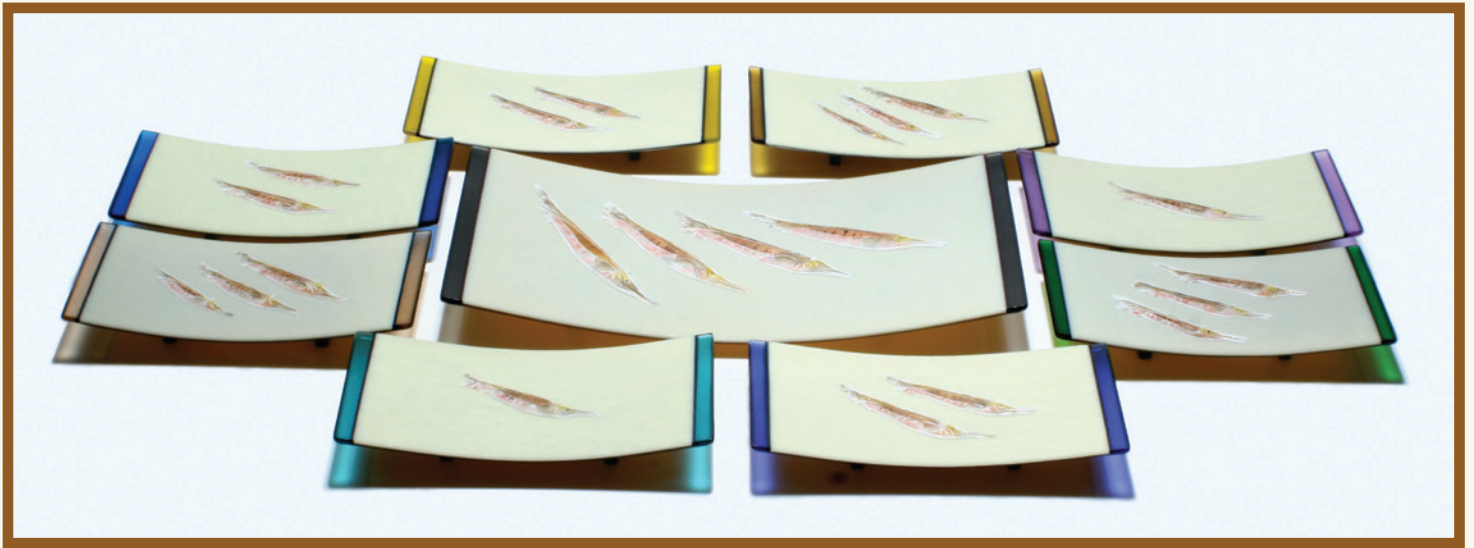


(Figure 1) Tools and cut linoleum block

The Carved Mat

Select a linoleum mat that is about 1/8-inch thick, is very flexible, and is easy to carve. Carve the outline of a design into the mat using a linoleum cutter that has a variety of blade shapes (Figure 1).

The grooves have to be deep enough to form embossed ridges when the mat is pressed onto the loose powder. The areas enclosed within the ridges will ultimately be colored using powders, enamels, and micas.



(Figure 7) Wafers on sushi set

The Embossed Powder

Sift an even 1/8-inch-thick layer of fusible glass powder over an area twice that of the carved design onto a freshly prepared kiln shelf. Place the carved mat face down on the powder and hold it securely in place at one end with one hand. Lightly press the mat onto the powder by running your other hand across the mat, starting at the end that is held in place.

Lift the other end of the mat to expose the embossed powder. If the pattern is not well defined, then either recut the lines to make them deeper, thicken the powder, or both. Reposition the carved mat using the same powder until a well-defined pattern is achieved.

Firing the Embossed Powder

Fire at 600°F per hour to 1285°F with no hold and turn the kiln off. Different effects can be achieved by subtle changes in the firing schedule. You may also have to vary the schedule depending on the type of kiln, position of the heating elements, and viscosity of the glass powder. Once you have calibrated your kiln, you can dial in the appropriate schedule.



(Figure 2)
Trimmed impression wafer

Trimming the Sintered Wafer

The sintered wafer can be easily cut and trimmed. Place it on a piece of Styrofoam packaging. Spray with water and use a Dremel tool with a diamond cutoff wheel or diamond burr to cut through both the wafer and the underlying Styrofoam. Remove unwanted parts of the wafer to attain the desired shape.

If the wafer is difficult to cut or shatters, decrease the temperature a few degrees for the next firing. The sintered powder should cut very easily. Use a handheld diamond burr or a small file to smooth the outline of the wafer (Figure 2).

Coloring with Powders

The ridges separate the wafers into enclosed areas. Use a fine-tipped artist brush to place a small amount of wet colored fusible powder that is compatible with the wafer into the center of an enclosed area. Any color of opaque or transparent powder can be used. If you layer colors, make sure the lighter colors overlap and are on top of the darker colors.

Use a spray bottle to mist water onto the powder, which will level it across the enclosed area. The powder should not cover the ridges in the wafer. When all of the colors have been applied, place the wafer on a tissue to wick away any excess water.

Firing Colored Powders onto the Wafer

There are two options for firing colors onto the wafer. To lightly sinter the colored powder, fire at 600°F per hour to 1285°F with no hold and no anneal. Using this schedule, you will be able to edit the colors by gently scraping the powder with a handheld diamond burr. These final adjustments are particularly helpful for removing colored powder from an embossed outline. As an alternative, you can fire the wafer at 600°F per hour to 1325°F with no hold and no anneal to fire-polish the wafer and seal the surface.

The target temperatures in these schedules may vary due to the glass viscosity of the various colors and your kiln characteristics. It may take several firings to calibrate your schedule.

Including Enamels and Micas

Surface treatments such as enamels and micas can be added to the impression wafer. First, fire-polish the wafer using the above schedule. If the surface is porous, the enamel or mica will be absorbed into the wafer and will overpower the pattern. Apply enamels and micas using the same process described above for colored powders.

A sgraffito finish can be achieved by painting on enamels, allowing them to dry, then scratching with a point to remove some enamel and create a design. The enamel can be matured by firing at 600°F per hour to 1325°F.

The Monoprint

Since a wide variety of colored transparent and opaque powders plus enamels and mica lusters can be used, each impression wafer becomes a truly unique hand-painted monoprint. Design possibilities are endless. Several different renderings of the same impression wafer are shown in Figures 3, 4, and 5.

The Impression Wafer as a Design Component

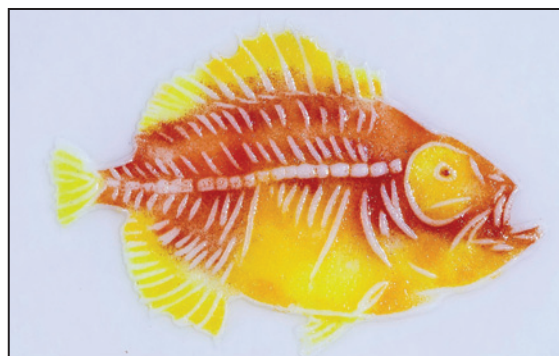
Think of impression wafers as separate design components that can be added to larger kiln formed compositions at a later time. Because making a wafer requires minimal materials and a short firing schedule, you can experiment with designs and colors without compromising the entire piece. If your wafer doesn't "belong," it's easy to make a new one.



(Figure 8) Seahorse wafers



(Figure 3) Wafer colored with transparent powders



(Figure 4) Wafer colored with opal powders



(Figure 5) Wafer finished with sgraffito on black enamel

Adding Impression Wafers to a Piece

Impression wafers can be tack-fused onto a glass sheet. If fired facing up, they may shrink or curl slightly due to surface tension. Prevent this problem by firing with the wafer facing down on a piece of fiber paper and capped by sheet glass (Figures 6, 7, and 8). By combining the techniques of block printing and hand coloring with powders, enamels, and micas, you can expand your repertoire for unique printed design components.

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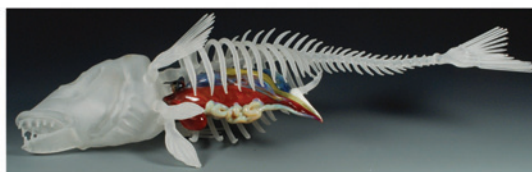
Bob Leatherbarrow established Leatherbarrow Glass Studio in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, in 1988 and has created original kiln formed glass ever since. Known for his innovative styles, techniques, and designs, he has taken an experimental approach to developing unique textures and color palettes using glass powders. His glass bowls and sculptures explore the subtle hues and delicate beauty of naturally occurring textures and encourage the viewer to ponder their origin.



In 2008 Leatherbarrow moved his studio to Salt Spring Island, British Columbia, where he continues to make glass and write e-books on his signature techniques. He has also been a popular instructor on both the national and international kiln formed glass scenes. Visit www.leatherbarrowglass.com to learn more about his work.

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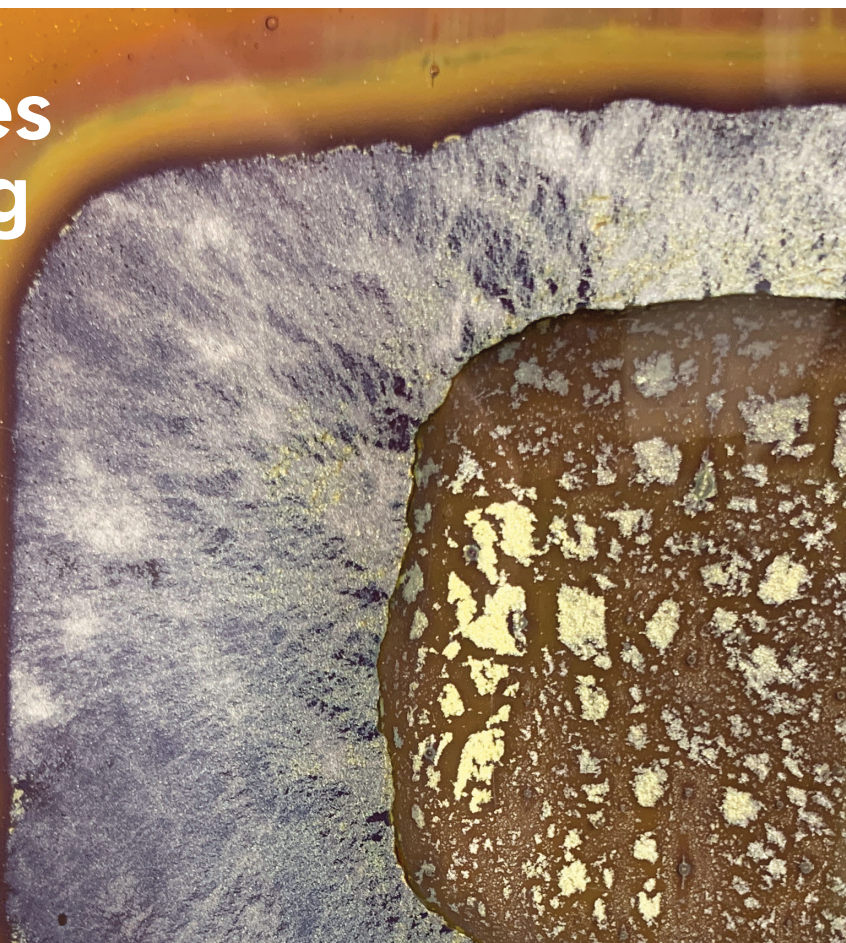
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Remembering the Past, Exploring the Future

Building an Artistic Career on Family Values

by Wayne Cain

My father had a rather unusual approach to child-rearing. When I was around 11, my parents moved my brother, sister, and me into a new home. It wasn't a newly built home, but it was in a more upscale neighborhood. That was basically my mother's idea. My father was quite content where we were.

My brother and I got the two upstairs rooms and our own bathroom. Both rooms were unfinished, just stud walls and insulation, but my father, a sheet metal mechanic by trade, was known as a man who could do almost anything. He would often take me to work with him on Saturdays, giving me tasks appropriate to my age and paying me 50 cents an hour out of his own pocket.

Soon after moving into our new home, my father informed my brother and me that if we wanted finished bedrooms, we would have to complete them ourselves. "I'll show you the first step, but you have to do the rest." I remember so well the emotional impact that had on me. I was quite upset that my father would not help beyond his initial instructions on how to hang Sheetrock, tape a joint, add joint compound, then cut and nail a piece of molding.

Up until that time, I had the impression that we all worked together to achieve our goals, but all of a sudden I'm faced with stud walls, some unfamiliar materials, and a few simple tools. Another part of me, however, saw the potential in my current situation. I was beginning to envision myself as an adult—someone who, in a few years, would be independent. I sensed that I was beginning to build a human being—myself—and that I could become the person I wanted to be.



Wayne Cain assembling leaves on a window in progress.
Photo by Will White.



A flameworked and solder sculpted fall tree.

The years I spent finishing off my bedroom stand out to me because I was on my own, doing and thinking. It developed in me a deep sense of self-confidence, knowing that I was developing processes that would help me when faced with the unknown later in life.

My father died of a heart attack when he was 43 and I was 17. I was helping him install ductwork in a home during my summer vacation and held him in my arms during his final moments. This devastating and final chapter in our relationship signaled to me that I was truly on my own and responsible for my life.

New Beginnings

The following year I was accepted into college. My family did not have money for such excesses, so I took our ladders and a couple of paintbrushes and painted neighborhood houses, making enough money each summer to pay my way through. That was, in large part, a tribute to my parents for the self-sufficiency they instilled in me.

Sitting on the hillside between classes, I thought a lot about how I wanted to live my life. I knew that I would not fit into the corporate world, since I wanted to be compensated for the value of my development and not give it away to someone else. I also thought that people should work, make the money needed, and spend the remainder of their time enjoying the other things life has to offer. Most importantly, I wanted to self-actualize and apply my problem-solving skills to the real world.

Out of college and free from what everyone else wanted me to do, I was finally on my own. I thought about becoming a blacksmith, perhaps a coppersmith. I was also fascinated by how light filters through treetops, by the translucency of nature.



Wayne and his son Daniel White loading a window created for the Unitarian Univer, a building inspired by the work of Frank Lloyd Wright. Photo by Will White.

It was June of 1972 when I climbed into my 1964 VW bus and drove from Richmond, Virginia, to Rockland, Massachusetts, to the Whittemore-Durgin Glass Company. I remember sleeping in my bus to save every cent I could to buy the basic tools and materials I needed to begin my journey. Starting on the kitchen table, I made stained glass apples, pears, cherries, and chickens that stood on one leg, selling them at craft fairs and gift shops. From there, it was Tiffany-style lamp shades, windows—including learning how to repair both—as well as curved bent shades.



Flameworked White Lilies completed window and flower detail designed for a residence in Ohio.



The beginnings of Wayne's study on how different glass colors would affect the appearance of his beveled windows.

A local plate glass company called me one day and said that they would like to sell their 1915 Henry Lang beveling machines to make room in their shop for other things. At the time, I couldn't find any literature on how to bevel, so once again I relied on the trial-and-error process I learned while finishing my room.



Discovering New Techniques

Holding a piece of glass over rotating iron, stone, cork, and felt was not the most exciting adventure in my life. In order to hold my interest, I began grinding and polishing different thicknesses of glass at different angles. I beveled flash glass, colored glass, and textured glass and made a display case to carry around in the days before the Internet when artists walked around with large portfolios. I loved opening it up to clients, who instantly realized that I had something special to offer them.

One of the wonderful things about being self-taught is that I didn't know when to stop. I also developed beveled glass windows with thicker glass so that my windows would hold their own when surrounded with oversized wood molding. Then it was on to UV-gluing to add beautiful, deep, rich colors of antique glass behind my bevels, giving them a jewellike quality. That led to my contemporary beveling style. Carving, painting, and fusing soon followed. I loved the experimentation, being able to quickly test an idea by trial and error.

When I look over my life's work, the one thing that really stands out to me is the diversity of styles and techniques. I attribute that, in part, to how comfortable I am dealing with the unknown and working with a variety of clients who have led me in different directions.

Capturing the Translucency of Nature with Flameworking

Around 10 years ago, I began to renew my interest in the translucency of nature. I was also tired of wrapping each piece of glass in lead and foil, further restricting the light. I started by introducing flameworking into my windows. The most important advance I wanted to make was to work in a painterly way, placing the flame-worked pieces onto the background glass to see how each piece of glass looked before permanently attaching the leaves and petals.

Flameworking was a slow, painful process to learn. If I counted the time invested working over a flame squeezing, mashing, and pulling a melting strip of glass, it was also a very expensive process to add to my skills. I know it took years of working in my spare time before I had the various shapes and colors and a reasonable production time to begin seeking commissions. I remember showing a tour of 12-year-old students the baskets full of my flameworking rejects during a demonstration in my studio. For a second, I thought their eyeballs were going to fall into my collection.



(Top to bottom) A perfect example of the evolution of the studio's flameworking techniques; Flameworked Wisteria Window in transmitted lighting. The whiplash design was created for interest and the background glass was chosen for privacy.

With the ability to form delicate shapes and colors and to work in three dimensions, I was finally able to work in a way that I had envisioned 47 years ago. Our latest innovation is creating branches with wire and solder and attaching them to the branches in our window design, adding even more depth to our windows. Suspending leaves and petals out on the branches gave us a realism that exceeded all of our first expectations.

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Additional Aspects of Becoming an Artist

It is very difficult making a living as an independent artist/craftsperson. Some days, I feel like a corporation reduced down to one individual. It's not only the expertise that must be constantly developed to practice art, but also all of the peripheral skills like marketing, selling, website development, purchasing materials, making presentations, paying taxes and insurance, social media, communication, organizational skills, and working with the people who help us produce our art.

When I started 47 years ago, people were very secretive about their work. "Don't take photographs of my work." "You stole that idea from me." Now for the most part, we live in a world where people freely share their ideas. Maybe not their closest-held secrets or their client list, but there is an enormous amount of material available to everyone at their fingertips. I am especially fond of YouTube and specialized social media groups where we can share an experience, and people from all over the world respond.

The Internet has made it possible for people to commission us from all over America. Working with photographs, email, postal service, and freight companies, we rarely have to leave our studios. This is a far cry from the days when we lugged around large portfolios and glass samples only to meet with people who didn't understand why a commissioned window cost more than forty-nine dollars.

The Importance of Sharing Ideas

In my shop, everyone has the power of influence. If someone has an idea, a quick study is made and we all share our thoughts. It is the very same process I learned when finishing my bedroom—thinking and doing, trial and error. Every line, every color is carefully considered. We take risks—a lot of risks—always hoping to discover something new.

We never use the word *mistake*. Our brains move so rapidly, we just know it's not right and don't feel the need to label it. Actually, we use very little terminology, if any—certainly no theories—and we cringe at the thought of color charts.

In my studio, we all work intuitively. There are billions of neurons in the three-pound organ between our ears, moving in the speed of milliseconds processing information. It is the "control tower" of our being, providing split-second insight that we often call creativity. We harness this gift, this resource, by giving it the time and space needed to function with the least amount of interference. Insights that take flight into the conscious are quickly written down and later transferred to a large sheet of pattern paper. From there, they find their place in the many categories and flowcharts we use to organize our work.



(Left to right) A fanciful residential bathroom privacy window featuring a woodpecker and a sculpted solder tree and branches. A flameworked and sculpted solder window featuring dogwood blossoms for a residence in Virginia Beach, Virginia.



A skylight created for an historical home in Richmond, Virginia.

All of us in the studio work the same way. I may be the only one taking notes, but I am constantly listening and encouraging the free flow of ideas that provides the base of our creativity. It is also the reason I believe everyone here deserves the right to sign each of our creations. This is the same “control tower,” the same processes, that 59 years ago helped me to figure out how to drive a Sheetrock nail, apply joint compound, and sink a finishing nail just below the surface.

Our working relationship has also given us a new language—a language that is often unspoken, where thoughts are quickly communicated in many different ways. I often think of it as communicating in a negative space, like the negative space in a work of art that is powerful once discovered. It also reminds me of my father and his mule, developing their own language as they cultivated long rows of corn together.

I believe that working in this way is very human. That is the way we have evolved over thousands of years to adapt to a complicated, ever-changing world. It also accounts for our needs for diversity, community, and good communication skills.

The Value of Perseverance

The other trait that I believe is necessary to succeed as an artist/craftsperson is perseverance. There are certainly easier ways to make a living, and we are all too often seduced by easier jobs, higher pay, and benefits. But there is nothing as fulfilling as assuming responsibility for your own development, then making a living based on what makes you unique.

Being an artist provides us with the lifestyle we need to sharpen our creative skills. Creativity is no longer a sideline. It is, instead, necessary for our survival and freedom. It allows us to express who we truly are and provides us with a deep sense of having lived a life true to ourselves. No longer do we feel the need to find our value in material goods, status, or medals and ribbons. We are content with the people we have become. **G&A**

The preceding profile is an excerpt from the Summer 2020 issue of Stained Glass Quarterly published with permission by the Stained Glass Association of America.



A solder sculpted and beveled residential window installation.



Photo by Will White.

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The AGG Goes Virtual for 2021



The restoration of the Tiffany Christ window from Calvary United Methodist Church will be one of several projects explored by Art Femenella and Amy Valuck.

by Troy Moody

With 2020 behind us, here's to looking forward to all that is possible in 2021. One event on the glass horizon is a new virtual experience with the American Glass Guild (AGG). This year's gathering will be the 15th Congress of Glass Artists, Conservators, Historians, Entrepreneurs, Enthusiasts, and Students that is the American Glass Guild. The gathering will bring all of the key elements of a standard AGG conference directly into the homes and studios of our community in an interactive, online experience.

Outstanding Presenters

As is customary for the diverse platform of the American Glass Guild, we will be hosting a plethora of presenters offering engaging and knowledgeable discourses on an array of topics. Ellen Mandelbaum and Marie Foucault-Phipps will discuss the world travels of a thirty-plus-year-old organization of notable women glass artists, and Art Femenella and Amy Valuck will offer an in-depth exploration of contrasting conservation techniques.

Ken Leap will bring his abundant enthusiasm to regale us with his adventures from stained glass into muralism. Architect and historian George Bryant will reflect on his nearly three-decade-long scholarly study of Henry Holiday, perhaps the most important stained glass artist of the Victorian and Edwardian periods. Bethanie Zucker will share her personal journey from making small copper foil pieces in a Brooklyn apartment to becoming a stained glass conservator through the Master of Arts in Stained Glass Conservation and Heritage Management program at the University of York. Her education was partially funded through the generosity of scholarships from the AGG. We are also very excited to have Helen Whittaker of the United Kingdom's Barley Studios to discuss her involvement in translating the unique vision of two renowned artists for Westminster Abbey.

The Impact of Public Art and Architecture

The keynote speaker will be Artist Michael Janis of the Washington Glass Studio. Michael had a successful 20-year career as an architect in Australia and the United States before focusing his attention on glass. Among his many awards and acknowledgements are two features in Corning Museum's *New Glass Review* and the prestigious Mayor's Art Award for Excellence in the Arts. Now as co-director of Public Art and Architecture of the Washington Glass Studio, Michael devotes much of his creative energies to navigating various complex processes, from finding public art opportunities and developing a meaningful proposal to ultimately facilitating their creation and installation. Michael's practical knowledge of the various factors involved in participating in public art will make him a speaker not to be missed, while his views on the importance and power of public art in communicating and unifying communities aligns wonderfully with the inclusive attitude of the AGG.

As Janis recently shared, "A public art installation can be very impactful when they are intentional, inclusive, inspiring, and promote dialogue. The role and power of public art is truly vital to the narrative of our time. It unites us and offers an opportunity for many individuals, not just artists, to connect with the neighborhoods where the artwork is placed. The large-scale installations created by artists of the Washington Glass Studio both enrich and celebrate diverse communities."

Participating from the Comforts of Home

Although this year's format is certainly different, if you've attended any of the past AGG annual conferences you'll find many of the planned activities familiar. The driving concept for our virtual happening can be summed up in a single slogan, "From Our Studio to Yours," that is indicative of the tone and character of the AGG from its inception. All paid attendees will have early access to prerecorded lectures to view from the comfort of their own homes, studios, offices, or vans down by the river.



*Keynote Speaker, Michael Janis, will offer an enlightening talk on the power and importance of Public Art.
Photo by Washington Glass Studio.*

After having plenty of time to absorb all of the educational videos at the attendee's leisure, the conference presenters will be available for live streamed question and answer sessions on Saturday, June 5. The Q&A sessions will be casual opportunities for attendees to meet with and ask questions of knowledgeable experts in the field. Saturday will also feature Peter Swanson offering an introduction to his enlightening documentary about the extraordinary life and work of Rowen LeCompte, after which all conference attendees are invited to a screening of the film.

In addition to the many events already listed, the conference will also feature a downsized, online version of our popular auction, short introductory videos of AGG members, a slideshow of member artwork, sponsor pages, and even more to be determined. Please check the AGG website and social media for registration details and updates.

Why Join the American Glass Guild?

The focus of the AGG has always been on education. The connection with new friends and old colleagues, raising awareness of this most noble craft, and the expansion of knowledge have long been and continue to be the motivations of the Guild. If you are not already a member of the AGG, I want to leave you with these words from AGG board member, glass artist, and all-around good guy, Don Burt. This was his response as to why you might want to join this organization.

- **You believe the art of stained glass is worth supporting.** There are aspects of the art form that should be taught and perpetuated to support and encourage the future of the art. There are also skills, procedures, and creative processes that may not survive if we do not actively improve upon the education offered to those who love stained glass as we do.
- **You want to grow as a stained glass artist, a scholar of stained glass, a supplier to the trade, and a conservator and restorer of historic stained glass.** You love stained glass, want to share the experience with others who love it as much as you do, and want to access the resources of experience and knowledge of other AGG members. They happen to be some of the best at what they do and believe unequivocally in sharing what they know via email, the Guild Bulletin Board, classes made available by the Guild, and in person at the annual conference.
- **In the American Glass Guild you are treated as a peer and encouraged to contribute and participate to whatever extent you wish.** This happens without your being categorized according to the size of your studio, the credentials following your name, or the breadth and fame of your work.
- **You believe that even though the American Glass Guild is already a great resource, it can become better with your help.**

On behalf of everyone at the AGG, we sincerely wish you all well and hope that you can join us virtually for the 2021 Annual Conference of the American Glass Guild. Visit www.americanglassguild.org for more information on upcoming events and how to become an AGG member.

GA



Noted glass artist and past AGG President, Ken Leap, will discuss his adventures in muralism. Photo by the artist.

The Innovative Glass Jewelry of Don Friedlich



Translucence Series Brooch, *blown glass, 22k gold, 18k gold, and 14k gold, 2-3/4" x 2-3/4" x 3/8", 2005. Blown, cold worked, fabricated. From the collection of Ezra Satok-Wolman and Jen Howard. Photo by James Beards.*

by Andrew Lang

Donald Friedlich has been a leading figure in contemporary jewelry for four decades. A former President of the Society of North American Goldsmiths (SNAG), the jewelry equivalent of the Glass Art Society (GAS), his work has been shown in museums all over the world. It can be found in the permanent collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, The Corning Museum of Glass (CMoG), and many others.

Friedlich has been an artist in residence at The Studio of the CMoG, Canberra School of Art, Tainan National University of Art in Taiwan, California College of Art, and elsewhere and has lectured at scores of schools and conferences in the United States and internationally. The artist has also presented at GAS, was a Renwick Alliance Distinguished Artist Lecturer at the Smithsonian, and the keynote speaker at the SNAG and ISGB conferences. We spoke through Zoom in early 2021.

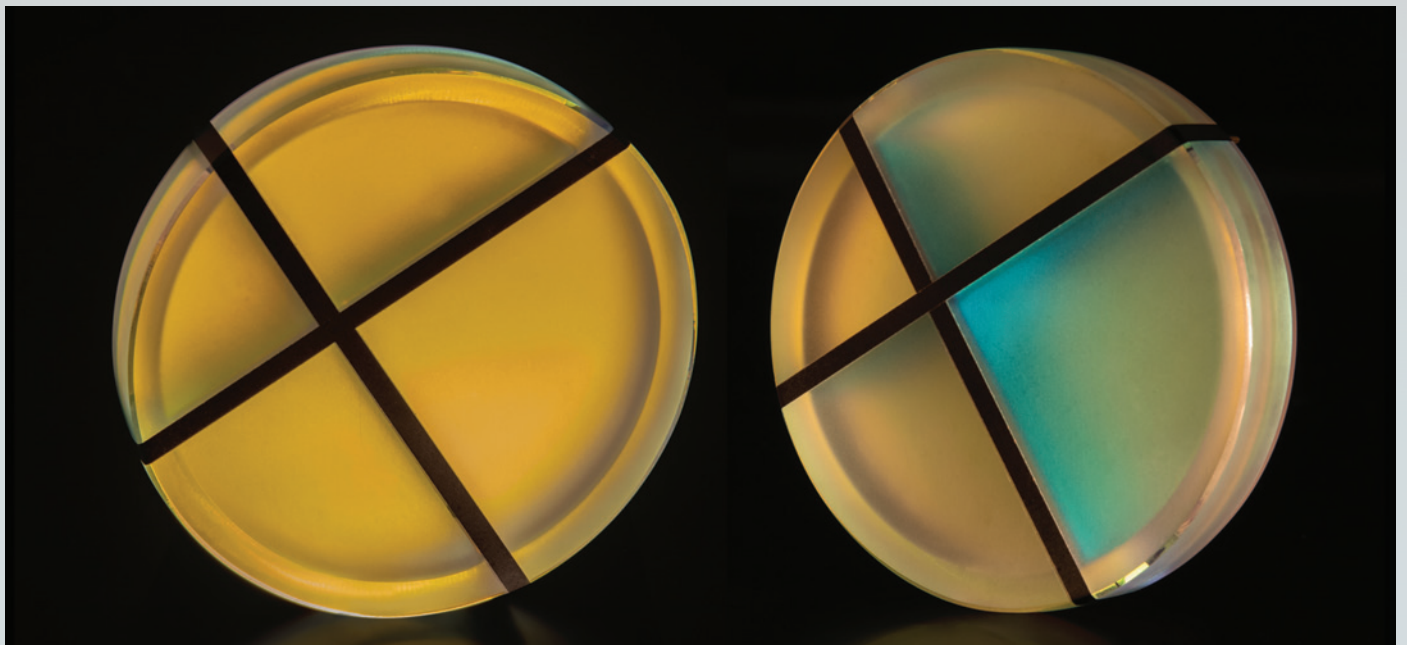
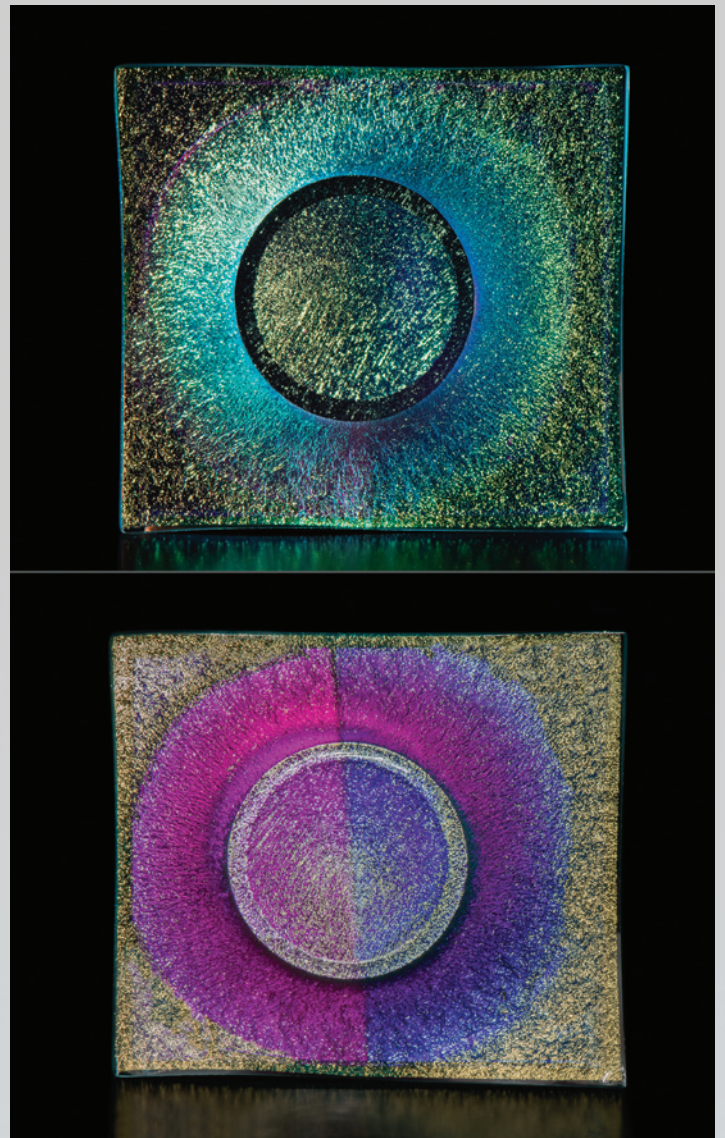
Don, can we begin with how you got started in jewelry and glass?

I never had any interest in making art until I took my first jewelry class with Laurie Peters at the University of Vermont. I quickly became passionate about the field and eventually transferred to the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) jewelry and metalsmithing program. The glass program was only two floors up then, and the students included Howard Ben Tré, Michael Glancy, Steven Weinberg, Judith Schaechter, Martin Blank, and others who became major figures in glass. I also took an invaluable professional practices class with Dale Chihuly. So though I was a jeweler, I was also exposed to the Studio Glass movement.

The work I made after receiving my BFA in 1982 primarily used black slate and gold. Eventually, to introduce more color, I started carving semiprecious stones like agate, lapis, jasper. Ultimately, in the late 1980s, I began experimenting with glass. Two of those early glass brooches were juried into the *New Glass Review*, and one was purchased by the CMOG. That was affirming, and I liked how the work was evolving. In 1997, glass with gold became my main focus.

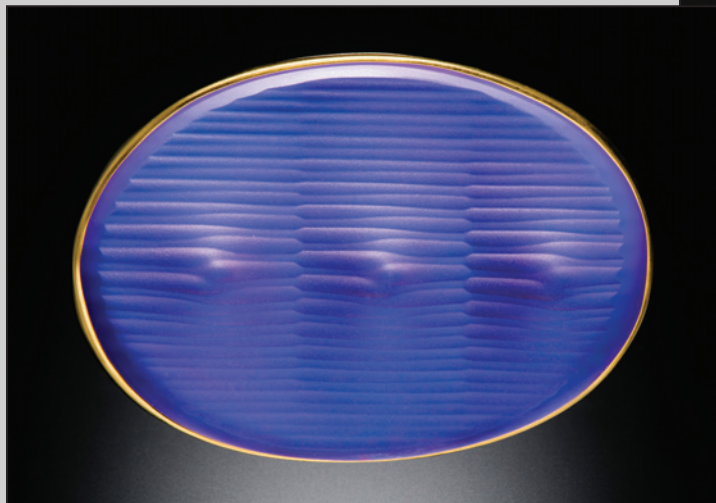
That early glasswork was entirely cold worked and often carved with a sandblaster. But though collectors responded well to it, I was aware that my glass skills were limited, so in 1999 I began taking workshops with the world-class artists who teach at The Studio of the CMOG. There was casting with Dan Clayman and Richard Whiteley, fusing and kiln forming with Kirstie Rea and Steve Klein, and cold working with Franz X. Höller and Martin Rosol, among many others. I still take Corning classes, and now I also teach there periodically.

Lumina Series Brooch, 2 views, *dichroic glass, borosilicate glass, and 14k gold*, 2-3/4" x 2-3/8" x 1/2", 2020. *Slumped, cold worked, UV glued, fabricated.*
Photo by Sanders Visual Images.



Lumina Series Brooch, 2 views, *borosilicate glass, dichroic glass, and 14k gold*, 3-7/8" x 3-7/8" x 5/8", 2019. *Cold worked, UV glued, fabricated, hand lapped.*
Photo by Sanders Visual Images.

Translucence Series Brooch, *fused glass, 22k gold, sterling, and 18k gold, 2-7/8" x 2-5/8" x 3/8", 2009. Fused, cold worked, fabricated. Photo by James Beards.*



Aqua Series Brooch/Pendant, *glass, 22k gold, sterling, niobium, and 18k gold, 2-7/8" x 2" x 1/2", 2016. CAD design, CNC machined graphite mold, press molded, cold worked, sandblasted, etched, anodized, roller printed, fabricated. Photo by Sanders Visual Images.*

How would you characterize the essential style of your work?

I'm a "less is more" minimalist, drawn to the geometric and abstract, with an affinity for working subtractively. Sometimes I'm driven by conceptual concerns, and other times I respond directly to the material. My greatest challenge is integrating glass and metal into one cohesive and elegant design. I do think one quality that distinguishes my work from most other glass jewelry is that I have a full range of goldsmithing techniques at my disposal.

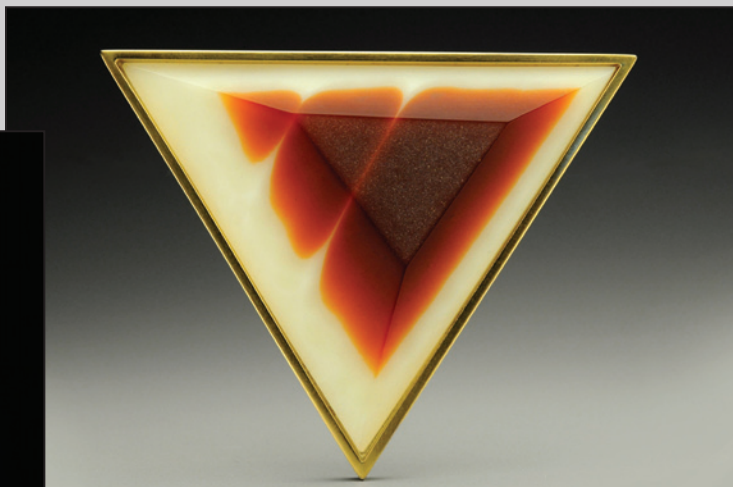
What glass processes and materials do you employ?

Thanks to my classes at The Studio, I now use a broad range of processes. I don't do any hot glass myself, but I understand it well enough to supervise gaffers when I need them. I use press molding, fusing, slumping, etching, casting, CNC, 3-D printing, and more. The one constant is cold working, which can be limited to the final finish, but more often, it's central to sculpting the form. Finishing glass can maximize and clarify an idea or hobble it, and as a jeweler, I'm very attentive to the little things, like adding a small, polished seam to an edge so it glints as it moves.

I use whatever glass seems best for the design, so I've worked with just about everything, though most of the work is soda lime glass. Usually, I prefer Spectrum sheet glass, because it has a smooth, flat surface with minimal flaws. My current work uses a lot of borosilicate and CBS Dichroic too.

In addition to the range of colors, what else draws you to glass?

I'd argue that glass is the most visually flexible 3-D material ever invented. Ceramicists might disagree, but I stand by this. Glass can be as clear as water or as opaque as stone. It can be translucent, reflective, or both at the same time. It can be hundreds of colors and just about any shape. It responds to a huge array of processes. On the downside, it's heavy and fragile, neither of which is ideal for jewelry, but I enjoy the challenge of engineering my jewelry so that it wears well on the body.



Aqua Series Brooch/Pendant, *glass, 22k gold, sterling, niobium, 18k gold, and 14k gold, 2-5/8" x 2-3/8" x 3/8", 2013. CAD design, CNC machined graphite mold, press molded, cold worked, sandblasted, etched, anodized, roller printed, fabricated. Photo by Sanders Visual Images.*

I absolutely love your current Lumina Series work with dichroic glass. How did this significant change of direction evolve?

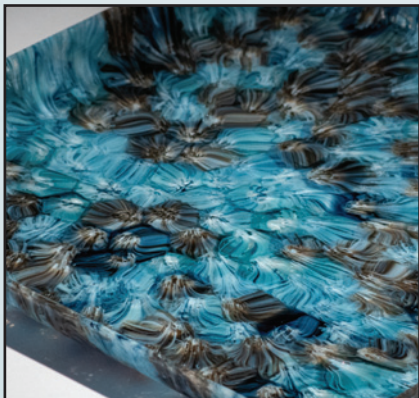
This series started in a 2017 Corning class that Sid Hutter taught on UV-cured adhesives. With some notable exceptions, like Jamie Carpenter's architectural installations, I've never loved the dichroic glasswork I've seen. I find the raw dichroic overpowering, so I adapted the aesthetic by using a frosted surface to diffuse and soften it. While most of the construction is done with UV adhesives, the technical challenges of fabricating these pieces required me to invent new tools. Recently, I've also been devising new ways to selectively etch and slump the dichroic.

For many years, I've been exploring qualities that are unique to jewelry as a medium. One I've focused on is that jewelry is viewed in motion. By exploiting the unique optics of dichroic glass, these pieces shift in color and intensity as the wearer moves to such a dramatic and vibrant effect that people often assume there are LEDs inside. This series is in part inspired by the effect of moonlight diffused by cloud cover or fog. The color field paintings of Mark Rothko and landscape sculptures of James Turrell have also been enlightening.

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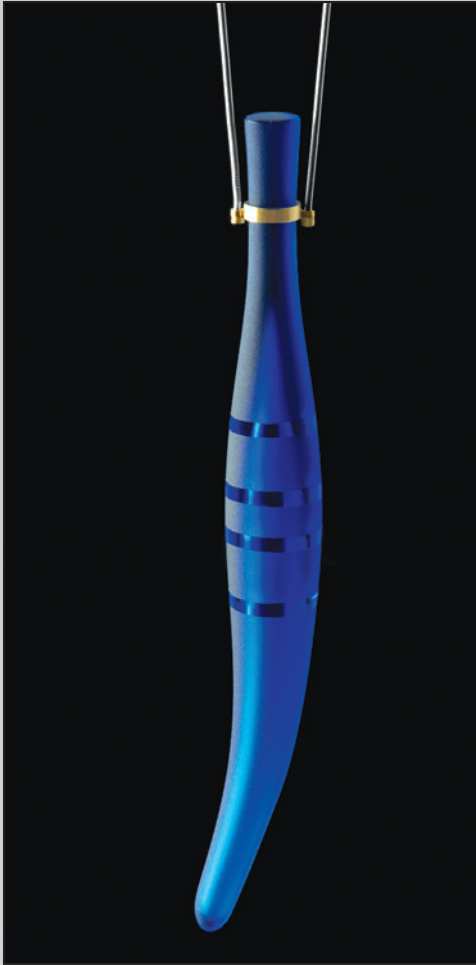


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*Detail of Fuchsia Sculpture
by Victor Trabucco.*



Amphora Series Necklace, blown glass, 18k gold, and sterling, 4-3/4" x 5/8" x 1/2", 2019. Blown, cold worked, sandblasted, etched, laser welded, fabricated.
Photo by Sanders Visual Images.



Lumina Series Brooch, 3 views, borosilicate glass, dichroic glass, and 14k gold, 4-3/8" x 7/8" x 1", 2018.
Cold worked, hand lapped, UV glued, fabricated.
Photo by Sanders Visual Images.

How have you used digital technology in your work?

In 2007, I was a visiting artist for five days at Kendall School of Art in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where my friend Phil Renato teaches. I spent half the time doing lectures, critiques, and demos, and the rest with Phil playing with their really cool high-tech toys. I'd draw and talk while Phil used CAD software to realize what I was describing. Most of the forms were inspired by wave patterns in water and became my *Aqua Series*. We then used CNC machining to carve graphite molds for press molding in a hot shop. The combination of CAD and CNC gives me most of the freedom of form of 3-D printing, but in a material I much prefer.

Have you engaged in other forms of art concurrently with your jewelry?

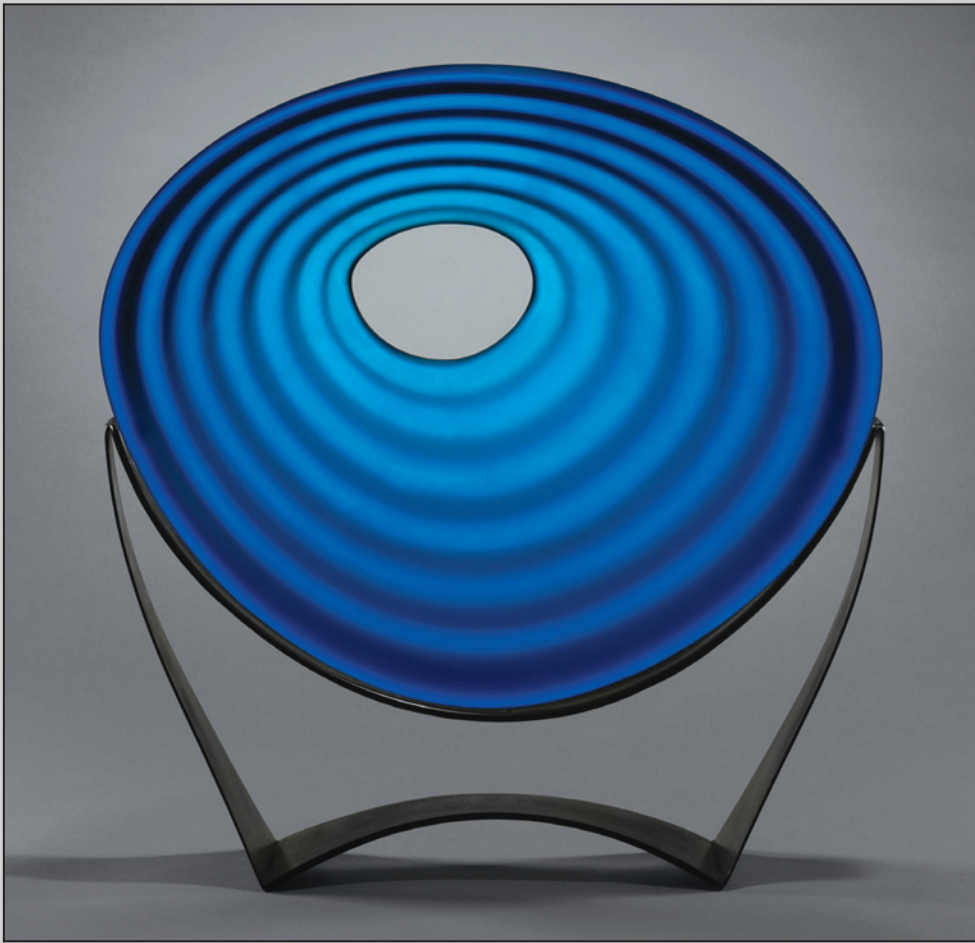
Actually, yes. I've always wanted to try working larger, and a 2014 residency at the Uroboros Glass factory in Portland, Oregon, gave me the opportunity. Taking designs from my *Aqua Series* jewelry, I used CNC to carve 20" x 25" shapes from 4"-thick medium density fiberboard (MDF). After hours of sanding and applying coats of lacquer, I cast silicon rubber into the MDF molds and then shipped my rubber originals to Uroboros so I could make plaster/silica molds.

With 100 pounds of wet plaster, those were by far the largest molds I'd ever made and the first time I didn't have adult supervision from someone like Dan Clayman. I used 750 pounds of plaster in the two weeks and made ten molds. The factory crew helped me load them into two massive kilns, I added 45 pounds of glass billets into each, prayed to the kiln gods, and fired them. The kiln cycle was thirteen days, so I went home for two weeks, then returned to Portland. Opening the kilns and finding out everything cast well—it was like Christmas morning.

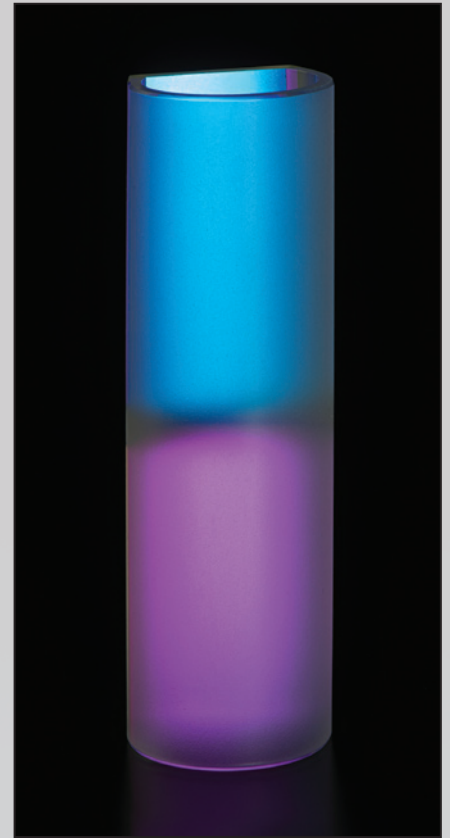
My sculptures utilize a triangular cross section, so the color intensity of the glass fades as it thins, producing a nice connection between color gradation and form. The idea for this approach came from scrutinizing the sculpture of Czech masters Libenský and Brychtová in the CMOG collection.

Tell me about your studio and home.

My wife, the novelist Judith Claire Mitchell, and I live in the University of Wisconsin's Arboretum, a large forest research area in Madison. My studio is in a small building adjacent to our home. A third of the space is devoted to goldsmithing and the balance to glass. I have an 18-inch diamond flat lap, a six-wheel lapidary lathe, a diamond saw, and a sweet German engraving lathe. Recently, I added a 16-inch Olympic kiln that I adore. While I usually work alone, I've collaborated with glassblowers, engravers, framers, and others. I love that the glass community is so open to collaboration and sharing ideas and techniques.



Aqua Series Sculpture, Glass and steel, 25" x 26" x 2" (glass portion), 2015. CAD design, CNC machined mold, kiln cast, welded, fabricated, cold worked. Photo by Sanders Visual Images.



Lumina Series Brooch, dichroic glass, borosilicate glass, and 14k gold, 4-1/4" x 1-1/4" x 1-1/4", 2017. Cold worked, hand lapped, UV glued, fabricated. Photo by Sanders Visual Images.

You've taught at Haystack, Penland, The Studio of the CMOG and elsewhere and lectured at universities and conferences internationally. How do you view teaching?

I love teaching but don't want to do it full time, so workshops and visiting artist gigs are ideal. I get to work intensively with talented students and then get back to my studio. I especially treasure teaching in Corning. The facilities and people are superb, and the CMOG is an unbeatable pedagogical resource. Teaching in the metals studios at Haystack and Penland is also very special.

I developed a new class based on my current work titled *New Warm and Cold Approaches to Dichroic Glass* for the Pittsburgh Glass Center for the summer of 2020, but COVID made that impossible.

The interface of art and industry has fascinated me since my days in Providence, the center of costume jewelry manufacturing. I've used many industrial subcontractors for my production earring line, and I've tried to make more artists aware of the benefits of these resources to help them be more financially viable.

How has being an artist in residence shaped your work and development?

Each residency is unique, but they all let me travel and work with new people in a new place, and they're always stimulating and

inspiring. My first glass residency was in 2003 at The Studio. I was the first jeweler offered that residency, and I got to collaborate with a glassblower to develop new forms. I also worked with the master engraver Max Erlacher, who added surface details.

Max has mad skills and was a master engraver at Steuben. Basically, for a month, I just generated forms and had faith I'd figure out later how to turn them into jewelry. It was one of the most productive and exciting experiences of my career. I shipped home 27 large boxes of glass forms. After 17 years, I'm still finding new ways to use them. A bunch have made their way into the *Lumina Series*.

You're a very prolific artist. How do new directions in your work come about?

Sometimes new work comes from the classes I take, but often ideas haunt me for years before I figure out how to bring them to life. I had a blown amphora form from that 2003 Corning residency, for instance, and I'd look at it repeatedly trying to figure out how to use it. It wasn't until 2016 that something clicked, and it became a necklace. Do you know the scientific precept, Occam's Razor? It says, "All things being equal, the simplest solution tends to be the right one." A simple design seems so obvious with 20/20 hindsight, but getting to simple is the greatest creative challenge.

For me, one of the best things about being an artist is that your life becomes one of constant learning and exploration. I often tell students that graduation may be the end of their schooling, but it's just the beginning of their education. That's part of what motivated me to take on a new medium, glass, in the middle of my career. It's the problem solving part of the creative process that still gives me the biggest thrill.

Do you have any YouTube videos currently on the Web?

There are two of my artist's monograph lectures on YouTube. The first one, www.youtube.com/watch?v=CF8gt_UfhQU, which details my full history and inspirations, is a 2015 talk in San Francisco. The second one, www.youtube.com/watch?v=mIrHaal3I4I, is from a Dubuque Museum of Art virtual talk in 2020, which is less detailed but more current. **G&A**

Don Friedlich
during his lecture
tour of China.



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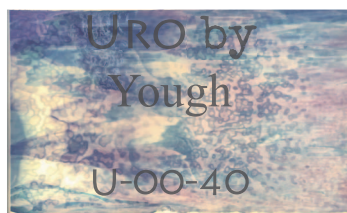
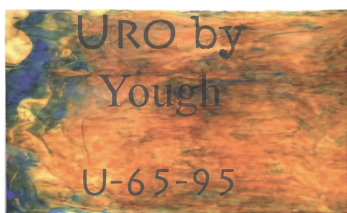
Andrew Lang has designed an unusually wide variety of blown glass over the past decade with his current obsession, dichroic glass. By heating and blowing large pieces of dichro, he has been able to make substantial artworks homogeneously covered in this remarkable material.

Andrew is currently Vice President of the National Capital Art Glass Guild (NCAGG) and served as the principal judge of the 2018 NCAGG Scholarship Program. His glass artwork was accepted for the 2015, 2017, and 2019 Biennial Exhibitions of the Mid-Atlantic Creative Crafts Council and a recent national show. Andrew also won first place in the 2019 Coatings By Sandberg "Dichroic by Design" contest with Big Bang +1. Visit www.andrewlangsculpture.com to learn more about the artist and his work.

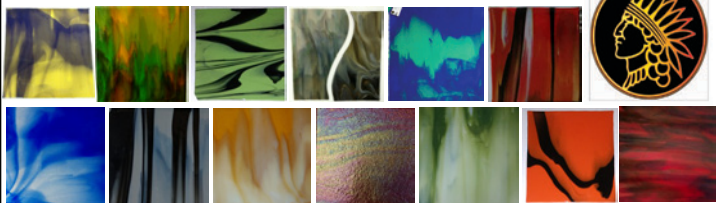
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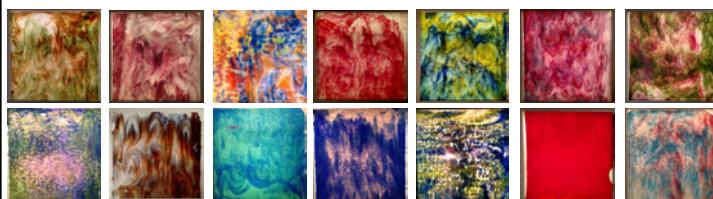
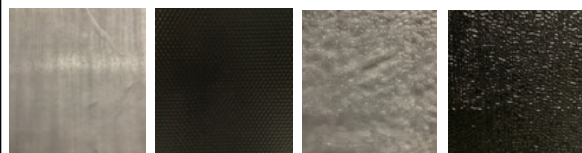


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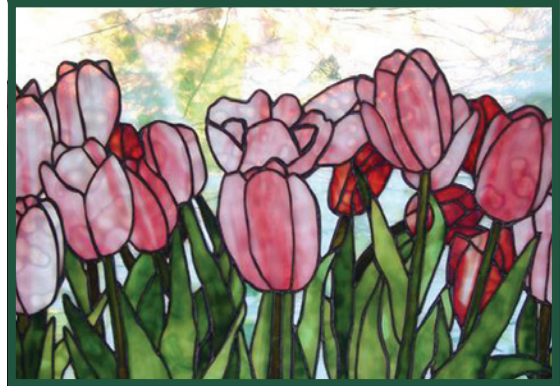
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Creativity

PRODUCTION WORK

by Milon Townsend



Doing artistic production work is, in the minds of many, the antithesis of the creative act. It is the productive act. It is repetitious, doing the same thing over and over. It is not creative but productive and implies that the purpose is not expressing one's self but is, instead, making work specifically for the purpose of selling it. I would argue, and have for years, that artists who cannot support themselves through self-expression will need to depend on either a supportive spouse or partner to pay the bills, or seek income from some activity that is not doing the artwork. This, in my mind at least, is a powerful argument for production work. At the very least, you will be immersed in the technical practice of your chosen medium and will achieve a massive amount of dexterity and ability.

The Value of Production Work

There is no shortcut to technical excellence. It occurs only as a result of the continuous practice of basic skills until they have become so much a part of your nature as not to be conscious. It is at this point that one may become fluent, nuanced, and able to say something when something worth saying does come to mind.

I have a lot to say about production work, seeing as I've done so much of it. Let us agree that it's not for everyone, but what is?

Let's look open-mindedly at the benefits that accrue to those who know how to pound out the pieces when the chips are down and the bills are due. In fact, just knowing how to pound out the pieces when you have to, for whatever reason or whatever circumstances dictate that, is its own real and important skill, without which it's pretty hard to do serious work.

I can respect waiting for inspiration, for the idea, but when you have a hot idea in your hand or mind, you'd better be able to start putting it together or it's worth exactly squat. For me, having a free or unexpectedly available afternoon or snow day is a real gift, because I know how to turn it into something substantial, something that I can learn from. It's something that I can look at and point to and photograph and perhaps even sell—not necessarily in that order.

I have that super power. I'm completely able to sit down and make a new, challenging piece when I have a hole that appears in my schedule or a slot that was planned into a day filled with things that have to be dealt with.

This ability wasn't just given to me at birth. I own it because I earned it, and I have to say that I'm still kickin' because of it. I paid my bills. I bought new and better equipment. I ordered whatever materials seemed would come in handy at some point. I can afford to do my work well, and that helps me make better work.

Sharks in process

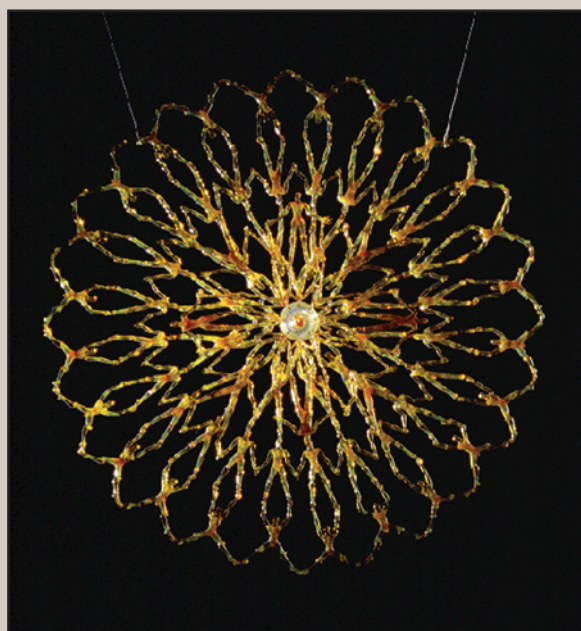
Accessing the Dynamics of Harmony, Symmetry, and Rhythm

Another thing about production work is that you learn to make things consistently, a very useful skill. It's nice to be able to play with ideas involving multiple figures that seem to be identical. It is also one of the more effective ways for a flameworking artist who is somewhat limited in scale in terms of individual pieces to make larger pieces. By combining two or more pieces, you can bump things up quite a bit. If you're able to create sculptures that are virtually the same, then you have access to the dynamics of harmony, symmetry, and rhythm that can be expressed by combining multiple similar forms.

I (unfortunately?) haven't had to do much production work recently. In 2020 it wasn't like that, and who knows how long it will take till things get back to some semblance of normalcy? That being said, when I do have to sit there and make whatever's on my list—150 of this, 20 of that, 50 of the other—I tend to want to break out a little. After I've accomplished a certain number of what I'm "supposed" to be doing, I let myself play.

Making the same thing over and over, wanting to do something else, building up the creative pressure inside, is a great way to get the creative juices flowing—and exploding. One time I spent an entire day or two making the little flying pigs we call *Pigasus*, or *Swine Flew*. It's a good-selling ornament, and we've found that making an inventory of steadily selling pieces in advance when things are slower is very helpful. This frees me up to do custom work and explore new ideas during the hustle and bustle of our busier seasons.

After a certain number of pigs, I just had to do something else. I made another pig, put an apron and a chef's hat on him and had him turning a guy on a spit over a fire. I turned it into a contest on Facebook, with the best caption winning the piece. The two top selections were *Chet's Nuts Roasting O'er an Open Fire* and *Thhhhaaaatttt's Paul, Folks!*



Generation

Pigasus



*Chet's Nuts Roasting
O'er an Open Fire*



Shark eating a mermaid



Experimenting with Themes, Colors, and Textures

I also make shark ornaments. After figuring it out and getting the elements of a good shark under my belt, I had to do something more with it—something narrative. I created the first shark eating a mermaid, because everyone loves mermaids. It's become a standard item ever since, and even though it's not for everyone, it does serve as a point for a conversation piece and gets the dialogue rolling. I like to have fun and mess with people. If I'm not enjoying my work, how can I expect anyone else to?



Uroboros design in various colors



Another way that production work helps me develop new ideas and new work is to make the same object in various colors. This is enormously useful in being able to experiment with different combinations of color and texture on a small and economical basis while making work that will most likely sell. I am, in effect, getting paid to learn.

Discovering Additional Applications

Working with an existing image and using it in different applications is another way that production work can aid in the forward movement of an artist's career. Mermaid ornaments, sitting in my studio in their veritable dozens and hundreds, seemed to suggest to me other ways that they might inhabit my world. By retooling the form, I developed a highly effective goblet stem. After listening to input from clients, I discovered that there was a strong demand for martini glasses as well—arguably the most effective method of ingesting the maximum amount of alcohol in the shortest period of time. Thus, the funnel shape appeared. This works better than even shot glasses, given the smaller number of refills needed toward the volumetric goal.

Champagne has several differently shaped glass tops dedicated toward its drinking as well. I personally prefer the coupe as aesthetically more appealing than the flute. Having the mermaid stem around the shop and available was another benefit of working in the quantity and high degree of consistency that are part of the natural aspects of production work, since it allowed me to plug those into various beverage delivery systems.

Production work keeps me active in my medium, increases my skill level, and gives me the ability to produce work on schedule. It also helps me to be able to make pieces that are highly similar, which opens up creative avenues not otherwise available to me. Finally, it allows me to make work that creates an ongoing income to support my family and my art and provides elements that can be incorporated into various projects, thus broadening the scope of my offerings. That works for me.

G&A



Mermaid Goblet



Mermaid Coupe



Mermaid Martini

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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The Art of the Glass Bead in Italy and France Gaining UNESCO World Heritage Status



Anusch Bayens creating a disk at the torch.

Photo by Patrice Niset.

by Sara Sally LaGrand

In all the darkness we experienced in 2020, it is good to find joy and accomplishment in our human existence. The art of the glass bead in Italy and France attained UNESCO World Heritage status on December 17, 2020, and that is a glorious thing. It lends a bright spot to the year that was many “volunteer years” in the making, centuries in the crafting.

What exactly does that mean, you may ask? The World Heritage Convention along with the United Nations describes it this way. “Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration.”

In order to be included in this collective, you must meet the criteria set out by the joint organizations. One of ten selection criteria must be met to be presented to the governing body. The ten consist of everything from human creative genius to history of human development and natural phenomena. For the historical knowledge base of the glass bead, that could fall into many of the ten requirements listed in the daunting 177-page initial document hosted on the UNESCO website.

The Process Begins

A group in Italy calling themselves “Committee for the Safeguarding of the Art of Venetian Glass Beads” began the process of seeking World Heritage Status in 2013. The goal in creating this group was to preserve and recognize the knowledge base of bead making, bead stringing, grinding, threading, and the techniques of glass masters in the area of the glass bead. The designation was not of the bead itself, but of the knowledge base, its place in history as an economic driver, and the information as it was passed down from generation to generation.

In case you are not familiar with the impact of the Venetian glass bead, it became a commodity that was traded for food, land, and power. In our prestigious Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri, where I live, we have an impressive collection of Native American seed bead clothing. Of course, the beads originally came from Venice. It is fascinating to ponder their journey to Kansas City and the hands that made, traded, and created these works of art. You might remember it is believed that the land around New York City was once traded for beads, and if you love the African Trade beads, you would know that they, too, originated in Venice.

Going Forward

The committee eventually reached out to Claudia Cottica, anthropologist of the Comitato per la Salvaguardia dell’Arte delle Perle di Vetro Veneziane (CPVV) in 2017 to help them with the process. The original members had contacted UNESCO—Rome initially—but eventually reorganized the group to serve as a steering committee in February 2018. The working group was composed of several people with different skill sets: Dr. Cristina Bedin, as coordinator, Dr. Eliana Argine and Claudia Cottica as anthropologists, and Dr. Maria Teresa Segà as historian. The group also included four members of the original organizing community: Marisa Convento and Luisa Conventi (*impiaresse* or seed bead stringers) plus Muriel Balensi and Cristina Sfriso (*perlere* or bead makers).

Also in 2018, the CPVV contacted French bead makers. “The Association des Perliers d’Art de France (APAF) embarked on an exciting and far-reaching project—the inscription of the art and craft of glass bead making as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity,” says Nathalie Srou, president of the French art beadmakers. This is a natural association, given the proximity of Italy to France and the

rich history the two countries have shared. “The art of glass bead making has been documented by written sources since the beginning of the 14th century, at least in Venice, and from the 16th century in France. But the art of glass bead making can be traced back to the Celts and Gauls in the third century BC,” says Srour. “As from the 16th century, glassmakers from Altare and Venice came to France to work and settle down. The French bead makers adopted the Venetian techniques, but they also developed their own.”

The Benefits of Collaboration

When Srour was asked why it makes sense to join forces with the Italians to contribute to the process of applying for UNESCO status she replied: “Because of the shared history and numerous exchanges in the past between the Italian and French glassmaker communities, but mostly because of the current existing relationships between our two communities. The French Association organized trips in 2016 and 2020 to Murano and Venice in order to exchange techniques and learn from each other.

“One of the key criteria for obtaining this recognition lies in what our communities are putting in place in order to keep our know-how alive. Education, transmission, and the informal exchanges of experiences are an essential component within our communities. They are some of the elements that lead to innovation and renewal in our practice.”

Marisa Convento, the Vice President of the Italian committee, shared how this new designation will affect the future. “This achievement with the French bead makers is important, because it assesses the art and the culture of making the beads. It creates the basis of the future development for the creation of a possible international festival or publication and also brings together the different communities around the world.”

Srour agreed and added, “It intensifies the dialogue already initiated between the Venetian and French communities on the diversity of techniques, terminology, methods of transmission, and cultural significance. It also helps us promote our craft to other craft and heritage communities and enhances the visibility, awareness, and capacity of dialogue with various artistic and other technical and cultural expressions. That encourages creativity, personal expression, and new syncretisms within the world of design, fashion, and art. We think this nomination benefits the glass community worldwide and believe it supports us in gaining better recognition for our very specific and highly technical know-how within the glass world as well.”

GA

The document presented to the CPVV announcing their UNESCO World Heritage status on December 17, 2020.

Photo by Marisa Convento for the Comitato per la Salvaguardia dell'Arte delle Perle di Vetro Veneziane.

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Glaspromenade Lanaye bead demonstration by Elisabeth Debaralle. Photo by Anusch Bayens.



Sara Sally LaGrand, award-winning artist and author, has had the great fortune to study glassmaking with many gifted teachers, both in America and Italy. She holds a BA in Glass Formation from Park University, Parkville, Missouri. Honors include awards from Art Westport, State of the Arts, The Bead Museum of Washington, D.C., Fine Line Gallery, Images Art Gallery, and the Kansas City Artists Coalition.

LaGrand has taught flameworking all over the world and has work published in many books and magazines. Her art can also be found in international public and private collections. Visit www.sarasallylagrand.com to find out more about the artist.





Calum Dawes Winner of the CGS 2021 Amanda Moriarty Prize

*Calum Dawes, Drop in the Ocean,
13 cm x 15 cm x 15 cm, 2019.
Photo by Jo Howell.*

by Pam Reekie

Every year, the Contemporary Glass Society (CGS) offers a prize to enable one of its members to achieve something unique. The prize is in memory of Amanda Moriarty, a long-serving Board member and Honorary Treasurer, who sadly passed away in 2017. The award celebrates her passion for and encouragement of glassmaking with the aim of developing an idea or project and producing new work through to a finished piece.

Introducing Calum Dawes

The Amanda Moriarty Prize enables one glass artist to fulfill a creative ambition or add to his or her technical skill set, a dream that would not be possible without this Prize. This year's winner is Calum Dawes, who graduated from the University of Sunderland in 2019 with a BA in Glass & Ceramics. In the same year, he won the Glass Sellers Art & Craft Student Award and placed third in the Contemporary Glass Society 2019 Glass Prize.

This year, Devereux & Huskie Glassworks based in Wiltshire, England, is providing a four-day residency in their studio. James Devereux and Katherine Huskie, both accomplished glass artists in their own right, also facilitate other designers and glassmakers to make work. Calum will have the opportunity to extend his practice with the assistance of both James and Katherine.



*Calum Dawes, Reptile Daydream,
16 cm x 45 cm x 7 cm, 2019. Photo by Jo Howell.*

A delighted Calum explains, "I'm really grateful for this opportunity. It will allow me to explore the body of work I have been developing throughout lockdown as well as this year in general. Hopefully, I can produce something really exciting with the support of CGS and Devereux & Huskie. I can't think of a better way to start 2021!"

With the resulting new glass artwork, Calum intends to then apply for The Cheongju International Craft Biennial, 2021. If that is not feasible due to scheduling or COVID-19 restrictions, his plan is to move to the British Glass Biennale in 2022.

Thoughts from the Artist

Calum's application included the following information. "This work is a continuing development of my love of illustration and glass as a sculptural material. The form and optical qualities of the glass interact with the illustrations in a way that other materials don't, while the imagery lends the piece narrative and context.

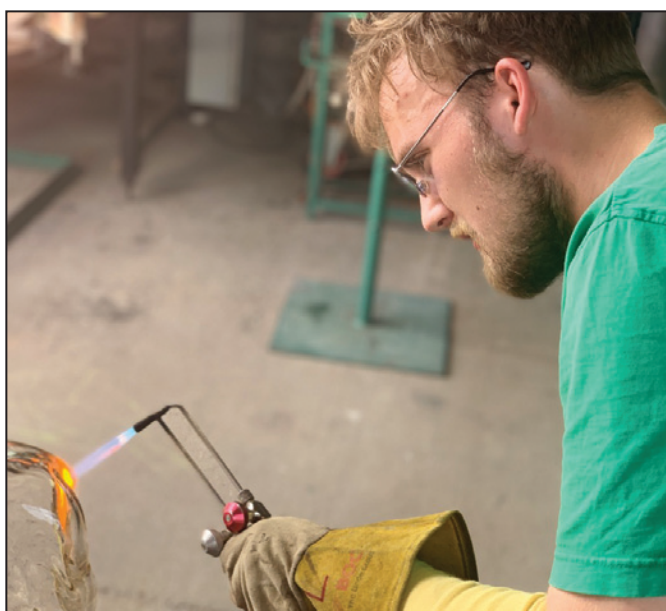
"It is a body of work I have been developing on my own time, but I have hit a wall due to making them on my own and having to try to fit them within the busy workshop schedule. These pieces require a three-stage process. First the bowls are blown, then painted with high-fire vitreous enamels, after which they are picked up in the hot shop. The painting is fired on and the bowl is then stuffed with a mass of molten glass in order to fill it. Finally, sculptural elements are added right before the piece is put away.

"Initially the bowls were designed in this manner for me to be able to produce under current limitations, and I have made several of these pieces. However, I have found that I have reached a limit in size and complexity, partly due to the workshop schedule, which has inadequate time to anneal a thicker piece, and partly due to not having much access to assistance.

"During this residency I would hope to use Katie and James' extensive wealth of knowledge and experience to help troubleshoot issues in the making of this work on a larger scale. I also hope to learn their practical and technical skills to improve my own making of these pieces in the future. I would like to gaff the pieces, to push myself and my glassmaking skills, using this opportunity to develop new skills while developing this idea."

G'A

The CGS is the U.K.'s foremost organization for supporting established artists as well as supporting up-and-coming makers and for promoting contemporary glass in the wider art world. Visit www.cgs.org.uk for a look at all of the offerings available from the Contemporary Glass Society and information on how to become part of CGS.



Calum Dawes. Photo by Moonju Suh.

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The Corning Museum of Glass

Exploring Glass in 18th-Century Britain



Man's coat and waistcoat, green woven velvet, cream silk, metallic-thread embroidery, glass-paste stones. France, about 1780. Coat: chest, 99 cm; waist, 88 cm; L. 111 cm. Waistcoat: chest, 112 cm; waist, 97 cm; L. 64 cm. Fashion Museum Bath (BATMC II.06.2, II.32.29). Photo courtesy of Fashion Museum Bath.



Chinoiserie goblet, cut and engraved lead glass. England, about 1750–1770. H. 24.9 cm. The Corning Museum of Glass. Gift of The Ruth Bryan Strauss Memorial Foundation. Photo from The Collection of The Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York.

by The Staff of The Corning Museum of Glass

On May 12, 2021, The Corning Museum of Glass (CMoG) will open its groundbreaking exhibition *In Sparkling Company: Glass and the Costs of Social Life in Britain During the 1700s*. Presenting the glass objects that delighted the British elite, the exhibition examines how those goods defined social rituals and cultural values of the period. It also illuminates a darker side of history—how members of the British upper class benefitted from enslaved and indentured labor to create and pay for their glittering costumes and jewelry, elaborate tableware, polished mirrors, and dazzling lighting devices.

The exhibition was organized by Christopher L. Maxwell, Curator of Early Modern Glass at CMOG, and will be on view through January 2022. “*In Sparkling Company* will demonstrate the many functions and meanings of glass in 18th-century British social life,” said Maxwell. “For those who aspired to be part of the polite world, glass objects presented an opportunity to demonstrate modernity, taste, and discernment in a social context. Many of these glass consumer goods were new to the market in the 1700s and consequently offer trenchant insights into the social, cultural, and political values of the period.”

Defining the Cultural Values of British Society

In the 1700s, Britain was a prosperous and commercial nation. Its growing cities were hubs of industry, scientific advancement, trade, and finance, and its colonies were expanding. British merchants navigated the globe carrying a multitude of consumable, material, and human cargoes. Underpinning Britain’s prosperity was a far-reaching economy of enslavement, the profits of which funded the pleasures and innovations of the fashionable world, among them luxury glass.



Part of a silver opium pipe with mounted glass gems. China, probably about 1800. H. 11.8 cm. The Corning Museum of Glass, gift of Martin S. Rosenblatt. Photo from The Collection of The Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York.



Ornamental vases, gilded copper-green lead glass. England, probably decorated in the London workshop of James Giles (1718–1780), about 1765. Each: H. 9.3 cm. The Corning Museum of Glass (2003.2.4A, B; 54.2.4A, B). Photo from the Collection of The Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York.



Log of the Slaver-Ship SANDOWN. Journal kept by Samuel Gamble, slave merchant. London, 1793–1794. H. 16 cm, W. 50 cm, D. 25 cm. National Maritime Museum. Photo © National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London.

Small Sword. France, about 1785. Silver, gold, steel, glass brilliants, aventurine. H. 99.5 cm, W. 11.5 cm, D. 6.5 cm. The Corning Museum of Glass, purchased in part with funds from Dwight and Lorri Lanmon (2020.3.1). Photo from The Collection of The Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York.

Alongside the beauty and innovation of glass during this period, the exhibition presents artifacts and documents relating to the slave trade, such as glass beads that were traded for human lives while elegant glass dishes, baskets, and bowls held sweet delicacies made with sugar produced by enslaved labor in the British colonies.

“This exhibition considers the role of glass as a witness to the many changes of the 18th century and to the ways in which its material qualities, not just its presence, defined the social rituals, cultural values, and personal identities of the period,” said Corning Museum of Glass president Karol Wight. “Glass played a role in the earliest encounters with continents beyond Europe and in the too frequent exploitation of their natural resources. The wealth of the British society that wore sparkling costumes and used polished glass on its tables rested squarely on the shoulders of the people who worked to create that prosperity—enslaved and indentured humans, traders, seafarers, and military explorers.”

Nowhere was this prosperity on greater view than in domestic interiors, which were transformed by the increasing presence of clear and smooth plate glass. The exhibition will put on display newly conserved panels from the original Northumberland House Glass Drawing Room, on loan from the Victoria & Albert Museum, that were designed by the celebrated British architect Robert Adam for Hugh Percy, the first Duke of Northumberland (1714–1786) and completed in 1775. In *Sparkling Company* will feature a virtual reality reconstruction of the entire drawing room, created by Irish production house Noho.

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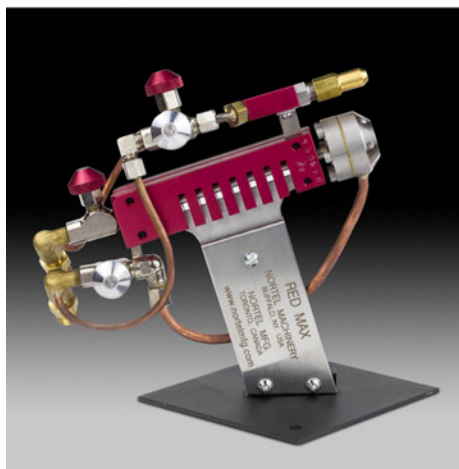
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Sophisticated Sociability

The smooth, polished, and reflective properties of glass also perfectly embodied 18th-century ideals of sociability, in what is considered by many as the “age of politeness.” As urban centers grew in size and prosperity, sociability became ever more sophisticated. The terms *polite* and *polished* were often used interchangeably in the numerous etiquette manuals eagerly read by those wishing to take their place in the polite world. Examples of such literature will be displayed alongside fashionable glass of the period.

In *Sparkling Company: Glass and the Costs of Social Life in Britain During the 1700s* will include important examples of 18th Century British glass.

- Glass embroidered costumes including a spectacular men’s coat intricately decorated with glass “jewels” made around 1780 and a pair of women’s shoes covered in glass beads, shoe buckles set with glass paste jewels, jewelry, and other accessories
- Cut glass lighting and tableware, all made possible through the perfection of British lead crystal in the late 1600s and exported throughout Europe and the British colonies in America and beyond
- A number of large mirrors, which became the tell-tale sign of a fashionable interior, and reverse-painted glass meticulously decorated in China for the British luxury market
- Opulent glass dressing room accessories, including a magnificent gilded silver dressing table set with a looking glass as its centerpiece made around 1700 for the First Countess of Portland; perfume bottles, patch boxes, and an exquisite blue glass casket richly mounted in gilded metal that was used in the *toilette*, a semi-public ritual of dressing that was adopted from France for men and women alike and became a feature of British aristocratic life in the 18th Century
- Artifacts of slavery, including glass trade beads, an iron manilla, a goblet commemorating the “African Trade” of the British town of Whitehaven, the log book of a slave ship, and the deed of sale for a 16-year-old enslaved girl
- Objects connected to the British East India Company trade in China, including a reverse-painted glass picture of the foreign warehouses in Canton, cut glass tea caddies, and a mouthpiece from an opium pipe mounted with carved glass



The Foreign Factories (hongs or warehouses) of Canton, China, about 1784–1785. Reverse-painted glass in gilded wood frame, H. 38.2 cm; W. 53.6 cm. The Corning Museum of Glass (2002.6.6). Photo courtesy of the Collection of The Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York.



Casket with glass panels, about 1760–1770. Possibly James Cox, probably England. Fused, gilt, and molded non-lead glass; metal. H. 19.6 cm, W. 17.8 cm, D. 26.7 cm. The Corning Museum of Glass. Gift of Lucy Smith Battson. Photo from The Collection of The Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York.

Collaborative Endeavors

The exhibition was designed by Selldorf Architects, a longtime collaborator with The Corning Museum of Glass. Central to this presentation of *In Sparkling Company* is a two-wall projection of the Vauxhall Gardens. A cutout in the projection will display a lavishly set table with glass tableware from the period. Eric Goldschmidt, the Properties of Glass Program Supervisor at CMoG and an accomplished flameworker, used 18th century recipe books and other images from the era to create glass versions of period-inspired sweetmeats and sugar table decorations for display.

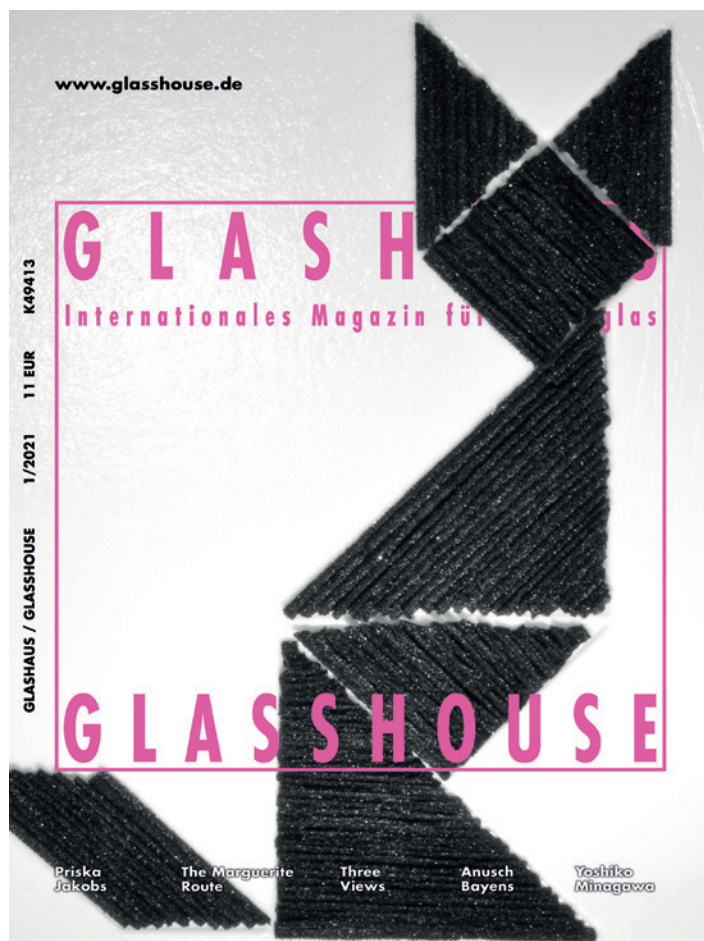
CMoG is also working with Cheyney McKnight, founder of Not Your Momma's History. This program works to educate and increase visibility of African-Americans at historic sites around America to more fully tell the story of glass and enslaved people.

In Sparkling Company: Glass and the Costs of Social Life in Britain During the 1700s will include loans from the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Sir John Soane's Museum, London; the Museum of London; the Fashion Museum, Bath; Royal Museums Greenwich, London; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Penn State University Library; Cleveland Museum of Art; and The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

The exhibition is accompanied by a richly illustrated book of essays by Marvin Bolt, Kimberly Chrisman Campbell, Jennifer Chuong, Melanie Doderer Winkler, Christopher Maxwell, Anna Moran, Marcia Pointon, and Kerry Sinanan with a foreword by Corning Museum Director Karol Wight. It's currently available at shops.cmog.org/index.php/sparkling-company-reflections-glass-18th-century-british-world.

GA

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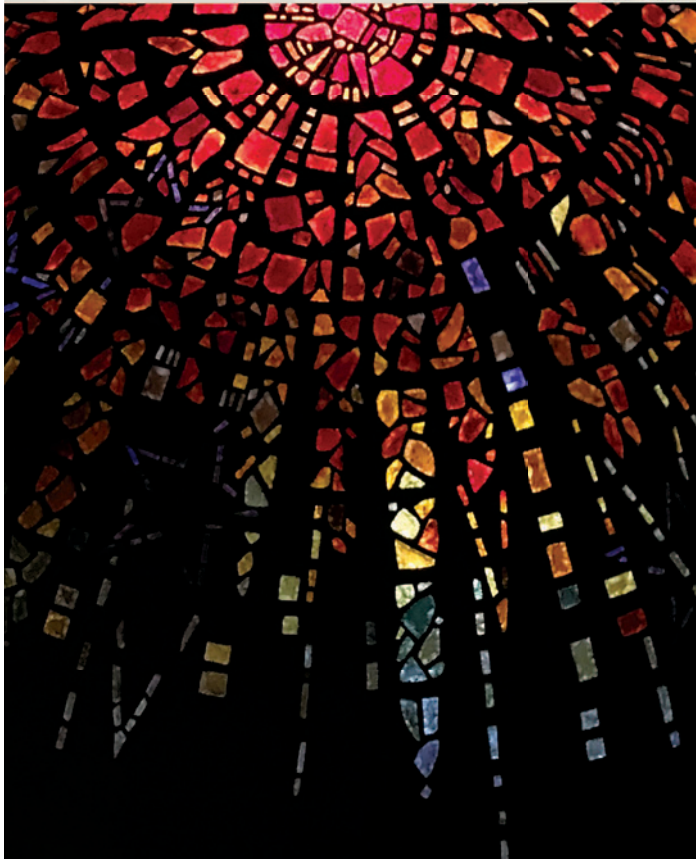
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Mark Hufford

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- Side elements for more even heat distribution
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Craig Mitchell Smith, Grace
Photography by Randy Blankenship



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