

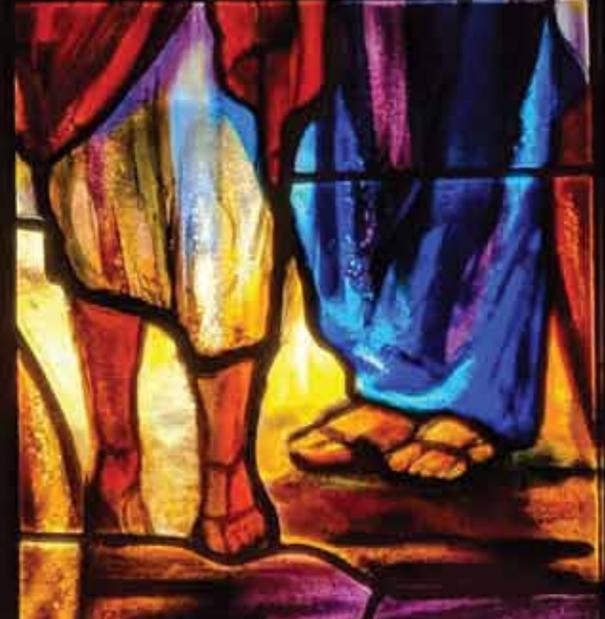
# GLASS ART™

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November/December 2019



**Tim Carey**



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Volume 34 Number 6



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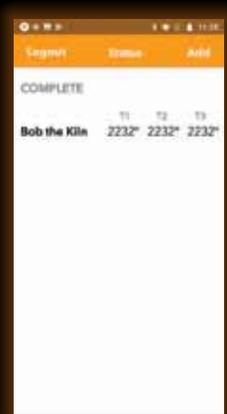
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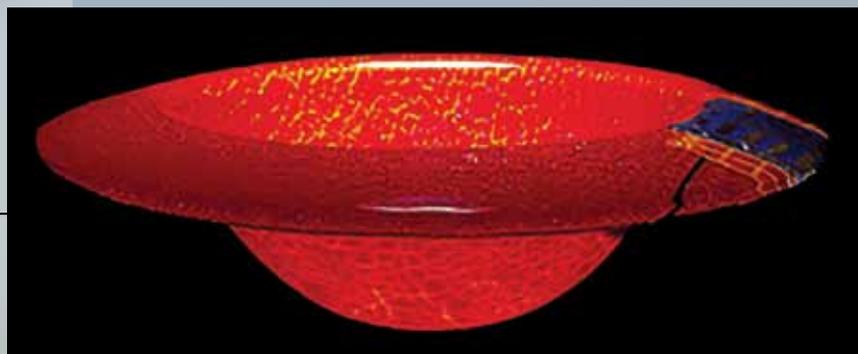
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Photo by Maya Hawk.

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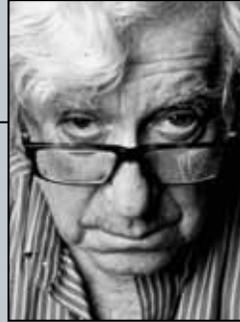
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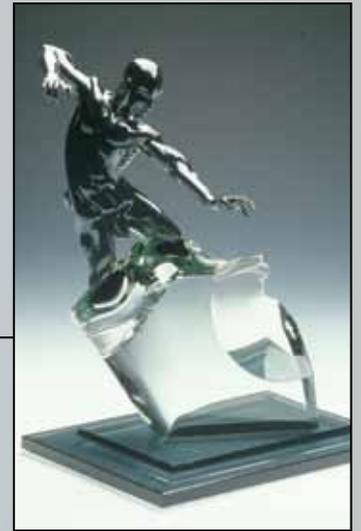
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# TIM CAREY

Provoking Movement with Fused Glass



by Colleen Bryan

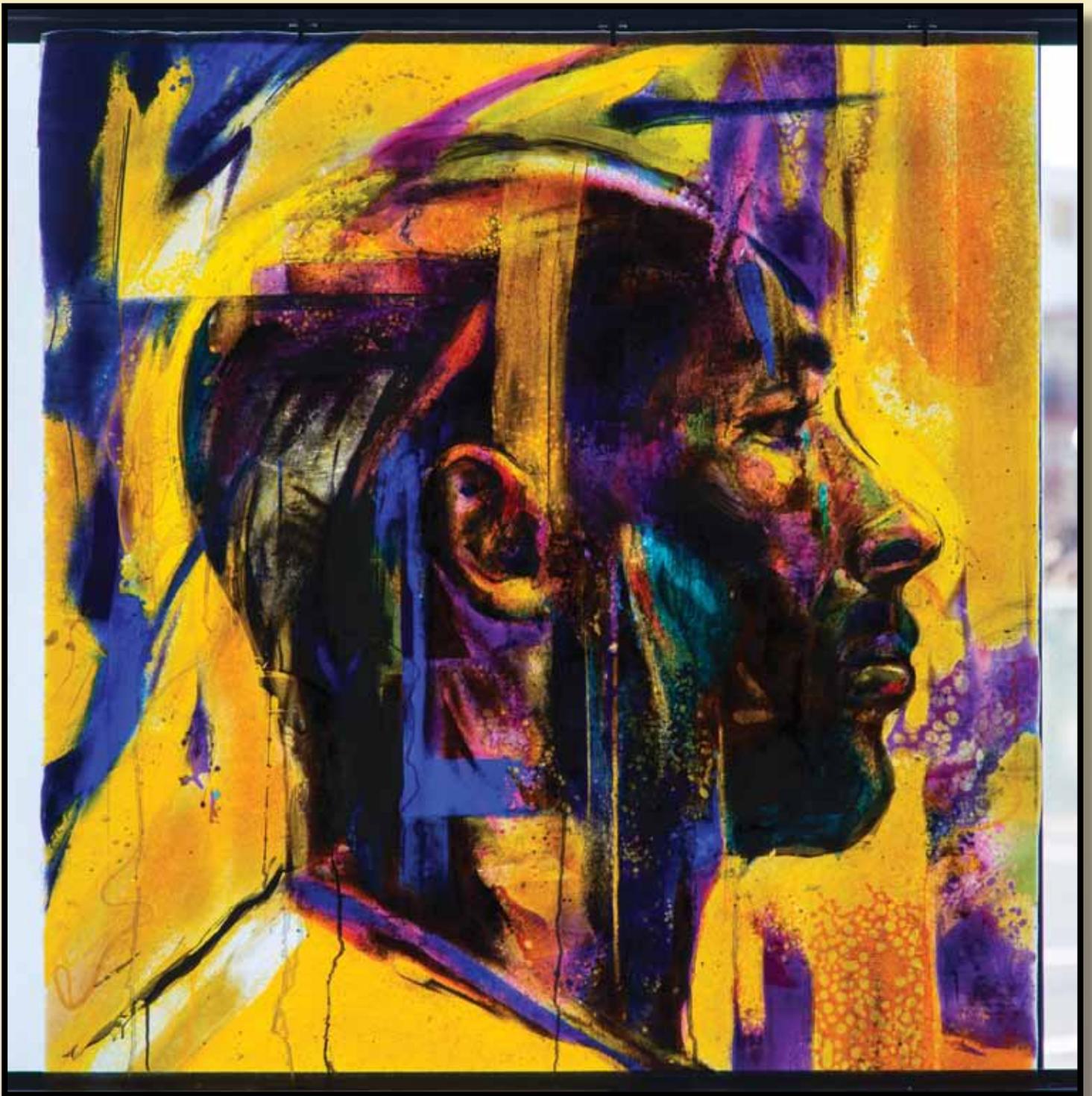
Tim Carey lives on a frontier of glass art design. From his new studio in Los Angeles, California, the onetime oil painter expands the boundary of traditional stained glass methods by merging them with fused glass techniques for architectural and fine art applications. He studied the old masters and worked for 10 years doing murals, canvas work, and drawing before coming to glass. “All artists want to have light inside their work, and when I discovered light coming through glass, I knew this was my medium.” Inside the glass world, though, Carey found that stained glass was incredibly underutilized as a medium for fine art.

“I wanted to bring my painter’s sensibilities to the medium of glass. My training at the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena emphasized craftsmanship and technique, but in industry practice I saw that financial considerations drove a lot of what was completed in the studio. People churned out windows as decorative afterthought, and the work was very production oriented. It was challenging to convince clients that windows were art rather than simply decorations.”

Carey soon went to work for Judson Studios, the oldest family run stained glass studio in the United States. He eventually rose to the position of creative director there. Tim and the studio’s fifth-generation owner, David Judson, collaborated to protect and promote the production of stained glass windows that met the threshold of fine art.

Toward the end of his fourteen years with Judson, Carey sought the mentorship of Narcissus Quagliata to develop a process for designing fused glass images for use in architectural applications. In 2018, Carey left Judson to start Tim Carey Studio so that he could pursue his passion and further innovate the combination of fused and leaded glass.

Tim is most interested in anatomy and producing figurative images in fused glass. He enjoys technical challenges and considers himself more technician and craftsman than artist. “A lot of what I love about my work is making beautiful things that are well crafted.” Tim Carey Studio seeks commissioned opportunities to create secular, religious, and personal fine art.



*(Left to right) Tim Carey, The Cowboy, fused glass and vitreous enamel, 53" x 73", 2019; Kobe, fused glass and vitreous enamel, 42" x 42", 2018. Photos courtesy of Tim Carey Studio.*

### **Historic Innovation**

A single project while he was creative director at Judson Studios launched Carey on his current journey. That was the 3,400-square-foot *Resurrection Window* at the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas. With 161 panels, the Kansas City window is the largest fused glass window yet made.

In 2014, Carey initiated the design of a stained glass window before he was even aware of fusing as an option for such a massive project. As he recalls, "The client kept asking for more color and detail, and I kept working with the design, wanting a more painterly effect that could not be achieved solely with traditional stained glass methods."



(Clockwise from top left) Tim Carey, *The Resurrection Window* in Leawood, Kansas, 2017. Photo courtesy of Bruce Matthews; *The Resurrection Window* detail. Photo courtesy of Kyle Mickelson; Tim and Narcissus Quagliata discussing a completed project. Photo courtesy of Kyle Mickelson.

Serendipitously, Carey became aware of artist Narcissus Quagliata’s work with fused glass and attended a Quagliata workshop in Denver, Colorado, to see if his technique would be an option for the massive window. “We instantly connected over our common mind-set and aesthetic. I asked Narcissus to mentor me and to come to Los Angeles to help us make the window. Together, we designed a custom fabrication process and completed the piece for installation in February 2017.”

Tim and Narcissus connected quickly based on their mutual love of image making with fused glass, but actual execution of the window was more awkward and fraught. “Narcissus observes that with stained glass, the artist spends a lot of time hunting for the right piece of glass to do exactly what he wants. With fused glass, the artist starts with a blank canvas and gets involved a lot earlier in the process. Once we choose the colors, shapes, and textures, we can make our own material in the kiln to best form the image we envision.”

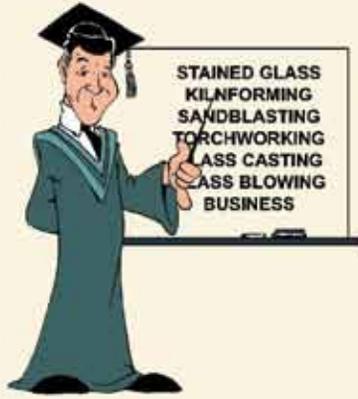
## Developing Mastery

Backing up from the demands of design, Carey had to learn fusing techniques and perfect his technical skill at making images with the material. “The latter is not something you learn in a four-day class. Narcissus would not let me approach the window itself for a long time. ‘You don’t know the moves yet,’ he’d tell me. I did no real fusing on *Resurrection Window* for four months.”

Initially, Tim found it difficult harnessing the material to produce the image he wanted in the kiln. Beyond technical specifications and the limitations of the material, he needed to push beyond cognitive thinking to visceral, creative action. “You have to be gutsy and throw caution to the wind, be okay with failing, and commit to each attempt, yet be ready to do everything over and over again. We had the luxury of a lot of experimentation. Both the trick and the challenge of the process is learning how to provoke the kind of response you want, gaining control over an eyelid or a facial expression.” Bullseye Glass, the manufacturer that also invented the technology that allows glass to be fused, was an incredible partner in this process, always open to questions.

“Every day I’d have a 12-hour window of time to follow my nose toward something I wanted to try. It required a lot of trust that, with repetition and practice, I could learn.”

A documentary film about the window is currently in postproduction by Justin Monroe. “He took real-time footage of the project from the time I met Narcissus in Denver through the installation of the window.” The film is scheduled for release in early 2020. The working title is *Magnifying Glass*, and the promo of the film can be seen at [www.magnifyingglassthefilm.com](http://www.magnifyingglassthefilm.com).



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## Excitement and Anxiety

Four years into his mission of merging fused and stained glass, Carey encountered excitement about its possibilities and aesthetics, along with questions and anxiety about its longevity and safety. “Artists who attempt this work can only be successful to the degree that we educate prospective customers and address their concerns about using fused glass to make public work.”

While leading and fusing continue to be a staple of Tim’s portfolio, he is pushing to make windows without the traditional lead lines. “Monolithic work can be created without using lead and cement, which deteriorate and must be replaced over time. I believe that fused glass is actually more durable than stained glass, allowing the decision whether or not to use lead to relate to the needs of the space and the aesthetics of the surrounding architecture.”

Tim is convinced that this material is safe as well as durable, and he works closely with Bullseye to demonstrate those qualities. “They’ve done a lot of testing in the United States and in Germany and have devised ways to construct and engineer fused glass panels so that they last. Bullseye does both impact and solar testing. Compatibility testing and looking at glass through a polarizing filter to detect any strain both serve to mitigate risk, as does symmetrical engineering and lamination.”

## Stepping Out on His Own

While Carey is proud of the work he did at Judson and appreciative of the relationships he formed there, he learned that sometimes a person can get pushed into places he doesn’t think he wants to go and benefit from the experience. Tim grew frustrated being the director of a studio with multiple concurrent projects and a broad range of responsibilities that he needed to cover every day. He yearned to spend time more time with hands on the material rather than keeping management balls in the air. “I also wanted to own something myself, and I was never going to do that with a 120-year-old family owned business.” Greater autonomy and a more predictable schedule also became more important with three young children. “My wife helped me clarify my choice by saying, ‘I would rather we be happy than comfortable.’ That spurred me to step out on my own.”

Carey tried to wait for the perfect opportunity, wait for a sign, but he acknowledges that those never came. “While I was designing a window about author Ray Bradbury, I read his autobiography. He said he concluded that he had to jump off a cliff, in relation to his writing, and learn to fly on his way down. That seemed relevant to my own situation. There is never a right time to take a big risk. You need to have faith and step up to be a creator of your own destiny.” Fittingly, Carey notes, “Fusing is the ultimate faith medium. At some point you have to just put the glass in the kiln and let it go.”



*Tim Carey, Jesus, Bread of Life Catholic Cemetery window in Mt. Laurel, New Jersey, in partnership with Macie Art Glass, Lumberton, New Jersey. Photo courtesy of Michael Rearden.*

## Transition to a Personal Studio

Tim subleased a 600-square-foot studio in Compton, California, to get his business up and running quickly. One year later, he moved his studio to a larger space in Los Angeles. Proximity to home saves 40 hours of commuting each month, which gives him more time for his glasswork and his family. The studio has concrete floors, new drywall, enough power for the kilns, and not a lot of natural light. “I prefer cool, controlled light, because most of my work is done on light tables.”

All of Carey’s materials are within arm’s reach. “With the experience of a buildout at Judson, I developed a strong sense of what worked and what didn’t and applied that learning to my own studio. A lot of creative decisions are spontaneous, and surrounding myself with glass in all its different forms — powdery frit, heavy frit, premade materials, sheet glass — is both inspirational and supports a smooth-flowing process.”

The new space also affords an opportunity for a gallery or showroom where Tim can stage events. “We live in a very artsy community with opportunities for outreach and exposure. I love the idea of a community gathering space.”

The newfound independence exploits Tim’s personable professionalism and forces him to learn how to run a studio from the business end. The studio, which Carey owns with his wife, is an LLC. Neither has ever run a business before, so they must develop savvy about day-to-day operations.

“I enjoy controlling my message while marketing and presenting myself and my work compatibly with my values and beliefs. Building a website was enjoyable, as was tailoring my brand.” He finds it harder, however, to organize and stay consistent with bookkeeping and scheduling. “As I grow, I hope to bring someone else in to help with those aspects. My wife works in the shop cutting glass.”

## Reviewing Year One

As Tim Carey Studio rounded its one-year anniversary, Carey reflected on his progress toward three main goals:

- Continuing to push fused glass in commission work, both large and small scale, in religious as well as secular settings,
- Educating people on using this medium through teaching workshops around the world, and
- Diving deeper into the possibilities of glass as art through experimentation and the creation of autonomous fine art.

Tim was happy to conclude that he has progressed along all three tracks in the first year.

The greatest adjustment in moving from Judson to his private studio was that Carey no longer had a large staff to direct in a big facility with big kilns. “I was concerned about the size of the projects I would be able to handle on my own while continuing to pursue the fusing techniques.” As a test of his capabilities, Carey secured commitments for commission work, collected deposits to purchase kilns and materials, and initiated a few personal projects as a sole artist.



*Tim Carey, Portrait of Christ detail from The River, fused glass project in Carlsbad, California, with Judson Studios. Photo courtesy of Kyle Mickelson.*

## The Cowboy

The first significant personal commission Carey completed is a residential piece entitled *The Cowboy*. The installation is 53 inches tall by 73 inches wide, monolithic panels defined by a steel frame that hangs on a wall. It is backlit by tiny LED panels. "The greatest challenge was figuring out lighting and framing, but the piece gave me confidence that autonomous, internally lit, free-hanging pieces can be installed virtually anywhere." Improvements to LED lighting technology greatly supported him in this endeavor.

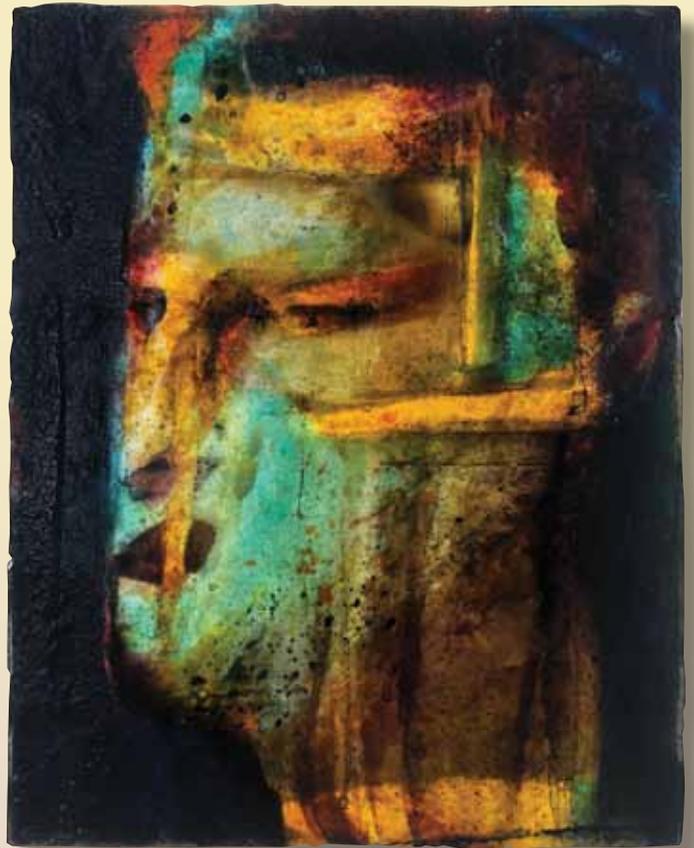
*The Cowboy* advanced the fine art objective that Carey wanted to tackle with commissions. While some artists chafe at the prospect of working closely with clients, Tim enjoyed the dialogue. "It stretches you artistically and pulls you to places you wouldn't necessarily go on your own. In this case, the commission was synergistic. I got the opportunity to work in a nonecclesiastical setting creating a site-specific image that incorporated my signature painterly approach to fused glass. My dream project would be to do a large work for a sports stadium."

## Other Work

Within the first year of operation, Tim Carey Studio also fabricated a 12-foot-by-25-foot window for the apse of the chapel at the Jesus Bread of Life Mausoleum in Mt. Laurel, New Jersey. The window was made in partnership with Macie Art Glass in nearby Lumberton, New Jersey. The new mausoleum has lots of clear glass that it wants to replace with contemporary stained glass. A second window on the first miracle of Christ was also fabricated and installed in July 2019.

In another project, Tim donated a breakthrough piece of intuitive fused glass to the Stained Glass Association of America's 2019 annual conference. "This piece entitled *Gross Anatomy* represented the first time I truly felt in complete control of the glass. I also believe it introduced a signature look for my future work."

Carey also maintains an ongoing collaboration with Judson as an independent contractor. He continues work to finish some projects at Judson Studios, and some clients still come to Judson asking for Tim and get referred. "Judson continues to move forward, and I am branching out on my own. It has been good."



(Clockwise from top) Tim Carey, *Boy 1*, fused glass and vitreous enamel, 10" x 7", 2018; *Torso*, fused glass, 17" x 14"; teaching demo, *Bullseye Glass*, 2019.  
Photos courtesy of Tim Carey Studio.

## Educating on Innovation

Tim admits a reluctance to take on teaching his methods of merging fused and stained glass for one key reason. “Sometimes I don’t know what I’m teaching. The glass works itself out and images emerge in moments of discomfort, which I have learned to value, but students of more traditionally prescribed forms may not. I find teaching an exhausting combination of stress with responsibility, because I want to make sure I’m not letting people down.”

Still, several factors compel Carey to integrate teaching in his new studio: One is the imposed discipline. “Teaching forces me to deconstruct my method, to record firing schedules, and externalize what I’ve learned. It drives me to a place where I have to be specific to meet other people’s needs, and that is good for me.” In the process of his own discovery, he learns a lot about what does and doesn’t work that can save other people time and expense.

Teaching also spreads confidence in the new method and spurs demand. “The more people who know about fusing images, the better for our industry. Teaching lets me address concerns about safety with real data. I am confident that the more exposure these techniques get, the more applications we will discover. I am particularly interested in teaching my techniques to people from a traditional stained glass background.”

Finally, Tim hopes to raise the artistic level of fused glass that is being made. “A lot of what I see out there relies on the beauty of the material but lacks movement. You can’t really plan movement, but you can provoke it in the natural process. I have learned a lot about provoking movement that I’d like to share.”

The artist now teaches three- and four-day workshops on expressive painting with glass for Bullseye. “These classes unpack all that I’ve learned about fusing over the past five years. My students include hobbyists, fine artists, and other studio owners. I will continue to teach these classes at least three times each year. I’ve also taught at Pacific Art Glass in Los Angeles, California, and will teach in the U.K. next summer.”

Tim feels himself channeling what he has learned and what he continues to discover about fusing with the larger world. “Narcissus and I speak weekly and are both committed to exposing fused material to the work ahead of artists throughout our industry.”

GA



*Tim Carey putting the final touches on the Face of Christ for The Resurrection Window in Leawood, Kansas. Photo courtesy of Terry Fouche.*

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# SGAA Supports 2022 as The International Year of Glass

*by SGAA Headquarters Staff*

Over the past 60 years, the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) has declared international years to recognize global initiatives of important contributions to society. Across the globe, UN resolutions have enabled professional societies, museums, journals, and academia to recognize and celebrate their history, their current state, their future, and in their totality, their major contributions to society.

## Celebrating Glass

Against this storied background, an international groundswell has risen to pursue a United Nations International Year of Glass for 2022. This concept was first introduced at the 2018 Fall Annual Meeting of the International Commission on Glass (ICG) in Yokohama, Japan. In May 2019, the ICG, The Corning Museum of Glass, The American Ceramic Society, and the Glass Art Society endorsed the exploration of this initiative in a presentation to the Office of the U.S. Mission of the United Nations in New York City. Extensive planning is now underway to inform both international art and scientific glass-themed societies and museums of this endeavor to secure the United Nations declaration of the 2022 International Year of Glass.

The Stained Glass Association of America (SGAA) is proud to support this declaration. As an organization advocating for stained glass artists and studios since its founding in 1903, SGAA is excited at the prospect of bringing a sharper world focus to the craft we love.

The members of SGAA look forward to working with the ICG on this project. While the SGAA deliberates to define what a celebration of the International Year of Glass would look like for us, we love input from our community. Be part of the conversation on how we can celebrate a year of glass!

## SGAA Returning Board and New Communications Director

As the SGAA continues to grow, headquarters has hired Amy Moritz as Communications Director in May 2019. Amy comes to the organization with an extensive background in journalism, marketing, and development, and we're excited to have her on board. You can drop her a line with member news at [amy@stainedglass.org](mailto:amy@stainedglass.org).



*SGAA Board and Staff: (Back row, left to right): Tom Holdman, Ralph Mills, David Judson, Bryant Stanton, Jim Piercey, and Ed Gilbertson. (Front row, left to right) SM Ann Therese Kelly, Kathy Barnard, Megan McElfresh, Courtney Nelson, Ariana Makau, and Amy Moritz. Not pictured: Ron Weaver, Kristine Nordmeyer, Eric Suevel, and Andrea Reid. Photo by Judson Studios/Kyle J. Mickelson.*

Meanwhile, the membership voted to retain the current board of directors for the 2019–20 year at the annual summer conference held in June 2019 in San Antonio, Texas. David Judson will remain as President along with elected members Bryant Stanton (1st Vice President), Ralph Mills (2nd Vice President), Kristine Nordmeyer (Financial Secretary), Ed Gilbertson (Treasurer), and James Pierce (Recording Secretary). Also returning to the board are Sister Ann Therese Kelly (School Director), Andrea Reid (Development Director), Courtney Alvarez (Director), Kathy Barnard (Director), Tom Holdman (Director), Ariana Makau (Director), Eric Suevel (Director) and Ron Weaver (Director). SGAA welcomes these board members back for another great year leading the organization to continuing success. **GA**

*Visit [www.stainedglass.org](http://www.stainedglass.org) to learn more about the Stained Glass Association of America and its upcoming events.*

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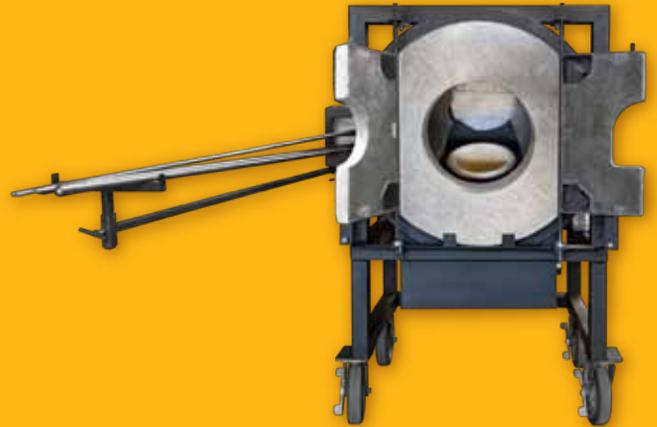
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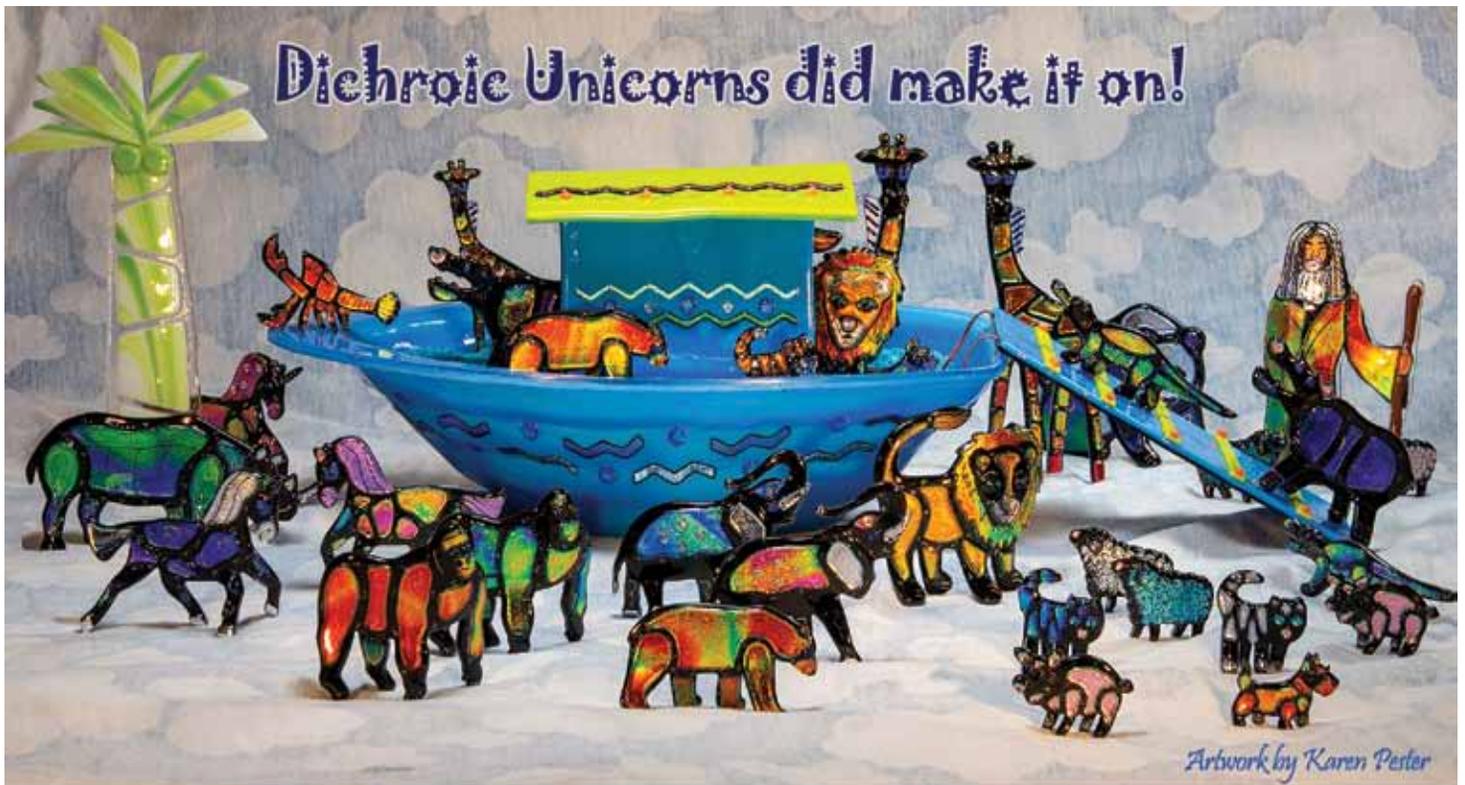
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# Christina Amri Acts of Light

## Fine Art through Glass

by Colleen Bryan

Christina Amri has chased fine art through glass since she was a teenager, and youthful enthusiasm still reverberates through the work of Amri Studio in Portland, Oregon. The vision guiding the studio is *Acts of Light*. Amri seeks both to enlist the human inclination to gravitate toward light and to engage the artist's ability to direct light as an antidote to all the darkness in the world. "This is our spiritual challenge, I think. Whatever medium we use, it is what good people do. I like to make glass as a celebration, an experience of honoring, pleasure, and joy. Artists can help to elevate the times and to elevate life's conditions for the larger society. I feel that I've been given the opportunity to participate in this important work. Whether in the healing sector, religious settings, or the commercial world of corporations and casinos, hotels and restaurants, this is what I seek to do."

Amri admits that this striving is not easily attained. "The artist's eye and sensitivity to color, light, texture, and dimension can lead one to get stuck in production. I refuse to stay stuck." She finds that moving between mediums (from stained glass to carved crystal to LED lighting) and forms (from windows to domes to her current *Gemstone Collection* "jewels") supports her fluid expression.

### Steeped in Glass as Fine Art

After early exposure to fine stained glass, Amri taught herself the trade by making small installations for Victorian homes. She soon rejected the ubiquitous craftier applications, however, and by age 19 went to France to apprentice with Atelier Gaudin, a fourth-generation stained glass studio. There, she helped work on their government contract to restore the *Infancy of Christ* panels of Chartres Cathedral. Chartres is a UNESCO World Heritage Site that is famous for, among other things, its 12th and 13th century stained glass windows, which have been well-conserved and are the most intact group of stained glass surviving from the Middle Ages.

"Living in Europe at that age, traveling through France and Germany, shaped my approach to glass. My knowledge of the craft was rooted in fine art and architecture that was created as a devotion out of a timeless act of love." Those buildings were made for permanence rather than slapped together by a contractor constrained to a "penny for the arts" budget. The work was artisanal, requiring fine craftsmanship and trained master workers. "That opportunity was a profound blessing that continues to inform my artistic career and choices these decades later."



Christina Amri, *Garden of Earthly Delight* detail.  
Photos of mural by Stas Afanasiev.

### Setting Up a Studio

Christina returned from France a changed person afire with a passion for glassmaking and started a professional studio. Her first location was in Berkeley, California. She quickly secured some large glass restorations for churches, historic homes, and casinos. From there, she moved to Santa Rose in Sonoma County for 28 years.

Five years ago, Christina moved Amri Studio to Portland, Oregon. "After my kids were grown, I felt I could pick up and move wherever I wanted to live. Santa Rosa is a small town with limited resources. I needed to be in a little city, so I packed up my 5,000-square-foot studio, found another warehouse in Oregon, and got to work again."

The move to Portland has been fortunate for Amri. She experiences Portland as a superfriendly, fun town with lots of fabulous restaurants in close proximity, an easily accessible airport, and ample resources for the glass artist. "I have great employees here, drawn from a deep talent pool."

### Recasting Past Work

While Amri Studio does more with collectible art glass pieces (her *Gemstone* line), carved glass, and lighting these days, it came onto the radar for *Glass Art* magazine through a bit of serendipity at a trade show. The Glass Craft & Bead Expo in Las Vegas, Nevada, is a regular event for the magazine. As a premier opportunity to meet people across the glass industry and tap into new directions in the field, the magazine sponsors competitions, hosts a booth, and sends a team to the show every year. Publisher Maureen James was taken aback on approaching the registration desk at the South Point Hotel and Casino to see a large, elaborate stained glass window filling a wall behind it. Maureen reflected, "It was so intricate and brilliant that I couldn't believe it could have been there before without my seeing it. The Expo is crazy busy, but my colleague and I just stood there for nearly half an hour taking in the detail and execution of that window."



(Top to bottom) *Jeweled Peacocks bookend*, a metaphorical vision of Las Vegas, *Garden of Earthly Delight mural*; reinstal-  
*lation of the Garden of Earthly Delight mural at the South Point*  
*Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada; Bird-of-Pair-of-Dice*  
*detail; Michael's architect peeking into a tiny hinged door into*  
*Michael's restaurant.*



Titled *Garden of Earthly Delight*, the window was indeed an older mural that Christina Amri designed and built along with a companion dome in the 1980s for patron Michael Gaughan. Owner of a number of casinos in Vegas, Gaughan has commissioned Amri to make stained glass for many of them over four decades. This window took Amri and a crew of eight craftsmen 10,000 hours to complete over a 10-month period. "It was a true labor of love, both for a great client and for the medium of stained glass!"

The *Garden of Earthly Delight* window was commissioned to celebrate Gaughan's first casino, the Barbary Coast. The 25-by-6-foot window is comprised of 12 separate panels that interlock without visible seams. The intricate, playful mural depicts a mysterious forest, with light filtering through the trees to reveal intricate creatures, tiny surprises, and personal references. An ornate wrought iron arched gate is studded with antique cut glass jewels. The letters *BC* at the top of the gate commemorate Gaughan's first casino venture as a young man. Through the gate, paths lead the eye to a central fountain and gazebo, where maidens lounge amidst a profusion of flowers with an urn of wine and fruits spilling out at their feet. Behind them, the landscape fades into distant hills. The mural is a celebration of Las Vegas opulence.





*(Top to bottom) Amri Studio, Garlands and Ribbons Dome. The stained glass is now reinstalled at the South Point Hotel and Casino in Michael's restaurant. Photos by John Sutton Photography.*

Throughout the mural are hidden surprises. Dimensional ivy made of drapery glass cut with a diamond band saw climbs a tree by the stone pillars of the gate, and three-dimensional butterfly wings stick out from the panel. Closer inspection reveals that the tiny butterfly bodies are people. A carved tree trunk bears a heart with the inscription "Michael+Paula" (Gaughan's wife). Deep in the woods, a full-scale portrait of Gaughan dressed as a gypsy holds a crystal ball depicting the garden. Some pieces of glass are no larger than the size of a small fingernail. A tiny door hidden at the base of a tree features working hinges and a keyhole and opens to reveal a stained glass image of the original Barbary Coast's famous Michael's Restaurant. "When the window was installed at its original location, someone stole the door as a souvenir. We made Michael a new one and presented it to him with a tiny brass key."

Gaughan recently contracted with Amri to bring the window out of storage where it had been crated for the past decade, refurbish it, select a new location at his South Point Casino, and reinstall it with new lighting. The window was reinstalled in April 2019 by Amri Studio with John Joy Art Glass Studio just in time for the Glass Craft & Bead Expo. Working with Gaughan's architect and contractor, a wall in the new South Point Casino was rebuilt to Amri Studio's specifications to serve as a light box for the piece. "We succeeded in replicating natural light in the interior of the casino."

Newly restored and relit, Amri contends that the mural never looked better. "In its former location, this mural was displayed in a standard light box. That solution flattens out all the texture and really doesn't work. Now we have state-of-the-art lighting that combines LED and spotlights, and that makes all the difference."

## **The Role of Patronage in Fine Art**

Amri feels both joy and gratitude for the opportunity of such an enduring relationship with her exquisite creation. "I thanked Mr. Gaughan for moving these big significant pieces instead of selling them with the original casino, and he responded 'Christina, I'm taking these pieces to my grave with me.' He has been a dear man and a dear client for more than 40 years and has supported fine craftsmanship in his casinos for all these decades."

Such patronage allowed the artist to find and use the best materials. "I once flew to a Denver warehouse to salvage some antique cut glass jewels. They were in tiny beautiful cardboard boxes with Egyptian cotton wrapping each jewel. That box hadn't been opened since 1910." It included faceted jewel insets for wooden merry-go-rounds and costume jewels made to be sewn into clothing for the follies. Another box held ruby red glass taillights for Model A cars. Other times, the artist would have glass pieces custom made for certain windows such as the gold-pink Tiffany Confetti glass for Michael's restaurant dome. "I have one of the best collections of antique and custom glass around, both because I had an eye for it and a client who let me play with it."

Amri assembled a group of 14 team members in Berkeley, then Santa Rosa, and trained and apprenticed them to a high level of craftsmanship. "We worked in the tradition of Tiffany, who was himself originally a fine art painter and jeweler. My clients let me loose, and we made hundreds of acres of glass in Las Vegas alone. That kind of patronage is invaluable, allowing an artist to spend the time and money and take the risks required to deliver fine art. Together, we pushed decorative art glass to its limit."



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## Beyond Stained Glass

While Amri created an impressive portfolio of stained glass art over many years, its use is circumscribed to certain kinds of architecture found in churches, casinos, and some private homes. This made it challenging to earn a living from stained glass alone. "We still make stained glass. I just installed a precious stained glass panel in a church in San Francisco's Chinatown. A tiny 90-year-old woman had funded it." In recent years, however, Amri Studio is better known for fine crystal carving and engineered lighting to show glass art to its best advantage.

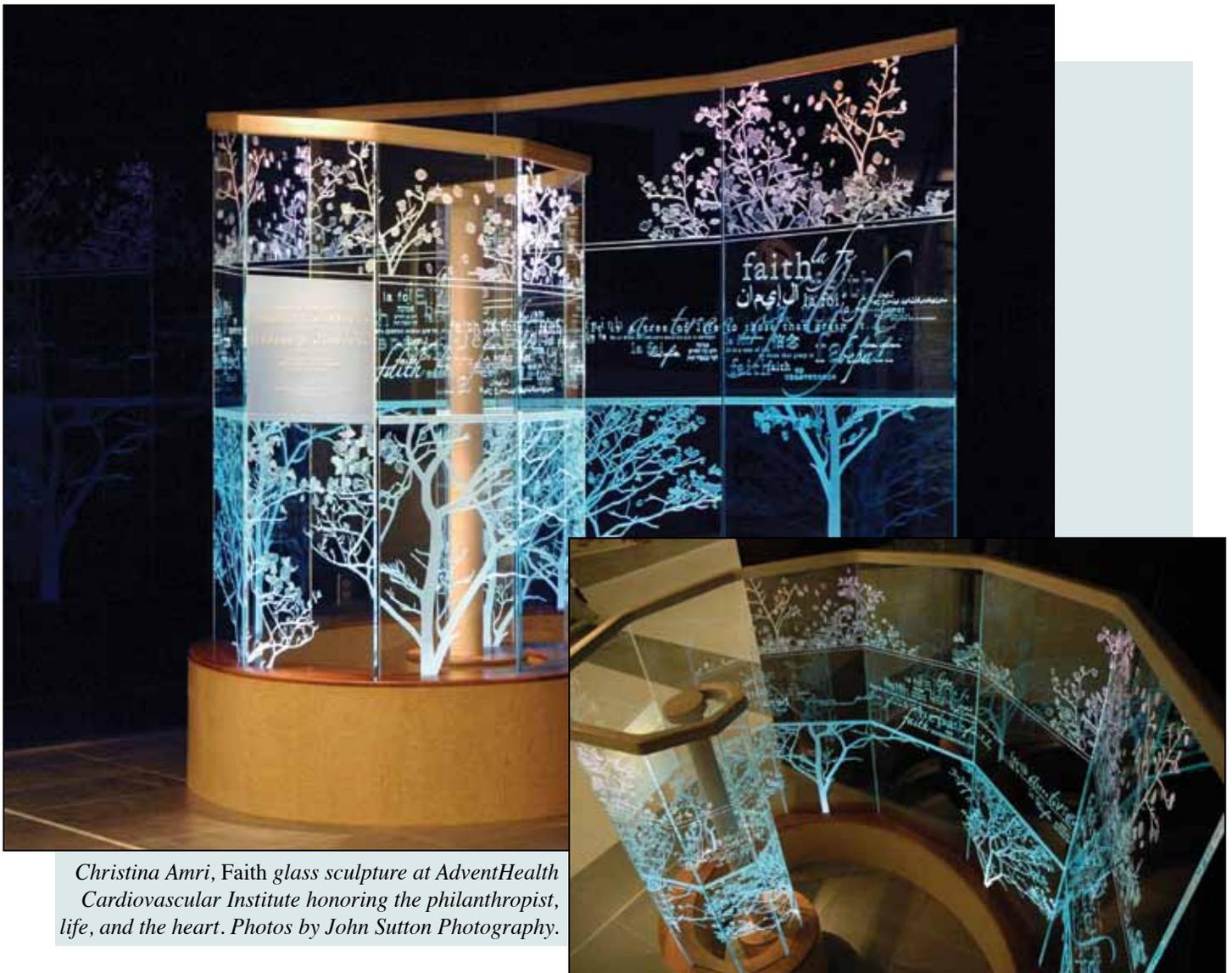
"My view of the world is very three-dimensional. I took my eye for fine detail, exquisite materials, and my good ear for listening to what the client wanted and applied those to all kinds of public buildings." Christina has combined good stained glass with carved crystal work in hospitals, healing environments, children's places, and museums. "I want to carve in timeless glass as the ancients carved enduring monuments in stone, marble, and bronze."

Amri aspires to be a thought leader in the medium of glass, to produce the finest quality craftsmanship while pushing the edges of the art form. "I'm always thinking about what we can do next, more, differently than has been done already. We started lighting glass edges with LED technology when that was still new and made wonderful work for Caesar's Palace that people traveled to see."

## Depth, Light, and Movement

Amri Studio lays claim to some of the deepest glass carving in the country, innovating LED-edged lighting with glass carving in a way that makes the object seem almost holographic. Now that it is possible to attach edge lighting to small computers and program it, the studio employs an engineer to program lighting in a manner that furthers the illusion that an image is moving. "We carved a flock of butterflies across a mural for Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio, and engineered a swirling scatter of leaves blowing in the wind. For Dayton Children's Hospital, we introduced a perched butterfly fluttering its wings and connected a proximity sensor so that kids can trigger the movement."

The studio makes smaller sculptural gifts, including the NASCAR trophy for NASCAR 400 car races. It also creates and installs larger obelisks, such as a tribute honoring major donors to the Museum of Fine Art in St. Petersburg, Florida. The names of major donors were deeply chisel-cut into heavy 10-foot-by-5-foot-by-1-inch crystal glass panels as a permanent monument. "I think of crystal as transparent stone. The finished work resembles a bas-relief except that it is transparent. Frosted parts resemble translucent alabaster that is backlit. We sought to elevate the piece to fit naturally within a museum by playing with light, the quality of the material, and messaging."



*Christina Amri, Faith glass sculpture at AdventHealth Cardiovascular Institute honoring the philanthropist, life, and the heart. Photos by John Sutton Photography.*

AdventHealth Orlando hospital in Orlando, Florida, treated the family of a wealthy person following a tragic accident. Afterwards, in gratitude, he wrote the hospital a check for \$20 million, which they used to help build a new cardiology wing. The hospital commissioned Amri Studio to make a permanent commemorative artwork to acknowledge the donor. "He had a connection to art glass and wanted to celebrate the goodness of life, thank the caregivers, and add to the healing environment for all patients, so we worked with the Foundation on that piece." Heart ventricles circulate in a spiral fashion, and Amri wanted the sculpture to reference the spiral of life. "We created a freestanding grove of trees arranged in spiral fashion and spelled out the word *Faith* in eight U.N. languages. The glass spiral grove is large enough for a person to walk inside and through. It was a very satisfying project."

### Elevating the Mundane

Her exposure to the worlds of environmental and architectural design stirred Amri's awareness of how seemingly secondary elements such as exhibit display, signage, and furniture can affect how a person feels about a space. "A lot of signage is functional, manufactured rather than artisanal or well-crafted. Often, it screams out jarringly against the context of spaces that are designed to be elegant. Our studio developed a suite of signage in thick, faceted, carved crystal for high-end environments like boutique hotels or restaurants. We incorporate gold leaf burnished into the glass in a luscious combination, using fine materials and intricate craftsmanship. We call it the *Gemstone Collection* and sell it from a separate website linked to Amri Studio."

The studio sponsored a display in Las Vegas in 2018 at the Hospitality Design trade show and generated considerable excitement. "I chose that show because my more recent work had been concentrated in medical and pediatric areas as well as universities, and I wanted to spread out again to the hospitality and signage worlds."

In each of these applications, Christina is trying to bring the magic of glass alive with dimension, carving, and light. "I think it is built into the human system that we are drawn to light. I am trying to keep the magic going in an age where people are acculturated to sitting for hours before the virtual reality of computer screens."



Christina Amri, Welcome Reception, carved crystal and gold-filled, self-illuminating Hospitality sign from Amri Studio's Gemstone Collection. Photo by Josh Gingerich.

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-Jeremy Thomley, Mohawk Steel & Glass  
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## Taking Stock of a Career

Amri is proud of being a woman and business owner working in the architectural field. “Both have posed challenges and taken a lot of guts to persevere. Gaining the attention and respect that men afford each other automatically has required me to work twice as hard. When I started my business and answered the phone, people would ask for the owner. When I talk to construction contractors, they cross their arms over their chests until they figure out that I know what I’m talking about.

“It’s been a gritty experience, and I was not afforded any special consideration. There is really something to be celebrated when a woman business owner has success and keeps her integrity and quality in her work without compromise. I love talking to and collaborating with younger women who are making art while raising families and taking care of our communities and our parents.”

Asked what she found made the greatest difference in her success, Christina ponders: “When you have passion about something, it is contagious. People get excited. I’ve always had a real passion for my art and for collaboration.” Still, she cannot underestimate the value of necessity.

“I had to raise my four children. I simply couldn’t collapse under the weight of it. I needed to care for my family and to be a strong role model for my children. In the beginning I wasn’t very practical, not the nuts-and-bolts person I have become. Nowadays, entrepreneurs are required to have one foot in the practical world and another in the artistic/visionary. Bridging those two worlds well with integrity and sanity intact is big work that needs to be honored in those who attempt it.”

Amri figures that the task of doing one’s best possible work, remembering to honor each other, and lifting each other up to make life better for all is both simple and complicated. “Fortunately, women are good at that.” **GA**



*Amri Studio in collaboration with Alex Grey, Rising Hope, a four-layer carved, edge-lit crystal and terrazzo floor inlay at the Miami Project to Cure Paralysis, University of Miami. The inscription reads, “When courage, genius, and generosity join hands, all things are possible.”*

*Photo by John Sutton Photography.*



*A nurse at St. Mary’s Medical Center in Grand Junction, Colorado, admiring the carved crystal and LED edge-lit History Wall.*

*Photo by Gabriel Harber.*

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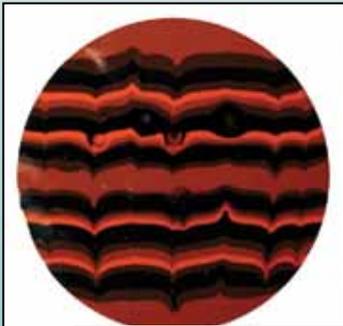
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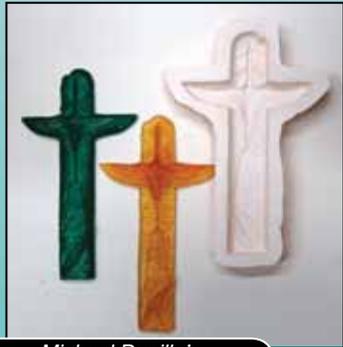
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# The 2018 Boston Mosaic Marathon

by *Cynthia Fisher, Mosaic Marathon Co-Coordinator*

Photography by Tim Stassinis,  
Shared with Permission of the Society of American Mosaics Artists

Founded in 1999, the Society of American Mosaic Artists (SAMA) is a vibrant and ever-expanding group of more than 900 members, including mosaic artists at all levels, mosaic aficionados, collectors, materials suppliers, and art educators. SAMA has put renewed emphasis on strengthening ties with other mosaic organizations around the globe to pursue common goals and develop new programs that are relevant to its diverse membership.

In addition to workshops, presentations, and mosaic art tours during the annual SAMA conferences, the Mosaic Marathon brings members together for a unique opportunity to create a mosaic in a cooperative networking experience. A large mosaic panel, *WATER*, was recently created during the 2018 Mosaic Marathon in Boston, Massachusetts, and now hangs on the wall at the Harbor Islands Pavilion located at 191 West Atlantic Avenue on the Rose Kennedy Greenway in Boston.



*Members laying tesserae on the Great Blue Heron panel*

## Finding Leaders and Sponsors

It had been so exciting to hear the announcement that the 2018 American Mosaic Summit was to take place in Boston, something that many of us New Englanders had been hoping would happen for years. When Deb Aldo, co-chair and good friend, asked if I would be willing to spearhead the marathon, I jumped at the opportunity with one stipulation—that we create it using the indirect method, which was a golden opportunity to spread the word on my beloved approach to mosaic.

Next up was to find a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization willing to work with us and identify a location for the mosaic to reside. Our theme was water resources, an important issue for our city, which is situated on a natural harbor and estuary of Massachusetts Bay. I created a design for three panels, each 3 feet wide by 5 feet high, hung vertically.

## Planning the Design

A watercolor sketch of the design was created to accompany the initial inquiries sent to various water-focused organizations. My original drawing is quite similar to the final mosaic. It included a map and a list of recreational uses of water resources on the left, a mandala with fish swimming around it in the center, and a great blue heron taking flight in the right panel. I chose the quotation, “If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in water” by Loren Eiseley, an American anthropologist, philosopher, and natural science writer, since it broadens the water theme from being science-driven to include a lyrical approach.

Boston Harbor Now, whose mission is “working to reestablish Boston as one of the world’s truly great coastal cities,” was enthusiastic in its acceptance of our offer. We had meetings and lots of e-mail back and forth to iron out the details. I was both relieved and thrilled when this important part of the process was accomplished.

Deb Aldo took the lead in the mandala, since that is her area of expertise. A team of local SAMA volunteers committed to the marathon, and I am grateful for all their efforts. Thank you to Christine Kenneally, Carol Cataldo, Jess Regelson, Cecilia Kremer, Suzanne Owayda, Beth Klingher, Pam Stratton, Nikki Sullivan, Gwen Basilica, and others.



*The completed mural*

We broke from SAMA marathon tradition by adding new materials to the beautiful Mexican smalti. These included one-inch pâte de verre tile, vitreous glass, and stained glass. Deb also incorporated a myriad of pebbles, shells, dalle de verre, Litovi, and Mexican smalti for the mandala section. Another task was making the sketches full size. Finally, as the marathon approached, we started the laying process in my studio to give a sense of what materials were to be used where.

### **Installing the Mosaic**

Once on site at the Westin Boston Waterfront Hotel, the conference received the unexpected zinger of a blizzard on day one, which gave eager member volunteers an early start. The mosaic was assembled by laying materials facedown on sticky mesh, as per the indirect method. Volunteers could choose which type of material they wanted to work with, and it was a great learning experience for newbies. When finished, the mosaics on the sticky mesh were flipped over, right side up, and attached to the panels with thinset mortar, then grouted with three shades of gray and black. The procedure was explained for those unfamiliar with using a notched trowel to spread the mortar, and as one member commented, "Being present was like attending a workshop!"

Much planning went into the installation, since the National Park Service did not want any hanging hardware to go into the beautiful, recently refinished mahogany woodwork. I designed a cleat system with a one-inch aluminum lip to hold the mosaics onto the wall. The installation went smoothly thanks to the assistance of my builder husband Marcus Fisher and Deb Aldo.

We also want to offer a huge thank-you to those who provided the materials needed to complete the project. The 2018 SAMA Mosaic Marathon was co-sponsored by Kim Wozniak of Wit's End Mosaic and Smalti.com (Mexican smalti, aluminum frames); LATICRETE International (thinset mortar, grout); an anonymous donor (stained glass, pâte de verre, vitreous glass); and Eno's Design Center (WEDI backer board). **GA**

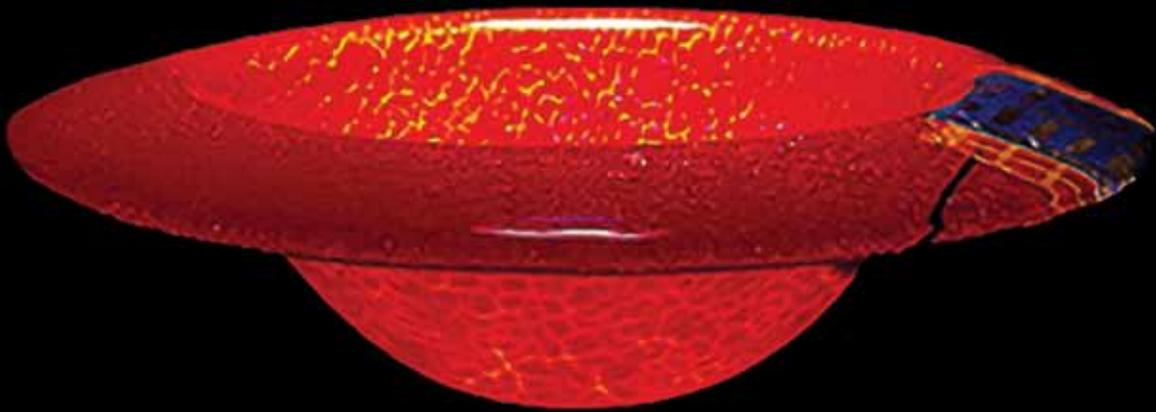
*Visit [www.americanmosaics.org](http://www.americanmosaics.org) for more information on the Society of American Mosaic Artists, a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating, inspiring, and promoting excellence in the mosaic arts.*



*Members working to ensure that andamento, the direction created by placement of the tesserae, flowed between the panels*

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# Unique Shapes in Kiln Formed Glass



Bob Leatherbarrow, Red Pangean, bowl slumped using a drop-out ring with outward sloping rim.

by Bob Leatherbarrow

Tired of finishing a unique design only to have to slump it into the “same-old, same-old” commercially available mold? Here is how to make versatile and economical molds in a multitude of shapes.

## The Nature of Drop-Out Molds

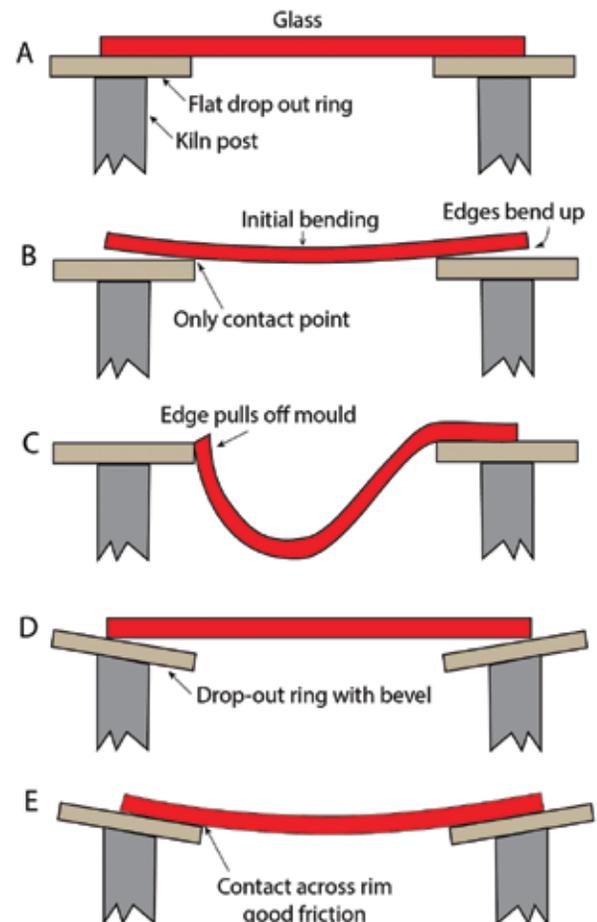
Drop-out molds, which are supported above a kiln shelf on posts, are made of a refractory material. They have an outer rim that supports a sheet of flat glass and an interior hole through which the glass slumps when heated (Figure 1A). If the rim is flat at the onset of slumping as the glass starts to slump into the mold, the glass over the rim lifts slightly (Figure 1B) and can pull off the rim as the piece continues to slump through the center (Figure 1C).

A common remedy is to create very wide, flat rims that often are unattractive. A better remedy is to bevel the rim of the mold (Figure 1D). Then the glass over the rim flattens onto the rim at the onset of slumping, and increased friction prevents the glass from pulling off the rim, resulting in a more successful slump (Figure 1E). The sloping rim of the finished bowl is also a much more interesting shape.

## Making a Beveled Drop-Out Mold

The procedure for making beveled drop-out molds is described below. It consists of first making a glass template with a sloped rim, then building a clay mold on the template.

**Step 1: Make a Glass Template.** The glass template must have a gentle and even slope around the perimeter. To achieve this, partially slump a sheet of float glass into an existing mold to form a large “contact lens” shape.



(Figure 1A–E) Drop-out molds with flat rims are prone to having glass slip off the rim, whereas the increased friction experienced when using a beveled rim helps to prevent the glass from slipping.



(Figure 2) Flat clay rim on cloth



(Figure 3) Clay rim with underlying cloth draped over the glass template



(Figure 4) Drop-out mold on kiln posts

**Step 2: Make a Flat-Rimmed Clay Shape.** Use a rolling pin to form a flat sheet of stoneware or porcelain clay to the desired diameter that is about 0.5 inches thick. Roll out the clay on a piece of large cloth, then use a “giant beam circle compass” to lightly trace the inside and outside rim edges. Place the center of the compass on a piece of cardboard on the clay to prevent the point from sinking into the clay. Next, trim the excess clay from the inside and outside edges of the rim (Figure 2) to create a donut shape. When trimming the inside edge, tilt the knife to undercut the rim. The clay will shrink about 10 percent during drying and bisque firing.

**Step 3: Position and Shape the Clay Rim on the Template.** Transfer the moist clay rim, including the cloth, onto the center of the gently sloped glass template (Figure 3). Cover the clay with fabric and allow it to dry slowly and thoroughly. This may take a week or more. With the fragile clay, which is known as greenware, still on the template, use a scraper to gently smooth the surface of the clay rim when it is completely dry. Use sandpaper to smooth the inside edge over which the glass will slump.

**Step 4: Fire the Clay.** Remove the greenware from the template and the cloth, then place it in a pottery kiln. If the greenware has to be transferred to a pottery studio, leave it on the rim to provide support during transport. Fire to a bisque temperature to convert the greenware to a durable porous pottery rim. Apply several layers of kiln wash, and the beveled drop-out mold is ready to use.

**Step 5: Set Up the Glass on the Mold.** Elevate the mold on three or more kiln posts above a kiln shelf (Figure 4). Make sure the outside uppermost edge of the rim is level. Center the flat art glass on the mold so that the glass rim will be a constant width. If the glass is opaque, make pencil marks at intervals around the drop-out mold that are a constant distance from the inside edge. This distance should be greater than the anticipated width of the glass rim of the bowl. Center the opaque glass art on the rim using the marks as a guide.

**Step 6: Fire the Glass Using This Suggested Schedule.** Heat the glass at 300°F/hour—slower if the glass is close to the heating elements in the kiln lid—to the point when the glass starts to bend and hold it there for 30 minutes. This flattens the glass onto the rim of the drop-out mold and creates friction between the glass and the mold, which in turn prevents the glass from slipping off of the rim. For a mold with a central opening about 12 inches in diameter, this onset of slumping occurs at about 1150°F.

Increase the temperature in 25°F increments with long holds at each successively higher temperature until the glass touches the underlying kiln shelf. Rapid heating results in steep-sided bowls

with sides that thin toward the rim. Slow heating results in gently curved sides with more constant glass thickness throughout. When the slump is complete, advance the program to the anneal soak segment. Always remember that each kiln fires differently, so you may need to make adjustments to the schedule for your own kiln.

## Variations

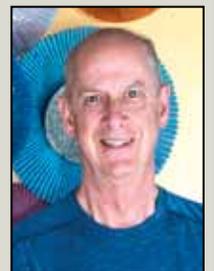
It is possible to create a wide variety of unique shapes using this combination of clay on a glass template.

- Vary the direction of the slope of the rim. Have the rim either dip inward toward the central drop-out hole or outward away from the center.
- Vary the amount of dip in the glass template. Rims can dip gently or steeply.
- Vary the shape of the drop-out hole—for example, square, rectangular, or oval—in addition to circular holes.
- Vary the shape of the glass template that supports the clay rim before drying. For example, instead of a large contact lens shape, try a linear trough with shallowly sloping flanks.

The concept behind these drop-out molds is to use the shape of an underlying glass template to create a gentle and evenly sloped rim of clay. Not only does this lead to varied and interesting rims, but the slope also eliminates the technical problem of the glass slipping off of the rim. Finally, the materials required to make these drop-out molds are economical and accessible. This approach is one solution to the challenge of creating original and unique slumped shapes for kiln formed glass bowls.

GA

*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](http://www.leatherbarrowglass.com) to learn more about his work.*

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# Bronwen Heilman

## Flameworker, Teacher, and Innovator

by Vicki Schneider

**B**ronwen Heilman is an American flameworker with a quirky style that is clearly visible in her art and her persona. Her creative interests run deep. She recalls sitting and painting with her mother, a professional painter, and knowing at an early age that she was going to be an artist.

The transformative process of glass appeals to her, even more than the pieces she creates. From her first exposure to the medium, Heilman has been intrigued by its properties and continues to be fascinated as it morphs from a solid to a malleable substance. "Molten glass is mesmerizing. I just keep wanting to see that change where the color goes from a glow to a darker glow as it's coming into itself."

### An Unlikely Career Path

Before working in glass, Bronwen had a love of theater, which became her initial college focus. Heilman was a performer, which, when one knows her, isn't hard to imagine. She's not afraid to be center stage and has even been seen walking around the International Society of Glass Beadmakers (ISGB) conferences with a tutu on her head.



Left to right) Bronwen Heilman, Rudston, flameworked glass, enamels, and 24K gold, 1.5" x 1.5", 2012. Bronwen flameworking on a blown vase. Photo by Nick Letson.



Bronwen Heilman, Blue Flower, fused glass and enamels, 13" x 9" x 1.75", 2013.

After several years majoring in theater, she switched to mechanical engineering. When one thinks of a stereotypical engineer, Bronwen does not come to mind. Even though she earned excellent grades, her professors kept telling her to change majors, believing that she was better suited to becoming a physicist. She recounts, "My professors knew that I had the thought process of being an engineer, but I was not in the mold of an engineer. I would show up in my pajamas and write my notes on little scraps of paper. The people next to me would be in suits and ties and carrying briefcases."

Bronwen earned her degree in engineering, which in some respects she wishes she hadn't. She acknowledges, however, that each step along her journey has brought her to where she is today. Her training as an engineer has helped her develop and apply well-honed problem solving skills to tackle and overcome many perplexing challenges in glass. Her tenacity is legendary, and she has often spent years developing new and exciting techniques.



## Becoming a Glass Artist

At the same time Bronwen was an engineer, she was also a jeweler. One day her husband David suggested that they go to the Fall Tucson Gem and Mineral Show. As they were looking around the show, they heard people talking about American lampworked beads. Bronwen and David had been collecting ancient trade beads for a while and couldn't fathom that contemporary lampworked beads could be anything special, but they were curious.

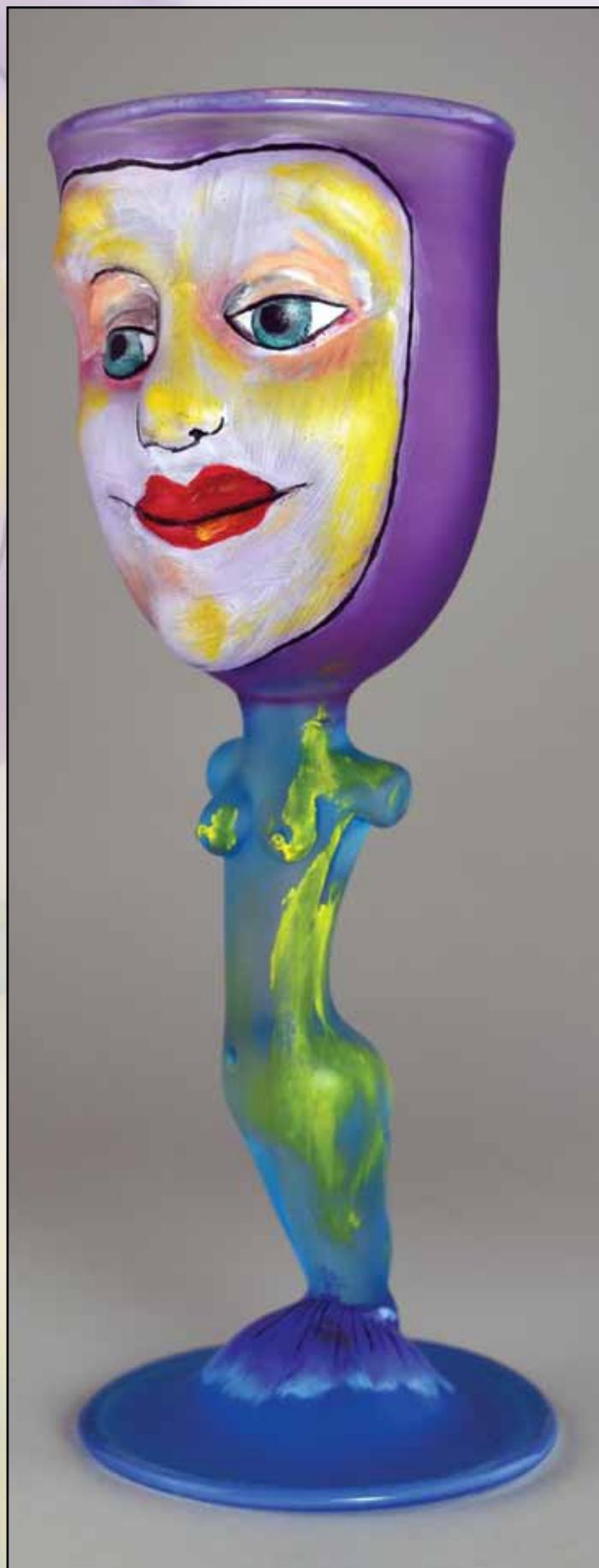
The pair went to the Best Bead Show in 1996 expecting to be disappointed. "We walked in the door and our jaws just dropped. The beads were gorgeous." They were so impressed that they bought a torch and bead release, something they had never heard of, from Wale Apparatus that same day.

Excited with their purchases, the couple set up their new torch that very night in a small space the size of a closet. With only one torch to share, they would stand behind one another and wait for their turn. After each bead was completed, they would switch positions so the other person would get a chance to work. They enjoyed it so much, they soon bought a second torch and set up their burners side by side.

By the end of their first year of flameworking, Bronwen and David had made a large stash of beads. A few days before the next Best Bead Show, she called Louis Wilson, the show's organizer, and asked him if there were any vendor spaces available. As luck would have it, a vendor had just dropped out. Bronwen took the space and easily sold everything on her table. She figured that if she could do that, she could make a living, so she quit her engineering job and started doing just glass.



(Left to right) Bronwen Heilman, Flora Series using Bron-Enam-Tech, flameworked glass and enamels, tallest piece 2.5", 2019; Mask 2 Goblet, flameworked borosilicate glass with paint, 2016.  
Mask photo by Maya Hawk.



## Exploring the Medium

Bronwen is continuously challenging herself to find innovative ways to use her medium of choice. "Right now, I'm really excited about exploring bottle glass. I'm figuring out more ways to manipulate it. This past spring, I took a ton of pictures of flowers while hiking in the mountains near Tucson, Arizona. I want to use recycled bottle glass to create the visions in my head. I need to create designs that are *me* and have my voice in them."

According to Bronwen, bottle glass is more difficult to work with than COE 104 soda lime glass and behaves very differently in the torch. To add to the challenge, bottles are generally not compatible with one another, and each color has its own idiosyncrasies. She explains: "Working with the Bombay Sapphire Gin bottle, for example, is like playing with Silly Putty. It is very gooey. If you're trying to pick off a little piece of glass, you end up picking off way too much . . . but that's the fun."

Another mystery Bronwen has been trying to solve for several years is how to use vitreous enamel with borosilicate glass. So far, she has had limited success due to the many variables that are impacting her results. Bronwen explains that if an artist applies the enamel too thickly, it may chip off. If it's applied too thinly, it can hardly be seen. If the painting is encased in a thick layer of clear glass, the piece may appear to be stable, but it may start checking a year later. She knows there's a solution but just hasn't discovered it yet. That lack of success doesn't dissuade Bronwen from trying. Instead, it spurs her on.

Problem solving isn't always easy. "I do get frustrated, especially when I'm trying to figure out a process and it's taking forever. I tell myself, 'Well, it should just be like this.' Then I sit down and five hours later I'm still asking, 'How come it keeps breaking? It's always breaking at the same point. What's happening?'" But that's not just the frustrating part. It's also the exciting part—figuring out how to get it to work."

Heilman's awareness of processes recently inspired her to modify a tool to help artists hold a wire on axis as they create headpins. It has a quick release mechanism so that the wire can be removed easily when it is placed into the annealer. Bronwen's Wire Holding Tool is available on her website.



(Left to right) Bronwen Heilman, *From the Dead Marshes*, soft glass flameworked and enameled, 1.5" diameter, 2013;  
*Hanna B or Stepping Out*, flameworked glass, fused glass, painted steel, granite, 17" tall, 2011.

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(Left to right) Bronwen Heilman, *Spirit Guides* group, *flameworked borosilicate glass, paint, 24K gold, tallest piece 6"*, 2018; *Peggy pendant, flameworked glass, enamels, copper, rubber, 4" x 4" x 1" (pendant) x 20" long (necklace)*, 2005.  
 Photo by Chris Heilman.

## The Role of Change

Bronwen is driven to change and the exploration of new and different ways of working with glass. "Sometimes I think the way I change all of the time is a curse. It seems like the people who "make it" have a certain thing they do over and over and over. I just can't do that. I get extremely bored. That's probably the engineer in my head. Once I've figured out a process, I want to find a new challenge."

One technique that doesn't bore Bronwen, no matter how many times she does it, is painting. Her artistic voice and her connection to painting are evident in the distinctive look of her pieces. "Each painting is different. That's what keeps me going. It's not the same bead over and over again, because the painting is so different." I think what really draws me to *everything* is painting. If you look at my borosilicate pieces—like my *Spirit Guides*, for example—all the coloration is with paint and gold. The piece is not done when it comes out of the kiln. I enjoy doing more processes to it to take it to another level."

Over the past decade, Bronwen has also had to adjust to dramatic changes in the world of sales. She used to do 24 retail and wholesale shows a year. In the past, she'd create her work, attend buyers' markets, and take orders. Currently, her approach to marketing her work has changed. Now she creates an inventory of pieces and builds online visibility to attract buyers that include galleries, stores, and individuals. Most of her former wholesale customers now find her online.

## Sonoran Glass School

The Sonoran Glass School in Tucson, Arizona, is virtually in Bronwen's backyard. After having taught there several times, one of its founders, David Klein, invited her to serve on the board. After three years, she was asked to take over the Flame Shop as its director.

Working at Sonoran, Heilman develops the school's flameworking program, promotes its classes, and teaches individuals and small groups how to work at a torch with soda lime and borosilicate glass. She also invites artists from all over the country, including Emilio Santini, Beau Barrett, and Patty Lakinsmith, among others, to teach flameworking workshops at the studio. "I am excited about what Sonoran Glass School brings to the glass art community's table. It is a fun and very welcoming place to learn glass."

## Sharing Her Passion

Bronwen is a well-respected international teacher who loves to share her passion for glass all over the world. Her most popular classes are reverse and surface painting at the torch with vitreous enamels, techniques she has developed and improved upon over the years. "Glass painting has been around for a billion years, but I developed a way that it would survive the aggressive heat of the torch." She has coined the term "Bron-Enam-Tech" to refer to her successful surface enamel process.

As people became more environmentally conscious, her class using recycled glass bottles has gained popularity. The earrings she makes from recycled glass have become so popular that she can hardly keep up with all the orders she receives.



(Clockwise from left) Bronwen Heilman, *Attack*, fused gold, enamels, fused glass, Verre Églomisé, 7 layers of imagery fused together, 11 x 15 x 1.5", 2012; *Group of Faces*, hot glass, glassblowing at the furnace, flameworked imagery, 10" for tallest piece, 2016; *Assorted Pieces*, fused glass, flame-worked glass, and cast glass, all with enamels, 0.5" round for smallest piece, 1998 to 2012.

### Focusing on the Future

Heilman maintains a fluid focus that is inspired by an array of subjects and techniques. These include her continuing investigation of vitreous enamels, revisiting and expanding techniques and subjects she has addressed in the past, exploring size, and pushing the limits of bottle glass.

Bronwen is intrigued by urban life, where she is drawn to the influences of graffiti art and the use of recycled glass. She is also moved by the human face, flowers, plants, the desert, and the mountains found in her part of Arizona. One thing is for sure. Whatever project she lands on, no matter how briefly, the results of her efforts will likely be memorable and quintessentially Bronwen. GA

**Bronwen Heilman**  
**Sonoran Glass School**  
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Vicki Schneider is humbled to follow the tradition of Venetian flameworking artists to produce decorative solid and blown glass art. Primarily working off-hand in COE 104 soft glass, her creations are informed and inspired by her "extra-ordinary" childhood growing up on the Jersey shore. Her current bodies of work include *Mama's Garden*, composed of life-like blown and solid flowers, and *Childhood*, vignettes celebrating the innocence of youth.



In 2009, Schneider opened *Expressive Glass*, a nine-torch teaching studio in Buffalo, New York, with the goal to share her knowledge and passion for glass with novice and experienced glassworkers. She also seeks to build the flameworking community in Western New York. Since 2006, the artist has introduced more than 500 students to the magic of this amazing medium and has studied with and hosted many of the world's most accomplished and respected artists. Learn more about Vicki's work and her studio at [www.expressiveglass.com](http://www.expressiveglass.com).

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Featuring the latest from  
the International Society of Glass Beadmakers

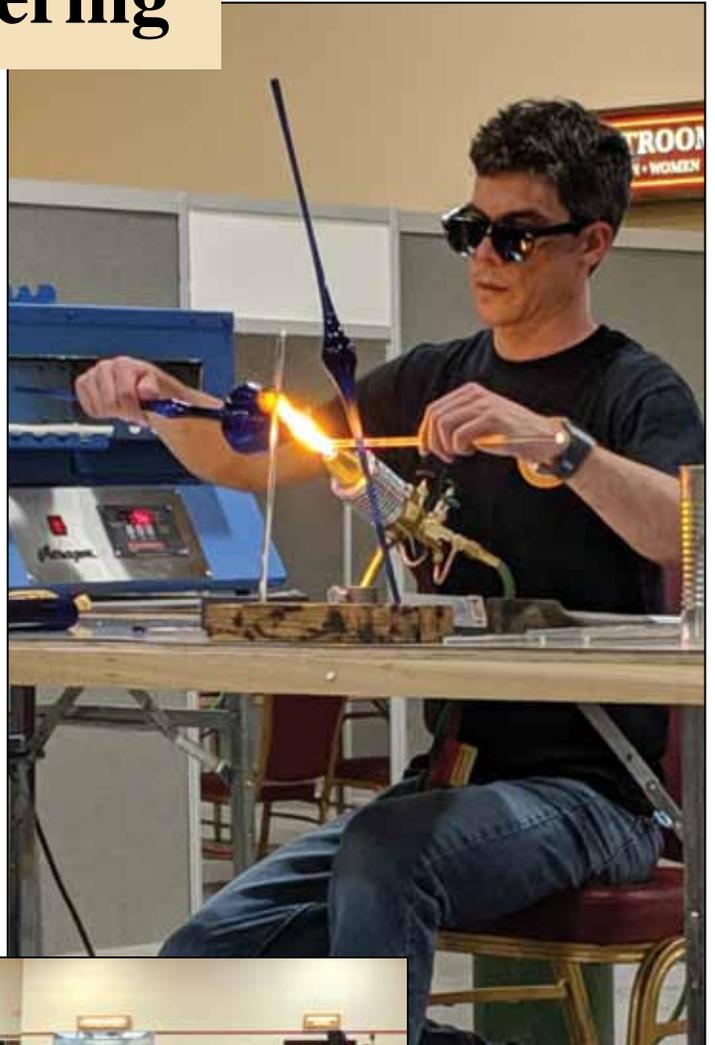
## The 2019 ISGB Gathering

by Susan Richards

In April 2020, the International Society of Glass Beadmakers (ISGB) will hold its annual conference, the Gathering, at the South Point Hotel Casino & Spa in Las Vegas, Nevada. The organization will again partner with the Glass Craft & Bead Expo (GCBE) in order to provide participants at both events with an extraordinary glass experience.

Although the GCBE and the Gathering remain independent of one another, this partnership offers ISGB attendees the opportunity to participate in their usual educational and fun-filled Gathering while enjoying the events offered by GCBE. Registrants of the GCBE will also gain access to the ISGB's Glass, Beads & Jewelry Bazaar as well as the Friday night Open Torch Event.

The Gathering will run April 1–5, 2020, with preconference workshops beginning on Tuesday, March 30. The ability to take advantage of GCBE class offerings and the show floor packed with vendors means that ISGB participants will have access to diverse and novel glass-related instruction and materials that showcase virtually every topic of interest to glass enthusiasts in addition to the ISGB classes and events.



Beau Barrett 2019  
Live Torch Demo



Bead Bazaar

## Promoting the Art of Glass Bead Making

The ISGB is the leading organization for the promotion, education, and appreciation of the art of glass bead making for wearable, sculptural, and functional art. Its mission states that the organization's goals are "to preserve the rich and diverse traditions of the art of glass bead making and glassworking techniques, promote educational initiatives and professional development, and encourage the innovative use of complementary mediums among artists and craftspeople." This Las Vegas event is an exceptional opportunity for the organization to pursue its mission because of its long-standing embrace of the glass arts.

The Open Torch Experience will take place on Friday during the Gathering and is open to both ISGB and GCBE registrants. In addition to the usual opportunity to sample many torches and tools, the ISGB will have guest flameworkers demonstrating for the crowd. The combination of flame and fun will make it a great evening for everyone.

## Something for Everyone

A highlight of every Gathering is the Glass, Bead, and Jewelry Bazaar, a one-day pop-up sale of member's artwork. The Las Vegas Gathering will include the Bazaar on the GCBE show floor for one day only on Saturday, April 4, 2020. The Vegas crowds will be treated to a sale of handmade artisan pieces made by Gathering attendees from around the world.

There also will be a wide variety of other events at the conference to satisfy many interests. It is an opportunity for attendees to network with each other, gallery owners, collectors, technical vendors, and suppliers. In addition, technical vendors will have an

opportunity to showcase new equipment, tools, supplies, and glass. Through demonstrations, lectures, panel discussions, and more, attendees can learn new techniques and business skills to further their glass knowledge. **GA**

Visit [www.isgb.org](http://www.isgb.org) to learn more about the upcoming events for the International Society of Beadmakers and how to become a member.



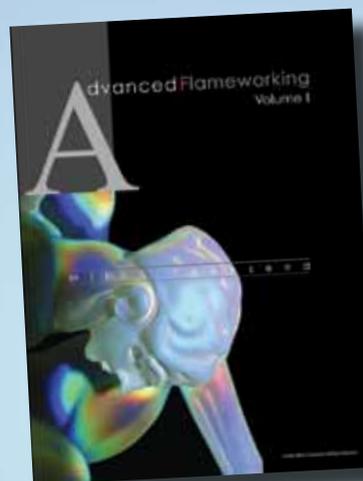
Sharon's hat

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# Priska Tobler Capturing Nature in Glass



by Sara Sally LaGrand

*Photos throughout the article show Swiss wildflowers and wildlife captured by Priska Tobler in frameworked glass.*

**P**riska Tobler is a genetic wonder. Having been born into a long line of successful artists, she comes by her artistic inklings naturally. She is a descendent of famous painters, sculptors, and draftsmen, all hailing from Switzerland. Priska is, however, the only one in her family to embrace glass.

## From Trinkets to Treasures

People complain about technology and social media in general, but I am ever grateful for the universe that is my algorithm, since it sends me to the most delightful artists all over the world. After following Tobler on Instagram for over a year, my observations tell me she is a prolific artisan, creating fungi to fauna and everything in between. Sometimes you have to ask yourself if the pieces are actu-

ally real flowers, except when you encounter the occasional painted fairy decorating a life-size bug. Instagram has a nifty feature that lets you save posts that strike your fancy into a “Favorites” folder. I am often amazed at how many stunning photos I have saved that belong to Priska.

The artist began her glass journey at the tender age of 17 working with a scientific glassblower in Switzerland. She honed her skills at the bench of Fred Meyer, an employee of the Swiss scientific glass company, Ems-Chemie, but she never created laboratory glassware. Tobler only made trinkets for Meyer’s side gig in a gift shop. This gave her an excellent foundation to what would become her life’s calling. She worked at his bench for five years, then began creating her replicas of nature in glass.



*Photo of Priska Tobler holding a stunning, true-to-life bouquet of her flowers created in glass by Marco Thöny. All other photos in the article by the artist.*



### **The Lure of the Natural World**

Priska's love of the natural world beckoned her to begin creating creatures, bugs, and plant life in glass, replicating nature in delicate forms that could rival the glass art of Leopold and Rudolf Blaschka. This famous father-and-son team from 19th century Bohemia was responsible for capturing hundreds of specimens that can be found in museums and scientific collections all over the world, including the Harvard Museum of Natural History in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

At the age of 22, Priska's father, the famous Swiss painter Rudolf Albert Tobler, invited his daughter to participate in an exhibition showcasing his highly sought after paintings. Her little table of glass sculptures was such a success that she was able to live on the proceeds for a year as she repositioned herself to focus on her own glasswork. She has been making a living as a glass artist ever since, moving to her dream home in Chur, Switzerland, and selling her sculptures from her home base.

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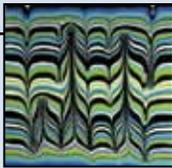
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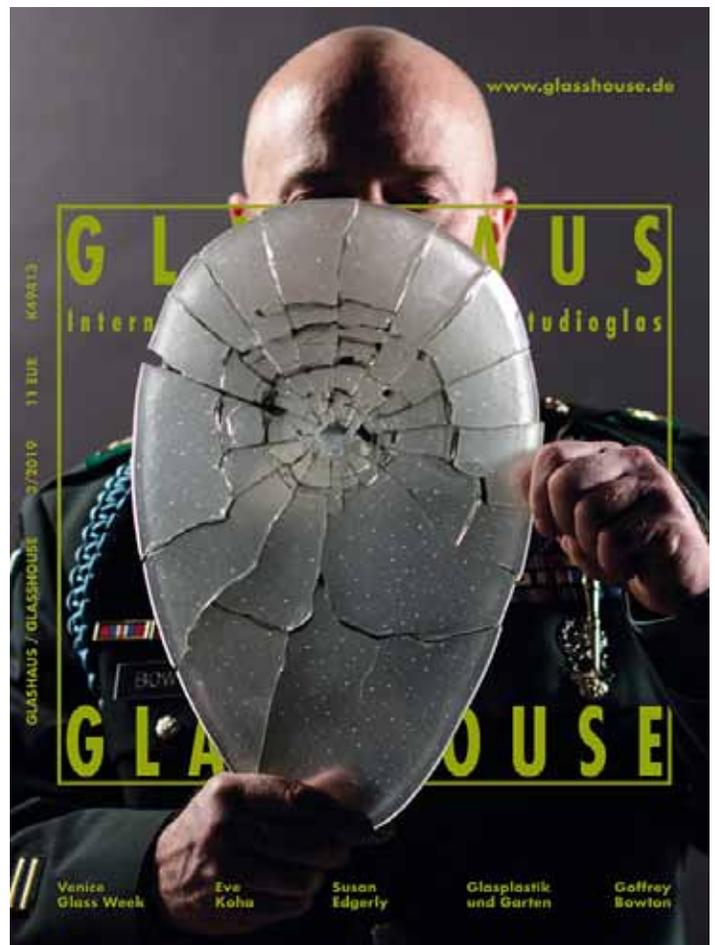
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## Drawing Delicate Details from Glass

Tobler is not a glass purist. Just as the Blaschkas' practice called for unconventional means to replicate nature exactly, the artist also creates her own forms in clear and color borosilicate glass first, down to the last detail. Then after sandblasting the surface, she painstakingly paints each piece with breathtaking precision. This helps her combine her two loves — sculpture and painting. The details are so precise, you might need to brush up on your German language skills so that you can read some hashtags to decipher whether a photo is of real nature or a beautiful piece of art.



Tobler's works are so delicate that even though they are made of borosilicate, she is reluctant to ship them anywhere. The best way to find her work is to trek to Switzerland and be prepared to carry your glassy treasure home on the plane. **GA**

*Priska Tobler continues to exhibit at galleries all over Switzerland. Her work was recently shown in Schloss Wellenberg, Switzerland, in September 2019 and Gossau, Switzerland, in October 2019. However, most of her sales are made over the Internet and by phone. The best way to see her work is by becoming her friend on Instagram @priska.tobler or visiting her website at glassart-tobler.ch/.*



**Priska Tobler**  
Reischen 23, 7432 Zillis-Reischen  
Switzerland  
Instagram @priska.tobler  
www.glassart-tobler.ch



*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](http://www.sarasallylagrand.com) to find out more about the artist.*

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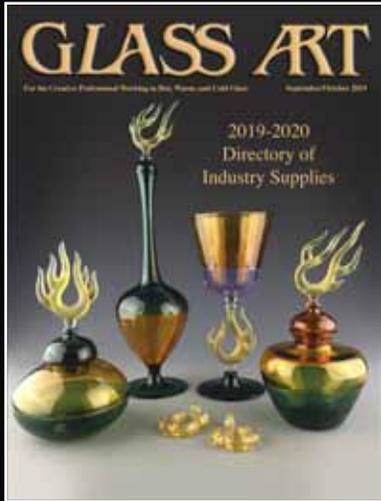


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- 4/3 Open Torch
- 4/4 Bead Bazaar
- 4/5 Presentations

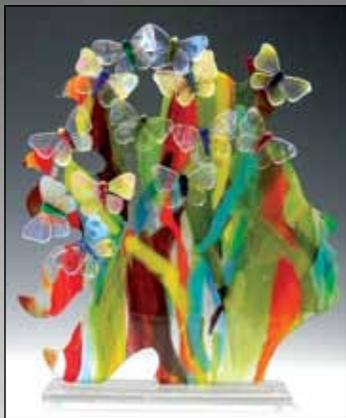
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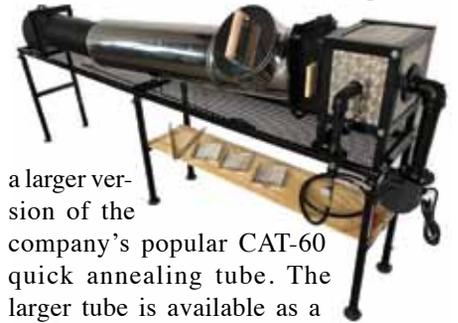
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**The Corning Museum of Glass (CMoG)** was the proud **collaborator and key consulting partner on the Netflix 10-episode show, Blown Away**, the first glassblowing competition series. Deborah Czeresko



won "Best in Blow" plus prizes including a weeklong residency at CMoG. The final session was held October 14–17, 2019, in the Amphitheater Hot Shop. Attendees to the family friendly demonstrations were also encouraged to visit *Blown Away: Glassblowing Comes to Netflix*. The special installation, which runs through July 1, 2020, includes one work from each contestant and a behind-the-scenes documentary with interviews conducted on the set and footage of the Museum's Hot Glass demo team taking part in the finale.

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## Readers' Forum

Dear Glass Art, March/April 2019

Thank you for a fabulous article describing my glass art to your readers. I wish I could thank you enough for working out all the details of this, and I'm very happy with the way it came out. I have become a devoted reader and loved the article on Kazuki Takizawa. Last summer we were teaching at UrbanGlass at the same time, and I got a glimpse into his work and the story behind it.

Best regards,  
Sasha Zhitneva  
SZd Glass Studio



55% Off  
by Sasha Zhitneva

Dear Colleen, May/June 2019

I am truly honored that you selected my work on blowing dichroic to cover in your magazine. It is quite a thrill for a 70-year-old glassblower who is relatively new to the art, but I am even more excited about the opportunities to create that glass provides!

The way that the article was written and the art displayed has resulted in my receiving numerous compliments that I believe are due to Glass Art and Colleen Bryan. My hat is off to you both.

With my very best regards,  
Andrew Lang



Prometheus' Gift by Andrew Lang

Dear Sara, July/August 2019

I'm very happy, because your article on my studio is really fantastic! I'm even a little bit moved.

Thank you so much,  
Silvia Tabasso



Muretto Papaveri  
by Silvia Tabasso

Dear Glass Art, July/August 2019

I want to thank you for making it possible to share our studio's part in restoring the glass art treasures of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. I think the layout is exciting and the article well-written. You have selected some really nice pictures of our history. Everything is very well done.

Thank you again,  
Cynthia Courage  
Attenhofer's Stained Glass



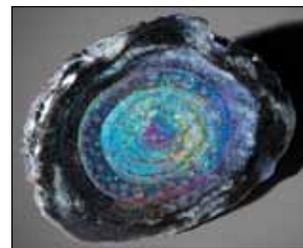
Mom's Sofa by Cynthia Courage

Dear Colleen, July/August 2019

This article is all so lovely. Both the writing and the photo layout in the article speak to my heart. Well captured, indeed! I

look forward to seeing it in print.

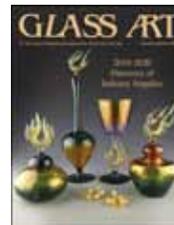
Kate MacLeod  
Dichroic Artist



Triple Dichroic Ring Rock by Kate MacLeod

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

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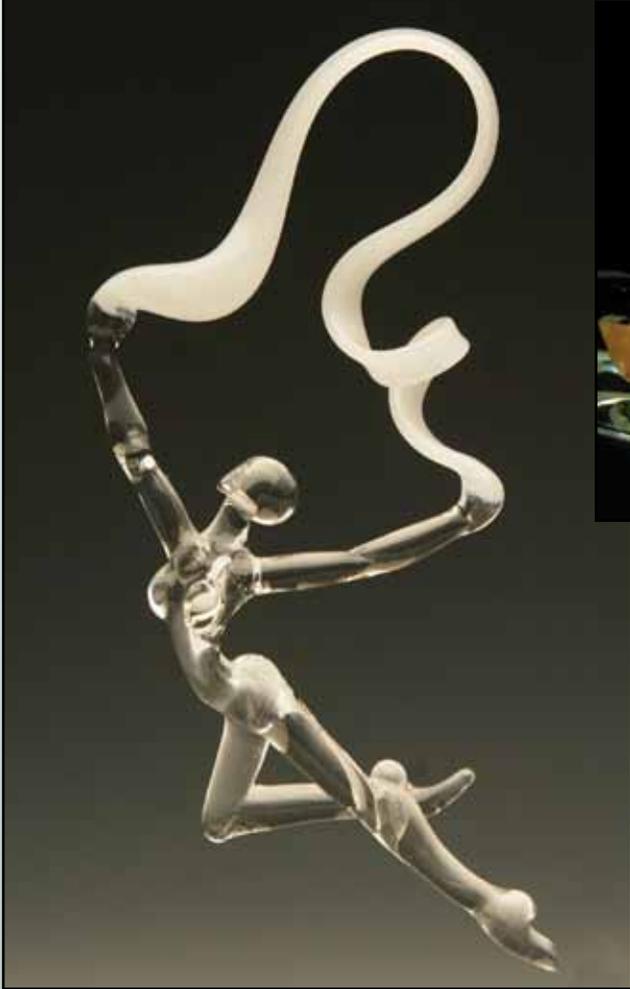
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### *Creativity*

CHANGE YOUR MATERIALS TO CHANGE  
THE WAY YOU THINK, PART II  
BOROSILICATE PLATE GLASS



*Milon Townsend, Ribbon Dancer featuring  
a clear body and white ribbon*

by Milon Townsend

Using borosilicate plate glass should, in my opinion, be an absolutely normal and routine aspect in the vocabulary of the working torch artist. When you understand that it is not, in fact, expensive and that there are many different ways in which you can use it, it'll transform your thinking and your work.

The first time I used plate in my own work was to make a ribbon dancer. There was a real limitation to the length of rod that I could flatten well, and I wanted to work bigger and better. The plate that I used then was rolled instead of polished. I learned how to heat the rolled glass to melt away the textured chill marks, and since rolled was one-third the cost of polished, I could afford to use it. When manufacturers figured out how to make borosilicate float glass naturally smooth instead of textured, it brought the cost way down. Boro plate is actually an affordable form of the material that every flameworker should have access to and be comfortable using.

### Pursuing Thicker Dichroic Coated Glass

After I created the ribbon dancer, I had an idea about viewing thicker, flat, polished glass through the edges, probably after seeing Tom Patti's work. I wanted to melt a figure into the center of a polished square of thick boro plate so that you could see inside the edges as though it were an inner space. This required me to conceptualize and build a special graphite jig.



*Milon Townsend, Shock Wave*

All dichroic glass is a microscopically thin coating of reflective color on a thin sheet of boro plate glass, so if you've used dichro, you've used boro plate. Since boro is harder, it likes a narrower angle of cutting wheel. The recommended angle is 105 degrees, which you can get at MacInnes Machine Tool in Rochester, New York.

Next I wanted to try a much thicker dichroic coated glass and had my plate supplier send a couple of 1/2-inch-thick circles of boro plate to Coatings by Sandberg (CBS) to be dichro coated. I did a very large hanging mobile with this material, cutting the individual pieces on a water jet. I also used the thick boro for large dragon wings, which gave me dichro on a scale fit for a larger piece that was thick enough to have its own structural integrity.



*Milon Townsend, Large Dragon with thick dichro plate glass wings*



Milon Townsend, Deco Study #15



Milon Townsend, Djinn



Hammering large fragments of dichro plate glass

### From Flowing Lines to Percussive Sculpture

At about this same time, while using the water jet at Advanced Glass Industries in Rochester, I noticed large bins of scrap borosilicate plate—3- to 4-foot-long irregular pieces of glass that were 2 to 3 inches thick, ready to be thrown out! I couldn't stomach it, so I brought my little pickup and filled it until the springs flattened out.

Back at my shop, we began grinding and polishing the pieces into geometric shapes for me to use in what became my *Deco Series* of figures. Wrapped in a thin, shimmering sheet of dichroic glass, these figures were fused onto the geometric elements, bringing the flowing organic lines into juxtaposition with the hard-edged geometry of the base. Since the figure was hot fused onto the geometric element, I didn't have to worry about the glue joint ever failing.

After several years and dozens of *Deco* sculptures, I had my fill of careful geometry and decided to try my hand at percussive sculpture. The result was a floor full of interesting organic pieces, some of which were still large enough to visually support a full-scale figure with many others that could work for smaller sculptures. Thus

was born the *Fragment Series*, along with many other pieces using the organic uniqueness of making “found” objects with which an artist could interact. This was the opposite process of premeditating and carefully creating a precise geometric form. These interesting and unforeseen shapes pulled from within me an equally interesting array of forms, figures, and forces that led to a very different series of pieces.

### Building on Lessons Learned

I had been grinding and polishing the edges of plate glass to make bases for many of my sculptures, keeping them consistent with the clean geometric lines of the *Deco Series*. While discovering from the *Fragment Series* how to break borosilicate glass and get a desirable outcome, I found that using the round end of a ball-peen hammer worked best, giving me what I learned were called conchoidal fracture patterns.

During this time, I was also working with the lost wax process, making molds to cast large glass sculptures in the kiln. I used a round, heavy metal tool to break cold wax along the edges, producing an irregular, organic line quickly and effectively. This idea persisted in my subconscious mind, and at some point, I took a borosilicate plate base and tapped it along the edges with the round, metal ball tool. This produced a pleasing edge that was very similar to the wax, and it did so quickly and easily with no grinding and

polishing required. The results were much more interesting and individuated than just a rectilinear form.

In breaking large, thick chunks with a hammer to make the found objects for my *Fragment Series*, I necessarily end up making bags and boxes of smaller chunks of thick plate, which I am loathe to waste. While some of these are useful in and of themselves, I have also found that fusing one onto a knapped base in vertical orientation produces a very effective organic environment for a natural form.



Milon Townsend, *Dragon on a fragment with a knapped base*



*Dagger with a ground and flame polished blade*

### Allowing the Glass to Speak

As I continued to work, an amazing thing became obvious to me. Using borosilicate glass for knapped bases allowed me to heat it in the kiln and fuse it to the sculpture, eliminating the need for time-consuming cold work. This was also better than using adhesives to laminate the pieces of glass together, since it is permanent. Being able to fuse the pieces together became an essential element of designing my work.

I had experimented with grinding and polishing a narrow strip of boro plate into the shape of a knife blade. This produced something elegant and visually appealing that I was able to incorporate into my work. I was also working on a book about using dichroic coated glass in as many different ways as was possible, and my kiln working informed my awareness that it should be possible to fuse pieces of flat borosilicate glass together. I'd need a much higher temperature to do so than was typical in fusing projects using soft glass. I discovered what turned out to be a key dynamic when fusing boro plate. Due to its low coefficient of expansion, it is not very prone to cracking when cooling, but that very stiffness causes it to devitrify—that is, become cloudy—when cooling in the kiln.

In the spirit of risk-taking, I removed several fused boro projects from the kiln at the top temperature I was using of 1700°F and allowed them to air cool with zero annealing. Success! There were clean, clear, crisp fused elements, some with dichroic glass embedded or sandwiched between layers of clear plate. This was the genesis of the dichroic sandwich, from which it is simple to produce what we call galaxy cane, a prerequisite to making pieces with a deep, rich sparkling effect within the mass of glass. I tried fusing a long narrow sandwich, then cold worked it into a knife blade, creating the first of the *Luminous Blade Series* of pieces.

### From Thick to Thin

My most recent use for borosilicate plate glass is very different—using very thin 3 mm-thick pieces. I have found it excellent for making elements for some of the decanters I've been doing for the past few years, especially the wings. By cutting it and building two parallel pieces together with an air space in between, I've been able to produce effective dragon and eagle wings that are useful for applications in a variety of the figures from which the decanters are made.

These are some of the examples where this remarkable type of material has taken my work, without which it would not have been possible. Change your materials to change the way you think . . . absolutely!



*Milon Townsend, Bat Decanter*

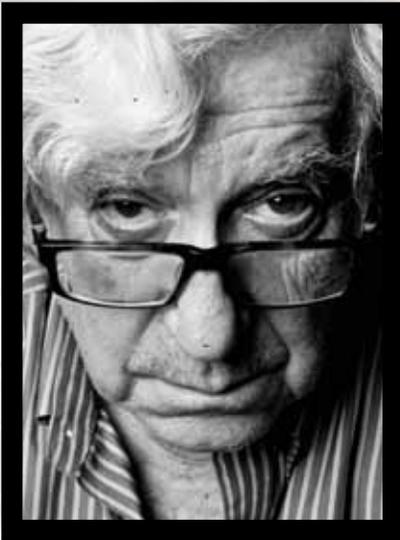


*Bat decanter wing blanks created from 3 mm boro plate glass*



*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](http://www.intuitiveglass.com) or Google "Milon Townsend images" to view more of his work and go to [thebluemoonpress.com](http://thebluemoonpress.com) for his educational materials. You can also e-mail [milontownsend@gmail.com](mailto:milontownsend@gmail.com). The sequence presented here is excerpted from Milon's upcoming book on Creativity.*

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# Narcissus Quagliata

New Revelations on His Vision for Glass Art

Narcissus Quagliata, renowned artist, has devoted 50 years to the exploration of the human figure as a gateway to the strangeness of life in an incomprehensible universe. Known for monumental glass installations in Asia, Europe, the United States, and Mexico, he is credited with reinventing the medium of stained glass. Born and raised in Rome, he later lived in San Francisco for 30 years and now resides in Mexico.

The artist has revealed his vision for glass art through several books including *Painting with Light*, *Stained Glass from Mind to Light*, and *Archetypes and Visions in Glass and Light*. Narcissus recently shared how he came to write his latest offering, *MUTANT*.

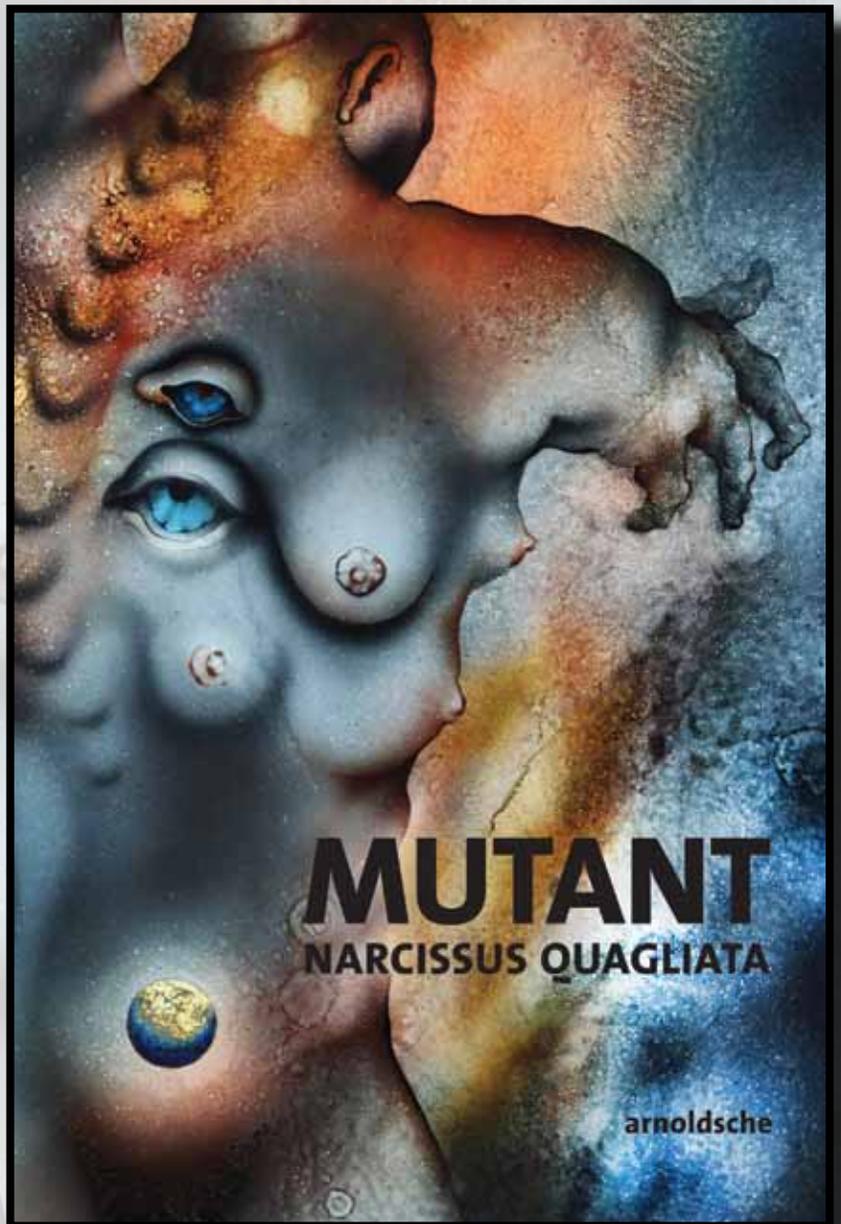
“I am excited to present to you *MUTANT*, my new book of poetry and sketches plus recent works in watercolor and glass. If you have followed my work for the last 40 years, I think you will be interested in this book, since I am sharing a part of myself that I had always kept guarded. This is a very personal book.

What is unique about *MUTANT* is that rather than focusing on completed artworks, it reveals the thoughts and feelings over a 50-year period at the core my creative process. For years I have been asked over and over where my imagery comes from. I think this book will go a long way to answer that question.

It took me six years to pull the project together. I conceived of the book as a single multifaceted art piece, and I consider it one of the most significant things I have ever done. I sincerely hope you enjoy it.”

GA

*The book is being distributed by Bullseye Glass in Portland, Oregon, and D&L Art Glass Supply in Denver, Colorado.*



*MUTANT* by Narcissus Quagliata

Introduction by Maricruz Patiño

Arnoldsche Publishers 2018: 216 Pages,

16 in color, Flexcover

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# Nortel

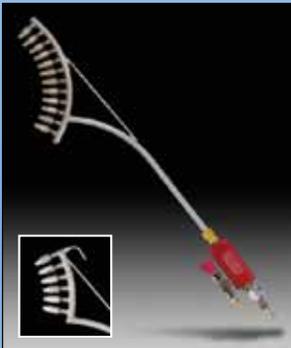
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Dan and crew, 1976

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# Becoming an Art Show Professional

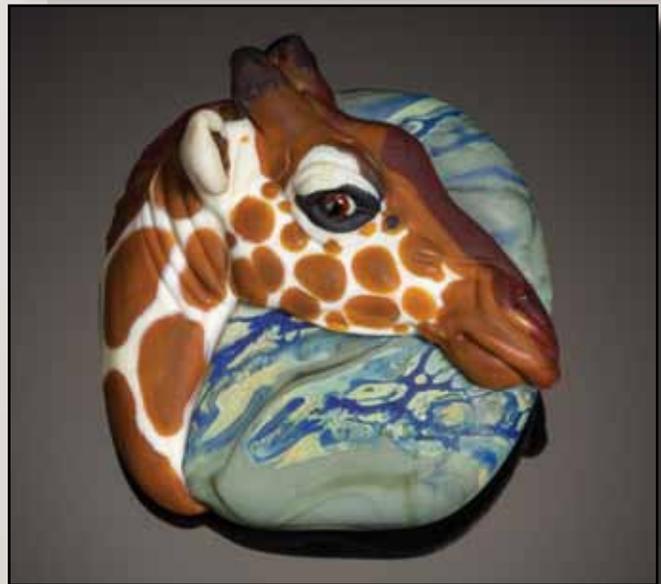
## The Importance of Proper Show Selection and Preparation

by Dennis Brady

I loved doing art shows. They're fun, exciting, educational, and inspirational, and they're a great place to meet lots of people who share your interest in quality handmade work. You get to see some truly beautiful work and meet the people who *do* beautiful work. Your own creativity is freshly energized with a barrage of new ideas, and you make some great network connections. Then, if all that isn't enough, you make money selling your work.

I started in glass art as an art show gypsy, traveling from show to show. I've done over 100 shows—retail and wholesale—and from that experience I have built a group of successful glass art businesses. Art shows are not anywhere close to producing the volume of sales they did in the past, but they're still a great way to get started selling and maintaining a steady market for your work.

When I did my first show in 1982 in my hometown of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, there were only two shows in all of Western Canada—one in Vancouver and one in Victoria. During a three-day show I made \$9,000. Allowing for inflation, that would be like doing a show today and selling almost \$10,000 each day. That kind of sales volume doesn't happen anymore. At that time there was only the one show in town, and people lined up to get in. Last Christmas, however, there were over 100 shows here in Victoria and no line ups. Promoters were desperately scrambling to fill exhibit spots, and they let in many exhibitors who really had no place in an art show. That doesn't mean you shouldn't do art shows. It just means that you need to work harder at making them work for you.



*Joy Munshower frameworked animal beads.  
Photos by David Orr Photography, LLC.  
Visit [www.JoyMunshowerGlass.com](http://www.JoyMunshowerGlass.com) to learn  
more about Joy's glass art.*

### Choosing a Show

Not all art shows are equal. Some are great, while others are gruesome. In some shows you'll sell loads of your work, while in others you might not sell enough to pay your booth fee. You won't have any advance guarantees for how good a show will be until you try it.

I've been surprised many times doing shows. Some of them that I expected to be terrific turned out to be a waste of time. Other shows that I was completely unenthusiastic about turned out to be some of the best ever. Although you will always have a few of these surprises, here are a few guidelines that will help you guess what a show will be like.



**Seasonal Shows.** Christmas shows are usually the best, and the closer they are to Christmas, the more you will sell. It's not that summer shows are bad. In fact, some are great! It's just that at Christmas, people are spending a lot of money buying gifts.

**Outdoor versus Indoor Shows.** Outdoor shows can be dangerous at any time of year. There's always the possibility of rain or wind damaging your display and discouraging customers from visiting.

**Charge Admission.** Shows that charge admission for people to get in will usually have more sales than those that let people in for free. When customers pay to get in, they more likely came looking to buy quality art than just to pass the time looking around.

**Booth Rental Expenses.** At higher rent shows, you will usually sell more expensive stuff than at shows that charge a lower rent. Shows that charge a lot for booth space usually have a better assortment of high-quality work and will attract the kind of customer who is interested in high-quality work.

Very often, sales at a low-rent show are so poor that it's not worth the effort to go, while a high-rent show can sell enough to be exceptionally profitable. It's just like retail shops. High-rent locations produce a higher volume of sales. It doesn't matter how much the rent is for the space as much as it does for the amount of sales you can make from that space.

**Juried Shows.** Because juried shows are harder for sellers to get into, they usually have a better mix of high-quality work. Customers come to these shows expecting to find high-quality, expensive work. These shows also attract a much higher ratio of customers to attendees who are just lookers. Church basement and school auditorium shows, for example, usually just get customers looking for very cheap goods.

**Blind Jury.** If you want to cater to a more art-oriented buyer, look for shows that use a blind jury system where the jurors are blind to who the artist is and judge the work based solely on the work itself. I remember one such show where a blind jury system was introduced, and many "name" artists were juried out of the show and freaked out.

**Festivals Shows.** Shows that are attached to some kind of festival such as music, harvest, and other similar celebrations are usually poor for art sales. This is especially true if the art displays are only a secondary part of the show. People come to these shows for the entertainment, not to buy art. However, these are also the kind of shows that are the most likely to surprise you.

**Cheap Booth Rental.** Shows such as those done by schools and church groups with cheap table or booth rental might seem attractive, but sales will usually correspond to the rent. I learned that shows with low rent produced low sales, while shows with high rent produced high sales. It's the same as renting a store. Low rent means low traffic. Locations with high traffic charge high rent.

It takes you just as much time and effort to do a show with low rent as one with high rent. Don't be seduced by low rent unless you're just starting to experiment with shows and not yet sure how to set up for sales and what to make to offer for sale. Low rent shows are for education. High rent shows are for sales.



*Carol Ann Savage floral beads. Photos by Colin Savage. Visit [etsy.com/ca/shop/CASavageGlass](https://www.etsy.com/ca/shop/CASavageGlass) to learn more about Carol Ann's glass art.*

## Expect Surprises

Sometimes these guidelines don't apply. I recall one show that broke all of my rules for selecting a show. It was in early June, had no jury, and just accepted applications in the order applied. It also had ridiculously low booth fees and mixed entertainment with art sales.

I expected to sell mostly low-priced items at that show, but as I always do, I took a few expensive show-off display pieces. Sales started with a \$500 piece, and everything I had over \$100 was sold before lunch the first day. I didn't sell out of everything I brought to the show, but it was the closest I ever came to taking nothing home.

Also don't expect sales consistency. One time I had contracted to set up a sales booth at a ferry terminal for people to shop while waiting for the next ferry. My contract was to stay for two weeks. I set up Sunday morning, and although lots of people looked and asked questions, I sold nothing. *Nothing!* This was the first time ever I was skunked. Zero sales. I was way beyond discouraged, but I figured if I'm committed to being here, I'll try to keep busy and get some work done. Sales on Monday were \$1,800. Solid sales every day—except Sundays. I have no idea why Sunday sales were so terrible.

Another big surprise was an indoor weeklong show I did during the summer. Sales were good but not exciting—until Friday. On Friday it rained, and the show was packed with people. Half of the whole week's sales were made that day. I guess a lot of people came to get out of the rain.

## Predicting What Will Sell

Deciding what kind of work to take to a show depends on each particular show, since they're all different. I've done shows where only \$10 items and \$20 items sold and others where only higher priced items sold. Unfortunately, even when you've done a show several times before, you still can't always predict what will sell. If you do expect a certain show to sell only low-priced items, you should always take a few show-off pieces anyway as samples of your work that say, "Look what I can do." Those will encourage the sale of less expensive stuff, and you may also be surprised at how often they sell themselves.

Just as sales are different in different shows, sales will also be different at different times in the show. That's why the answer to the question "What should I take?" is *everything!* Take everything you can, but the most important thing is to take what you expect to actually sell. ***Instead of asking people to buy what you like to make, make what people like to buy.***



Terry Henry electroformed and flameworked insects.  
Photos by the artist. Visit [www.terry-henry-glassworks.com](http://www.terry-henry-glassworks.com)  
to learn more about Terry's glass art.



*Corina Tettinger frameworked jewelry. Photos by the artist. Visit [www.corinabeads.com](http://www.corinabeads.com) for more of Corina's glass art.*

### Attracting a Wide Customer Base

When you start doing shows you won't know which pieces will sell, so in the beginning you need to make a variety of different items to take. As you do more shows, you will learn to focus on what sells well and what doesn't. The most successful art show sellers are not the ones who display a wide variety of different items, but instead, have developed a theme or style that is unique to them. Through experience, they have learned how important it is to offer something unique—something that other sellers don't have.

Hopefully you will acquire a wide range of customers over time who will become interested in your artwork as you participate in various art shows, so try to have something for every customer. That means having some small items for customers with only a few dollars to spend and some elaborate, expensive pieces for customers looking for something special. That big expensive piece you display not expecting to sell might be the exact thing that draws people to your exhibit to buy other items. It might also be what attracts a customer to place a commission order with you or, surprisingly, it might often sell itself.

Also be sure to print and take lots of business cards and give them out freely. If you have a website designed to sell your work, the more business cards you hand out at a art show, the more people will go to your website to order from you after they have seen your work in person. The same thing is true if you offer classes.

### Preparation for the Big Day

It's important to work out a plan for the show and have everything prepared beforehand. I have often had one of the biggest displays at art shows, but I was also usually one of the quickest to set up and the quickest to pack up. That's not because I worked harder than everyone else, but because I had planned everything in advance.

I don't do art fairs and wholesale shows anymore, but I still do a triple booth exhibit every spring at the Glass Art & Bead Expo in Las Vegas, Nevada. I have a floor plan like a blueprint and use it to put the booth together. All of the boxes are clearly marked, and there is a specific plan for how everything should be unpacked and put out. The plan is applied in reverse as I take down the booths and pack up to leave.

If you haven't done a show before, it's a **great** idea to do a practice setup before the show. It's also a good idea to watch what other artisans do as they prepare their booths and learn things that work from the more experienced exhibitors.

When it comes time to actually sell your products, you will find that sales won't be in a steady flow but will come instead in a combination of rushes and lulls. When it gets busy, you want to be able to process sales as quickly as possible. The last thing you want is for buyers who are ready to pay for something to become frustrated and walk away. Prepare in advance to be ready to process the payment quickly. One way to accomplish that is to make sure you're able to accept credit card payments.

## Pricing Tips

When it comes to pricing your work, there are several things to consider. Think about the following as you decide what you will ask for your work.

**Steady as she goes.** Whatever price you decide an item should sell for at a show, keep that price for all shows. Do *not* play games by increasing prices for some shows and lowering it for others. That is dishonest and destructive and will infuriate any customer who learns, or even suspects, you do that.

**The Price Perception Game.** You should keep prices the same for all shows, but you need not use the same price markup for everything you make. Remember, there is no such thing as real value. There is only perceived value—what someone *thinks* a thing is worth. I have used price perception over the years to my advantage. Some of the things I have made, such as stained glass model ships, were much different than the things others at a particular show had. To keep sales volume up, though, I had also made a lot of small items that sold steadily and helped pay the bills.

On things I made that *were* in some way similar to things that others had available, I set the prices as low as I could to be extremely competitive. On the things I made that nobody else had, I took a much higher profit markup. By doing that, when customers could compare the prices of my work with that of others, they always had the perception that my prices were terrific.

**Wholesale Pricing.** If you sell wholesale as well as retail or hope to start selling wholesale, it's important that your show retail prices be two times your expected wholesale price. That's what is known as "keystone pricing." When a store buys from you, they expect to sell it for twice the wholesale price. If you sell retail at an art show for less than twice the wholesale price, you are undercutting your wholesale customers.

I built my business on art show sales and test marketed everything at shows, always charging twice what I expected to sell the pieces for wholesale. When I offered a new product to a gallery or gift shop, they would say, "I'm not sure it will sell at that price." I could respond, "I can confirm it sells at that price, because I've been selling it at that price." Building trust is good business.

**Discounts.** Discounting a price won't always make customers happy. You might have something priced at \$50, for example, and accept an offer to sell it for \$40. Some customers will be satisfied with getting a discount, but more will think that if they had pushed harder they could have gotten an even lower price. Whenever I was asked to accept a lower price, I always responded, "I wish I could sell it for less, but I wanted to be fair to everyone, so I started off with the lowest possible price." **GA**



*Kim Fields flameworked animals. Photos by the artist.  
Visit [www.kimfieldsglass.com](http://www.kimfieldsglass.com) to view more of Kim's glass art.*

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*Detail of paperweight by Victor Trabucco*

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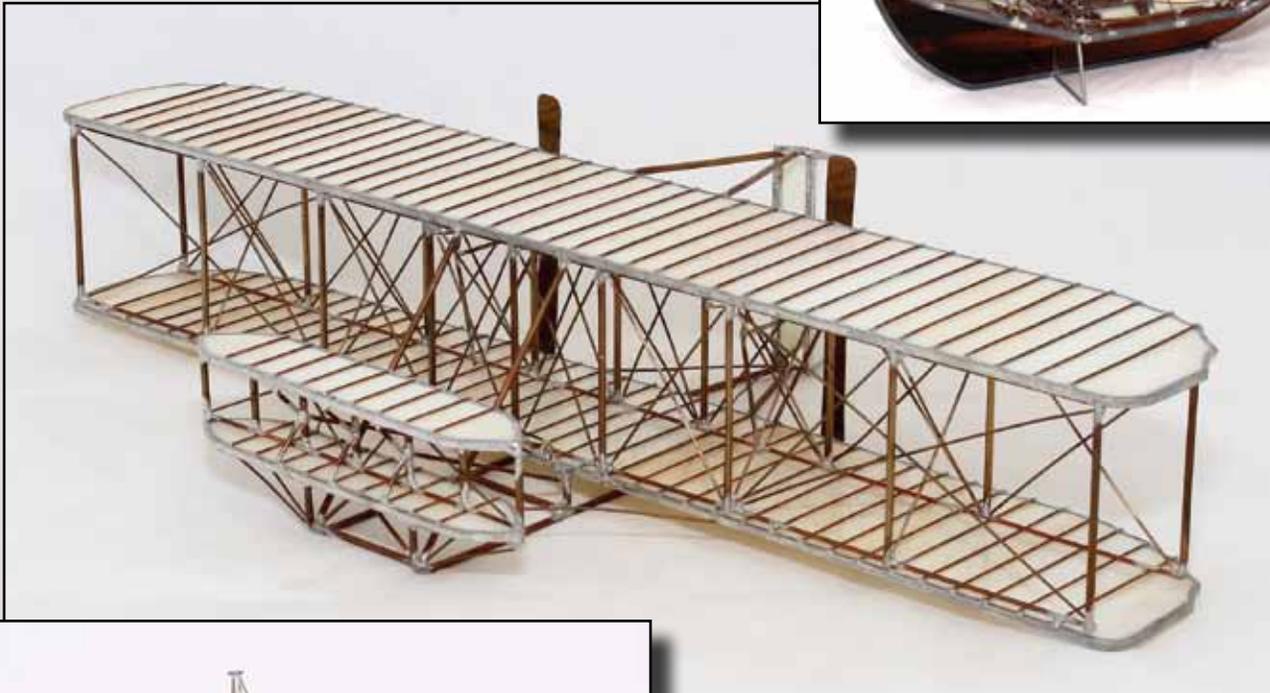
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*Photos of Dennis Brady  
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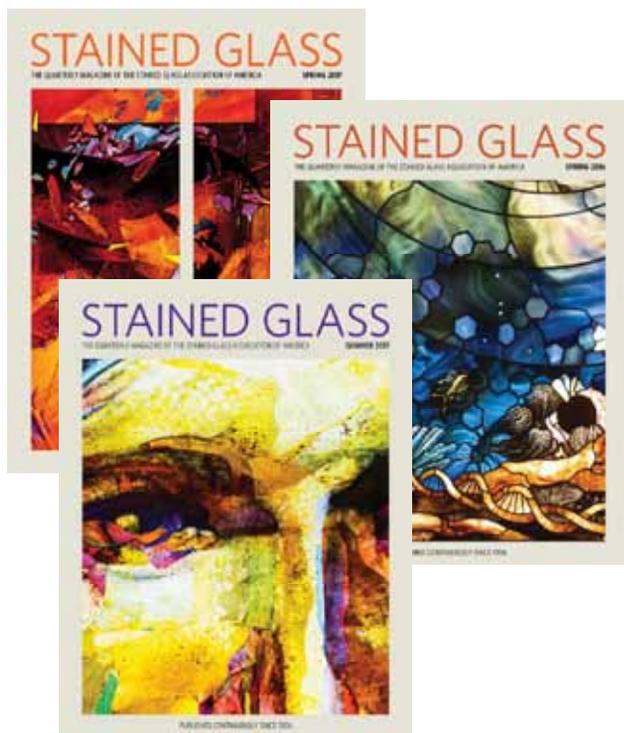


*Dennis Brady has been a full-time professional glass artisan since 1980 and currently works with stained glass, fusing, casting, glassblowing, and sandblasting. He has authored and published six books of stained glass patterns plus A Lazy Man's Guide to Stained Glass. Along with his sons, Dane and Jason 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](http://www.debrady.com) to learn more about Dennis and his art.*

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*Bronwen Heilman,  
Mask B 1 Goblet, flameworked  
borosilicate glass with paint, 2016.  
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# Lauscha Traditions

## The Beginnings of Glass Christmas Ornaments



*The four steps for creating Christmas ornaments*

by Cesare Toffolo

According to an ancient legend, in the hills of Lauscha at Christmas time it was customary to decorate Christmas trees with red apples and nuts. In his humble home was a lampworker who had neither one nor the other, owing to the financial straits he was in, and he saw no possibility to even buy them. Overcome with pain at the thought of not being able to give his family a decorated tree, just a bare green pine tree without any other colors, he started thinking about what he could do.

What on earth could he make without any money? All he had in his small home was a couple of glass tubes and some rods. All of a sudden he had a flash of inspiration while sitting in front of his torch. With the glass on his workbench he could make apples to hang on the tree. While the snow fell thickly, the man sat with the flame of his torch before him, heating and blowing the glass, and there he remained, hour after hour until the middle of the night. The following morning he took his glass apples and began to decorate the tree so that he could offer his wife and children a beautiful Christmas tree decorated with shining red apples.

### Legends versus History

Leaving legends behind us and going back to history, we do not actually know who invented the silvery fruits that created such amazement and became so successful. All too often, legends are not that far off from the truth, and in all likelihood these sparkling ornaments were created and used to decorate Christmas trees in the homes of the glassmakers in Lauscha. What *is* known is that the ancient Christmas balls were mirrored internally with a lead and tin alloy, and they could either be round, egg shaped, or lengthened sinuously. In addition, the famous Lauscha beads were joined together in a long row so they could be wrapped around the Christmas tree.

According to historical documents, in 1860 word began to spread of the Lauscha Christmas balls when they started to leave the lampworkers' homes and were met with amazement and marvel. Before long they had become widespread throughout the country. The trade of these balls was so profitable that in 1870, in both Lauscha and the surrounding villages, workshops were established with the precise objective of producing these ornaments. Thirty years later in 1900, with the support of the German imperial family, the Christmas tree became a national symbol.

For years, a Christmas tree decorated in the Lauscha style with Christmas balls was a synonym for Christmas Eve, and Christmas gifts were placed beneath it. Over time, the decorations became more and more ornate. Enamels were used to decorate the surfaces, and later molds were created to produce a variety of objects such as pinecones and nuts.

The Lauscha ornaments were so successful that they were sought after by collectors worldwide, and a tree decorated with the small glass jewels that had been produced in this tiny town towered majestically in every house. Today, these "balls" are still produced in Lauscha, and although production has now been reduced considerably, it includes a vast variety of new shapes making a total of more than 4,000 different models.



*The Weschenfelder family creating Christmas ornaments, Lauscha, 1930.*

*Photo from the Archive at Museum für Glaskunst Lauscha.*

## Borrowing from the Past

The technique has remained the same and basically still follows the same production procedure. However, the ancient bellows that supplied the flame with the air it needed have been replaced by a small electric compressor, and thanks to the gas tubing, the oil that fueled the work lantern is no longer necessary.

Glass tubes are still used by the Farbglashütte Lauscha company, which has been producing them since 1853 and is the same company that produced the white tubes that Ludwig Müller-Uri used for his glass eyes. Today the production of the molds used in the blowing of Christmas decorations is the prerogative of very few people, and their names are protected by the strictest confidentiality. If a foreigner visits the town, it is shrouded by total secrecy.

Michael Haberland is a craftsman from Lauscha who makes decorations for the Christmas market, some of which are made with ancient molds. Haberland lets an aura of past history sparkle through, while others are extremely contemporary and at times even transgressive in style.

## A Disappearing Tradition

As time went by, the famous “sparkling apples” from Lauscha were frequently replaced by plastic balls that were cheaper and more resistant as many people became more practical. Sometimes they even eliminated the Christmas tree altogether. Many traditions gradually disappear, and as a result, ancient fascinating stories fall into oblivion.

Today it is the prerogative of a select few to own such ornaments. Sometimes they are passed down in the family, and at other times, they are bought at antique markets, but the commerce of glass balls has as good as disappeared. Future generations will probably never know of the famous Lauscha “apples,” and their story will be told as follows: “Once upon a time . . .”

GA

*The text and photos for this article were excerpted from Il Vetro a Lume: Lampworking Volume 2 by Cesare Toffolo with the author's permission.*

**Cesare Toffolo**  
[www.toffolo.com/en](http://www.toffolo.com/en)



Mirroring



Molds to blow the ornaments by Michael Haberland



*Cesare Toffolo, world-renowned flameworking artist, grew up in Murano, Italy, in a family of top glass artists. His grandfather Giacomo and father Florino were both master glassblowers at the Venini Furnace, and Florino taught Cesare the methods that led to his being a master glassblower at Venini as well. Florino later specialized in flameworking, which he passed on to his son. Cesare lost his father two years later but continued perfecting flameworking on his own, developing many techniques that had never been tried before in borosilicate glass, including work with filigree, incalmo, and gold leaf.*

*Cesare has collaborated with the most prestigious glass establishments in Murano and abroad, exhibiting when he was 21 at Palazzo Ca' Vendramin Calergi in Venice. By the age of 30, he was also teaching various classes at the Pilchuck Glass School in Washington, followed by classes at the Niijima Glass Art Center, the Toyama Glass Art Institute, and the Kanazu Forest of Creation Foundation in Japan; The Studio of The Corning Museum of Glass in New York; and the Penland School of Crafts in North Carolina. In 1997, he founded Centro Studio Vetro to promote glass art in Italy and abroad through 2003, and Vetro magazine, which was published by Centro Studio Vetro. From 2001 to 2003 he also coordinated the Glass Workshops at San Servolo Island in Venice as Artistic Director.*

*In 2018, Cesare joined the Glass Art Society (GAS) Board and coordinated, as Chairman of the Muranese Committee, the 2018 GAS Conference in Murano. In the same year, he published Il Vetro a Lume (Lampworking), Volumes II and III. Visit [www.toffolo.com](http://www.toffolo.com) to learn more about Cesare Toffolo and his extraordinary glass art.*

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# The Naked Craft Project

## Shin-Nagata Glass Residence 2019

*by the Contemporary Glass Society Staff*

The Naked Craft Project is an artist in residence program instituted by Nobuyasu Yoshida, a glass artist living and working in Kobe, Japan. Yoshida, who studied in the U.K., is a member of the Contemporary Glass Society (CGS), a U.K. organization that aims to promote and develop all forms of contemporary glass art.

The residence program is run in partnership with the CGS. Each year one artist from the CGS is selected to spend a month in Kobe creating a body of work while experiencing life in Japan. The project aims to make connections on a local and global scale via contemporary craftsmanship as well as making a cultural exchange through the works of artists from the U.K. and Japan.

### Project Goals

The first volume of The Naked Craft Project took place in Kobe in 2011, with the second in 2015. The project has allowed three artists to visit Kobe—Sarah Brown in 2015 and the most recent being Paul Miller and Griet Beyaert, who visited in 2017. In addition to creating artworks, the selected artists participate in workshops and seminars for schools and people living in Kobe. The aim is to introduce people to the creative possibilities of working with glass as an expressive art material and for the artists to gain an understanding of the lives and culture of the people living in Kobe.

The Naked Craft Project is supported by CGS and CGS members Professor Mike Barnes, MD, FRCP, Peter Bloxham, Dr. David Williams, and Alan J Willis. Yoshida approached the Contemporary Glass Society and Dominic Fonde, a glass engraver living and working in Kobe, to be project partners. Fonde is a former committee member and editor of *Glass Network*, the CGS magazine. Yoshida also approached the Greater Manchester Club to be a project partner to assist with publicity.

Pam Reekie, Administrator for CGS, recently shared: “We are delighted to have the opportunity for CGS members to visit and work in Japan with Japanese students. The Naked Craft project is a fantastic way to share ideas and experience different cultures from across the world.”



*Nina Casson McGarva.  
Photo by the artist.*

### Nina Casson McGarva, 2019 Residency Recipient

The artist selected to take part in the 2019 residency is Nina Casson McGarva. Nina was born in Gloucester in the U.K., but grew up in rural central France. She started learning the basic technical skills of glassblowing in the National French Glass School in Yzeure, then experimented with kiln work techniques at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Bornholm, Denmark. Since graduating in 2014, she has been part of two artist residency programs in the USA, one in Star, North Carolina, and the Emerging Artists in Residence (EAIR) program at Pilchuck Glass School in Stanwood, Washington.

Talking about her work Nina states: “The starting point in my work is nature. I take a detail of an element I find in nature and use it as an inspirational base to create my own abstraction, which then builds into a complex sculpture. I have always admired Japanese crafts, coming myself from a makers family, and I think that going to Japan in the autumn would be the perfect time to gain inspiration for my work and share with people there who appreciate craft and seasons.” The residency began on October 15, 2019 and will run through November 15, 2019.

**GA**

*The Contemporary Glass Society is a charitable organization registered in the U.K. and is funded entirely through its members and donations from individuals and organizations. To learn more about becoming a CGS member, visit [www.cgs.org](http://www.cgs.org).*

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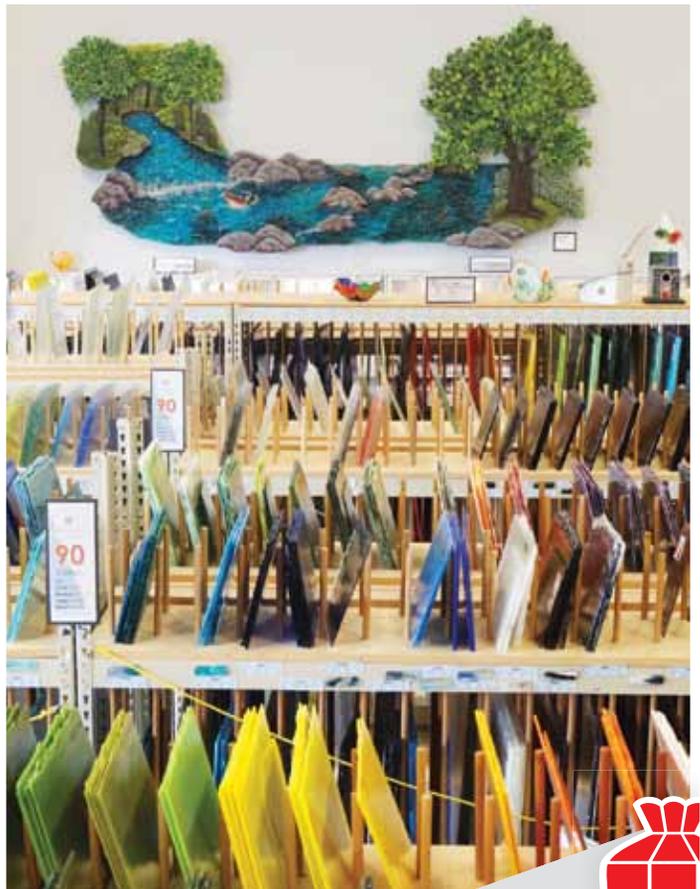
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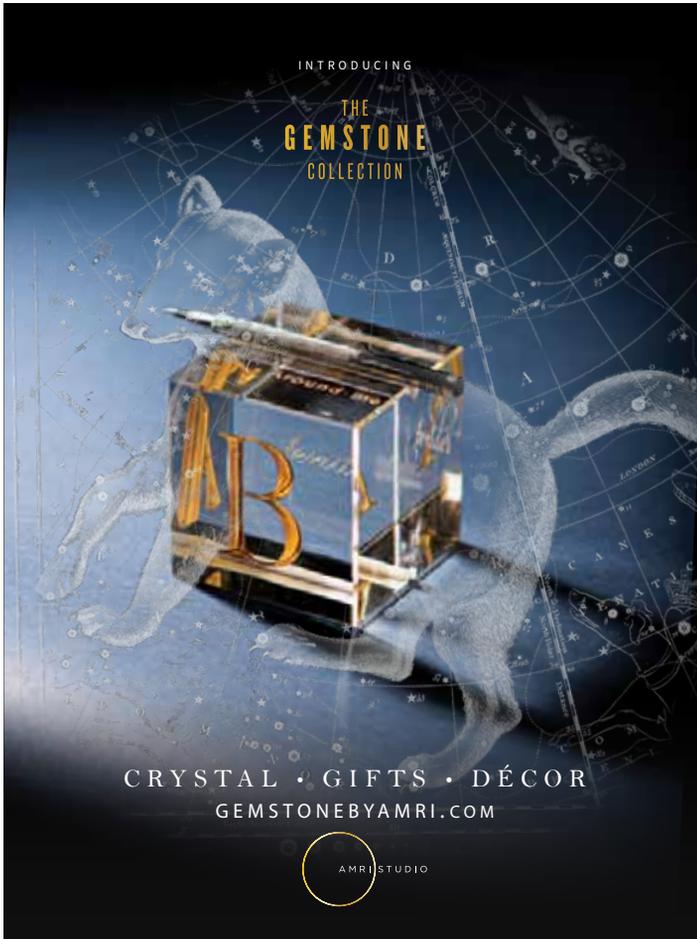
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