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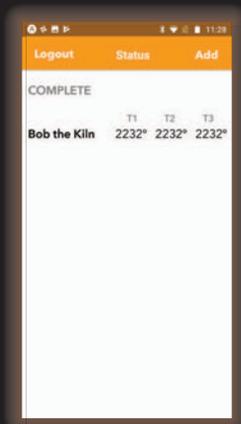


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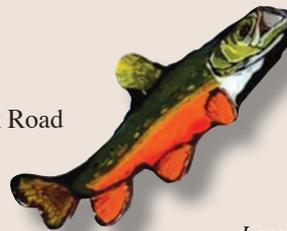
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September/October 2021

Editorial Due	June 20, 2021
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Above:
Stephen Boehme,
Animal Murrine.

On the cover:

Loren Stump, detail of Nativity Triptych.
Photo by Rich Images.





Loren Stump, Nativity Triptych, fused murrine marquetry, Effetre/Moretti soft glass, 7" x 8-3/4" (open), 2019–2020. Photo by Rich Images.

LOREN STUMP

MAESTRO OF GLASS MURRINE

by Dr. Julie Anne Denton

As I sit in the kitchen quarantining with my dog and cat in my homeland, the Isle of Man, UK, my new best pal the laptop starts to blink. It reminds me that I am about to catch up with a long-standing old friend. In these strange times of isolation, I have actually never felt more connected to the world. In the press of a button and the blink of an eye, on my screen there sits a very handsome, ponytailed, and tanned god of contemporary glass. His name is Loren Stump, and for those of you who may be unfamiliar with this trailblazer, he is known as the murrine king.

As his face appears on my screen, Loren flashes me with his dashing smile and we spend a little time catching up on the news, but today our conversation is not simply a social visit. I have been chosen to interview a man some may call a genius and others a master problem solver. I am interested in where it began, where it is now, and where he is going in the future. I began to pose my questions, and the following is what he relayed to me.

Finding an Artistic Niche

Since the age of sixteen, Loren was working with flat glass alone until he opened a storefront family business in 1978. He created all manner of stained, fused, and cast objects for private and public customers, and it wasn't long before he was running a thriving enterprise. Business boomed, but in the early 1990s with two small children to look after, the artist realized that his business model must pivot.

With that switch in mind, Loren carried on as normal. Since he was a teenager, he had been a friend and customer of Craig and Donna Milliron from the glass supplies company we know today as Arrow Springs. At that time beadmaking was going through what one might call a renaissance. The International Society of Glass Beadmakers (ISGB) was formed in 1990, and Donna was one of the founding members. In the autumn of 1993, Donna took Loren home to view her glass bead collection, the best in contemporary lampworkers' art. When Loren beheld these works, he became excited at the medium's possibilities and exclaimed, "I can do that!"

Craig and Donna described the basics to Loren, and after buying a simple Hot Head torch and glass materials, he got to work. When he showed his first creations to the couple, their amazement was palpable, which spurred Loren on. He told me, "That Christmas,

I struck a deal with my mother. If she bought me a lampworking setup plus annealing kiln, I would make her all of her Christmas presents for the family in exchange." The deal was made and *iacta alea est*—the die was cast. With mostly women in the family, he began making beads, little animals, and small cars for them, because he was constrained in size by his Hot Head. Here is the birthplace of the Loren Stump style we all know and love. He found his niche in lampworking that early!

During this time of trial and error, Loren attended a few local bead shows and the ISGB yearly Gathering, where his work sold well. Loren was thirsty, and he attended a slide show given by Jamie Allen, an expert in ancient chevron beads at the Northern Californian Bead Collectors Society, where he first beheld murrine. There he was introduced to the groundbreaking portraiture murrine of the late, great Venetian master and genius, Giacomo Franchini, who unfortunately was committed to an asylum when he was just 47. These portraiture murrine struck awe in Loren, and he has never looked back since. His journey started with little people inside the tiny cars he was making, and in the 2020s he now creates entire scenes in glass such as the *Madonna of the Rocks* originally painted by Da Vinci, a feat never before attempted by an artist working in glass.



Loren Stump, *Virgin of the Rocks*, Effetre/Moretti soft glass, 22 slices in total plus the ends of the pulls, approximately 2-1/4" x 1-1/4" x 1/8", 2005. Photo by Rich Images.



Definitions of Success

When asked how he defined success, Loren shared: “For me it’s something that artists feel inwardly. They are not driven by money but understand that the world works in this way and money buys freedom. I believe that if artists do not have the talent to pull off the technical virtuosity, then they will never be truly successful.

“The advice I would give fresh, budding glass artists is not to believe your mom when she tells you that you are the most talented person in the world. The same is reflected in social media, because people mostly want to be nice, and those “likes” merely promote mediocrity, helping neither artist nor buyer.”

For Loren, success is first for him to be happy with what he has created. Second, it is for his peers to understand his work with no explanation and rate its quality with a “Wow,” since artists cannot pull the wool over the eyes of their contemporaries. Gallery and customer opinions are far down the line, because if an artist can use hyperbole, galleries and customers can be duped into believing what the artist wants.

Given Loren’s definition of success, the next burning question is how successful does he believe he is? “I am barely ever contented with my output. If I were satisfied, then the only option would be to stop working.” For Loren, the act of creation is the eternal quest to reach Nirvana. It was at that moment he bestowed on me why he chose glass as his medium. He is essentially an engineer and inventor in all he does. “Glass is the only artistic medium that continues to challenge me daily. It is the medium that is *the* most difficult to control.”

(Top to bottom) Loren Stump, Nativity Triptych, fused Aventurine intarsia, 7" x 4-3/8" (closed), 7" x 8-3/4" (open). Photos by Rich Images.

Fusing setup for a Nativity Triptych, murrine marquetry overlaid with Aventurine intarsia. Photo by the artist.

When appraising his own work, Loren is most critical regarding its merit. “Occasionally I create something close to good. What I find interesting is stretching the technique past the point of known knowledge, since at that stage there is no one left to ask for advice.” He enjoys learning the limitations of the glass, then pushing that envelope. If this advancement of the genre requires creating a new tool, burning out the flux in a glass, or even creating a different recipe for his batch glass, he has chosen to walk that intrepid path of “Do or Die!” In one way, it is a form of thrill seeking and in another it is the quintessence of the material philosopher.

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Loren Stump, *Camel Caravan/Casbah Cantina murrine*,
 Effetre/Moretti soft glass, 5-1/4" x 5", 2020–2021.
 Photo by Rich Images.

Monumental New Work

Loren, like the master painters and sculptors of old, has a Swiss patron named Hermann Pedrotti, a rare breed in the 21st century. Loren's freedom to create groundbreaking, world-class murrine that have never been imagined is due, in part, to the deep passion his patron has for the progression of murrine and miniatures.

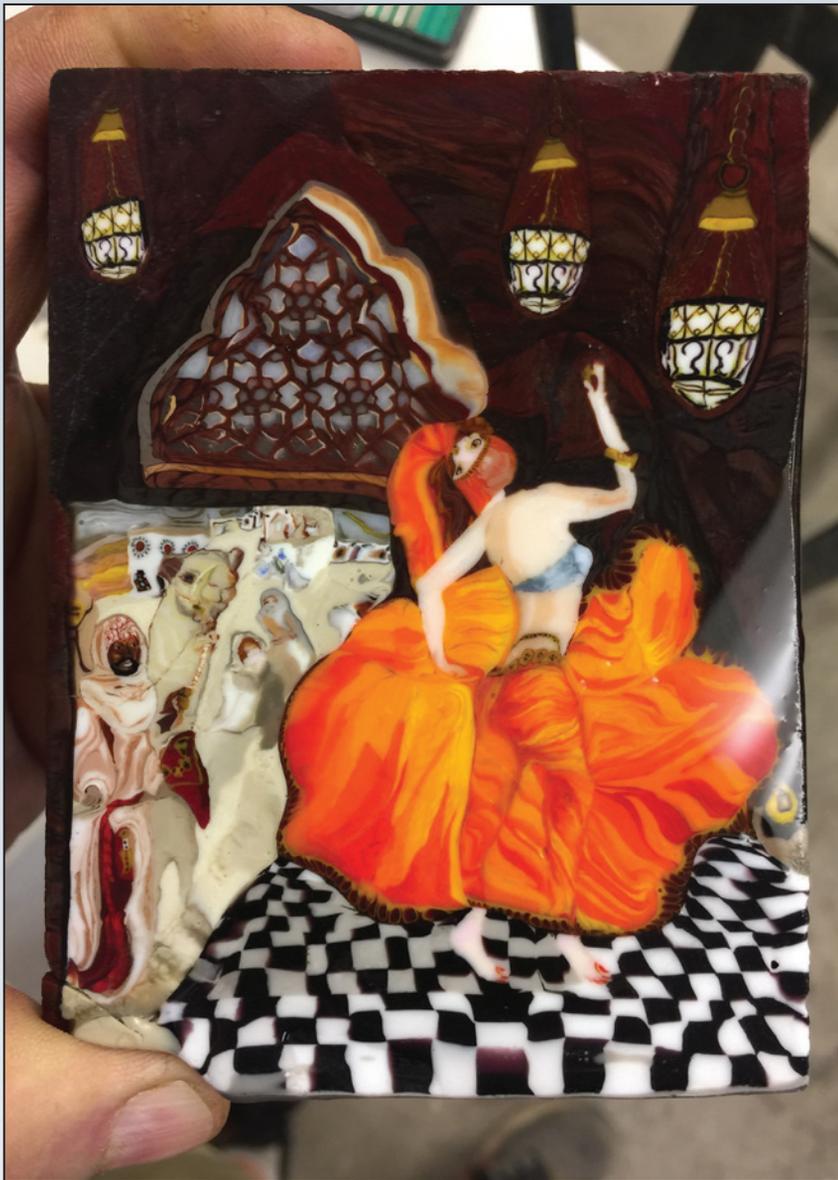
Currently, Loren is working on both a very special triptych murrina for his patron called *Nativity*, plus the largest and most detailed murrina that has ever been created called *Camel Caravan*. His *Nativity* triptych, after three years of hard work, was finally polished and photographed in February 2021. To give the reader an idea of the amount of effort required to complete such works, each of Loren's tiles have been fired hundreds of times during the making process. Loren's work is revolutionary, because the chemical and physical difficulties involved with refiring glass multiple times is technically challenging and, some might say, impossible. This is what makes the process stimulating for Loren. When I asked the artist what frustrated him most in his daily work, he replied, "Waiting for the kiln to complete the heating and cooling cycles of my creations is a constant source of vexation."

Sharing Tips for Technical Success

Loren is dedicated to his career as a teacher. He comes by this desire to share what he has learned honestly, since all of the matriarchs in his family were and are teachers—his wife, mother, and grandmother. He began teaching four months after he started lampworking and has taught over 300 classes in ten different countries.

Loren takes almost as much satisfaction from teaching as he does from creating his masterworks. He does not teach what he makes, but rather teaches technique only. While instilling positivity in his classes, his honesty to the craft dictates that his absolute best comment to a participant's effort is, "That's pretty good," most likely due to Loren's high expectations of his own work.

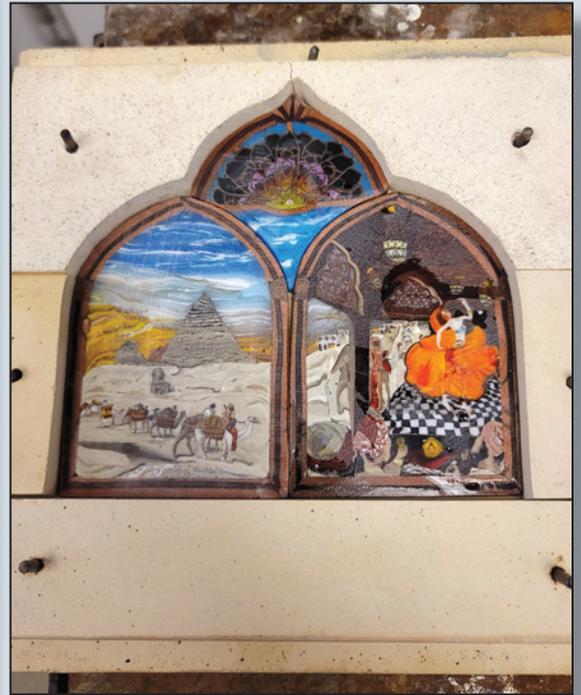
Loren is very skilled at observing a class of new participants and reading the room. He also caters to the needs of each individual so they can receive the most from their class without others feeling alienated. As he observes and accounts for the group dynamics, he imparts his vast knowledge to his students, which is, after all, the job of a good teacher. Becoming a teacher is a calling, and not every artist in glass is a capable instructor.



Cantina murrine block without spectator components, 4" x 3" x 2".

Loren's favorite place to teach is The Studio at The Corning Museum of Glass (CMoG) in Upstate New York. As soon as The Studio opened in 1996, Loren taught there. Forty-six classes later, he continues to teach there biannually, at least until the pandemic hit in 2020. He loves Corning and has many long-standing friends who work there.

As our conversation progressed, Loren began to speak in hushed tones of awe when he mentioned Sullivan Park, Corning's material science and technology research facility. The center was established in 1908 and continues to be Corning's primary location for early stage research through product development. The Sullivan Park building is a mile in length and houses several pilot plants to test production scale manufacturing and produce prototypes. The artist and teacher is obviously gripped in wonder by this source of technical advancements in glass. He has been offered a residency there, but Loren does not take on residencies due to varying constraints in his life. One day soon, however, he will seize that residency at Sullivan Park in order to realize his material dreams of furthering the scenic murrine.



Camel Caravan/Casbah Cantina murrine, set up for fusing in dams.



Loren Stump performing a Casbah Cantina pull.



Loren Stump, David, Effetre/Moretti soft glass, etched surface, 16" x 5" x 5-1/2" at base, 2006. Photo by Rich Images.



David statue parts, process shot of components to be assembled in the kiln.

David assembly, process shot of parts of the statue assembled hot in a zone-controlled kiln.



Loren Stump, Grand Canal plaque (front), fused mosaic front, Effetre/Moretti soft glass, Aventurine border, 3" x 4" x 1/4", 2018.

No Retirement in Sight

On asking Loren if he ever felt blocked, he took a different context from my question and answered, "Time is the only thing by which I feel blocked." He had celebrated his 65th birthday only a few days earlier and understands there is not enough time to realize all of his ideas. This lack of time means that he only sleeps four to five hours per day in order to fit everything he wants to do into his day. This feeling about time feeds into Loren's teaching style, because he is well known for teaching five-day classes that run well until two or three o'clock the next morning. There is so much knowledge that he wishes to impart.

With all this talk of time, our minds began to turn to the future, and I wondered what is next for Loren. I query if he would ever retire, and he reiterates with his own question. "What else would I do if it wasn't pushing the boundaries of my devotion?" Therefore, there is no retiring for master glassmaker Loren Stump.

In terms of Loren's legacy, he informs me that his peer and friend, the renowned paperweight artist Paul Stankard, is pressing him to write a book. As he ruminates over the contents of his imaginary novel, it is clear that he feels obliged to act so that his discoveries are not lost to future generations. He has already spent weeks in Venice, Italy, researching and interviewing glass figures and glass historians. Why? "I desire to intersect the crazy, tragic, and controversial life of Franchini and parallel that story with the contemporary how-to of the techniques I have rediscovered about the lost art of the murrine." This book would be an historically accurate account of Franchini flashing back and forth from 19th-century Venice to 21st-century California—a beautiful fusion between documentary nonfiction and educational legacy to the glass community. I await this gem of a book with bated breath.

G&A



Loren Stump, Madonna slice and carved Madonna murrine, approximately 1-3/4" x 1-1/4".

Loren Stump
lorenstump@comcast.net



G. Franchini, portrait of Cavour, 1-1/4" diameter (32 mm), 1862.



Loren Stump, Taxi Cab Bead, Effetre/Moretti soft glass, multiple murrine placements, 1" high x 7/8" wide x 1-3/8" long. Photo by Rich Images.

Dr. Julie Anne Denton received her doctorate in the combination of sandcast and flameworked glass for artists from the National Glass Centre, UK. She has learned from and worked with the best flameworking artists in the world including Emilio Santini, Lucio Bubacco, Vittorio Costantini, Gianni Toso, Shane Fero, Loren Stump, and Sally Prasch, to name just a few. She rounded off her education with Bertil Vallien of the renowned Swedish design house Kosta Boda (est. 1742).



Julie settled in Zürich, Switzerland, in 2010 and runs her design firm, www.Atelier315.ch, and www.ZurichGlassSchool.com, her online learning platform for sculptural flameworking skills, from the center of the city. She works with a small team beside her who all care deeply about quality education, creativity, and business.

Dr. Julie creates glass and bronze work that resonates beauty, workmanship, and authenticity. Her key themes are people, folklore, nature, and counterculture. She has also received worldwide recognition for her storytelling skills as an artist and her technical skills as a glassmaker.

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Stephen Boehme

How a Community Fostered a Phenomenon



by Joe Samuelson III

Stephen Boehme, Burrowing Owl Family, borosilicate, Franchini style murrine, polished coin, 2019.

Coretta Scott King once said, “The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.” Stephen Boehme (pronounced bay-me) is incapable of discussing his vast understanding of art, education, or glassworking technique without giving credit to those who contributed to that body of knowledge along the way. Community has been at the center of the Venn diagram of his life’s work.

“I’ve always been an artist,” Boehme says, referring to a catalog of work including bronze sculpture, silversmithing, photography, painting, and drawing. However, his exposure to the world of glass came in the form of craft rather than art. After several years teaching silversmithing and pottery at a local ski resort, the owners transitioned to a hot shop.

Stephen worked as an assistant to the Finnish glassblower, Kaisa Serrao. “I was basically her punty boy. We were blowing recycled glass from the bar and restaurant there, so it was brown glass day or clear glass day or amber wine bottle day. I got to where I could make small glasses and cups and witch’s balls. I didn’t know anything about murrine then.” After about seven years of production work, he left the hot shop.

Learning to “Paint” With Glass

Having become a fan of glass, Boehme’s attention transitioned to glaze and crystalline pottery. With the help of his wife, they produced large amounts of work for the better part of a decade. Then one fateful day he realized, “I was at an art festival, and the lady who had the booth next to me was Jodie McDougall.” It was a slow day and nobody was buying anything, so he spent some time checking out Jodie’s work. Enthralled with the little glass pictures, his first thoughts were of incorporating the murrine into his silversmithing. He asked, “How do you get the pictures in there?”

Jodie explained how murrine were built and introduced Stephen to the name Loren Stump. She suggested that he take the same Stump class she had taken. However, some googling helped him formulate a different plan. “I was stalking her a little bit online, and I realized she had an Etsy store with a lampworking beginning bead class. I bought the class for my son and me. It was supposed to be a three-hour introductory class, and I kept her for about ten hours and made her show me everything. She’s amazing.”



With that, Stephen got his own single-stage torch and started practicing soft glass beads and murrine. “I was making skulls and faces—little, terrible murrine—for days. I bet I made probably a hundred little skulls before I got one that was perfect,” he shared, as he lamented on the stack of rejects still sitting in a corner of his studio. “I was spending all my free time on that torch every night. I’d go to work teaching high school, and after work I’d spend four or five hours on the torch.”

Stepping into the Community

For the Boehme family, a teacher’s salary meant frugality was a way of life. Stephen convinced his wife to slide \$100 a month for glass into the budget. “I had my Etsy shop where I was selling little animals and skulls for three or four bucks apiece. I woke up one Sunday morning, and my website was cleaned out. I was really happy, because I had money for the first time. I thought, ‘Whadaya mean, glass can pay?!’ Then I was trying to figure out who bought it all.” He learned that another murrine artist, David Kaminski, was buying and reselling his work on the newly established Facebook group Millefiori Artists, Collector and ADDICTS Group (MACA). “Kaminski was pretty influential in my getting into murrine, because he showed what the business side was like.”

Stephen Boehme, Dorothy and Friends featuring the characters from the original film in one marble, borosilicate, Franchini style murrine, 3", 2020.



(Top to bottom) Stephen Boehme, Terminator Face component, borosilicate, Franchini style murrine, end canes featuring the Terminator, 2021. Terminator Set showing how uranium and cadmium in the glass can glow under black light, borosilicate.

Stephen Boehme, Tiger, borosilicate, Franchini style tiger murrine, 2020.

Stephen Boehme, Edgar Allan Poe end cane, borosilicate, Franchini style murrine end cane, 2018–2019.

An influx of messages ensued with collectors and artists asking to buy Stephen's work. "People started messaging me, and I had no idea what they were talking about. I got this message from an artist named Jason Lee asking to buy some skulls. I didn't even know who Jason Lee was at the time." It was during their first conversation that Jason told him about MACA. "I got on MACA and saw my work being sold." The murrine were selling for multiples of his prices on Etsy. "If people are selling them for more than they bought them for, then that's a good feeling." Kaminski had already started the ball rolling, and it only gained speed from there.

The encounter with Jason was a catalyst for Boehme's transition. He was frustrated with soft glass having garnered burns all over, including some of the glass exploding into his mouth. "I'm never gonna touch 104 glass ever again," he said. "I can't get the detail I want with it. It always blows up. I'm just not patient enough for it." So while he lauds Jodie's work as exceptional and offers immense respect for all of his colleagues in soft glass, boro was exactly what he was looking for.

Jason was an open book to Stephen and all of his questions about boro. "I got into boro because Jason wanted to do some collaborations. I was probably totally annoying to him because I asked a million questions, but he was amazing!" Without knowing the notoriety of this new friend nor the incredible exposure a collaboration would bring, Boehme dove into boro murrine, his new niche.

Boro Murrine, a Culture of Collaboration

Pivoting from soft glass into boro wasn't without hurdles. Stephen learned the hard way about what he calls the fundamental flaws of borosilicate. "I have an intimate relationship with boro color, both love and hate. It's temperamental and prone to breaking down if overworked." The chemical composition of some colors lends itself to the possibility, or inevitability, of fading or cracking if overworked, being held in the kiln for too long, or having been too deeply encased. "My biggest frustration is not being able to use all of the colors I want and having to mix so much." He gives credit for his style of drill mixing to a late friend, Larry "Tiger" Henderson, who taught him about the fundamentals of boro color chemistry in relation to which colors are safe for murrine and why.

In addition to learning about the new medium itself, the tools had to change as well. The torches required to manage larger pieces at higher temperatures meant that Boehme's existing setup was barely sufficient. "I remember my first Joker pull I did. I built that on a National and built the Joker up huge. I roasted it forever, and it wouldn't even get hot enough to glow, so I wrapped it in kaolin wool, put it in a cooler, and drove up to see my buddy, Kenyon Coon, in Salt Lake.

Stephen Boehme, Owl Marble, borosilicate, Franchini style murrine, 2017.



Stephen Boehme, Haunted House, borosilicate, Franchini style murrine end cane with more than a dozen individual components, 2018–2019.

It was still hot when I got there, so I pulled it down on his Mirage.” Kenyon and the crew there taught both Stephen and his son Gaven, aka conversion_glass on IG, what was possible in boro. “He was instrumental in my not being a complete noob about boro. I also learned who Jason Lee was through him. I didn’t realize I was talking to rock stars!” The community encircling him just kept growing because, as he put it, “The boro culture lends itself to collaboration more than any other culture.”

Within a few years Stephen was teaching. It was during a fateful trip to the Sonoran Glass Art Center that he made one of his most valued friendships. “I was able to throw down with Karl Taylor, aka Grimm Glass. Karl is like a genius and one of the most talented people I’ve ever met. He’s like the mad scientist who’s always pushing the bounds of glass. I learned more from that trip to Tucson than I did anywhere in my whole life.”

Karl transformed Stephen’s understanding of using murrine in finished work and how to manipulate technical aspects of boro to achieve the aesthetics he pictured in his head. “Some murrine don’t like to be in the center of a marble. They’ll always check if you encase them too deeply. Karl taught me how I can get away with doing layers and layers of murrine and putting hundreds of murrine in a marble. Karl changed my life and my art. I went to Tucson for three days, and I came back with superpowers. I was at a standstill, and he opened up the door to so much. I can visualize how glass could be now.”

Along with Boehme’s personal growth came the growth of the boro murrine community. “Probably the most important thing that happened to boro murrine was the first American Glass Expo (AGE) in 2013. They gave us a murrine room. We were like step children off to the side in this little room where we never got any traffic, because we weren’t marked. But all the murrine artists were there all day just talking. I learned so much from everyone—Josh McDaniel, Jerry Kelly, Ryan McClure, Piper Dan, Dave Kaminski, Greg Chase. It was like every murrine artist in the country at that time was there. A lot of great collabs happened from that. I thought it was just a hobby before that, but then I started taking it more seriously.”

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The Business Side of Social Media

Although Stephen admits to being lackluster when it comes to maintaining a consistent social media presence, he touts its necessity in his ability to make sales. “Without Facebook and Instagram I probably wouldn’t sell a thing. The most important thing for an artist right now is to get your name out there and be sharing as much as you can. I’ll go weeks without posting and I feel kind of bad, but the more I post, the more collectors I can contact or meet.” Speaking about saltcityglass.com, his website, he shared, “It’ll sit there for days without anyone buying anything, but if I blog about it on Facebook or Instagram, I’ll get some sales.”

The artist’s philosophy on sales is more about volume over increasing value. “I would like my work to be reasonably priced for collectors to be able to afford it. If the value goes up from there, then I’ll be happy. Maybe I don’t have the value I would if I raised my prices, but I make a lot of stuff. I’m prolific, and if I’m trying to sell this stuff and stay prolific, then I need this artwork to go out into the environment.”

Inspiration and the Perpetual Process

The path Stephen has taken into the world of borosilicate murrine has been one that is away from his classically trained conceptual art roots. “Conceptual art is a big deal in college. For a long time, I was always thinking everything had to have a huge concept.” He’s still very mindful of the influence his work can have and regularly asks himself, “Am I making the world a better place with my art?”

Rather than concern himself with concept, the practicality of image-driven art allows Boehme to convey his interests. He pursues live models for his portraits and commissions local photographers for his wildlife images. He has even approached a wild buffalo to “experience the buffalo” before he builds it.

A self-described “crazed media nut” and lifelong comic book collector, Stephen finds himself drawn to his early childhood cultural icons as inspiration.

“I’ve been reading *Batman* comic books since I was a kid, and I’ve always been drawn to the Joker. I love to make Jokers. I really like the Joaquin Phoenix Joker that I did.” After six versions, he says he can now “bust them out” with little thought.



Stephen Boehme, 20,000 Murrine Under the Sea collab with Karl Taylor, Daniel Porte, Rocko Belloso, and Greg Wilson, borosilicate, Franchini style murrine encased in a functional glass rig, 2019. Photo by Karl Taylor.





Stephen Boehme,
Tea With the Joker,
borosilicate, Franchini
style murrine end cane of
a hybrid Mad Hatter/Joker
drinking tea, 2016.



Stephen Boehme,
Joaquin Phoenix Joker
from the movie Joker,
borosilicate,
Franchini style polished
murrine coin, 2020.



Stephen Boehme,
Spirit of Bushido, final
build before pulling,
hot shot of a multiple
component build
featuring the Spirit of
Bushido, borosilicate,
Franchini style
murrine, 2020.



Photo by
Wekku Ari Sääsäski.

Stephen Boehme
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The inspiration Boehme pulls from his childhood, in concert with his ever-evolving skill set, promises a bright future for his continued work in marbles. “Most of my murrine are based around marbles now. That’s where the creativity happens for me.” When he gets commissions, he only takes ideas he thinks he’d do on his own. Like a recent one for *The Wizard of Oz*, or *Alice in Wonderland*, he will design the murrine based on the marble he has already built in his mind. “I want all the characters from *Alice in Wonderland* sitting on a mushroom in the forest having a tea party.” The relevant commissions he gets help bring his vision into reality. “Maybe in ten years from now I’ll have enough murrine to make that marble.”

A Lifelong Teacher

The wealth of life and love that the glass community has brought to Stephen and his work is what he tries to pass on to his students. “When you’re a teacher, there are no secrets.” Whether it’s the boro fundamentals from Kenyon or Jason or Larry, encasement methods gleaned from Karl Taylor, or stringer stacking tips passed down from another departed friend, Ken Snyder, he will share any and all of his knowledge with his students. “After I do my thing, I’m there for the class and whatever they want to learn. I always try to feel like I am there for my students, not that they are there for me.”

The community wouldn’t exist if the body of knowledge of those who came before them hadn’t been passed down. Stephen acknowledges this in all aspects of his life. Speaking about both his religious faith in his Latter Day Saints community and his role as a teacher he shared: “I get to do a lot of service, and it’s not always about me. It forces you to go into your community. It’s called payback. I really enjoy giving back to the glass community by being free with my knowledge, teaching classes, and mentoring and supporting new artists.”

GA

Joe Samuelson III has been a borosilicate lampworker intermittently for 20 years, both professionally and as a hobbyist. The focus of his work has largely been on functional glass in which he enjoys taking his own style and collaborating with artists who have unique aesthetics. In addition to his functional work, he produces a wide variety of glass both lampworked and fused. For more than a decade, Joe has been an avid collector of murrine focusing largely on glass butterflies.

Originally from Buffalo, New York, Joe has been an expat living across East Asia and the Middle East for 15 years, both teaching and managing English language programs. He is proud to be utilizing his BA in Journalism and experience as a writing instructor to venture deeper into the world of glass and glass art through his work with *Glass Art*® magazine. A variety of his glass art can be found on Instagram @number3glass.



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Alexander Rosenberg

A Multifaceted Artist and Teacher



by Vicki Schneider

For Alexander Rosenberg, everything starts with a question. “I like looking at the natural world and history and seeing the different ways that other artists, scientists, and curious people have asked questions about what’s around them. My studio practice is how I process the world.”

On the surface, Alexander’s questions might appear simple or even foolish. Yet pursuing their answers with childlike curiosity has led Rosenberg to create fascinating and thought provoking works of art and opened the door to his participation in Season One of *Blown Away*, a Netflix reality series.

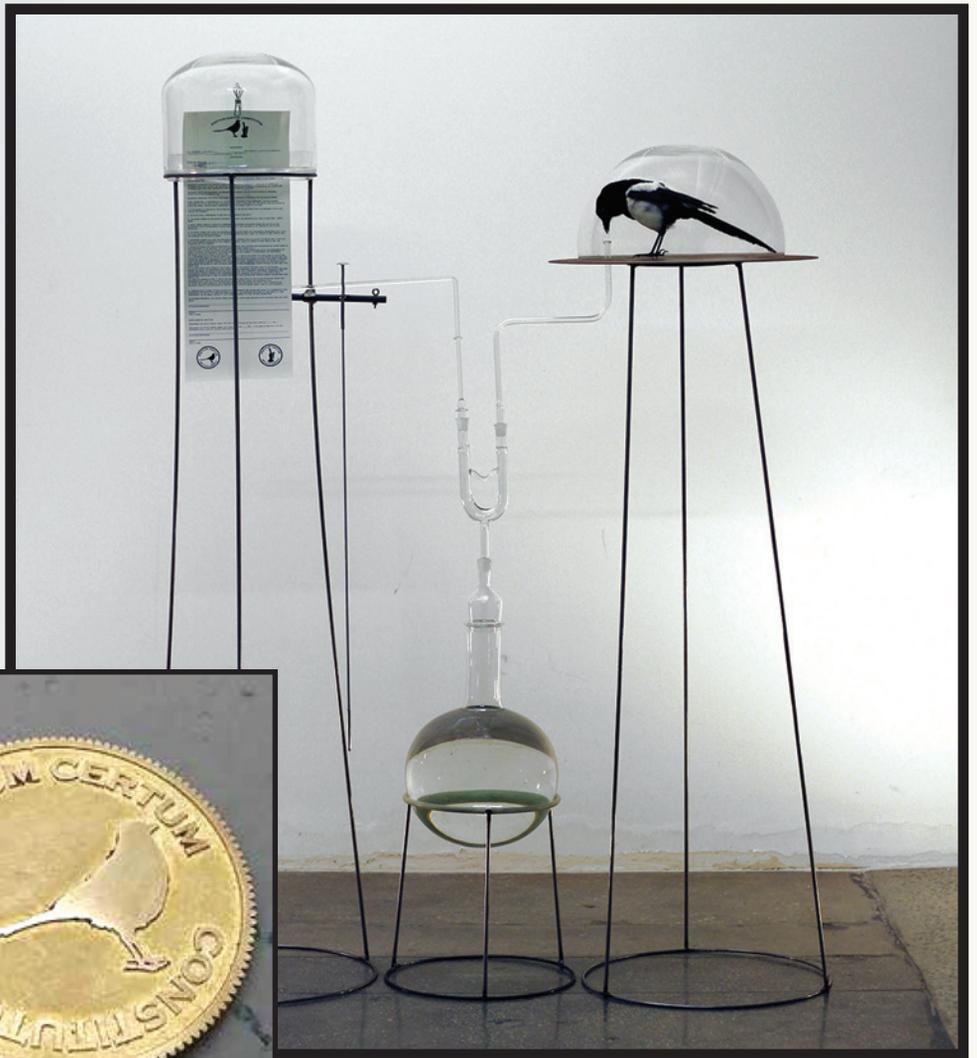
Central to all of Rosenberg’s work is glass. “I think glass is a magical material. There just aren’t that many things in this world that are both solid and clear, that let you see the inside and the outside at the same time, or understand the wall thickness or a cross section of an object in real space.” The opposing properties of glass make it his material of choice and are key to his creative problem solving.

Alexander Rosenberg, Lantern Room, neon sign, hardware, transformer, microcontroller, sensors, and beating heart, variable dimensions, 2016.

Notes from the artist: I sleep next to a window at the top of my house where I can see cars driving on I-95 approaching Philadelphia from the north and boats on the Delaware river from the same direction. My block, historically illuminated by the now abandoned coal power plant, is darker than it used to be. I constructed a large neon sign of an anatomical human heart and mounted it in the window next to my bed. When I sleep, I wear a sensor that allows the sign to blink in time with my heartbeat. Friends in the neighborhood and those traveling to the city can observe the flashing beacon from a distance and send me their observations and diagnoses.”

Alexander Rosenberg, *Pretium Certum Constitutum*, blown soda lime glass, borosilicate glass, bronze minted currency, taxidermied English magpie, inkjet printed contract, cochineal cannabis ink, distilled water, and steel, variable dimensions, 2016.

Notes from the artist: This project is the first iteration of a multidisciplinary investigation into the thriving economy that has appeared around handmade cannabis pipes and the conflicting legal status of medical and recreational marijuana between state and federal law. It also explores the unmanageably robust cash economy that has been created due to the hesitancy of banks to accept cannabis money until the industry receives legal status federally. The project aims to produce an extremely valuable cannabis pipe and sell it to support the rights of people incarcerated for nonviolent drug offenses.



Leading to Glass

Rosenberg started his glass journey when he was around 19. "I was kind of floating around at that point. I was a high school dropout living on the West coast with a guy who was taking glass classes at a local community college. He was bringing home this ugly, globby, very primitive stuff, but I was really captivated by the idea that this material could be manipulated by a human hand. I'd never really seen that or thought about that before. I was so interested in it, I decided that I would try to take the class."

Rosenberg took his first glass course at San Bernardino Valley College in Southern California. He doesn't remember if he passed the class, but he continued to be intrigued by the process.

Always knowing he was going to be an artist, Rosenberg started college at Rhode Island School of Design expecting to become a professional painter. "I didn't really think of glass as a fine arts material. Once I saw more of its potential, I knew I wanted to have it in my life. I ended up joining the glass program there. I found more ways to incorporate the material with other interests and started using it to make art."

Even though Alexander places glass at the center of his studio practice, he doesn't think of himself exclusively as a glass artist, "My studio work is project based. Rather than saying, 'This is a particular material or process that I do,' I come up with what I want

to make and figure out the process that best serves it. That being said, everything that I do is influenced by recurring themes that are inherent to glass, like absence and presence and seeing the unseen. All these kinds of poetic ideas just live in what the material does. Even when I do other stuff, even if I'm using leather or metal or carpentry, I like to think that I use those materials in a glassy way. I think of my work as multidisciplinary, but the only thing that I'm really an expert in is this one field. In terms of glass processes, the one that I feel the most competent in is blowing soft glass at the furnace."

The Appeal of Glass

Rosenberg is drawn to the degree of attention working with hot glass demands from him. "Unlike many other activities, you can't be looking at your phone. Your other concerns have to fade away a little bit and in the best moments, they completely disappear." He compares working with glass to the highly focused mental state of flow defined by psychologist and professor Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. As Alexander explains it, "Flow occurs when the task at hand and the practitioner's abilities are perfectly matched, so the task demands everything of the person, but it's not so demanding that they're unable to do the task." The artist finds that working with glass often puts him in this desirable state of flow.

Alexander likes the level playing field that glass offers to beginners. “It’s this universal equalizer. Everybody sucks just the same when they start. I’ve never really met somebody who just sat down and said, ‘This stuff is easy. I was made for it.’ In my experience, the person who works really hard and is able to find a way to get the most time practicing in the material is the one who gets the best at it.” Realizing this principle very early on in his career, he and some of his classmates would sneak into the studio outside of hours to get more time to practice. When he had a paid gig, he often traded a portion of his pay for studio time.

Passing it Forward

Rosenberg has been teaching college level art since 2007, and he started teaching glass full time in 2010. Since then, he has taught a variety of classes in a wide range of venues. Currently he’s an adjunct professor teaching flameworking, glassblowing, and cold working at the Glass Education Center at Salem Community College in New Jersey.

Alexander has developed specific language to help communicate effectively with his students and describes his teaching style as being hands on. “I try to get a lot of one-on-one face time with each student, and I also try to know when to back off and let people do their thing. I would say that more than half of technical glass learning happens on your own. It’s not while watching a demo or talking to an instructor. It’s when you’re left by yourself to bang your head against the wall a little bit and figure things out. In my teaching, I aim for balance. I try to cultivate a sense of discovery, like we’re here to figure this stuff out together.”

Rosenberg’s goals for his students have changed significantly since he began teaching. Originally, he wanted everyone to master the same skills and knowledge. The longer he’s been teaching, however, the less narrow his goals have become, especially as they relate to instructing a more diverse student base. “What they’re here to learn might be separate from what I’m trying to teach, and those outcomes are no less valuable than the ones that I intended. Some might learn, for example, what it is to fail completely and utterly for the first time in their lives. Others might find out that the materials are therapeutic in some way, and this practice can help them find relief from other parts of their lives. Even though I’m still here for traditional and academic outcomes, it excites me when I can be more open to different kinds of results.”

The Creative Process

Maintaining a personal history of ideas and concepts has been very valuable to Rosenberg. He has amassed nearly 30 notebooks filled with pencil sketches that document his evolving thoughts. “I am not a good draftsman. The drawings are not pretty, and they’re not really artwork in their own right. They are just a system of notation that lets me work through problems in different iterations. I’m a firm believer that ideas usually come out in order from worse to better. Sometimes the first one is a winner, but I like to get those iterations on paper rather than going through the process of making a whole thing and realizing that it was a mistake.”

Alexander doesn’t plan out everything he makes and finds that especially with conventional glassblowing, he has to rely on the material and the moment to create certain pieces. “I love making goblets and stemware. It’s really hard to know exactly what’s going on formally until I can pick it up, feel it in my hand, and see what it looks like with the light shining through it. When I’m throwing myself at the material and seeing what’s going to happen, I think that’s a form of sketching, too.”



Alexander Rosenberg, Enoch Robinson’s Desert De Retz, blown, sandblasted, and enameled glass, wood, plaster, and electronics, variable dimensions, 2010.

Notes from the artist: This work is about a round house in Massachusetts. Enoch Robinson built the house in 1856 after a folly in a French pleasure garden called Desert de Retz. The folly, called the Broken Column House, was made to look like a ruin of a giant classical column. I made a scale model of the Robinson house in glass and showed it in complete darkness. A bright light in the center of the model projected the lines of the house all over the walls of the dark room in an inversion that transported viewers from the outside of a model looking in, to the inside of an architectural structure, looking out.

A timing circuit caused the light to flash for only a split-second every minute and a half, the time it took to significantly dilate the eyes in the darkness, so that the inside-out projected house could only be viewed in “after-image” when the viewer closed his or her eyes. The projection aligned with a window-like frame on the wall containing the view from a window of the original broken column house in France. The view was a collage made from the French scenic wallpaper that covered the interior of Robinson’s house.

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Corey Pemberton (American, b. 1990), *Ukhamba in Curry*,
2017, Blown glass, glass seed beads, nylon thread.
Photo by Corey Pemberton.



The artist describes his creative process as an emotional roller coaster, starting with curiosity and passing through uncertainty, momentum, confidence, and often recovery from mistakes. He says that a lot of beginning glassworkers fall in love with the material and only want to work on the parts of the process they enjoy. "There's a lot of stuff that I don't like to do in order to get to the things that I like. I'm willing to do it because the big picture is great. I have a life that I like and get to make things that I like, but it doesn't mean I'm having a blast every single moment. Whether I feel inspired or whether I feel like a bag of rocks, working with glass is just like any job. You show up and go to work."

The *Blown Away* Experience

Rosenberg's sophisticated designs, technical prowess, and calm demeanor made him a fan favorite on Season One of *Blown Away*. Early on in his career, Rosenberg learned that he needed to calm down in the studio in order to create "good glass." During the show he put that lesson to good use. As he worked under tight deadlines with cameras running around the shop and things not necessarily going as planned, he appeared composed and focused.

Viewers have commented on how nicely Rosenberg treated his assistants from Sheridan College. "I've had the experience of being an assistant. It's terrifying to show up and carry around the glass of somebody whom you admire. There's this moment of responsibility when you can totally ruin everything. We rely on those people to make our work. It's already stressful for them, and I think it's appropriate to say 'please' and 'thank you' and make an already stressful thing a little bit easier."

Even though it might have been tempting to some, the artist never played it safe. "We can do stuff that we know will be successful every time, but that's not how somebody grows as an artist or a technician." He recalls being told that the best glass creations in history never made it into the annealer and wound up on a shop floor. That thought motivates him to push himself and the limits of the glass, always looking to make better and better pieces.

As a result of appearing on the show, Rosenberg has gained a bit more financial stability. "That has freed me up to research, play, and make whatever I'm curious about in different disciplines at my whim." His visibility on social media has grown exponentially, and with that, he has been able to test out new designs and learn what appeals to his audience. Surprisingly, he's found that there is more interest in esoteric designs than he expected. Another pleasant surprise to him was the increased appeal of his pieces made with clear glass, which he likes to work in.

Alexander Rosenberg, Reliquary, or From Beneath a Piano Keyboard Used For 103 Years, blown glass, waxed cotton string, Philadelphia Opera Company upright grand piano debris, 4" x 4" x 8", 2013. Photo by Jaime Alvarez.

Notes from the artist: Modeled after a reliquary from the 17th century, this glass vessel contains the debris collected from beneath the keyboard of a piano that had been in use since it was made in 1910.

Coming Attractions

With COVID-19, a lot of Rosenberg's 2020 plans were put on hold. At the end of 2019, Alexander was scheduled to go to Australia to be the Stephen Procter fellow at Australia National University. His plan, which he hopes to revisit once world travel is again possible, was to conduct research to produce a wilderness survival guide using glass to address the problems of food, water, and shelter.

Alexander also has a residency coming up at Recycled Artist in Residence (RAIR), a nonprofit arts organization in Northeast Philadelphia within a construction and demolition recycling center. The program provides artists on-site access to recovered materials and a studio space to produce work. "I'm really interested in thinking about glass in terms of the future of the world and sustainability, which is a hard problem to think about." In a similar vein, the artist is currently making a chandelier out of automotive waste and glass. The piece uses recycled electronic components to take a video of a single burning candle and project it onto screens on each of the arms.

The future looks bright for Rosenberg. He and some colleagues will be co-curating a glass exhibition at the Delaware Contemporary Museum in Wilmington, Delaware, and he is hoping to do more work in television. Even though Alexander has won a number of prestigious awards and opportunities continue to surface, the things he is proudest of in his life and career are getting sober more than three years ago and his evolution into being a more empathetic and effective teacher. That says a lot about the kind of person and artist that Alexander Rosenberg is.

G&A

Alexander Rosenberg
alexanderrosenberg.net
Instagram @rosenbergalexander





Alexander Rosenberg, Almost Middle C, parts of a 103-year-old upright grand piano, blown glass, performance variable dimensions, 2013.

Notes from the artist: Almost Middle C is a one-note piano made by cutting away every part of a 103-year-old upright grand piano except for a single key and the apparatus that hits the string when the note is pressed. A wine glass, handmade to resonate close to the frequency of middle C, dangles from the three strings that are used to produce the note.



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

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



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Glorious Glass Exhibitions

CGS and The Biscuit Factory Gallery Working Together

by Pam Reekie



Like many other organizations, the Contemporary Glass Society (CGS) had great plans for 2020. In 2017, the foundation marked its 20th anniversary as the principle supporter and promoter of artists and collectors of contemporary glass in the United Kingdom. Over the next three years, CGS celebrated this landmark birthday with a series of linked open exhibitions held at venues around Great Britain.

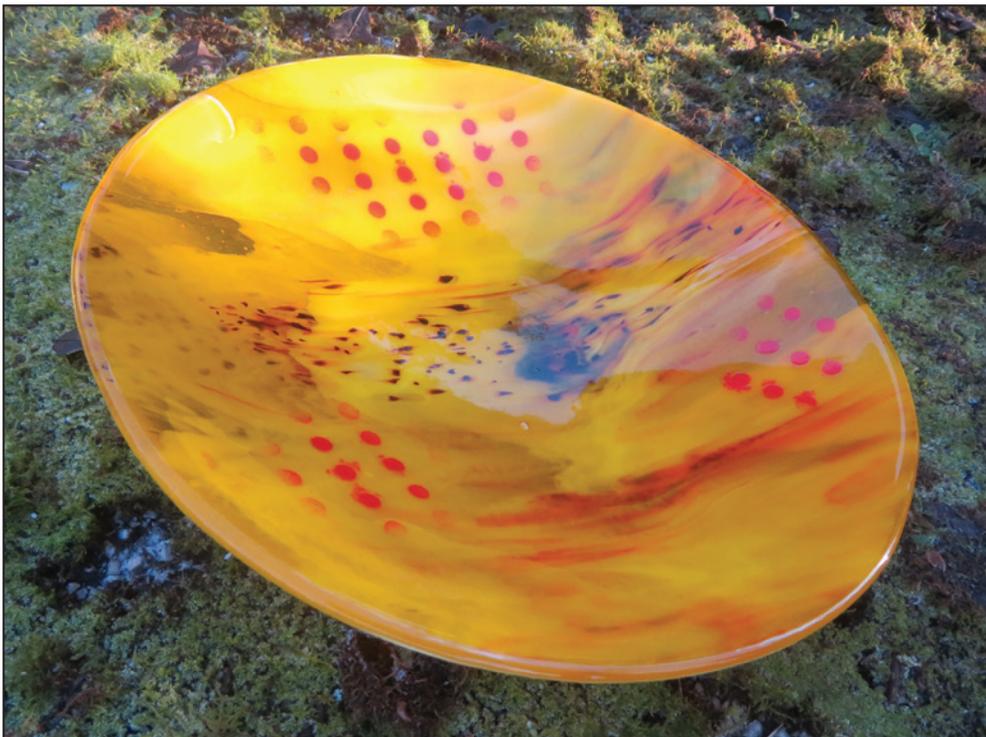
This celebration and the goal of raising awareness of the glory of contemporary glass culminated in a collaboration with The Biscuit Factory, the U.K.'s largest independent contemporary art, craft, and design gallery set in the heart of Newcastle's cultural quarter.

Discovering the Glory of Contemporary Glass

The aim of the *Glorious Glass* exhibitions was to demonstrate how utterly glorious and amazing contemporary glass is so that everyone can appreciate and enjoy its magical colors, textures, use of light, and variety of techniques. They were also intended to help local patrons where the various exhibitions took place to discover their own nearby glass artists.

With 2020, unfortunately, also came the pandemic and the closure of all nonessential establishments, including The Biscuit Factory. Undaunted, we collaborated to discover ways in which CGS and The Biscuit Factory could continue our mission to promote

contemporary glass. The joint solution we came up with was to create quarterly mini exhibitions of CGS members' work within the gallery so that CGS would have an ongoing presence there for a year. This would be both online as well as a physical presence once the galleries were able to reopen.



(Top to bottom)
Helen Grierson, Rockpool 3.
Photo by Northumbrian Images;
Penny Riley-Smith, Shades of 2020.
Photo by the artist.

As Rachel Brown for The Biscuit Factory explained: “We are pleased to announce a new collaboration with the Contemporary Glass Society as we work together to provide a platform for contemporary glassmakers from across the U.K. Featuring sculpture and functionware, we will showcase the work of makers in seasonally changing exhibitions.

“With the first show launching online, CGS and The Biscuit Factory are working with the makers to ensure that viewers can still purchase and receive pieces from the collection during our physical closure. This is a strange time indeed, but a wonderful opportunity to bring the work of these glass artists to our audience.”

Planning a Return to In-Person Viewing

The first online exhibition includes the work of eight makers—Catherine Mahe, Helen Grierson, Kate Henderson, Morag Reekie, Pat Marvell, Penny Riley-Smith, Stevie Davies, and Sue Woolhouse. Their work is now live on The Biscuit Factory’s website.

The good news is that The Biscuit Factory is anticipating reopening on April 14, 2021. After that date, Contemporary Glass Society members’ work will be able to be viewed both virtually and in reality.

G&A



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

Visit www.thebiscuitfactory.com/blogs/news/contemporary-glass-society to learn more about the participating artists and view their work.

(Left to right) Morag Reekie, On the Edge; Catherine Mahe, textured yellow and pink drop-out vessel. Photos by the artists.

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Kate Baker

Exploring the Connection
Between Flesh and
the Human Spirit



by Sara Sally LaGrand

Carl Jung, often considered one of the founding fathers of modern psychological practice, once said, “Often the hands will solve a mystery that the intellect has struggled with in vain.” This comes to mind when viewing the glass art of Australian artist Kate Baker. Her work of ghostly images of human beings that is layered, nuanced, and muted evokes that mystery in the human existence.

“Within my work I am primarily interested in exploring our less understood emotional and psychological realms that are often hidden from even ourselves within our everyday lives,” says Baker. She calls the human body a metaphor for this known and unknown realm that is often considered a juncture between flesh and spirit.

“The work is certainly focused on exploring a highly emotional and visceral space. However, I am fundamentally interested in how these realms are experienced or accessed through our material reality, thus in essence, through the body. I am also interested in how the human experience and the broad and nuanced emotional range that we experience as human beings is inseparable from matter. Within that context, the human body becomes a metaphor for the relationship between matter and the more ethereal realms of the emotional and psychological.” That’s a lot to take in, but so is her work.



A Challenging, Complex Environment

The process involved in Baker's work is extensive and experimental. It includes glass techniques that she has mastered in hours of study plus trial and error. The artist calls on her experience in photography and studio glass fusing as the foundations of her current work.

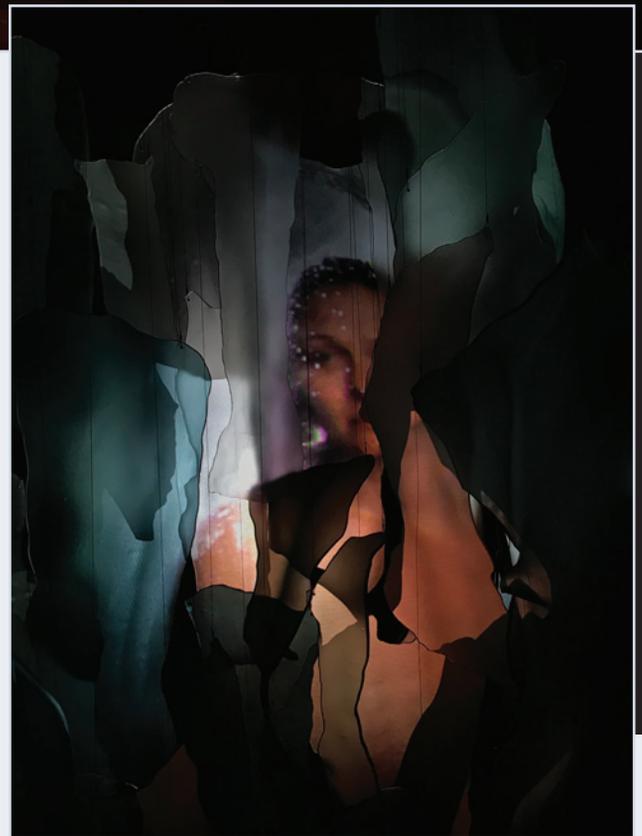
"The process of kiln formed glass results in the creation of static, sculptural, and translucent form. Its interdisciplinary relationship with the photographic and digital image is the primary focus of my studio research. This direction provides for a challenging yet complex environment in which concepts of our immaterial nature can be explored paradoxically through an intimate and rigorous engagement with the material and the resulting abstraction."



The Within Matter series explores Kate Baker's ongoing fascination with the intersection between our material reality as physical beings and the less tangible space of our emotional and psychological experience. The figures in this work are young, captured in various moments of transcendence, where the abstraction of their forms invites viewers to question where their physicality begins and ends. These works invite us to question the parameters of material existence and whether other dimensions also reside in that space.

Each work is created from a UV Flatbed digital print on a translucent panel of glass, mounted on an architectural steel base. The freestanding nature of the works allows light to pass through the imagery and give viewers the opportunity to experience the works more as a series of sculptures than as photographs.





A Stellar Beginning

Baker graduated with First Class Honors from the Glass Workshop at the Australian National University School of Art (Canberra) in 1999, now known as ANU School of Art and Design, and later co-founded Locus Studio, a glass kiln forming and cold working studio in Sydney. She has been a Ranamok Glass Prize finalist three times and was included in the 2007 International Exhibition of Glass Kanazawa in Japan. The artist was also the Gold Award winner for *E-merge 2010*, Bullseye's biennial juried competition. Clearly the art world appreciates not only the time element involved to create such complex work but also the mysteriousness of the subject matter.

In 2017, Baker returned to the Australian National University as a full-time PhD candidate to further develop her studio research in a critiqued setting. She was recently awarded the 2018 Hindmarsh Prize, which recognizes excellence in the field of Contemporary Art made primarily from glass.

"For the past 10 to 15 years, I have been focused on the abstraction of the human body to create a space between our literal reality and a void inhabited by our deeper psyche where our memories, experiences, and imaginations reside. This is the space between reality and pure abstraction that really interests me. It is like a kind of departure from what we know toward a space less understood yet strongly felt. It is a space where the visceral experience of affect can reside in a kind of purity where it doesn't have to be understood or explained so much as felt. In essence, it is the part of human experience we can't articulate or that we don't understand that I am looking to explore within the work—an emotional space where the viewer can be held, if momentarily, between what they know and what they long to know."

Kate Baker, Pulse, single-channel digital video, sound and studio glass installation, 10 minute looping video, 85-plus suspended glass forms, 3.5 meters x 1.8 meters x 1.5 meters, 2019. Video and sound produced by Doe and Doe Studio. Featuring a performance by Leanna Walsman. Large photo by Brenton McGeachie. Additional photos by Su-An Ng.

New Online Class

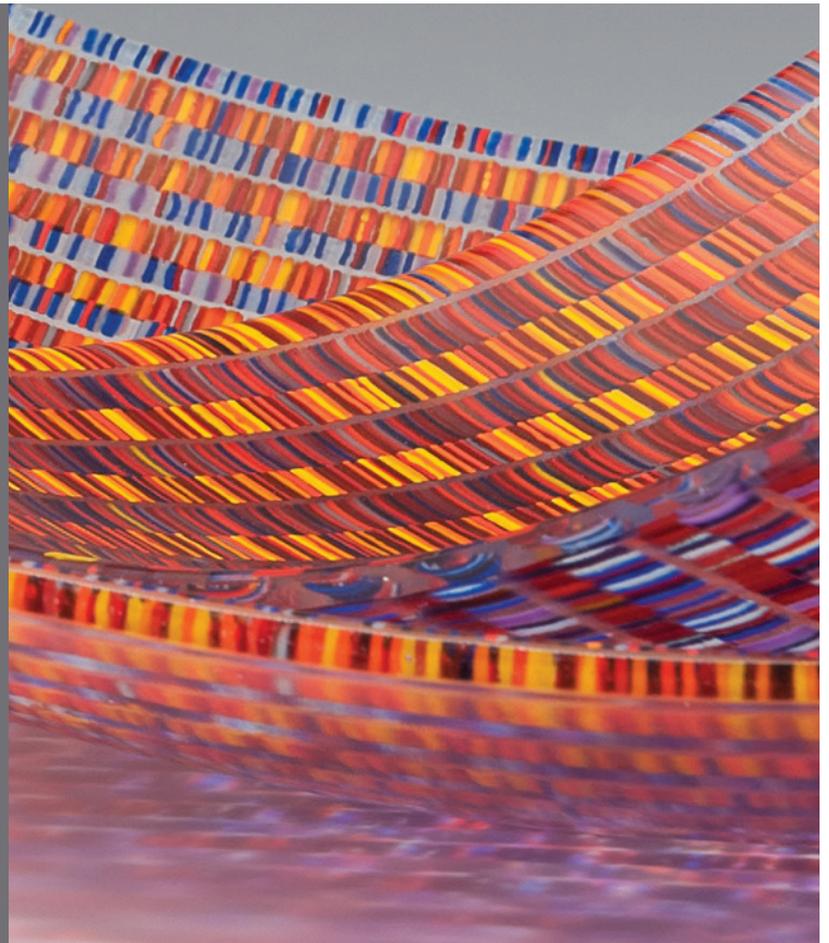
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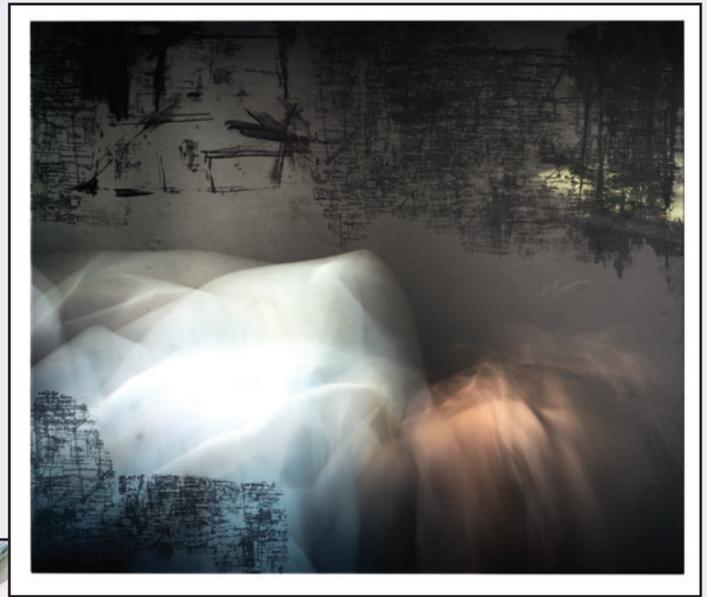
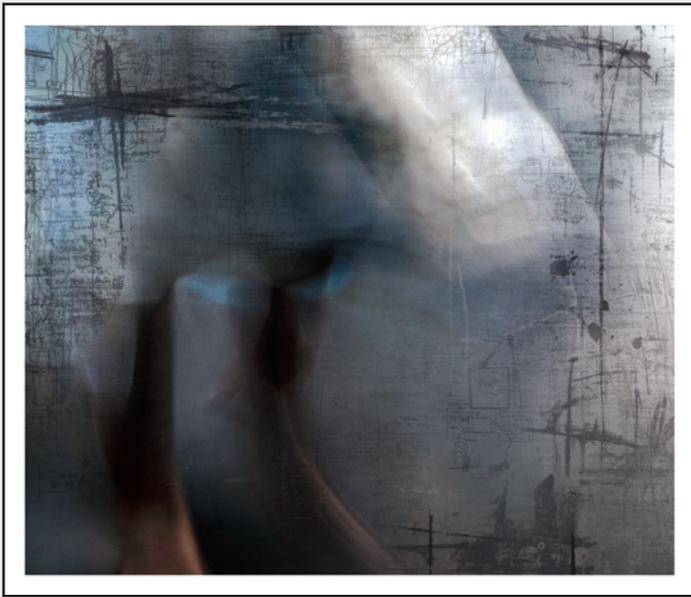
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Creating a Narrative from Personal Experience

On Baker's website, Aimee Frodsham, artistic director of Canberra Glassworks, speaks of Kate's 2019 body of work *Between Intimacy & Trespass*. "Drawing from her own experience, Baker overlays images, surface treatments, and text, as well as other highly personal information that includes years of technical process notes, which may appear as ambiguous scribbles to the viewer. This narrative acts as a reminder to the artist of the importance of her conceptual and technical processes referencing her internal struggles with the separation of artistic vision, making, and daily life."

While the imagery is highly personal, Baker is careful in her presentation of the material. Frodsham explains: "Using imagery and video with unexpected compositions of the body, Baker often starts by photographing or drawing her own children, reflecting on personal connections of instinct and unconditional love. By cropping out faces and abstracting the image, she is questioning our perceptions of how we recognize the emotions held within our physicality." While the imagery is often of her own family members, the result is obscured to the point that the viewers could easily insert themselves into the narrative, finding that point of universality of just being human.

In her most recent work, Baker has begun incorporating mirrored sheet metal into the glass and photographic image. In her 2020 work *Sublimate*, she combines imagery that "feels" familiar in its reminiscence of pastoral themes but combines UV flatbed digital print on mirrored stainless steel to lend another level of nuance to the mix. The result is a dreamlike sequence of images as described on her website that appear supple, flowing, and imbued with layers of texture, figurative imagery, and translucent color.

G&A

Kate Baker

www.katebaker.com.au

Instagram @katebakerart

Facebook @katebakerart

Kate Baker, Between Intimacy and Trespass, digital and hand painted silver mirror panels, each panel 100 cm x 120 cm x 5 cm, 2019. Installation view at The Canberra Glassworks Gallery.

Photos by Brenton McGeachie.

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

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



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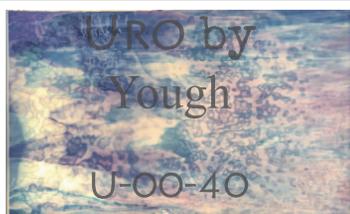
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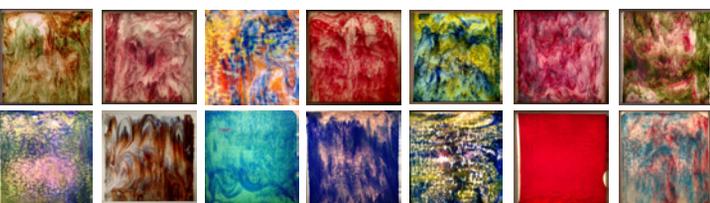
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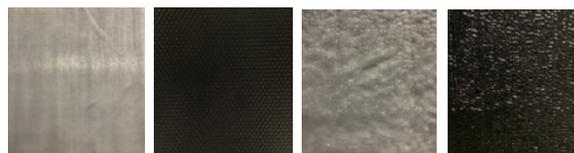


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American Glass Guild

A Virtual Conference Experience for 2021

by Kathy Jordan

As the President of the American Glass Guild (AGG), I agreed to carry out the tasks necessary to achieve our purposes and goals. Having to make the decision to cancel two in-person conferences felt all consuming. Our Board spent countless hours responding and pivoting to the challenges a small nonprofit would face. There was no time or a manual that would prepare us for a virtual crash course. Virtual reality had become a virtual way of life.

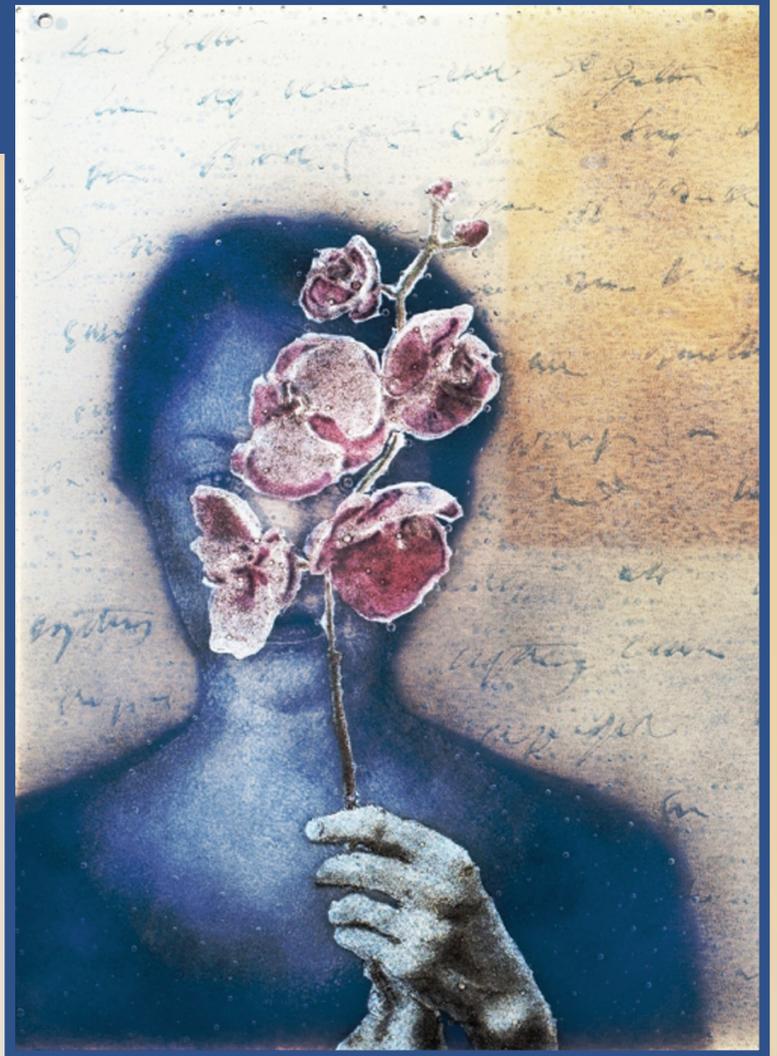
The 2021 AGG Conference Goes Virtual

The Board recognized that the original driver leading to the formation of the AGG has been education. Many of our members are accomplished designers, fabricators, conservators, and historians. We are all the benefactors of this generosity. In an effort to stay connected and honor our mission statement, even in the midst of a pandemic, the AGG has been preparing for our Virtual Conference. You will be able to join us through your computer and go mask-free the entire time. The format of this year's conference will include talks, education, awards, and interaction and feature Michael Janis as the keynote speaker.

Conference registration is open! We are very excited to be able to bring our members a clean and sanitized 2021 Virtual Conference on Saturday, June 5, 2021. Check out the schedule and speakers list on the Conference page at www.americanglassguild.org.

The James Whitney Memorial Scholarship Auction

Our annual scholarship auction has been a highlight during all of our past conferences, and this year we are excited to hold a virtual auction during the conference event. Since 2007, the scholarship fund has handed out over 125 scholarships to further glass art education through the generous donations from sponsors and AGG members. Please continue to support our annual scholarship auction with contributions and gifts. Information about the James Whitney Memorial Scholarship and how to donate to our auction can be found on our website.



Michael Janis, *The Memory of Orchids*, (detail) 2011.
Photo by anythingphoto.net

The resilience of our collective creative spirits combined with intention is the recipe we need to experience connectedness and community again. I so look forward to seeing all of your smiling faces this June.

Visit www.americanglassguild.org for more information on the upcoming Virtual Conference and on becoming a member of AGG.



Kathy Jordan, AGG President

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The Annual Mosaic Arts International Exhibition Series 2021

by Shawn Newton

Photos Shared with Permission of
the Society of American Mosaic Artists

The Society of American Mosaic Artists (SAMA), a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating, inspiring, and promoting excellence in the mosaic arts, was founded in 1999. This vibrant and ever-expanding group of more than 900 members includes mosaic artists at all levels, mosaic aficionados, collectors, materials suppliers, and art educators. The group has put a renewed emphasis on strengthening ties with other mosaic organizations around the globe to pursue common goals and develop new programs relevant to its members.

SAMA's annual Mosaic Arts International (MAI) exhibition series invigorates a new perspective of mosaic art in numerous contexts and celebrates established as well as emerging artists working in the medium today. The series is comprised of separate, juried exhibits featuring the best in contemporary fine art, architectural, community, and site-specific mosaics from SAMA's diverse international membership. Fifty-four selected works from members throughout the world reflect the multiplicity of the mosaic medium and its endless applications.

A Virtual Exhibition for 2021

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, SAMA cancelled its 2020 exhibition and is presenting the 2021 exhibition as a fully interactive, virtual experience. Many of the works in the Fine Art segment will remain on view and are available for sale through the exhibition website indefinitely.

SAMA's Executive Director Dawnmarie Zimmerman, who designed the exhibition, explains how viewers will be able to experience it. "Artists who use this medium spend countless hours producing work that is best presented in person for viewers to experience the aspects of texture, color, reflectivity, and intricacy of design that is possible with mosaic. We have created an intimate digital experience wherein viewers receive large, juicy images and longer, more in-depth statements from artists to create a connection. It is a very dynamic and intuitive user experience that is easy to navigate and accessible on all devices."



Jacki Gran

Meet the Jurors

Julia Lang-Shapiro, Director of Media, Visual, and Performing Arts for Long Beach Public Schools, and Anabella Wewer, graphic designer and internationally exhibited mosaic artist, selected the exhibition winners. Each shared her perspective on the benefits of juried art exhibitions for artists as well as viewers.

“The arts are the voice and memory of all societies. They express perceptions of the past, present existences, events, feelings, ideas, and thoughts about human life, learning, and beliefs. Art is one of the main resources for broadening our experiences beyond events in our surroundings. As artists, we have to give ourselves over to creative expression and be willing to share our creative experiences with the world around us. For adjudication, this takes a certain amount of determination and courage.” — Julia Lang-Shapiro

“Any juried show is a representation of the combined perspectives and backgrounds of the jurors, the limitations of the show’s criteria, and the pool of entries, including its supporting materials. My hope for MAI is not just that it shows the best of our community, but that it helps to elevate mosaic’s acceptance as a fine art within the larger art community.” — Anabella Wewer

Winning Artists

Best in Show

Jacki Gran

Homestead, Florida, USA

Fire Within, 2019

36.5" x 25" x 2"

Mexican smalti and gold

Communicating my feelings can often be difficult. You can rely on me to listen to your problems, but I don’t often share my own. Through my mosaic journey, I have found a way to express the passion that is inside me without the filter of words.

“Painting can produce a beautiful portrait, but the lines and luminescence of hard materials in this work produce an effect that cannot be achieved with paint—a perfect example of what mosaic can do that other mediums cannot.” — Anabella Wewer



Technical Achievement Award

Michael Kruzich

San Francisco, California, USA

Trittico del Pacifico, 2020

66" x 52" x 1.5"

Stone, Italian and Mexican smalti, colored gold

San Francisco chef, Peter Hemsley, was specific in the subject matter but left the rest to me. I incorporated the movement and fine details that I enjoy imbuing my works with and chose to do a black thinset background that is poured up to the edge of the mosaic but slightly below the mosaic level. That gives the subject a slight forward relief from the background.

“Part of the mastery of one’s medium is to know which technique and which materials to use, and to decide on scale and proportion to achieve one’s artistic vision.” — Anabella Wewer

Michael Kruzich

Contemporary Innovation Award

Donna Van Hooser

Goodyear, Arizona, USA

Violet, 2018

18" x 33" x 1"

Telephone wire, various hardwoods

I'm always excited to meet a new material to use in a mosaic. Every object, piece of glass, or in this case, a cable full of colorful telephone wires, presents its own limitations and challenges to be overcome and explored. *Violet* is one of my favorite mosaic subjects. From her serious expression to her not-so-serious pose, she is the perfect weim-model—regal yet slightly goofy.

"Donna's mastery in working only with the limited color palette of electric wire to present us with a beautifully and expertly executed portrait, elevates the work to the fine art category and has challenged the definition of mosaic art." — Anabella Wewer

Juror's Choice — Julia Lang-Shapiro

Yulia Hanansen

Baltimore, Maryland, USA

Light as a Wave as a Particle, 2019

27" x 81" x 3" (combined dimension)

Smalti glass, cement mortar on hand-formed substrate

Each panel of this triptych represents a section of a full, visible light spectrum. The "Redshift" panel represents the light that has been traveling away from us, and the "Blueshift" panel represents light that has been traveling toward us. The central panel, after which the whole triptych is named, shows a full light spectrum.

"The panels are an undulating ocean of technicolor smalti glass, showcasing the myriad of values found in the color spectrum." — Julia Lang-Shapiro

Juror's Choice — Anabella Wewer

Barbara Uhlenbruch

Melbourne, Australia

Goodbye Old Life, 2020

27.5" x 27.5" x 3"

Smalti Italian and Mexican glass, marble, gold smalti

In early 2020, there was a worldwide sense of knowing that things were changing in an unprecedented way and that life, as we knew it, was fast disappearing. This work captures a sense of the loss of something treasured while still holding on to a sense of hope for its return.

"The color work within the simple andamento is anything but simple. It's a rich, vibrant darkness that leads to light using a beautiful gradation, a personal favorite, punctuated by bits of gold. I can imagine standing there, next to the figure, waiting." — Anabella Wewer



Donna Van Hooser



Yulia Hanansen



Barbara Uhlenbruch



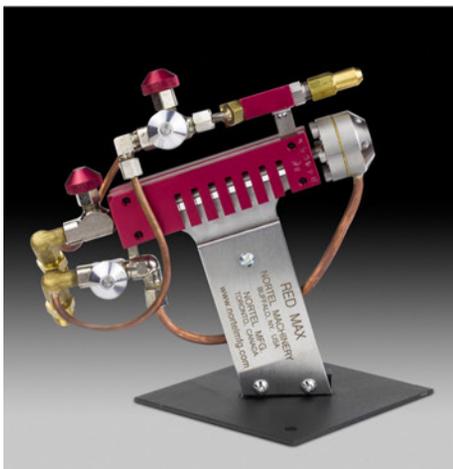
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Site-Specific Best Architectural Mosaic

Bonnie Cohen

Akron, Ohio, USA

CONNECT, 2020

55' x 8' x 4'

Glass mosaic, recycled glass, porcelain tile, stainless steel, Cleveland carbon steel, mirror, smalti

Installed at Cleveland State University, Washkewicz College of Engineering, Cleveland, Ohio

The artwork draws an earth-bound map: Cleveland State's GPS coordinates anchor the university itself in place. The seven monumental letters were designed using the Golden Rectangle, a mathematical formula based on a set of numbers known as the Fibonacci Sequence. Eight hundred years after its discovery, it is still inspiring artists and engineers to connect science, technology, and nature to achieve balance and beauty.



Bonnie Cohen



Site-Specific Best Community Mosaic

Ann Wydeven

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA

La Casa de Esperanza Charter School, 2019

25' x 15'

Glass tile

Installation in Waukesha, Wisconsin, USA

“The House of Hope” is a full-service charter school with a mission to provide opportunities for children to achieve full social and economic participation in society, with an emphasis on the Hispanic population. The mural is devoted to both primary and higher education. **G&A**

Visit www.mosaicartsinternational.americanmosaics.org to view additional MAI entries. To learn more about SAMA and how to become a member, go to www.americanmosaic.org.

Ann Wydeven

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SGAA Conference Updates

Looking Forward and Forging New Connections

by Megan McElfresh

Coming together to share and learn is one of the core pillars of the mission for the Stained Glass Association of America (SGAA). There is no virtual experience that can rival the cumulative knowledge we experience in person at our annual conference. Still, we cannot ever refuse to put the safety of our members at risk. We are determined not only to build on what we started in 2020 but also find new ways to serve our community as it grows. While maintaining the strong bonds of friendship and camaraderie that exist now, we can also share that passion with a broader audience and use the challenges of the times to welcome new faces to our historical association.

A Change of Plans

Like most of the country, in Spring 2020 we thought we would merely be postponing our Summer 2020 Conference a few months, possibly a year. As the entire nation began rescheduling events for 2021, we found ourselves in one scheduling difficulty after another, not just in moving our 2020 conference but then moving the following years' conferences that had already been scheduled.

One way the SGAA works to secure better rates for our conferences is to work three to five years out. By early fall in 2020, after seeking counsel from both our legal and insurance advisors, it became increasingly clear that we needed to scuttle both our 2020 and 2021 conference plans, pivoting our focus on other ways we could connect until 2022.

It took most of 2020 to successfully navigate the process of canceling those conferences and recovering deposits plus whatever other early investments we possibly could in order to get those monies back to our members and sponsors. It has been tough to give up on our Philadelphia and Salt Lake City conferences for now, but we look forward to rescheduling with the hosts in those cities as soon as we can do so.



Photo of Justice & Mercy (c. 1928) by George W. Haskins Studio, Rochester New York. Taken by Megan McElfresh while touring South Park United Presbyterian Church, now a commercial conversion project in Buffalo, New York.



Interior of Trinity Episcopal Church in Buffalo, New York, taken in October 2020 while still empty on Sundays due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The SGAA moved its main offices to Trinity Center at Trinity Episcopal in January 2021.

Virtual Programs for 2021

With so much of the rescheduling process finally wrapping up, we are looking forward to connecting virtually with members in several ways. It was difficult to continue our zoom meetings in the fall, but we have those up again starting right now!

Looking into a more structured “virtual conference,” we felt strongly that a multiday virtual event was a format that simply could not be successful for us. We are an enthusiastic, passionate crowd, and there is undoubtedly business that we will need to attend to. More importantly, there are educational opportunities that we should make an effort to explore. With those things in mind, we have decided to spread out our time together across the year versus packing it into two or three long days.

We are very excited to be putting together bimonthly programming for 2021, which began in March 2021 with Ted Ellison. Members will be getting significant discounts on their 2021 registrations thanks to generous support from our sponsors. After discussion and feedback from the other virtual educational programs we offered in the fall, we felt it was important to share our presentations with the passionate public as well.

Upcoming Bimonthly Programs

On March 18, thanks to support from Monarch Glass Studio, the SGAA presented *From Hand to Hearth: The Untold Story of American Glass Mosaic Fireplaces* by Ted Ellison. Fascinating programming to follow Ted’s presentation in 2021 will include:

- a talk on the science of iridescence in glass by Greg Merkel, Ph.D.,
- a virtual restoration panel and roundtable, and
- a visit and lecture from Jasmine Allen, Curator at The Stained Glass Museum.

Looking Ahead to 2022 and 2023

We still look forward to having informal member gatherings on zoom, and we will likely have a separate business meeting in this way as well. Stay tuned and see you online!

In the meantime, we are looking forward to our 2022 and 2023 Summer Conferences. We have not been alone in canceling, renegotiating, and rebuilding during the years that will have passed by the time we meet together in 2022. These conferences will not only be significant because we will finally be able to gather together again, but they are also significant milestones for our industry and our organization. We anticipate releasing more information about those conferences by May 2021. **G&A**

Visit www.stainedglass.org for more information on the Stained Glass Association of America, SGAA’s move to Trinity Center in Buffalo, New York, and how to become a member.

Creativity

FOLLOW THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD

by *Milon Townsend*

Sometimes we begin with a plan—a specific idea of exactly what it is that we want to make or accomplish or express. Sometimes, however, our direction is not so clear. I believe that it's important to keep moving, and that can mean trusting that the road is going to take you somewhere interesting, at least, and perhaps even significant or meaningful or fulfilling. You know the saying, "Wherever you go, there you are!" It's normally used to illustrate the idea that stupid people will try to escape their self-induced problems by relocating to a new job or situation or community. Unsurprisingly, they find that the very same problems plague them in their new set of circumstances.

I think that the saying applies equally well to the positive aspects of personality. If you're productive, courteous, and able to serve as well as lead, always looking for good ideas to flow from which you can produce good work, then all those positive things will follow you, wherever you are. "Wherever you go, there you are!"

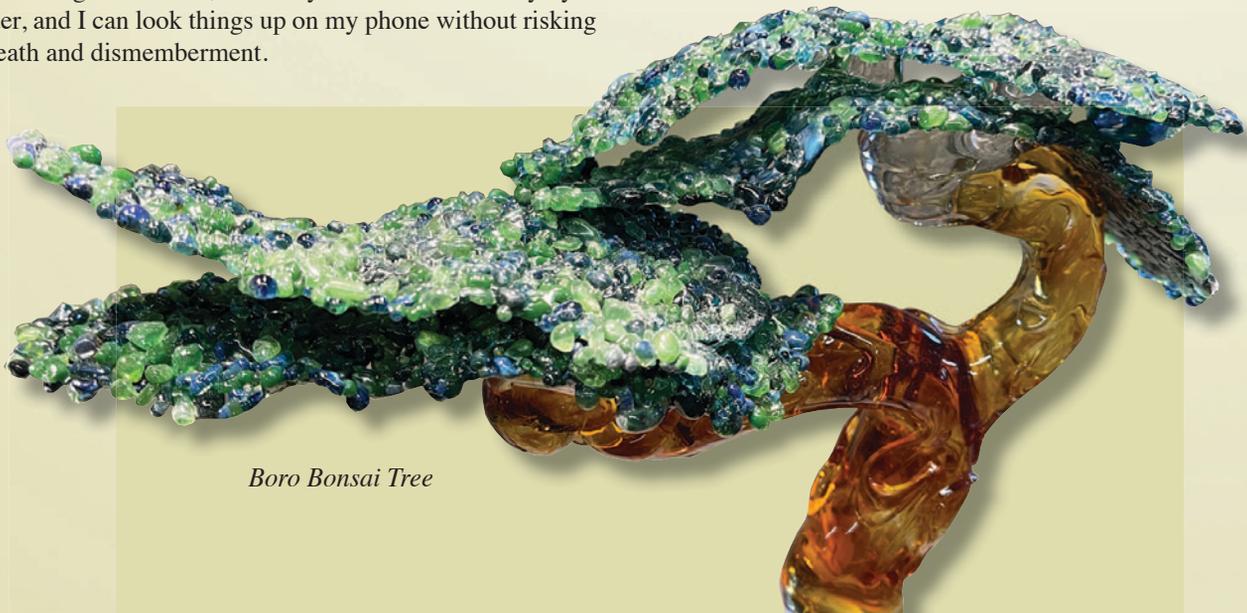
Reading the Sign Posts

My wife Kiyoko and I recently took a road trip to see our son, who is living in Florida. Traveling from New York all the way to the Gulf Coast in the time of Covid-19 was interesting. We spent a week going and coming back, packed tightly together in our little red Honda Fit. Taking turns driving, napping, and talking at a great rate (just after our coffee stops), we often faded into sitting and thinking as our energy waned toward the end of each day. I enjoy not driving sometimes, since my mind as well as my eyes can wander, and I can look things up on my phone without risking sudden death and dismemberment.

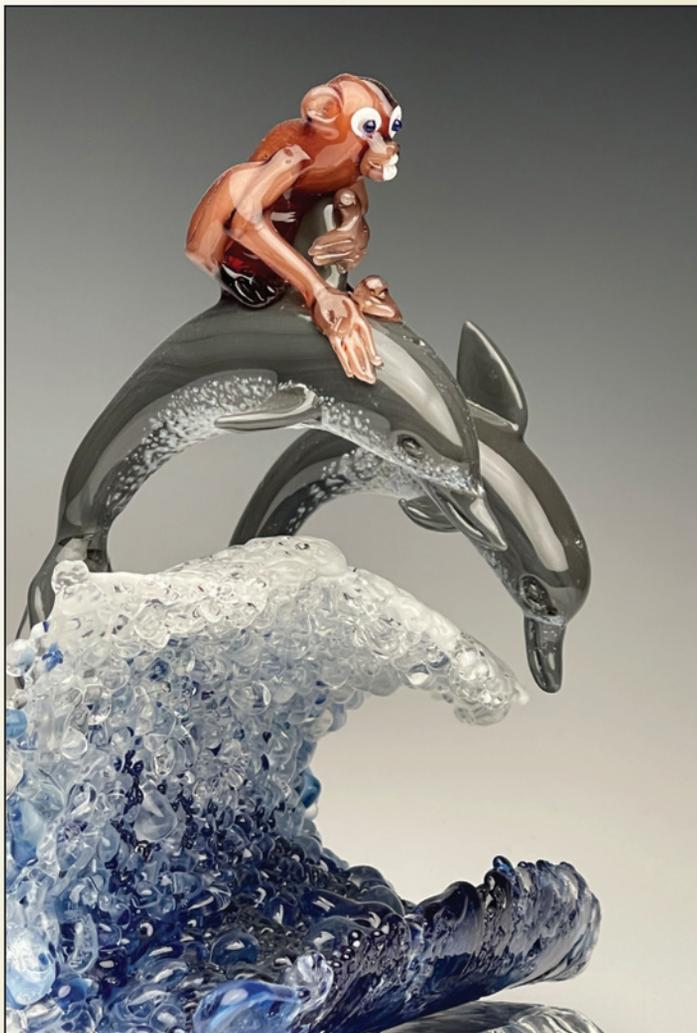


Milon and Kiyoko

Surfing the Web, I came across a glass gallery that had opened a new branch in Sarasota, a town where we'd worked closely with another gallery that has recently closed. Scrolling through their images of work online, I came across a bonsai tree, a furnace piece that used fused frit for the needle/leaf component of the piece. I thought to myself, "I wonder if that would work in boro?" I made a mental note to try it when we got home.



Boro Bonsai Tree



Dolphin and the Monkey on Wave

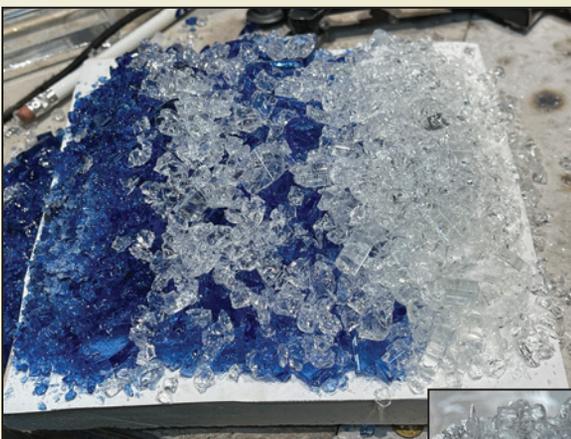
Farther along the road, we passed through Berea, Kentucky, the center of the state's arts and crafts community. It reminded me of a woodworker there for whom I'd made chess sets upwards of 20 years ago. I mentioned this to Kiyoko, and something started percolating in the back of my mind. While still on the road, I found a chessboard maker and ordered 2 boards from him so they would arrive at my studio as soon as possible. That way I could try this crazy idea that had popped into my mind.

Taking the Scenic Tour

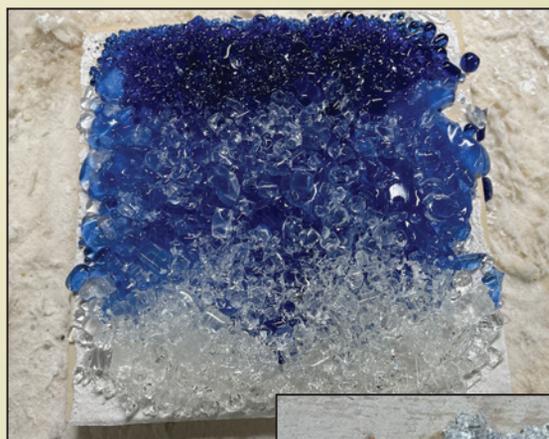
Back at the ranch, I tested the fused boro frit idea for tree leaves/needles. It worked pretty well, but that tree idea didn't really do anything for me. Hmmm . . . I have an ongoing list of the Aesop's Fables pieces I'm working on, and the Dolphin and the Monkey seemed like they could use a good wave. I've seen some pretty nice wave forms done with fused frit and decided to give it a try. I had some blue tubing that was the right color, so I fritted it up and fused what turned into a pretty nice wave form that I used for the Fable.

The next wave I tried was fused onto a piece of flat plate for structural integrity and a smoother look on one side that was okay, but only just. I pulled the next one out of the kiln while it was still a little too hot, and it cracked in two fairly equal sections. Fortunately, I'm at a point in my career that when I end up with something that didn't turn out as I expected, I really don't even have a moment of chagrin or upset. My mind immediately turns to what way this unexpected result might be used to make a good piece.

When I looked at the broken, fused mass of frit, I realized that it gave me a double wave, splitting and breaking in two different directions. I melted it up, joined it at the base, twisted it in two different directions, and started thinking about what to do with it. It was like an empty stage waiting for something to happen.

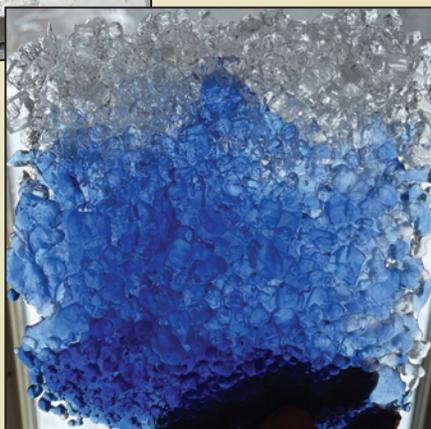


Dry frit for wave



Fused frit for wave

Fused frit for wave, with light showing through



Fused frit for wave, cracked

Sharing the Journey

During that time, Kiyoko and I went to our neighbors' house for dinner. Our friend's granddaughter has been working with glass on the torch for a year or so and has done some very intricate and detailed pieces. She had made a little sailfish for her grandmother, who showed it to me at dinner. Great, I said to myself. I'll do a sailfish to go with the wave form that's waiting for something to happen to it.

It took me a week or so to get the sailfish through all the stages, but I just kept doing another step every day—body; black powder on the white base for background for the dichroic stripes; sailfin blank, attached and shaped and curved to fit the shape of the body; dichroic pectoral and tail fins—and on and on and on, until it was done! It was a little hair raising to get the whole thing together, what with the thickness of the wave relative to the thinness of the sailfin, but again . . . step by step by step, until it was done.

Stopping Along the Way

Looking for a base, I drew from some experience a year or two ago when I was taught how to use paints to shade and texturize wood for a background environment. I found a manzanita burl with the shape and thrust of a wave. Using three colors and six or seven layers of color, I found that it can simulate a wave pretty well. I'm going to keep using that, you can be sure.

I ended up with a pretty serious piece, not without hardly trying, but without a lot of deep thinking, just following along to see where it would take me. Speaking of which . . . back to the crazy chess idea.



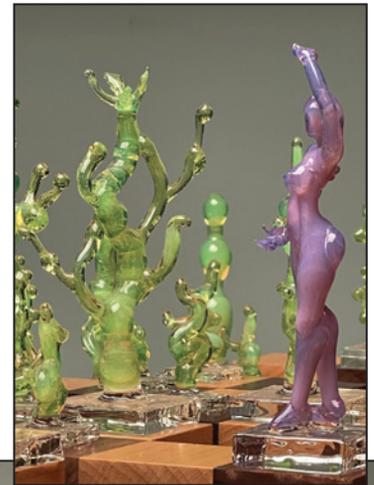
Alison's Sailfish



Sailfish showing complete painted burlwood base



Detail of dichroics on sailfish



Full and detail photos of Earthlings vs. Aliens chess set

Having received the wooden chessboards, the first thing I did was to take one of them and slice and dice it up on my table saw. Then I cut some strips and chopped them into different length pieces. To finish, I glued some of those pieces on the board that I hadn't modified to create a multidimensional chessboard fit for the *Earthlings vs. Aliens* pieces that had set up camp in my mind until I pulled it out of there and whipped it into reality.



Pizza Rat Pendant

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



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Traveling On

Then there's the pizza rat. It came up during our monthly family/birthday Zoom call—the pizza rat meme that I'd never heard of. My nephew said that I should make one, and after looking up the video, suitably pooh-poohing the idea, it simmered overnight in my sizzling brain. First thing in the morning, I made a set of pizza rat earrings, and an articulated pizza rat pendant. Why? Because why not?

So . . . circuitous path, check. Random stimuli, check. Being open to following where these unrelated factors lead, check. Being as committed to making something as serious with them as though it was a genuinely good idea that you'd developed on your own, check. There's no such thing as a straight line in this line of work, and that's all right by me. Good luck! **G'A**

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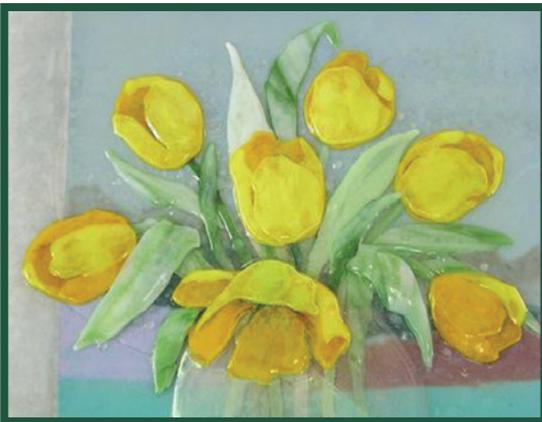
Tiptoe Through the Tulips



Artist: Michael Balak. From Delphi's Online Artist Gallery.



Artist: Julie Mazzoni. From Delphi's Online Artist Gallery.



Artist: Donna Sarafis. From Delphi's Online Artist Gallery.

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His Glassworks, Inc. (828) 254-2559 www.HisGlassworks.com	45
ISGB (614) 222-2243 www.ISGB.org	33
Mobile Glassblowing (229) 352-9988 www.MobileGlassblowingStudios.com	39
Nortel Manufacturing (416) 438-3325 www.NortelGlass.com	37
Paul Wissmach Glass Co., Inc. (304) 337-2253 www.WissmachGlass.com	48
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Wet Dog Glass, LLC (910) 428-4111 www.WDG-US.com	39
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Introducing a new addition to the Cress line of Glass Kilns Our GL717B is the Ultimate Kiln for the home fuser

Patty Gray

In my 30 years of working in kiln-formed glass I have used many different manufacturers' kilns. I have been fortunate to have Cress Kilns in most of my classes because reliability and consistency is critical to a successful class. Cress kilns has been open to suggestions, I talked to them about building a kiln for both home studio use and classes that runs on a 120v/20amp circuit. They listened to my input about size and design and built the GL717B. This kiln is large enough to fuse and slump 15" bowls, and I can fuse eight of my 6"x 6" molds.



- Generous 17" x 17" x 6.75" Interior
- Easy to open, 2.5" thick fiber lid with a strong lid brace and locking mechanism
- Firebrick brick floor and sides with dual heating elements, for perfect heat distribution
- Comes standard with the user-friendly Bartlett 3 key digital controller
- Cress digital controller has room for 4 programs with 8 segments
- Slanted control panel for easy use and view
- Superior riveted steel casing with solid handles make it easy to move
- Long-lasting solid-state relays
- Requires a 30 amp 120 volt outlet

Model	Volts	AMPS	Temp.	Inside Dimensions	Outside dimensions	Plug type
GL717B	120 VAC	18	1700 °F	17X17X6.75"	31" W x 25" D x 21"H	5-20P



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Wissmach Luminescent Glass



Craig Mitchell Smith uses
Wissmach Luminescent Glass
for his new *Grace* series.

“Only Wissmach Glass can
give me the soft, graceful curves
I love. It drapes beautifully in
the kiln, Wissmach is the
perfect glass for me.”

Craig Mitchell Smith, Grace
Photography by Randy Blankenship



www.WissmachGlass.com