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November/December 2021

Clinton Smith



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Volume 36 Number 6



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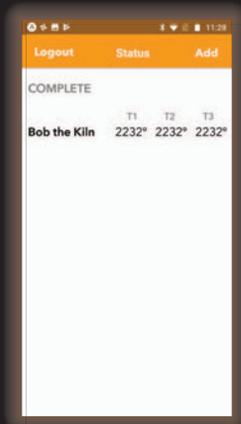
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Photo by Katie Malone-Smith.

## Editorial Calendar / Advertising Deadlines

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# De Carter-Ray

Revealing “Deep Skills”  
in Flat Glass Panels



*De Carter-Ray working horizontally from a scaffold on the back side of History of Transportation, since she is too short to reach the piece. The artist is using a 36" bridge to keep her hands distanced from the wet paint. Photo by Jon Ray.*

by Vicki Schneider

What beautiful images and stories can be found within a simple piece of flat glass? For most of us, probably nothing particularly noteworthy. However, in the highly skilled hands of De Carter-Ray, a piece of flat glass can become an amazing, carved scene with such depth and precision that it hardly seems possible. Perhaps it will become an illustrated panel with images as beautiful and detailed as any traditional oil painting. Stained and painted or leaded colored glass might also be combined to create an imaginative and evocative scene. De Carter-Ray may have spent her early career as a typesetter, a draftsman, and a technician, but over the years, she has evolved into an exceptional flat glass artist whose impressive and often massive creations grace homes and businesses across the world.

De sees her role very simply. “I make beautiful things for people. I’m kind of a tool for people who have a dream or an idea for filling a space.” She has trained herself to take people’s visions as a starting point and come up with ideas and plans that are even more spectacular. She is grateful every day that she can do the work she does to enhance people’s lives.



*De Carter-Ray, History of Transportation, overall size 83-3/8" x 144", each panel 83-3/8"x 36", total weight 1,100 pounds when suspended, October 2020. Panels were carved with enamel paint (cold work), and an Iwata airbrush was used to apply the paint. After painting the panel, Red Gold, Palladium, and Moon Gold Manetti leaf was applied. The panel was back-finished with clear acrylic coat to seal the precious metal from future damage. Photo by C. Graham Berwind.*

## Early Steps

As a young woman, De began her career as a draftsman for Hughes Aircraft in El Segundo, California. There she learned how to draw landing gears and correct blueprints using a T square and a triangle. "I worked at it for maybe six months, and I couldn't stand it. There were all these guys smoking and hanging over drafting tables, and they were miserable."

De's next job was working for printing companies where she would merely present herself as an artist. Her first art project was drawing illustrations of food and woks for *Madame Wu's Art of Chinese Cooking*. With every job, she accumulated valuable knowledge and skills while holding on to her belief that art was what she ultimately had to do.

Carter-Ray used her typesetting and drafting experience as the foundation of her glass business, Classical Glass Studios. She started by engraving names on barware, engraving glass for wedding invitations, and completing 30 curtain walls for hospitals and other organizations in which she carved thousands of names into individual pieces of glass. She looks back on those jobs fondly, appreciating how they contributed to her skill set. Because of them, she can now confidently tackle large panels that reveal her innate artistry.

## Planning from All Angles

One of Carter-Ray's skills that has proven invaluable is her ability to think three-dimensionally. When she begins a project, she typically does a detailed sketch oriented from the front, side, and top. These isometric views allow her to explore various designs and work out any design flaws. She pays close attention to this step, realizing that if a composition is unbalanced at this stage, it will appear far worse when it is full size. "It's always about balance, rhythm, and timing. I walk around the piece in my mind's eye like I'm circling a dog's bed until I settle down with what I'm going to do. I will do two or three quick sketches on a big pad to see which one feels like it's most in balance, and then I'll work that one up."

Once Carter-Ray is happy with her sketch, she imports it into a CAD program on her computer. There she traces and draws the image again, making alterations along the way. Oftentimes she sends her file to a blueprint shop and has the sketch blown up to full size. When she visits her client, she tapes the large-format image on the wall or unrolls drawings on the floor to obtain feedback. This process gives the client a real sense of what the piece is going to look like and provides a chance to make modifications before any glass is touched.

Imagery and artistry are just some of the things De Carter-Ray needs to think through. She must also consider the stability of the piece. You can't, for example, have deeply carved sections positioned too close to the edge of a panel, or it becomes brittle and may crack.

Learning a variety of technical skills has also enabled the artist to design reliable support systems to hang her glass, which often weighs many hundreds of pounds. She realized that if she wanted to create larger pieces, such as large moveable glass curtain walls that hang from floor to ceiling, she needed to find ways to suspend them that will withstand the elements and even earthquakes. "Glass is wonderful, but unless you can get it on the wall, you can't sell it."

When a major piece is completed, she often has to rely on others to move and install it. Some of her work is so large it can't fit in an elevator and has to be suspended on ropes and lowered down the outside of a building. "Watching these guys handle something you've just poured your lifeblood into is absolutely heart-stopping, but you have to let it happen." She may offer some guidance on how to handle the piece, such as asking them to wear gloves, but ultimately, she has to trust them. All she wants is for the piece to look beautiful.



*De Carter-Ray, Do You See Me, leaded glass, stained, and painted, 24" x 18", 2017.*



*De Carter-Ray, Chariot of Aurora, deeply sculpted Verre églomisé art glass, total dimensions 47-1/2" x 73-1/4", each panel 45" x 24", March 2015.*

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## Deep Carving, an Endangered Skill

Carter-Ray has many aligned specialties, but the one she speaks most passionately about is deep carving. According to the artist, "Carving is becoming a lost art. There aren't a lot of people out there doing heavy cut plate. And I know why . . . it's hard. It's *really* hard! It's hot, it's dirty, and you're in equipment that makes you sweat like a pig. You have to be aware of every step along the way. There are no shortcuts. You have to do it right and do it slowly, because once it's in the glass, you can't take it out. It's forever. More often than not, when I see etched glass, it's surface etching. I rarely see somebody who is willing to sit in that hot suit, the gloves, and that hood and just keep going."

Before starting to carve, De masks a panel of glass, the substrate, with a heavy resist tape. She uses a sandblaster to rifle 120-grit aluminum oxide at the glass at a hundred miles an hour to dig holes in it an inch at a time. "I often get lost in a Zen-like mode when I'm carving glass and I'm watching the material be removed. When I've got the pressure up and the equipment is spinning, I can actually see sparks flying off the glass. When I watch it start to turn into something real right in front of me, it is magic. It is absolutely magic!"

When De plans out her work, she pays attention to every detail. "I know in my mind's eye where the light is coming from and where the shadows need to be. That's really important. That's what makes things look three dimensional." She works one small section at a time, often turning the work on its side or approaching it from the back. She works for 45 minutes to an hour and has to take a break. After about four hours of concentrated effort, she's exhausted.

The artist recalls one particularly daunting project. "Panel two of *The History of Transportation*, a painted and carved piece, was a nightmare, because there were three clipper ships crossing in the same panel. I had to make sure that the flags were blowing in the wind in the same rhythm. I knew that making the reflected light work across the panel in a congruent way would make it magic. It's either right or it's wrong."

In addition to the carving challenges presented by this project, De enhanced the entire piece with Verre églomisé, an ancient process in which the back side of the glass is gilded with gold or metal leaf to produce beautiful works of art. She applied 95 square feet of Giusto Manetti Firenze leaf, one hair-thin sheet at a time. "It was daunting! I had to overlap the sheets of Manetti by an eighth of an inch and then lay them straight. One on one, on one, on one, on one. It's like doing Tai Chi very slowly over a period of hours to cover a piece. It was massive."

Carter-Ray met her deadline and finished the commission in seven months, including researching and complying with safety specifications, as well as designing and overseeing how the massive panels would be hung. While working on this piece, she was like an athlete in training, paying strict attention to her diet, sleep, exercise regimen, and hydration. Everything needed to work together to ensure her success.

*De Carter-Ray, Protecting the Sacred Fires, 30" x 48", hand cut 3/4"-thick crystal, 2007. Inspired by the iconic angel painted by master artist Michael Parkes.*





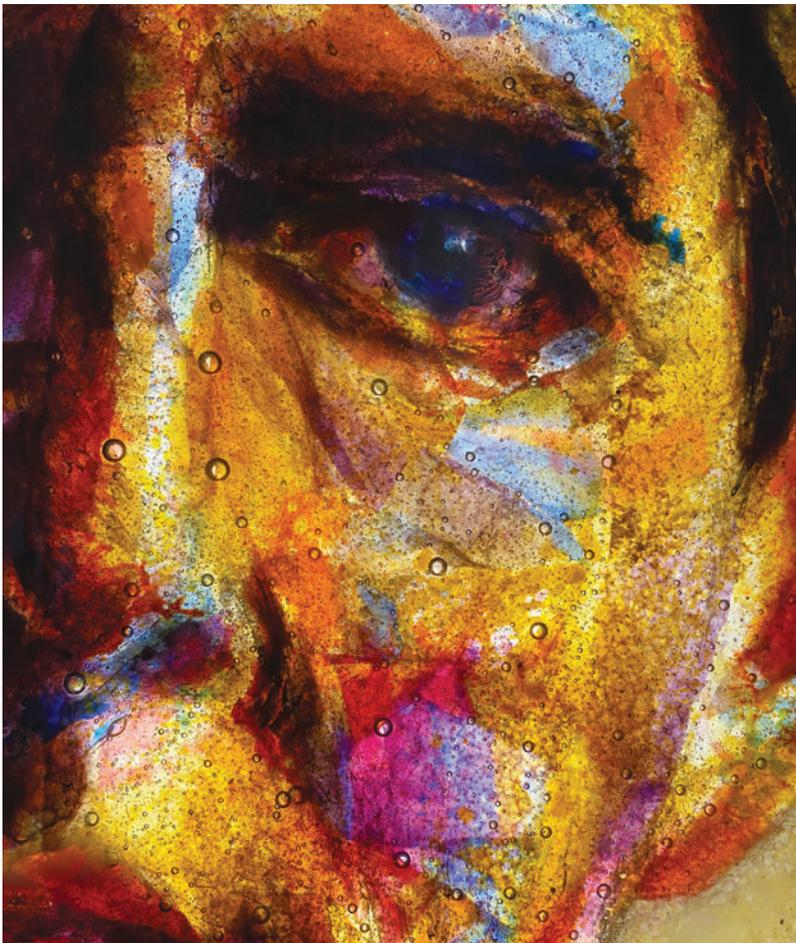
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## Learning and Teaching

De is largely self-taught, which hasn't always been without its challenges. "Everything that can be done to ruin a piece I've done. I've blown holes in it. I've stepped on it. I've dropped it. It doesn't happen much today, but in the course of your life, anything can happen!"

"I like making something permanent so that when I'm finished and stand back and I look at it, it feels otherworldly. At those times, I wonder if it really came out of me, although I know it did. There's a pride in that and a sense of accomplishment. I really believe that Spirit gave me a gift, and I'm supposed to do it well and to the best of my ability. It doesn't matter who the client is or what the images are. If I do my best, that's all I can do."

Carter-Ray is a continuous learner. Currently she is experimenting with incorporating fused and cast glass into leaded glass pieces and has found it to be a stiff learning curve. The artist has encountered problems with popping and cracking, leading to the destruction of expensive pieces with little to show for it—little, that is, except the experience she will build upon.

Before COVID-19, De was holding classes in her backyard with neighborhood kids, teaching them how to draw. "It was fun watching them wake up and understand that they have the ability in themselves. It was thrilling to watch the light bulb go on." She would like to find a way to also pass on the lessons she's learned in deep carving, so this art form will survive into future generations. "I know I shouldn't take that skillset with me. No one taught me, because no one knew how."



De Carter-Ray, Engineering, Verre églomisé glass, deeply sculpted, Manetti filled, 12" x 9", 2020.

## Words of Encouragement

Experimenting, learning from mistakes, and growing as an artist have always been important to Carter-Ray. She encourages herself and others. "When you find you've bumped up against a wall and you're stuck, learn something new. Don't just sit still with it. There's more there to be known. Forgive yourself again and again and again, then get at it again. Ruining something is all a part of learning. Quickly take that broken piece, set it aside, and just keep going. Take all the learning you got from that destroyed piece and do another one. The next one is going to be better. It really will!"

It's not always easy being an artist. Early on, De was struggling and thinking about quitting. During her daily meditation, flashes of a No. 2 yellow pencil and images of her traveling all over the world inspired her to stay the course. "It takes a lot of courage to make art and put it out there for people to see. I'm really proud of that, and I'm proud of women who've done it."

"It's important to celebrate the wins. When I celebrate somebody else, I'm celebrating myself at the same time. When somebody else wins, I'm winning too. If someone else gets a great commission or made something beautiful and they're given an accolade for it, good for them! That means there's enough in the world for everybody. I fundamentally believe that. I think we need to hold each other up, especially in this world. It's just so hard. It can be very difficult. Don't believe all the naysayers. Just keep going, make beautiful stuff, and help other people make beautiful stuff."

De anticipates an exciting and fulfilling future. "I believe that some of the greatest things I'm going to do in design are probably from now through the next six to eight years, because I have a vast reservoir of information and ability." If De is right, we are all in for some amazing work!

G&A

### De Carter-Ray

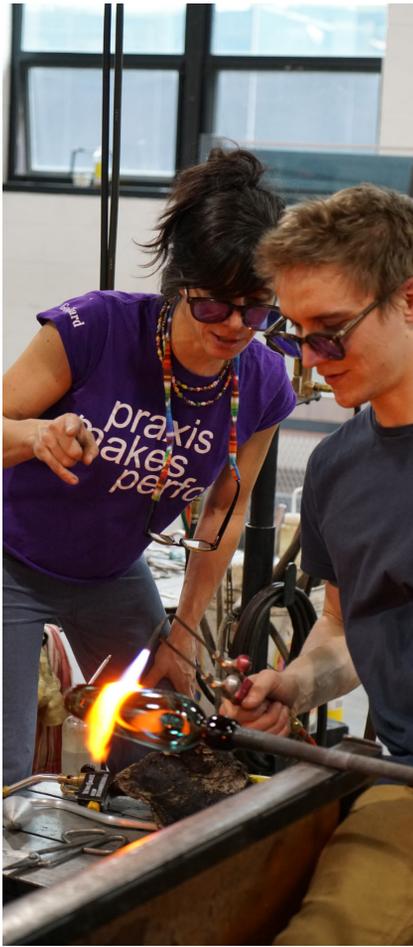
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Vicki Schneider follows the tradition of Venetian frameworking artists to produce decorative solid and blown glass art. Mainly working off-hand in COE 104 soft glass, she is inspired by her childhood spent on the Jersey shore. Her current bodies of 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](http://www.expressiveglass.com).

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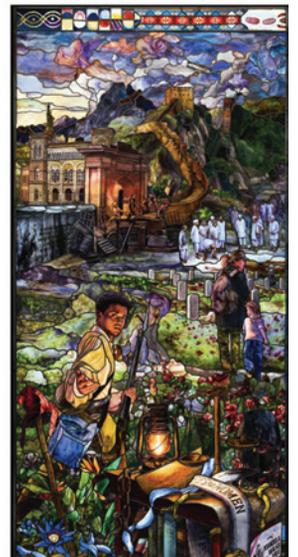
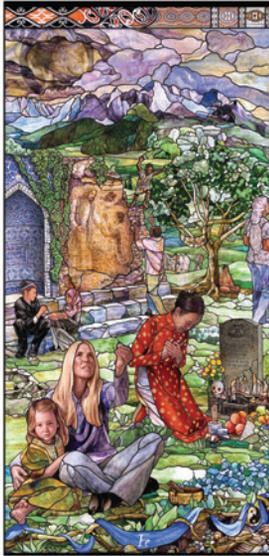
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# The Creative Process

by Vicki Schneider

The myriad ways glass artists process information and inspiration is as varied as the art they create. Some may jump into a project with hardly a sense of where they are going, trusting that immersing themselves in the act of creating will lead them someplace wonderful. Others may meticulously plan out each minute detail in advance.

How much and what kind of documentation artists maintain is another individualized decision that may impact the nature and ease of creating future work. What helps one person may prove disastrous or overly restrictive to another.

We asked four established glass artists to share some of their work and give us a behind-the-scenes look into their creative process and documentation procedures. Whether you are a meticulous planner or more of a free spirit, perhaps this article will encourage you to try an approach outside your comfort zone. Who knows? Your foray into the uncomfortable might open doors you didn't even know were there.

As we look forward to future issues of *Artist to Artist*, we welcome hearing from you. If there are artists you would like us to contact or any particular questions you would like us to ask, please email [theflow.maureen@gmail.com](mailto:theflow.maureen@gmail.com).

## What is your creative process and what documentation do you keep?

### Rachel Sager

Mosaic Using Smalti and Micro-Mosaic Framework  
25 years

I jump in! Come visit my studio and you will see my never-ending battle between order and chaos. My brain works on many projects at once. Sometimes that's unfortunate, but I often achieve happy results. I would love to tame the "idea monsters" a bit for the sake of order, but I'm afraid that ship has sailed.

My process begins with great enthusiasm and impatience to turn an idea into what I see in my imagination. My latest process has been creating micro-mosaic with a technique that I call Intuitive Malmischiato. I take the age-old Italian art of heating mixed colors of smalti together in a crucible. I then pull them into long, unique threads of glass that get cut down into the tiniest of tesserae. Instead of creating tiny works of art or image-based mosaic like the classic portraits or flowers so popular in the 17th to 19th centuries, I create organic swaths of color studies and often create a full-size mosaic in these minute units of malmischiato. My specialized courses teaching this addicting technique can be found at:

[mosaicartsonline.com/p/intuitive-malmischiato](http://mosaicartsonline.com/p/intuitive-malmischiato).



Rachel Sager, *The Inside-Out Canoe*, 16" x 5", 2020. Photo by the artist.



For all of my impatience and multitasking, it might seem counterintuitive that the bulk of my art is created with what can be described as deep work—the kind of work that happens slowly with great attention to detail and over long periods of time.

I do not have a formal documentation process, which I will one day regret. I am, however, collecting and reorganizing my writings for a book in the near future.

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*Rachel Sager, The Rust Belt Series #5, 3.5" x 3.5", 2021. Photo by the artist.*



*Rachel Sager, Two Bears Series #2, 13" x 16" with frame, 2021. Photo by the artist.*



*Jon Erickson, The Chromatic Dragon (detail), 2017. Photo by the artist.*

## **Jon Erickson/Aurora Stained Glass**

Architectural Art GLass

30 years

Stained glass is a meticulous medium. I don't think you can get away without being a meticulous planner, at least on some level. There is a lot of engineering involved, and I really enjoy the fabrication process, from concept to installation. I can truly "zen out" bending lead. When I'm working on a painted piece, my cartooning is pretty tight, but I try not to belabor it to death. I leave a lot of room for spontaneity. It's just more fun. After spending large amounts of time with a project, it's easy to get really tired of it.

I think documentation is important. I can be really self-critical, so photos are nice to peruse after some time has passed to see how I might improve the things I had been nitpicking in my head. When I first broke into glass, I burned through a lot of film. I'm liking the digital age. Most of us carry around a pretty decent camera that disguises itself as a phone. Documentation is also a great sales tool and a fine means of communicating progress.

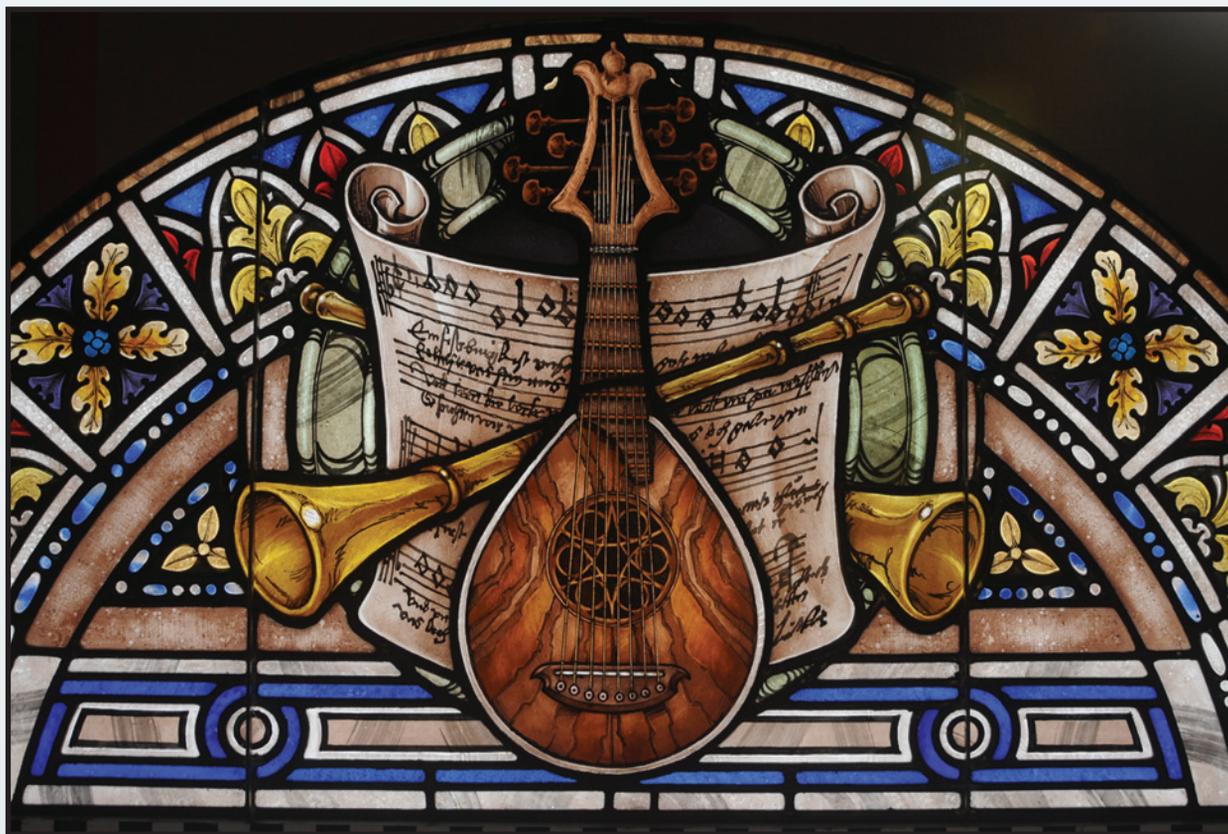
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*Jon Erickson, Keyhole Fairytail, 16" x 10", 2016. Photo by the artist.*



*Jon Erickson, Lutheran Church of the Ascension Music Window, 25" x 56", 2019. Photo by the artist.*



*Jon Erickson, The Innsmouth Effect (detail), 2017. Photo by the artist.*

## Clinton Smith

Paperweight Encasement

22 years

At the end of the workday, I leave my workstation too exhausted to clean up. In the morning, I enjoy going in the studio with a cup of coffee in hand and my plans from the night before of what I am going to accomplish. Music goes on, and I meticulously clean the remnants from the previous day. This process gets me energized and ready to work. I don't like a cluttered workstation, as I find it to be a distraction. This way, everything is fresh when I start working.

Most of my week is spent making components. I encase one day at the end of the week. I have a tendency to procrastinate when it comes to cold working, even knowing the end results are stunning. Looking at an artistic composition floating in a dome of clears still fascinates me as much as it did 15 years ago when I saw my first Stankard piece.



*Clinton Smith, Unripened Blackberries and Blossoms, 3.25" x 2.25", 2021.  
Photo by Katie Malone-Smith.*



*Clinton Smith, Chokeberries, Daisies, and White Plum Blossom Bouquet, 3.25" x 2.25", 2021.  
Photo by Katie Malone-Smith.*

As far as planning goes, I seldom draw out a design. I will typically find a plant or animal species, and I try to recreate it on the torch. Once all my components have been made, I arrange and rearrange the layout on my hot plate until I'm happy with the composition. I don't document my work. My wife, however, does. Every piece I have made has been photographed. I seldom look at the images after the paperweight is finished and photographed, as I prefer to look forward not backwards. Once I've been there, I'm ready to move on.

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*Clinton Smith, Lilac Bouquet, 3.25" x 2.25", 2021.  
Photo by Katie Malone-Smith.*



*Clinton Smith, Kermit & Piggie in a Field of Butterflies, 3.25" x 2.25", 2021.  
Photo by Eric Jump.*



*Daniel Benway, Electric Avenue Timewarp Pendant,  
1-3/4", 2021. Photo by the artist.*

### **Daniel Benway aka Piper Dan**

Borosilicate Murrine and Marbles  
26 years

It takes me about a month to make an urban skyline murrine. I usually have no idea what I'm doing when I start. I just start making squares out of some cool color combo that I know is stable. Usually about a week in I get the idea after quite a few squares are made. I take a few more weeks building squares, and then when I have enough I start putting them together into buildings. I sometimes do it myself, but this year, I hired a friend to make some antennas and some satellite dishes to go on top. After I get enough buildings made, I stretch them out into the right size and start putting them together into skylines. The whole process wears me out, and I'm usually done with milli making for the rest of the year. This year it just had to do with UV colors and very crisp black and white lines.



*Daniel Benway, Yesulga Castle Pendant,  
1-3/4", 2021. Photo by the artist.*



*Daniel Benway, Yesulga/Castle  
Electric Avenue Marble, 3.2", 2021.  
Photo by the artist.*

I don't keep any notes of my process. The only documentation I have are the videos I take to post online. I don't like writing things down. I figure if it's important, I will remember it, and that usually works.

**G/A**

[www.instagram.com/piperdanglass](https://www.instagram.com/piperdanglass)  
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Featuring the latest from the American Glass Guild

## AGG Corning 2022



*The AGG Conference Committee (left to right): David Fode, Roberto Rosa, Maria Serpentino, Kathy Jordan, Bee Stumph, Tony Serviente, and Adam Frazee.*

by Troy Moody

The American Glass Guild is a diverse collection of individuals, each engaged in the craft and art of glass on some personal level. Whether its new design, restoration, manufacturing, retail, or academic as a professional, amateur, or hobbyist, it is the common interest in one or more of the myriad aspects of the field that unites us as a community, as a collective. Throughout the year we connect through social media, discussion boards, GlassZooms, and our yearly summer conference. The elected Board of Directors, with help from committee members and volunteers, are in a constant state of planning and preparation.

### Heading to Corning

The Conference Committee continues to finalize plans for a stellar conference at the Corning Museum of Glass (CMoG) in Corning, New York, July 14–17, 2022. Site visits and contract negotiations are underway. Decisions are also being made about workshops, accommodations, speakers, and scholarships, sponsors are pledging support, and other logistics are beginning to jell.

An auspicious location for an auspicious happening, most of the Conference activities will take place at the Corning Museum of Glass. CMoG is the world's largest museum celebrating 35 centuries of glass art and history. With stunning architecture housing a breathtaking Contemporary Art + Design Wing, a floor dedicated to science and innovation, and the largest hot glass demonstration space in the world, a visit to CMoG is an experience like no other. The hands-on activities, exhibitions, and collections on view can be browsed over a day or absorbed over a week.

Accommodations are available a short distance from the Museum and within walking distance of restaurants and shopping. Located halfway between Niagara Falls and New York City, Corning is found in the picturesque Finger Lakes Wine County of Upstate New York. The region is rich with natural beauty and agricultural abundance.

As magnificent as the location may be, it is the human interaction, the gathering of like minds, and the sharing of ideas that is at the heart of the American Glass Guild. Bringing experts and masters of the craft together with peers and colleagues from across the gamut of glass experience has been central to our mission from the inception. As busy schedules fill, we are securing commitments from an inspiring lineup of speakers on all things glass. As is customary, we will showcase lectures and workshops focused on areas of new design, conservation, technique, materials, history, and best practices.

### Globally Renowned Speakers

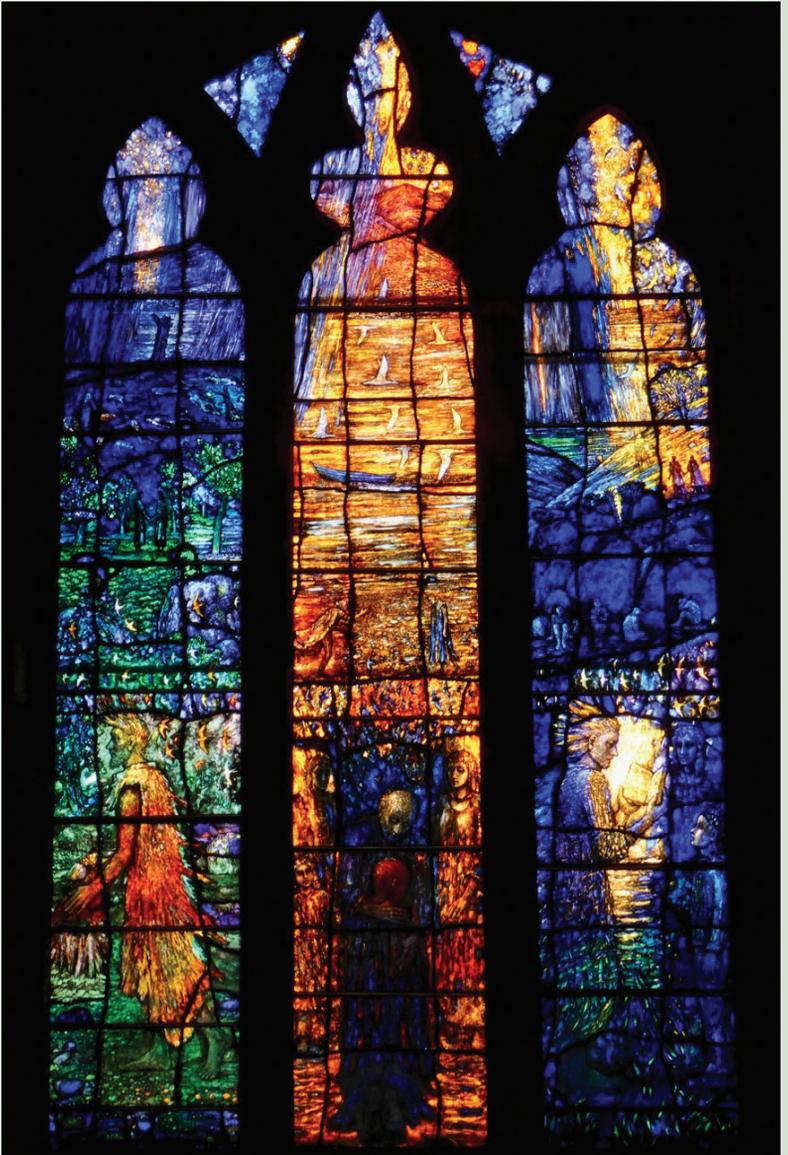
At this time we are excited to announce that both Narcissus Quagliata and Thomas Denny have agreed to join our Summer 2022 Conference gathering. They will be sharing their unique perspectives and experiences with this most astounding of materials.

Narcissus Quagliata is widely considered one of the most dynamic contemporary artists in glass. He gained global attention for his captivating art glass installations in public spaces, and his fine artworks in glass and watercolor have been exhibited and collected worldwide. CMoG has an early window by the artist on display.

Quagliata shared that he will celebrate his 80th birthday in 2022 and believes he has reached a time in his life where people begin to feel their own mortality as they consider the achievements they have made and decide what is left to be achieved. Because of his irrepensible curiosity to manifest his vision in glass, the artist created a new language with Bullseye kiln formed glass. He is compelled to share this vast knowledge and recognizes the value it will bring to practicing and emerging young artisans. He is also producing an educational series that calls upon 50 years of unique artistic philosophy, research, business practice, and foundational fusing and painting techniques. The series encompasses three distinct categories—Business for Artists, which is available now, Find the Core, and Painting With Glass.



*Thomas Denny, Jesus reading from the Book of Isaiah (detail). Photo courtesy of the artist.*



*Thomas Denny, Reconciliation Window at St John's, Tralee, County. Kerry, Ireland. Photo courtesy of the artist.*

Thomas Denny, visionary artist from the United Kingdom, has agreed to make a sojourn across the pond to discuss several projects, most recently his current immersion in the Trinity Church Wall Street in New York City. Denny was the selected artist in 2020 to receive this prestigious commission through an international competition. He relies on techniques and materials that would be familiar to craftsmen of the 14th century.

The medieval language of lead came and fields of jewel toned blown glass gives Denny's ecclesiastical work an established context within church architecture and ornamentation. This material comfort within that setting permits him the freedom to explore a unique treatment of imagery composition and form. He has refined a highly personalized approach to glass painting, acid etching, and plating, the result of which is a fresh aesthetic, mastery of color, and character unique to his hand.

### **GlassZoom, a Virtual Gathering**

With an outrageous location plus powerful speakers, demonstrations, and workshops, *AGG 2022* is shaping up to be an event for the books. We are excited to see you there, but you don't have to wait to get involved. As technology evolves, allowing greater accessibility to an ever-expanding community of glass enthusiasts, the AGG continues to support and strengthen that network of friends and colleagues.

GlassZoom was born of necessity during the pandemic but has proven itself to be a fun, effective addition to the American Glass Guild beyond our yearly conference. It is a wonderful format to engage our growing national and international community in a fresh, intimate way. Each virtual gathering brings together a panel of experts in the field to discuss a specific glass-related topic or technique. A culture of support and camaraderie encourages lively discussions and casual banter that creates an opportunity for entertainment and education. We intend to continue offering GlassZoom episodes for all current AGG Members and nonmembers alike. Check us out on Facebook and Instagram for upcoming topics, dates, and times.

### **Looking Forward to Next July**

It's been hard to be away from friends, and like many of you, we crave the face-to-face dialogue and exchange of ideas, humor, and philosophy that come with an in-person congress of like-minded individuals "geeking out" on glass. We are excited for the future and look forward to seeing you all in Corning in a few short months.

In the meantime, please reach out, get involved, find us on social media, and start making plans. We will continue our efforts to build our most inspirational and energizing annual conference for the July 2022 venue. We are closely monitoring local and state public health protocols in the host city and are reassured by the safety and wellness measures that the Radisson Hotel (soon-to-be Hilton) and Corning Museum of Glass have implemented for their guests and in-person events. Be safe. We'll see you soon!

**G&A**

*Visit [www.americanglassguild.org](http://www.americanglassguild.org) for more on the American Glass Guild, including its membership, conferences, auction, and scholarship information.*

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**STEPHANIE CARLTON SMITH**

by Sara Sally LaGrand  
Photography by Matthew Booth

After discovering the body of work of Stephanie Carlton Smith, sort of by accident—well, okay, it was Instagram whose algorithms continually send me such treasures—I was on a quest to find out more. Carlton Smith is a British artist, living and working in London/Somerset. She has been prolific since receiving her MA in Glass from the Royal College of Art in 2006, and yet, her work has eluded me all these years.

Allow me to gush in the most exuberant American style. I find her work quite mind-blowing in my humble opinion, worthy of all the praise I can muster, and I am not alone in my admiration for her work. Dr. Antonia Pew, a collector of Carlton Smith's work says: "For me, these works embrace everything, from the huge concept of all the parts of the universe and all cultures held together under one big sky to the inner working of the human heart within that organ." High praise indeed.

## Combining Natural Materials with Glass

Carlton Smith is not a glass purist, since she combines glass with all manner of natural materials in a way that echoes not only a modern sensibility but an ancient one as well. The glass is used in the most thoughtful ways, sometimes just a tiny tendril of frameworked glass poking out of a polished marble egg or stacks of gleaming float glass cut, stacked, and sandwiched between alabaster, stone, and wood with strategic patterns emerging from the natural veining of the materials and the gleaming interior of cut glass. The visual impact makes your breath stop suddenly, as if you just received a tiny shove by the universe.

Artist Jemimah Patterson, formerly of Waterhouse and Dodd, says: "Stephanie finds the paradoxes inherent in her materials conducive to a wider reflection on the human condition. Despite its solid appearance, glass is, of course, a super cooled liquid more recently reclassified as an amorphous solid, and while it easily fractures on impact, handled correctly it can be made impossible to break.



(Left to right) Stephanie Carlton Smith, LOVE, fused glass, enamel photograph, and hand carved Portland stone, 8" x 6" x 2.5", 2021; Bite, alabaster and low iron plate glass, 14" x 12" x 7", 2017.

“Stephanie combines and continues to mix materials associated with high art like alabaster and hard woods together with construction materials like borosilicate rod and spruce ply. She is particularly expert in the manipulation of glass, transforming a cold practical substance into something more ethereal and seductive.”

### Garnering Acclaim

Carlton Smith’s work can be found in the collections of actor Sir Ian McKellen, the late actor Alan Rickman—you might remember him as Snape in Harry Potter—and actress Beatie Edney of Poldark television fame, who calls the artist’s work “extraordinary and unique.” They are also included in the collections of other notables all over the world including art collectors and philanthropists Sir Harry and Carol Djanogly.

Novelist, author, and collector Andrew O’Hagan says of her: “Stephanie is a sculptor and painter who shares with the poet a sense of how important it is to give materials their due and give mystery its due. She is also a gentle addict of the pure, natural art of balance—an engineer, I would say, of the relationship that can exist between the individual and the mass.

“In glass, in alabaster, in oak and hewn marble, this artist achieves a rare honesty of form. I see her work and feel rejoined to the earth, connected again to some original magic, some essential drama of married opposites and preserved thought.”

### Discovering the Unique Fascination of Glass

The artist’s work has been featured at SOFA Chicago, The Department of Culture in Abu Dhabi, UAE and the Palm Beach International Art Fair, and the Royal Academy of Arts Summer Exhibition, so again, how could I have missed this? I asked Ms. Carlton Smith what drew her to the glass, and her answer was equally intriguing.

“I became fascinated with plate glass when I was a student studying furniture design. The idea that it has a skin and within that lies a living, moving mass intrigued me. Handled in the right way, it can be a super strong, modern material, but running alongside that, it is a fragile and easily fractured substance. I really connected on a personal level to this complex position, presenting strength and



(Left to right) Stephanie Carlton Smith, *Pity Me*, bronze and low iron plate glass, 18" x 18" x 18", 2011; *Pity Me*, oak and low iron plate, 86" x 24" x 20", 2013.

fragility at the same time. I am endlessly excited by how it can appear and disappear, become light and heavy with the turn of a head or the position of a light. Eventually after my MA at the RCA, I began to assemble pieces of plate, exposing the vulnerable edges, encasing them in solid elemental forms made from stone, alabaster, and wood.” That fascination is translated into her pieces from small scale to large.

### Reminders of Environmental Issues

Carlton Smith’s body of work is pretty extensive, but it was her new series that first called to me. This new work looks like memorial stones, or tombstones as we call them in the United States, with bold statements like SOS, LOVE, or KIND chiseled into stone. Below that is the ghostly image of a tree or a rose in full bloom encased in fused glass.

Asked if the semblance was intentional, Stephanie replied, “Yes, it is intentional. I have always been engaged in environmental issues and started to make a series of bronzed trees called *Pity Me*. I bronzed the whole tree and root and suspended them in tall glass plinths. The idea was to immortalize these specimens and remind people of our responsibility to the increasing environmental danger. These recent pieces are an extension of that, but I needed to create a more alarming message, hence, the memorial stone and the carving of words such as SOS. The use of the glass is still representing our strength and fragility as well as memorializing these beautiful specimens.”

*(Top to bottom) Stephanie Carlton Smith, Oil Slick, hand carved marble, reverse painting on 10 mm low iron plate glass, 24" x 16" x 7", 2021; Save Our Souls, reverse painting on 10 mm low iron plate glass, 24" x 47", 2018.*



**SEASONS GREETINGS!**

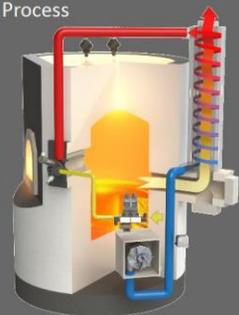
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| <b>Profile Status</b><br>Profile Status: Off<br>Step Type: End<br>Current Profile: 0<br>Current Step: 0<br>Current Set Point: 0<br>Remain Step Time: 0 :0 :0 | <b>State/Fault Codes</b><br>State 8 – Pre-Purge   |  |

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While the subject matter is alarming and thought provoking, Stephanie's aesthetic offers a feeling of peace and soothing, regardless of the warning messages conveyed. A great example of that is the piece entitled *Mankind* with an abstract "oil slick" that is actually reverse painted on the back of polished plate glass in full color. The muted use of color and grainy images is calming.

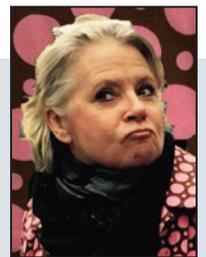
Memorials serve as nods to the past, yet Carlton Smith's serve more as a warning. The message is that we can indeed destroy our planet. At the same time, however, it suggests that at some time we will look back at our own activism and how we saved our planet. We can only hope we get the message in time. Going forward, Carlton Smith is working on a similar format with the word *Humankind*, which will be a series of memorials for the celebration of life and our future. **G&A**



Stephanie Carlton Smith, *SOS*, fused glass, enamel photograph, and hand carved Portland stone, 8" x 6" x 2.5", 2021.

**Stephanie Carlton Smith**  
[stephanie@stephaniecarltonsmith.co.uk](mailto:stephanie@stephaniecarltonsmith.co.uk)  
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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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# Building the Plane in the Air

## The 2021 ISGB Online Gathering



*Janis Miltenberger, Bird on a Teapot.  
Photo by Peter Kuhnlein.*

*by Floor Kaspers, Educational Director*

The International Society of Glass Beadmakers (ISGB) held its annual meeting, *The Gathering*, virtually on June 10–13, 2021. The official slogan was “Reimagine *The Gathering*,” but the phrase that became almost synonymous with *The Gathering* turned out to be “Building the Plane in the Air.” The physical ISGB Gatherings have always been filled to the brim with presentations, classes, and a bead bazaar. There are also many informal activities such as open torch night, a bead swap, and simply getting together with so many like-minded glass artists. Creating an online experience was, to say the least, a challenge. However, I feel that we have risen to this challenge and created a full educational, inspirational, and simply fun Gathering!

### Something for Everyone

The general schedule we worked from was the “normal” schedule for *The Gathering*. We started with four online pre-Gathering classes, with something for everyone from beginners to experienced beadmakers and glass artists. The online classes were also the kickoff of our new online educational platform, which will bring together a great deal of resources for our members, starting with the recordings of our *Second Sunday – Creators and Makers* series. The response to these online classes has shown us that there is a great demand for this type of educational opportunity, and we are currently working on creating additional online educational content to provide even more training for our members.

*(Above right) Photo of Janis Miltenberger,  
keynote speaker, by Lynn Thompson.*

Janice Miltenberger, our keynote speaker, inspired us by kicking off *The Gathering* by encouraging us to focus on the process we use to make our art. Are we being true to ourselves? Are we creating in a way that benefits us and those around us? With an open heart and an open mind, we were ready to start creating and learning.

What followed was a varied lineup of presenters and a series of social activities. We had a virtual Show & Tell, a glass-themed cocktail reception, a bead bazaar on our Facebook page, and much more. There was also a virtual Flame Off with four artists in three countries working live at the torch in their studios on a collaborative piece of art. Mauro Vianello from Venice, Italy, made us all feel like we were walking around Murano, hopping into local studios and having an Aperol Spritz in an enthusiastic and, for some, emotional video.

There were understandably some mishaps along the way—people getting lost in the technical world of Zoom accounts, passwords, etc.—and that is where the phrase “building the plane in the air” was so well suited. We all missed the hugs, hanging out at the pool or the bar just talking about glass, seeing all the beauty of glass art in person, but we had people participate who had never been able to come to a physical Gathering. It was also more international than ever, with time zones sometimes being a challenge.

*Continued on page 44*

# The Skinny on Precise Kiln Formed Glass Designs



by Bob Leatherbarrow

Design pieces on the top surface of kiln formed projects commonly distort when they've been heated to a full fuse. Stringers that are supposed to touch have pulled apart, may be wider than expected, and may even have wobbled (Figure 1). The base sheet glass underneath the design pieces may have squeezed up into a newly formed gap between the overlying design pieces even though the pieces fit together tightly when placed in the kiln. These disruptions can ruin a carefully arranged design.

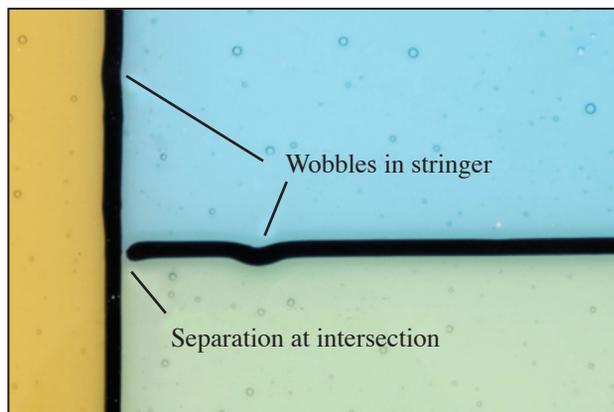
Deviations from the planned design may seem random, but their formation is related to surface tension and glass viscosity. Knowing the cause, we can find a cure.

## The Cause

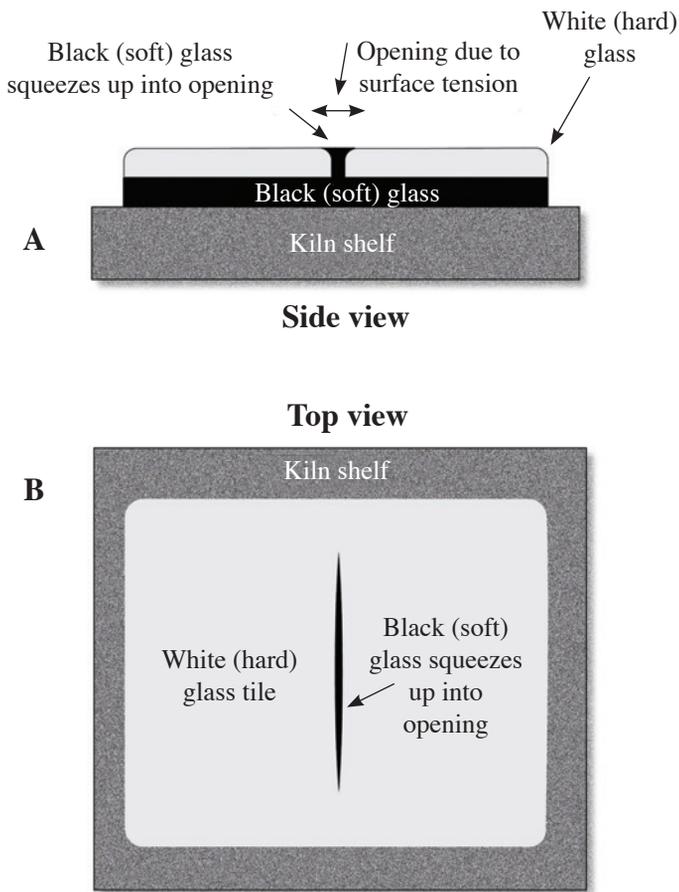
Surface tension causes a molten mass of unconstrained glass on a kiln shelf to be 1/4 inch or 6 mm thick. This is called the equilibrium thickness. Unconstrained projects that are thicker than this will expand and flatten to the equilibrium thickness when fully fused. Projects that are less than the equilibrium thickness will contract toward equilibrium thickness when fired to a full fuse on a kiln shelf with a kiln wash coating. When stringers that are placed on top of a 1/4-inch-thick project start to melt, they don't "know" that the underlying glass fulfills the equilibrium thickness rule. Initial melting of stringers is independent of the underlying glass. Then they start to contract resulting in gaps between stringers that are supposed to meet.

Viscosity, the resistance of a fluid to flow, is related to the melting temperature of glass. Low viscosity "soft" glass, such as black glass, melts at a lower temperature than high viscosity "hard" glass, such as white glass.

The combined effects of viscosity and surface tension can result in base sheet glass squeezing up between design pieces on the top surface of the project. If "hard" white glass pieces are placed on top of a base layer of "soft" black glass, at the onset of melting the white pieces will start to contract due to the surface tension explanation above. The "soft" black base glass will have melted more than the white glass and will squeeze up into the gap between the slightly shrunken white surface pieces (Figure 2).



(Figure 1) Gaps and wobbles in stringers due to surface tension and viscosity contrasts



(Figure 2) Squeezing of less viscous base glass between more viscous design pieces

## The Cure

The solution is to fire the project upside down. The design pieces and stringers are placed facedown on the kiln shelf, and the base sheet glass is placed on top. As the glass starts to melt, the weight of the base sheet glass pushing down on the design pieces prevents gaps from opening due to surface tension. Any stringers will intersect precisely, and there will be no gaps between hard glass design pieces for the soft glass to squeeze into.

Assembling the piece upside down on the kiln shelf, particularly if there are stringers, could lead to air being trapped between the glass and the kiln shelf. When heated to a full fuse that air expands, and as the glass softens during melting and becomes more fluid, the trapped air may form an enormous bubble. The solution is to place the design pieces and stringers on a sheet of fiber paper. The loose weave of the fiber paper will allow any trapped air to escape.

The design surface that is fired onto fiber paper will have a rough matte finish, which is not very attractive. A light sandblast with a fine abrasive such as 220-grit aluminum oxide will create a satiny smooth matte finish. If you don't have access to a sandblaster, then finish the rough surface with a diamond hand pad, sift a thin, even layer of clear powder over the surface, and refire at about 1400°F to achieve a fire-polished surface.

## Examples

The Mondrian styled bowl in Figure 3 illustrates how firing the design side face down onto the fiber paper maintains the straight character of colored stringers and precisely fitted intersections. The stringers were placed between the design pieces, and the project was capped with white sheet glass, resulting in a piece 1/4-inch thick, the typical equilibrium thickness for fully fused projects.



(Figure 3) Mondrian style bowl with precise line placement after firing

The fish design in Figure 4 was created as thin impression powder wafers created in a series of separate firings. The completed fish were tack fused onto the base glass. If, during tack fusing, the wafers had been on top of the upper surface of glass, it is likely that parts of the outer edges would have contracted and curled upwards due to surface tension, which would have compromised the design. By tack fusing the fish facedown on the fiber paper capped with 1/4-inch-thick base sheet glass, the outline of the fish remains flat.

Each bowl in Figure 5 has an intricate pattern of stringers that were fired to a full fuse onto a single sheet of 3 mm sheet glass. The stringers have remained exactly as placed, and the T-intersections between stringers are intact. Firing stringers on fiber paper and capping them with sheet glass provides consistently excellent results.

### The Skinny

A notable feature of the pieces in Figure 5 is that they all consist of a single sheet of 3 mm sheet glass that has been fired to a full fuse without distorting due to surface tension. Why didn't the equilibrium thickness rule apply? The answer is that the increased friction between the fiber paper and glass prevents contraction of the glass. That makes it possible to "cheat" the equilibrium thickness rule and fire a single sheet of glass to a full fuse on fiber paper. I call this type of glass "skinny" glass.

There are important design and production implications for skinny glass. Pieces can be thinner and reflect the delicate aspect traditionally associated with glass. The sheet glass acts as a canvas on which to create designs. It is also possible to cut production costs of fully fused pieces in half by eliminating an entire layer of glass.

By understanding the properties of glass you can turn your designs upside down to achieve precise outcomes. Look for an e-book on this entire process at [www.leatherbarrowglass.com](http://www.leatherbarrowglass.com) this fall.

G&A

*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.*



(Figure 4) Firing the fish design wafers facedown on fiber paper to ensure flat edges



(Figure 5) Stringer patterns on fiber paper capped by a single sheet of 3 mm glass resulting in "skinny" glass

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# AMERICAN GLASS GUILD



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# Michelle Sider's Art

## Exploring Themes of Identity, Place, Spirituality, and Light

by Shawn Newton

Often described as having an ethereal and dramatic quality, Michelle Sider's works are characterized by her use of bold, imaginative colors and a sense of movement and flow.

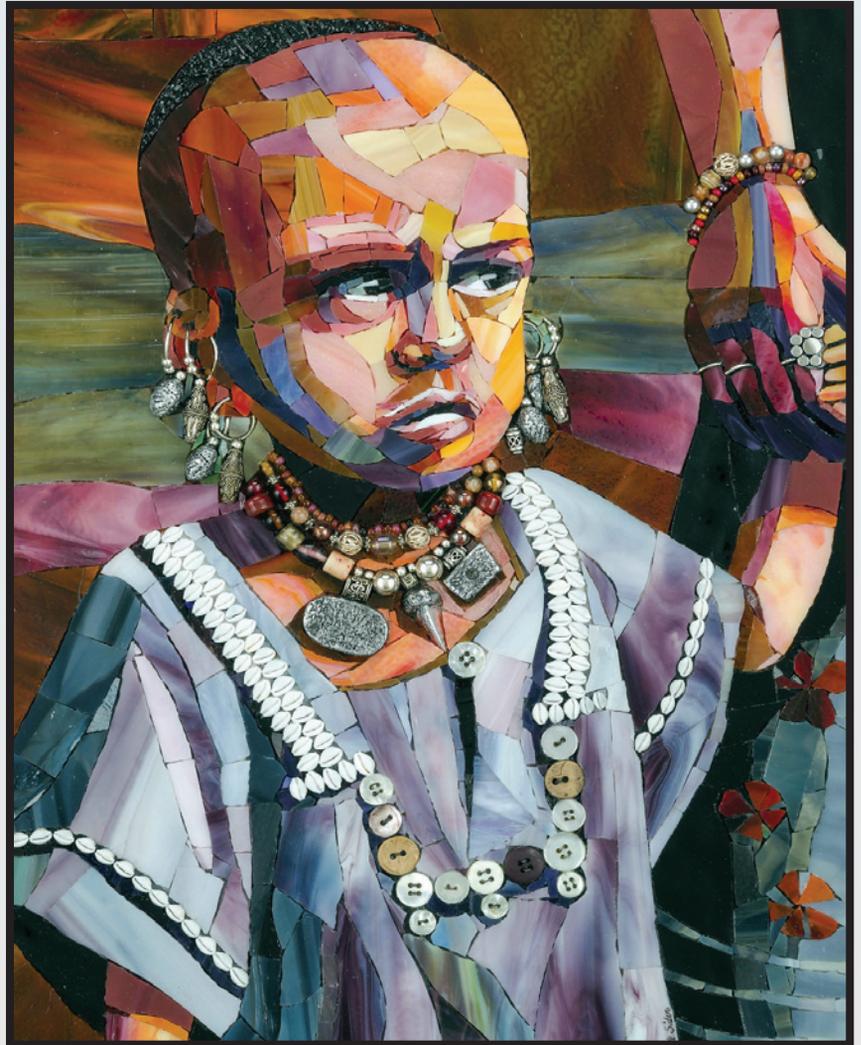
### Power Through Art to Heal the Soul

A pivotal point in Michelle's life journey occurred when she volunteered as a young student in the waiting room of a children's hospital, where her assignment was to make the kids feel better. This, however, was a cancer ward, and she recalls the stillness of the room, which was filled with an awful tension.

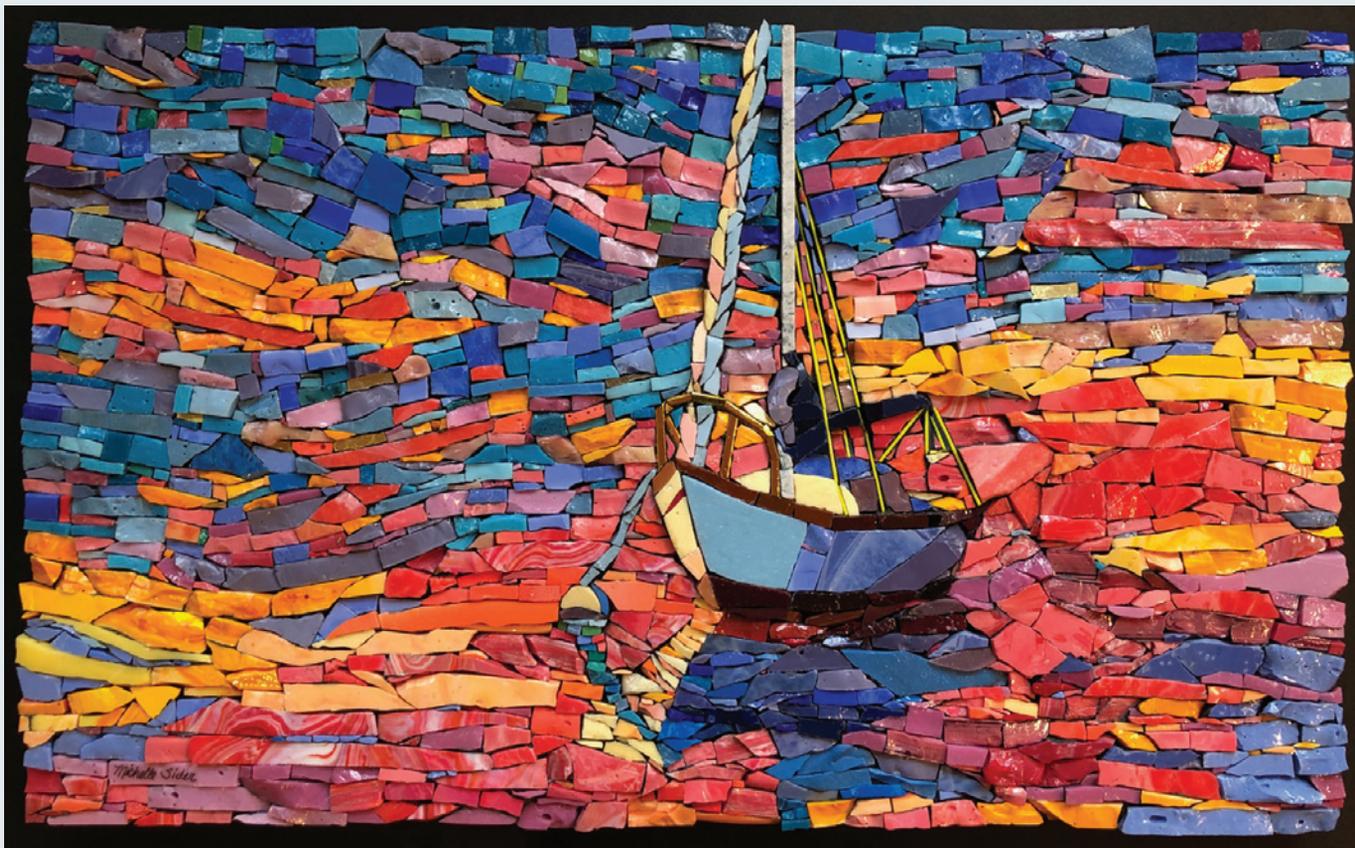
After arranging plenty of extra art supplies to encourage participation, Michelle just began to draw. Slowly and quietly, the children began to approach and choose their materials, interpreting their conditions and feelings on paper. It was then that Michelle decided to add a minor in psychology to her fine arts degree, eventually obtaining a doctorate in clinical psychology. The field of art therapy had not quite gained the momentum and success it now enjoys, but she knew it to be a vehicle for success.

Michelle worked within the psychology community for approximately eight years, raised her children, and became the high school art teacher called "Doc" by her students. She successfully used life themes to drive the lessons, including sessions on technique to facilitate artistic progress, and they loved it.

Three years ago, Michelle began a series of mosaic artistic journeys, *Transparencies and Reflections*, that illustrate her love of light and how it dances on the surfaces of the various objects she portrays. *Sense of Self* answered the ubiquitous questions, "Where do I come from and what are barriers that I have broken through to become myself?" This introspection birthed a modern *Queen Esther*, the biblical Jewish queen who was able to thwart the genocide of the Hebrew nation by using her intelligence, status, and beauty to devise a plan to persuade the Persian king to spare her people. Michelle portrayed her with a knowing stare, sumptuous figure, a globe in her hand, and hiking boots to facilitate a quick escape! It seemed a natural progression that would lead to her next series.



*Michelle Sider, I Am Yemenite #3, stained glass, conch shells, handmade silver jewelry, buttons, copper, metal, and beads, 18" x 14", 2020. Fear, starvation, poor health, sadness, and weariness were constant companions for Jewish Yemenite children, close to 60 percent of whom did not survive. Seeking protection from God and mystical forces, they developed traditions and customs, including styles of clothing and jewelry thought to have magical powers to protect themselves and their families. To ward off evil, this little girl wears charms, beads, and an amulet, and is laden with jewelry inscribed with prayers. The jangling noises they create are designed to invoke God's blessings and keep evil at bay. Michelle personally crafted the jewelry after much research. Photo by Eric Law.*



*Michelle Sider, Sunset Sailboat, Italian smalti, marble, and iridized glass, 16" x 24", 2019. Photo by the artist.*

## **I Am Yemenite**

Between June 1949 and September 1950, an amazing refugee evacuation took place. Operation Magic Carpet, also known as On the Wings of Eagles, was a covert operation sponsored by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the Jewish Agency, and the Israeli government. Close to 50,000 nomadic Yemenite Jews, isolated for generations, gathered at the capital of Yemen, after traveling on foot over treacherous mountains and deserts, where they faced robbery, starvation, disease, and wild animals. There, they boarded planes provided by Alaskan Airlines and Near East Air to be flown to Israel.

Since 2019, Michelle has spent time researching written material and interviewing historians, professors, and residents who may still be alive, with the hope of telling their personal histories and honoring their unique culture through a series of mosaic portraits—eventually a dozen or more—presenting them in a museum exhibit accompanied by a written study.



*Michelle Sider, Steam, Italian smalti, gold smalti, and stained glass, 14" x 18", 2020. Photo by Eric Law.*

*Continued on page 41*

# Jason Lee

by Joe Samuelson III

Functional glass as a genre is merely 30 years young. From that short amount of time, there are a few who are recognized as some of the true forefathers and style originators in the pipe world. The name Jason Lee is on that list. Known largely as an innovator in the expansion of the use of linework patterns and sculptural aspects in the creation of monstrous pieces, Lee's vision for the manipulation of the medium is ever evolving.

Though Jason had always been an artist having studied graphic arts, painting, drawing, ceramics, sculpture, and jewelry in school, glass had a unique appeal. It was a conscious decision for him to seriously engage in glass with the goal to rise to the top. "Glass was a small enough field to believe I had a chance to make a name, and belief is half the battle to overcome self-doubt."

In a medium such as glass, developing an artist's skills, techniques, and style is often synonymous with creating unique secrets. Like the houses of Murano in which tradition dictates an apprenticeship as the primary avenue for entry into the guild, the early days of the functional borosilicate scene, aka the pipe scene, took a similar protectionist approach to new flameworkers. Even though Lee's Corvallis home was only about 45 miles from the burgeoning pipe scene spawned by Bob Snodgrass and his crew in Eugene, Oregon, it might as well have been half a world away because the doors were shut to outsiders.

In 1994, separate from the Eugene scene and without too much of an idea of what they were getting into, Jason and his buddy Chris Dawson started melting in pursuit of pipes. "We didn't have anybody to watch or talk to. We were kinda like outcasts of the scene, because we tried to start this glass thing without going through an apprenticeship. If you just tried to jump in and start yourself, that was seen as dirty or something."

Jason Lee, Incendiary, 2-layer montage, boro, 2010. Photo by the artist.



# Bringing Form to Function

## Coming of Age

The popularity of functional glass grew quickly as pipe makers lit their torches, spun production work, or strived to create their own heady piece. A production piece is a normal to nice pipe that takes less than a day to make and costs anywhere from tens to hundreds of dollars. A heady piece, on the other hand, will take anywhere from days to months to complete. It will be a culmination of the artists' visions all wrapped into a glorious representation of their skills, styles, and techniques. The most expensive head pieces to date have sold for well into the six figures.

Glassworks Park, Jason's studio in the late '90s, was an epicenter for the explosion of heady pipes into the scene. The crew there at the time included now-famous names like D-Wreck, Ease, Kevin Nail, Amber Pelegrini, Eli Zygmuntowicz, and a few others.

The environment proved to be an inspiration for the artists' growth together. "Around 1998 or so is when Glassworks Park started doing collab pieces for these parties we threw. We'd bring in DJs, and each of us would be at our bench making one little section and assembling the collab, all while everyone was watching and dancing.

"In those earlier meeting places, the customers and the artists were all on the same level. Blowers and growers were just equals trading heady wares. The whole for-us-by-us notion was a unique and special element there." Jason was laying roots in linework and was setting new trends at the forefront of the newest genre of Americana art, the glass pipe world.

*Jason Lee, Napalm Tree, 3-layer montage, boro, 2021. Photo by Wind Home.*



## Evolution of Style

Though the last decade has seen a flourish of diversity in the work coming out of Jason's kiln, he built his name largely on immense pieces exploding with intricate linework and names like Staircase, Re-Wig, Bow Tie, Beach Ball, or Ram's Horn. He was pushing the limits of linework. "The first standard classic reversals I did kinda looked like a beetle. I'd look at those for hours and be like what If I do it this way. This looks like a spider, and this could look like a dragon."

Lee says, "I'm always trying new things." He likens his goal for each piece to skateboarding back in the day. "It all goes back to the old skate culture where you're skating with your buddies, no one's winning, but if you do a good trick your buddies all go, 'Yeeeah!!!' That's my ethic when I try to make pieces—try to make something I haven't tried before and have my buddies all go, 'Yeeeah!'"

The pursuit of something that hasn't been done before requires extensive time for experimentation. As a result, collectors may not see work come out of Jason's studio for months at a time. "Sometimes a whole bunch of trials and errors have come out errors." But those errors are all part of the game as he admits, "A lot of things that I'm most known for were happy accidents. I set myself up by trying enough experiments in an area and monitoring results. You're eventually gonna hit a good one, and when you do, exploit it."

A perfect example of that would be his *Staircase* design. While experimenting with the layering of different linework patterns, Jason found the work muddled and too busy to be aesthetically pleasing. He asked himself, "What's the simplest possible two-layer thing I can do? A spiral over a straight . . . okay! The staircase came from me trying to simplify, but it ended up being its own whole thing.

Then people only wanted the piece with the staircase. That was the cool thing. But it's also mind-numbingly redundant to have to make the same thing over and over."



Jason Lee, *Symbolized*, tiled murrine, boro, 2020. Photo by Wind Home.



Jason Lee, *Symbiotic*, 2-layer montage, boro, 2019. Photo by the artist.



Jason Lee, *War On Art*, dichroic linework montage with sculpture, boro, 2003. Photo by Rick Levinson.

## Pushing Patterns, Never Pigeonholed

The current state of the functional glass scene lauds the repetition of a unique design aesthetic an artist has created in pipe form. The ducks by Rhino, the dinosaurs by Elbo, or AKM's skulls garner well-deserved brand-name pop star status in the pipe world. "If you can get typecast and have a thing be your thing, that's an instant chain of sales forever, but it's also a frustration and depression that's gonna have to be fought too. I'm not being negative on having your thing. That's the intelligent, efficient, marketable strategy in today's world. It's celebrated now, but that, to me, is my nightmare."

Wary of any one product becoming a ubiquitous symbol of the artist himself, Jason made a conscious effort to rebel when the thing he made got very popular. "I may have sabotaged my career in some ways to avoid getting too typecast."

As age creeps in and the physical ability to work very large pieces fades, Jason laments on some decisions that may have otherwise provided a steady income stream over the years and into the future, but he harbors no regret about his perpetual push forward. "I've kept that random experimentation where each new batch is a different little thought process so I have the freedom to keep evolving."

Moving forward, it's about marrying the old with the new as Jason looks to new ideas and patterns that are brought to life on classic pipe styles. Many of his recent pieces reflect this as intricate murrine patterns that are tiled into classic Sherlock, hammer, or bubbler shapes. "I'm falling into a kind of tradition-oriented thing myself where I just wanna make a normal Sherlock but put a complex heady pattern on it. I love a good Sherlock. That Sherlock U-bend at the bottom is one of the most satisfying things in glass. No other shape in glass makes me as happy."



Jason Lee, Autumn Bomb, tiled murrine, boro, 2020. Photo by Wind Home.



Jason Lee, Gold Rush, 3-layer montage, boro, 2021. Photo by Wind Home.

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## From Criminal Glass to Contemporary Art

For much of the life of the functional glass scene, the larger glass art world was often either harsh on the emerging genre or ignored it completely. There was even a period of time around 2003 during the government's crackdown on cannabis paraphernalia named Operation Pipe Dreams when the future of the glass pipe was legitimately put into question.

Lee discusses how his piece entitled *War on Art* represented a milestone moment. "Literally nothing was selling. No shops wanted to buy new work, so nobody was making any money. I took the last money I had and bought materials and was like this is the end of the game. I'm gonna throw it all into this one last piece. It was the most depressing 'good-bye cruel world' bubbler. And then it sold. I got lucky."

There was a battle not only for the glass in the form of the pipe, but also a battle for the perception of the type of person who made or used such a thing. "The war on drugs was also a war on peoples' perception of what a pothead was. The more that barrier got chopped down, the more potheads could be seen as actual creatives and not just stupid couch people. We get up and work. We do it thoughtfully and intuitively."

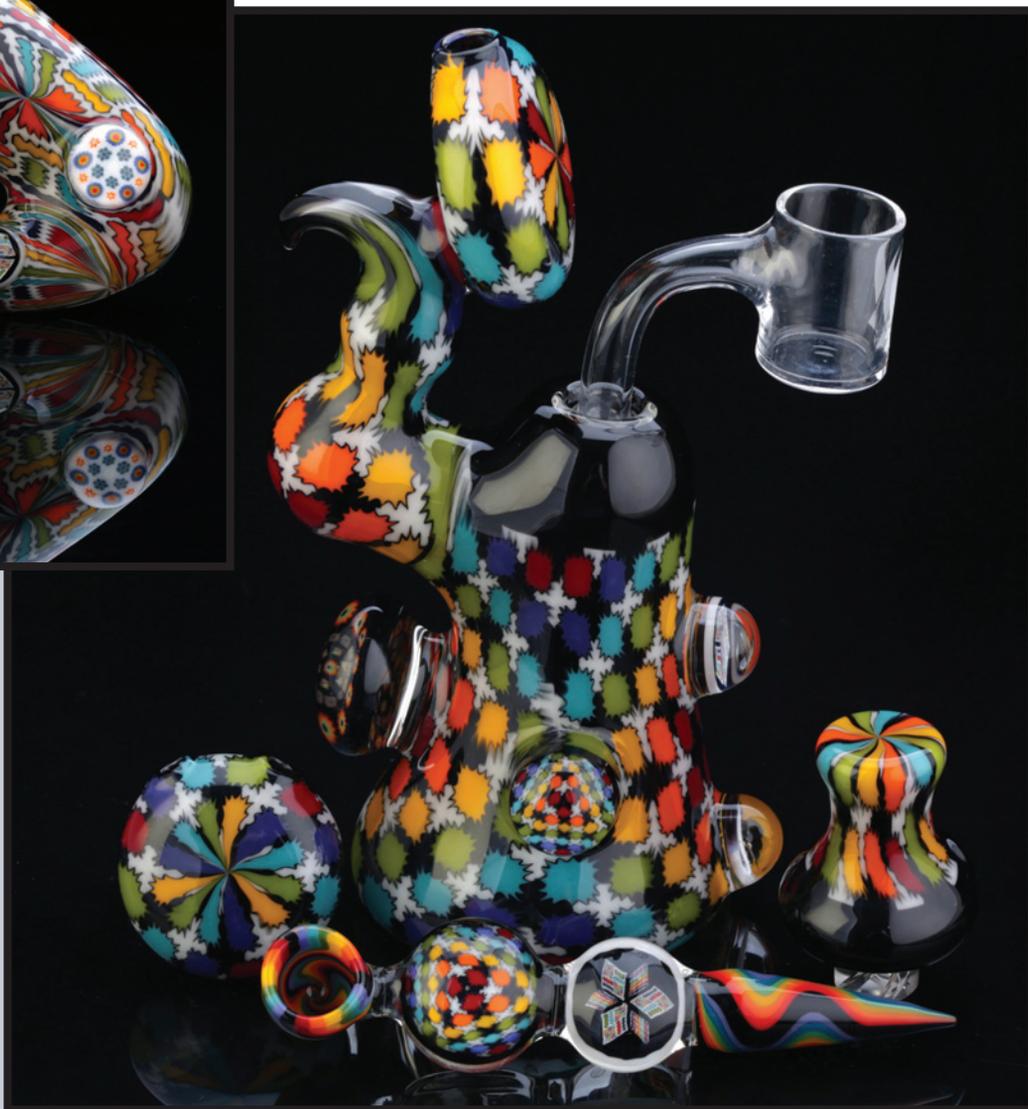
Jason credits that thoughtful intuitiveness as a foundation of glass art in America in general. "The American art glass movement didn't have such a strong cultural significance in its history, so there's less reason to keep it traditional. That's where the boro pipe makers really got a chance to shine. We've added more new types of shaping, patterns, fillcellos, implosion millies, different linework effects. All these different things came out of tradition, but we birthed new versions into the world. It's fascinating that we've been able to do that in thirty years."

With time and due diligence, a "pipe" became a "functional piece," and eventually a functional piece would be given its due credit in the fine art scene. When discussing the emergence of respect that Jason, his work, and the pipe world has been shown by the larger glass art community, the artist is humbled. "I'm so grateful—grateful and just happy for our scene."

Jason makes note of a few who had shown support long before the wider acceptance of the fine art world. "Emilio Santini and Robert Mickelsen were two who were always really supportive. I'd love to do a collab with Mickelsen. I've been inspired by him and watching him influence our scene before he was ever a pipe maker. He was just teaching some classes to pipe makers. And it was really cool of Cesare Toffolo to shout me out for my pipes in his fine art book." Lee was honored when given a nod in Cesare Toffolo's *Lampworking Volume 3: The 20th Century to the Present*.



Jason Lee, *Spectrometer*,  
tiled murrine, boro, 2020.  
Photo by Wind Home.



Jason Lee, *Resonance Renaissance*,  
tiled murrine, boro, 2020.  
Photo by Wind Home.



Jason Lee and Mike Eastman, *Demonized*,  
linework and sculpture, boro, 2005.  
Photo by Rick Levinson.



Jason Lee and Wes Winters,  
*Floral Exploration*, linework and  
implosions, boro, 2005.  
Photo by Rick Levinson.

### Imparting Knowledge Jason's Way

Lee's intrinsic understanding of glass as a medium and an art form has turned him into an encyclopedic entity of borosilicate knowledge. He doesn't take on apprentices all too readily and admits, "I haven't offered public classes in

probably five years or so, but I love sharing and passing stuff on."

Jason will drop some knowledge on social media when he feels he has something of ubiquitous relevance to share. "I ache and I fuss about things until I find some relief, and then I feel like I have to tell everyone. A lot of times I don't realize other people have the same issue as I do, and I have a solution that would be useful."

Such is the case with the piece the artist wrote on annealing cycles or, *Doctor Leebo's Health Tips for Torchworkers*. "I was frustrated at seeing all these people crash their kilns. It's frustrating. I felt I needed to write it in the form of a children's book and a little bit of a horror story to scare them into annealing properly."

"The Dr. Leebo one, I've fought that hurt for years trying to find the right position. It's an athletic career. It's really easy to think of

a glassblower as a painter by another name like, 'I'm just another artist making art,' but it's more like an extreme sport or a martial art where you really gotta think about your position.

"Glass is like a video game, but no matter how hard I practice I will never get to the end of the game. With glass, at least I know there's always another level to play, and no matter how good you are there's a level that keeps you at your edge of challenge. That makes it fascinating every day despite having done it for 26 years."

### Dr. Leebo's Tips for Creating

- Keep it simple, like that friendly competition where we're not in a contest. Nobody's gonna win, but we're all gonna try to do something that's exceptional.
- Find a way to keep it fun. The more fun it is, the more you're gonna be able to do longer hours and be excited about what you're doing.
- Finding your own limits is exciting. You'll never know where they are if you don't keep trying things.
- There is an evolutionary change even in the simple, most mundane process. When you notice, "Huh? Somethings happening there," chase it.
- The glassblower is the roadie, the pipe is the rock star. It's my job to sweat and grunt and get the stage ready for the show so the pipe can shine.
- It doesn't come from thinking rigidly. It all comes from happy accidents.

G&A

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**Jason Lee**  
 Instagram @jasonleeglass

Jason Lee working on Biosphere, 2009.  
 Photo by the artist.

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Photo by: Weckel Art Studio

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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*Michelle Sider, After Hours, stained glass and crystal, 13" x 13", 2019. The selection of material for the ice cubes in this piece was becoming an increasingly annoying task. After pondering her dilemma for days, a worker pounding a wall in her home settled the matter. While opening a kitchen cabinet door, a lovely, hand cut wine glass lost its precarious balance and crashed to the floor. Michelle didn't miss a beat. She had found her ice cubes. Photo by the artist.*

## Combining Materials and Technique

Michelle begins every mosaic by gathering information while speaking to her clients about their expectations and hopes for the project, then taking photos or sketching the scene on-site. A black-and-white illustration develops into a colored-pencil sketch, which serves as a guide for a full-scale acrylic or oil painting, upon which she places carefully selected glass and metals. Each of her mosaics, which themselves take 100-plus hours to complete, hides a complete painting underneath. "People have asked me if I am sad to cover over the paintings and if I want to preserve them with prints," Michelle admitted. "The answer is no. I am able to let go of the painting, because I am excited to see the piece turn into a dazzling, light-filled, reflective, and luminescent glass mosaic."

Her enthusiasm for this art form can be detected in her descriptions of her past and current work as well as her anticipation of future personal explorations. "Surrounding yourself with beauty, a sense of place and, in particular, reminders of places that you hold dear in your heart can help you to have a positive and grateful view. I think that is very healthy for the mind, body, and soul." **G&A**

*Michelle Sider works out of her Huntington Woods, Michigan, studio and is a member of SAMA and the Mosaic Artists of Michigan, among other professional groups. Visit [www.michellesstudio.com](http://www.michellesstudio.com) to discover more about the artist and her work.*

*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.*

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Featuring the latest from the Contemporary Glass Society

Erica Poyser, *Constricted*, First Prize.  
Photo by Matt Stone and Matt Evans.

## The 2021 Glass Sellers/Contemporary Glass Society Glass Prize and New Graduate Review

by Pam Reekie

The Contemporary Glass Society (CGS) is delighted to announce both the winners of the Glass Sellers/CGS 2021 Glass Prize and the graduates to be included in the *New Graduate Review 2021*. Because of the pandemic, CGS was unable to award a Prize last year or produce the *New Graduate Review*, so we are delighted this year to include both 2020 and 2021 graduates.

### Impressive Quality During Difficult Times

It has been an unimaginably difficult time for students who graduated over the past 18 months. Despite this, we had 38 excellent applications from graduates attending 13 different colleges spanning 2020 and 2021. The quality was really impressive, especially considering the tough time that students have all experienced. The judging panel had a very hard task selecting four winners for the prizes plus another 16 graduates for the Review. The First, Second, and Runner-Up prizes were awarded to the following students:

- 1st Prize, Erica Poyser, BA, from De Montfort University, Leicester,
- 2nd Prize – Dr Helen Slater Stokes, PhD, from Royal College of Art, London,
- Runner Up – Sacha Delabre, BA, University of Sunderland, and
- Runner Up – Stephanie Harper, MA, from University for the Creative Arts, Farnham.

First Place winner, Erica Poyser, stated, “Wow, this is crazy! Thank you! I am so excited and honored to have won this prize! There were so many amazing glass graduates this year, and they have all created such amazing work in these extra challenging circumstances.

“I am so proud of the work I have been able to accomplish this year. I couldn’t have done it without the incredible help of my glass partner Rosie Perrett and my incredible teacher Jill Ellinworth! Thank you again for this prize. It’s such an amazing way to end my three years of University!”



*Dr Helen Slater Stokes, Oculus, Second Prize.  
Photo by Ester Segarra.*



*Sacha Delabre, Time to go, Runner-Up.  
Photo by Michael Goncalves.*



*Stephanie Harper, As Above, Runner-Up.  
Photo by the artist.*

### **Capturing Overwhelming Emotions in Glass**

Part of Erica’s winning application for the prize was her passionate explanation of her work, which struck a chord with the Judges. “The process of glassblowing and its endless creative capabilities are an addiction to anyone who is lucky enough to have a go. I found my passion for glassblowing through my Design Crafts degree, and I am working hard to learn as much as I can about the art. I want to pursue a career in glassmaking and keep expanding my knowledge of the material.

“A 2020 United Kingdom summer survey, reported by Young Minds, resulted in 80 percent of respondents agreeing that the Coronavirus pandemic made their mental health worse. My collection of glass pieces represents the overwhelming emotions many have tackled alone over the past year. Hopefully representing those emotions in a physical form can bring a cathartic feeling, as people can relate my art to their own emotions from the past year.”

### **Encouraging a New Generation of Glass Artists**

The selection panel was comprised of artist Angela Jarman, glass collector and CGS Trustee Michael Barnes, glass artist and CGS Trustee Sarah L. Brown, and Leigh Baildham, Chairman of Trustees of The Worshipful Company of Glass Sellers of London Charity Fund (WCGSCF). They had a long and arduous task in selecting the four Winners, five Highly Commended, and 11 Commended graduates to be included in the *Review*.

The judges were honored to be able to provide support for the graduates, who over the last couple of years have completed their degrees in unimaginably difficult circumstances. Leigh Baildham recently shared the joy that the WCGSCF feels in their involvement with the the award. “The WCGSCF is delighted to be associated with the CGS Graduate Award, which we hope will help to encourage another new generation of studio glass artisans.”

Professor Michael Barnes MD FRCP, CGS Board member and sponsor of the Graduate Prize, also noted that it was a pleasure to once again judge this year's prize. "Considering this was such an awful year in many ways, it was great to see so many entrants and such high quality. As always, we struggled to give the prizes with so many good pieces to choose from. However, a winner emerged and there were several really high-quality Runners Up as well as Highly Commended and Commended entrants. Well done to everyone, and I really hope that the prize will help some excellent artists become established in the glass world."

### Commended and Highly Commended Artists

The CGS *New Graduate Review 2021* is a 16-page publication, which will be circulated to all CGS Members & Associates. It will also be circulated through *Neues Glas - New Glass: Art & Architecture* magazine.

**Highly Recommended Artists** included in the *Review* are:

- Wai Yan Choi, MA, Royal College of Art, London,
- Belinda King, BA, De Montfort University, Leicester,
- Pratibha Mistry, MA, University for the Creative Arts, Farnham,
- Rosie Perrett, BA, De Montfort University, Leicester, and
- Moon Ju Suh, MFA, Edinburgh College of Art.

**Commended Artists** included in the *Review* are:

- Kate Courtney-Taylor, BA, University for the Creative Arts, Farnham,
- Catherine Dunstan, MA, University for the Creative Arts, Farnham,
- Shona Escombe, HNC, City of Glasgow College,
- Steven Graham, BA, University of Stirling,
- Ossin Hanrahan, BA, Crawford College of Art and Design, Ireland,

- Chengyu Li, MA, Royal College of Art, London,
- Ethel Moir, BA, Crawford College of Art and Design, Ireland,
- Tamar "Nikki" Palmer, BA, University of Wolverhampton,
- Áine Ryan, BA, Crawford College of Art and Design, Ireland,
- Bethany Walker, MA, Royal College of Art, London, and
- Samantha Wuidart, De Montfort University, Leicester.

This publication will give CGS an opportunity to showcase work from the talented prize winners plus work from several more emerging British and Irish graduates. It is vital to promote all glass education courses, since more and more creative courses are threatened with closure.

### Thanks to Our Sponsors

We are extremely grateful to all of our sponsors who provided financial support and prizes for the Glass Prize and the *New Graduate Review 2021*, without whom this would not have been possible. A sincere thanks to Professor Michael Barnes MD FRCP, The Worshipful Company of Glass Sellers of London Charity Fund, Creative Glass UK, Pearsons Glass, Warm Glass, *Neues Glas - New Glass: Art & Architecture* magazine, and Alan J. Poole.

*The Contemporary Glass Society is widely regarded as the foremost organization in the UK for promoting, supporting, and encouraging cutting-edge contemporary glass and glassmakers within the wider art world. Visit [www.cgs.org.uk](http://www.cgs.org.uk) for more information on CGS, its upcoming events, and becoming a member.* **G.A.**

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ISGB News continued from page 27

Mauro Vianello, one of four artists who took part in the *Flame Off*.



### Exploring New Educational Possibilities

As the new educational director of the ISGB, this online Gathering makes me more eager to explore the new possibilities that our educational platform, ISGBeducation.org, brings. Oddly enough, my body also felt like I was at *The Gathering*. Jet lag—I am from the Netherlands—was swapped for a lack of sleep due to virtual cocktail receptions in the middle of the night. Being the last one in the bar was swapped for being the last to hang out in the Zoom room and starting to explore the filter options.

We don't yet know what 2022 will bring for the ISGB and *The Gathering*. However, we will be working on creating online content for our members no matter what. **G.A.**

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

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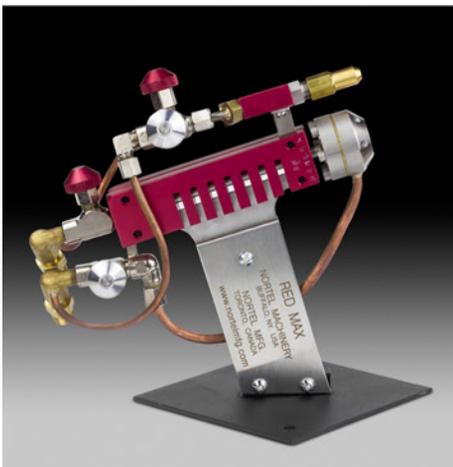
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(Required by 39 USC 3685)

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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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# *Stretch It*

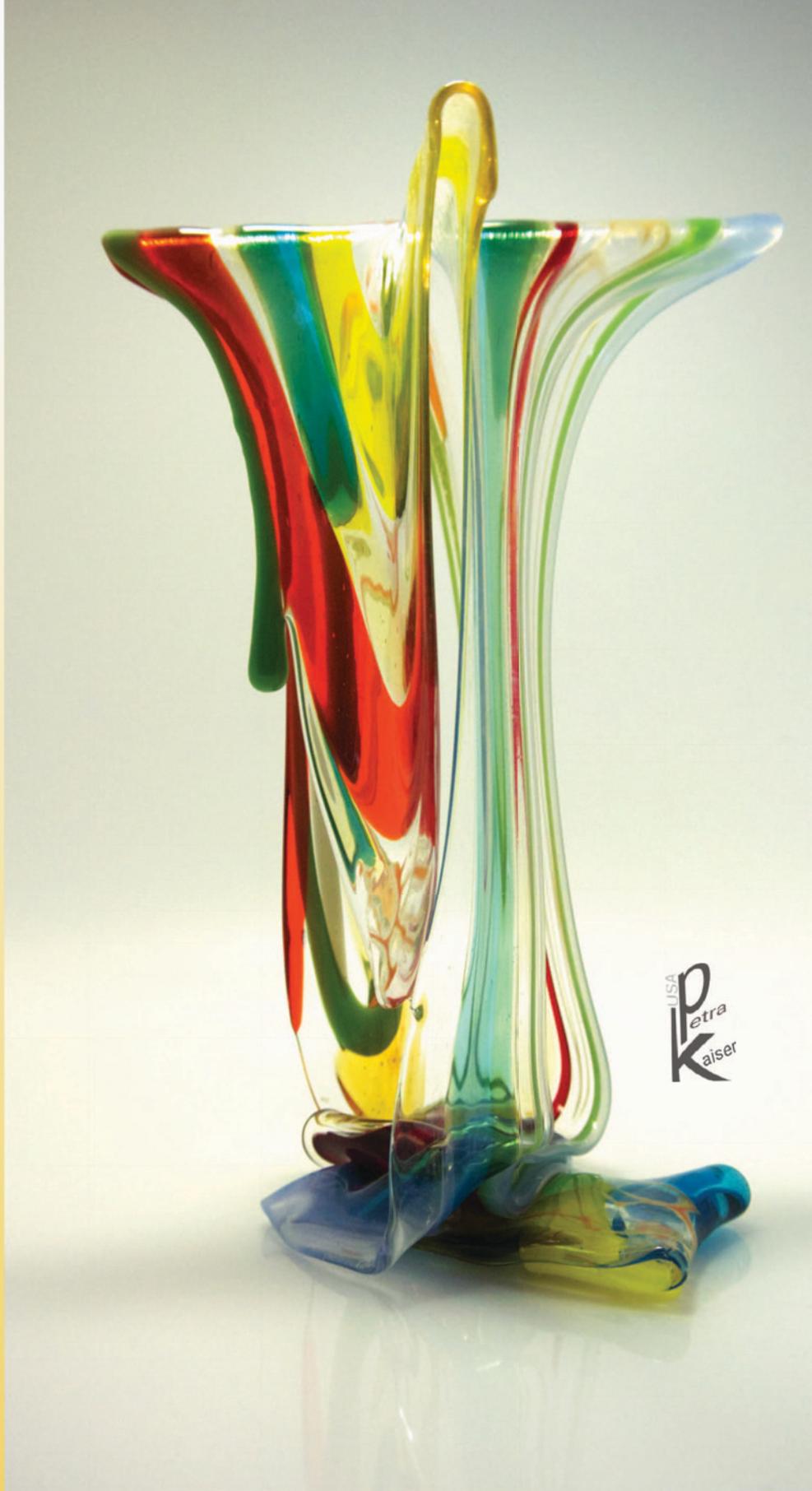
by Petra Kaiser

This long stretch is just one of the amazing techniques we can create by kiln forming with Wissmach Glass. It has the brilliance of blown glass and a beautiful flow. As the kiln glass consultant for Wissmach Glass I experiment with it on a daily basis and am really pleased with the results.

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