



Fluid Formations

THE LEGACY
OF GLASS IN THE
PACIFIC NORTHWEST

GALLERY GUIDE

Lino Tagliapietra

(Italian, b. 1934)

Dinosaur

2018

Blown glass

Courtesy of Lino Tagliapietra Seattle Studio



Tagliapietra draws inspiration from a variety of sources, whether it is his Italian culture, a faceted sunset reflecting across a city's skyscrapers, a peculiar fold of a flower petal, or the playful characteristics of animals.

His *Fenice* (Phoenix) and *Dinosaur* series with their curiously curved and stretched necks, enliven the vessels with expression and character. Their organic silhouettes are fluid, refined, and seemingly impossibly balanced.

Venice Panels

2012-2013

Blown glass

Courtesy of Lino Tagliapietra Seattle Studio



Tagliapietra does not sketch or plan out how a sculptural piece will look ahead of time. He prefers to make most of his decisions while the glass is glowing hot and pliable like honey, allowing the glass to guide his decisions in the moment. His sense of color and the results he achieves are remarkable considering that glass glows bright orange when it is worked hot, with the details and color variations only revealing themselves once the piece has cooled.

However, with the *Venice Panels*, which operate more like paintings than sculptures, the planning and preparation of the colors in advance is essential. Since 1994, Tagliapietra has explored making the Venetian panels. They are created similarly to a blown vessel, formed into the shape of a cylinder, but then cut and reheated until flattened into a two-dimensional piece. The effect is a color-field painting with the added depth and luminosity of glass.

Dick Weiss

(American, b. 1946)

Dressage

1999

Leaded glass screen with rondelles

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



Seattle-based artist Dick Weiss has been creating works in painted and stained glass since 1971 with numerous public and private commissions completed over the years.

His collaborations with many artists, including Walter Lieberman, Dante Marioni, Benjamin Moore, Charles Parriott, and Cappy Thompson, have led to a diverse body of work, exchange of skills, and enduring friendships within the studio glass community.

Much of his leaded glass-screens, such as *Dressage*, include hot, blown glass, in the form of rondelles, but Weiss admits he has never picked up a hot gather of molten glass himself. The rondelles in this screen were created by artist John DeWit, and are blown glass bubbles that are cut and spun on a rod while still hot to create a flat circular pane of glass. Weiss works with the shapes and patterns of the rondelles given to him to inform the compositions that he completes in the screen.

Dale Chihuly

(American, b. 1941)

No. 36 from the *Macchia Series*

1985

Blown glass

Whatcom Museum collection, gift of Safeco Insurance, a member of the Liberty Mutual Group, and Washington Art Consortium



Chihuly is tireless in his experimentations with glass, constantly pushing the potential of what the material can do. With his *Macchia* series, which he started in 1981, his goal was to use as many of the 300 colors available to him as possible in infinite color combinations. Color is so important to the artist that he often includes the specific hues he uses in the detailed titles of his work. *Macchia* is Italian for 'spot' or 'stain,' which characterizes the spontaneous way the colors bleed, blend, and splash across the surfaces of these vibrant works.

Opaline Spined White and Carmine Seaform with Persians

1987

Blown glass

Whatcom Museum collection, gift of Safeco Insurance, a member of the Liberty Mutual Group, and Washington Art Consortium



Chihuly developed the *Persian* series out of a desire to search for new possibilities in form. Working with his team, they experimented for a year, creating blown glass works based on Chihuly's exuberant drawings of peculiar biomorphic shapes. The series was well received and contributed to the artist's larger architectural installations, including the *Persian* ceilings in various museums and hotels worldwide, some of which include up to 2,000 individually blown forms.

No. 39 from *N.W. Basket Series*

1979

Blown glass

Whatcom Museum collection, purchase supported jointly by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Whatcom Museum Society



In 1977 Dale Chihuly visited the Washington State Historical Society, where he first saw Coast Salish baskets. He was struck by the beauty of the irregular, slumped baskets which led to his investigations of this form in glass.

At first Chihuly attempted to cut and hand shape the edges with tools to replicate the slumped baskets. He soon discovered that by just using heat, human breath, and movement he was able to capture the undulating forms organically, allowing gravity and centrifugal force to determine and define the shapes. This was a breakthrough moment for the artist, and he constantly pushed the edge of thinness and collapsibility to make new and larger forms. It is a process of making that has carried through his work and come to be identified as his signature style.

Dale Chihuly
(American, b. 1941)

Marigold Seaform Pair with Cardinal Lip Wraps

1996

Blown glass

Whatcom Museum collection, gift of Safeco Insurance,
a member of the Liberty Mutual Group, and Washington Art Consortium



“The *Seaforms* seemed to come about by accident, as much of my work does—by chance. We were experimenting with some ribbed molds when I was doing the *Basket* series. By blowing the pieces into ribbed molds, it gave them more strength. It’s sort of like corrugated cardboard—or actually, like seashells themselves, which are very often ribbed. Then the *Baskets* started looking like sea forms, so I changed the name of the series to *Seaforms*, which suited me just fine in that I love to walk along the beach and go to the ocean. And glass itself, of course, is so much like water. If you let it go on its own, it almost ends up looking like something that came from the sea.”

—Dale Chihuly

Pilchuck Glass: Traver Sutton Gallery

November 30-December 24, 1980

Lithograph

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of Dick Weiss



Pilchuck Glass: Traver Gallery

November 27-December 24, 1983

Lithograph

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of Dick Weiss

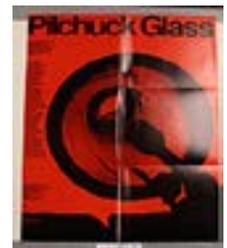


Pilchuck Glass: Traver Sutton Gallery

December 3-23, 1978

Lithograph

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of Dick Weiss



The glassblowers of the Pacific Northwest have absorbed the best techniques from all around the world, refined, evolved, and shared them with one another. The infrastructure of the dynamic glass community in this region is certainly anchored by the establishment of Pilchuck Glass School as a primary hub, but over the last fifty years, it has grown to include a complex network of galleries, collectors, schools, museums, residencies, and production studios that have supported artists in their work here.

An example of this early enthusiastic nurturing of the Studio Glass movement was the exhibition collaborations between Pilchuck and Traver Sutton Gallery that began in the late 1970s. Decades later, there are now more glass studios in the region than anywhere else in the world, and Traver Gallery continues to represent scores of artists working in the medium.

Dante Marioni

(American, b. 1964)

Becco di Oca

1991

Blown glass

Whatcom Museum collection, gift of Safeco Insurance,
a member of the Liberty Mutual Group, and Washington Art Consortium



As the son of Paul Marioni, a foundational figure in the American Studio Glass movement, Dante Marioni, was immersed in the field of glassblowing from the age of 15 when his family moved from San Francisco to the Pacific Northwest in the late 70s. He spent his summers at Pilchuck Glass School where he gleaned techniques from his dad and other mentors, such as Lino Tagliapietra, Benjamin Moore, and Richard Marquis, who have strongly influenced his Venetian style of glassblowing and use of bright colors.

Marioni's works are studies of the vessel form. He is known for his contemporary interpretations of classical Greek and Italian objects, including vases, goblets, flasks, pitchers, and cups. His early work, such as *Becco di Oca*, focused on form with a distilled palette of opaque colors and an elongated profile. Always an experimenter who pushes his exploration within the centuries-old Venetian techniques of glassblowing, his later works incorporate innovative surface decoration and display Marioni's proficiency in combining intricate pattern, dynamic shape, and vibrant color.

Clearly Art Exhibition Catalogue

Published in 1992 in conjunction with an exhibition and national tour of the same name, prepared by the Whatcom Museum.

To mark Pilchuck's 20th year, the Whatcom Museum hosted the 12-venue touring exhibition and catalogue *Clearly Art* in 1992. The project celebrated the growth and innovation that characterized the American Studio Glass movement in its first few decades. Many of the artists who were foundational to the movement then, are actively working and innovating in glass today. As in 1992, artists Sonja Blomdahl, Dale Chihuly, Ann Gardner, Joey Kirkpatrick, Walt Lieberman, Dante Marioni, Paul Marioni, Flora C. Mace, Richard Marquis, Benjamin Moore, William Morris, Ginny Ruffner, Lino Tagliapietra, Cappy Thompson, and Dick Weiss are exhibited here. As pioneering artists, they have worked with and learned from each other through the team model of glassblowing which has been described as "the Pilchuck way." Thirty years on, and fifty years into Pilchuck's legacy, they continue to impact generations of artists.

Preston Singletary

(Tlingit, b. 1963)

Raven and the Box of Daylight

2020

Lead crystal

Courtesy of the artist



"I see my work as an extension of tradition and a declaration that Native cultures are alive and developing new technologies and new ways of communicating the ancient codes and symbols of this land."

—Preston Singletary

Preston Singletary met Dante Marioni in high school and the two worked at Glass Eye Studio in Seattle as they were both starting out in glass. At Glass Eye they met Lino Tagliapietra, from whom the two learned Italian approaches to glassblowing.

In 1984, Singletary attended Pilchuck, where he learned incalmo techniques from Sonja Blomdahl and was encouraged to research his Tlingit background by Isleta Pueblo artist Tony Jojola, and formline design exploration from wood carver David Svenson. These and many more mentorship experiences have brought Singletary to a place in his work where he conjoins his skills in glass making with his Tlingit tribal style.

Singletary works with the transformative nature of glass as a narrative medium, preserving the symbols and codes of his Indigenous community. The raven is an enduring subject for the artist. This totem form, cast in lead crystal, illustrates the traditional Tlingit creation story, as Singletary states, "...of Raven and the Box of Daylight who brings light via the moon, stars and sun to a previously dark world. It depicts Raven at the top holding the sun, the wealthy man and his daughter and the box of daylight."

Lino Tagliapietra

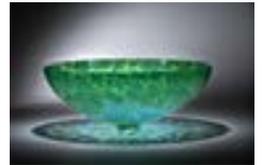
(Italian, b. 1934)

Florenzia

2020

Blown glass

Courtesy of Lino Tagliapietra Seattle Studio



Saba

2010

Blown glass

Courtesy of Lino Tagliapietra Seattle Studio



When Lino Tagliapietra was invited to Pilchuck Glass School in 1979 by Dale Chihuly and Benjamin Moore, most of the young American glass artists at the time were self-taught and knew little of technique. In the decades since, Tagliapietra has shared his broad knowledge of glassblowing with scores of artists in the Pacific Northwest, empowering Chihuly, Moore, William Morris, Preston Singletary, Dante Marioni, Nancy Callan, and so many others to shape their artistic voices with the foundation and respect of these traditional skills.

Within his own work, Tagliapietra moved away from a commercial production design mind-set by 1990 and began making one-of-a-kind pieces of his own. He now splits his time between Seattle and Murano, Italy, and travels the world teaching and collaborating with artists. His boundless curiosity propels him to seek out new forms of expression every day.

Lino Tagliapietra

(Italian, b. 1934)

Endeavor

2000

Blown glass

Courtesy of Lino Tagliapietra Seattle Studio



Endeavor is a form that Tagliapietra has explored since the late 1990s. Its creation entails gathering a large amount of glass on the end of a blow pipe then coating that glass with various canes of colored glass, then reheated to melt the colors into the surface. After blowing a bubble the artist then grabs one end of it with a tool and pulls it like taffy, stretching the glass into a long tubular shape. Once cooled, the long tube is cut in half with a diamond saw and the edges are polished, and surface etched. The resulting elegant form recalls a trim canoe or delicate leaf gliding across the water's surface.

Niomea

2016

Blown glass

Courtesy of Lino Tagliapietra Seattle Studio



Spirale

2007

Blown glass

Courtesy of Lino Tagliapietra Seattle Studio

With *Spirale* and *Niomea*, Tagliapietra plays with ideas of restraint and release, which shift from closed to open vessel. For *Spirale*, the vertical, pod-like sculpture is contained, solid, and monolithic, the action and energy of the swirling lines are bound within the transparent shape. By contrast, *Niomea* is airy and revealing of its interiors.



Flora C. Mace
(American, b. 1949)

Joey Kirkpatrick
(American, b. 1952)

Bird Pages

2004-2007

Glass and steel

Courtesy of the artists

Combining drawing with blown glass has long been central to Joey Kirkpatrick's and Flora Mace's practice. It was at Pilchuck more than 40 years ago where they met and began their years long collaboration by experimenting with wire line drawings transferred onto glass.

Kirkpatrick and Mace were at the epicenter of the Studio Glass movement from its very beginnings, teaching and helping to develop the Artist in Residence program for Pilchuck Glass School during the 1980s. For many years the duo worked on Dale Chihuly's team to compose the drawings on the surfaces of his blown basket series and cylinders, using thin glass shards.

With *Bird Pages* the artists continue to innovate in order to work drawn images into glass, this time with a process similar to monotype printmaking. Working on a flat metal plate, Kirkpatrick carefully builds an image by sifting layers of crushed glass powders of different pigments to create a drawing in reverse. The image on the plate is then warmed up and molten clear glass is poured over the top of it, picking up the powdered drawing and fusing the two together in a cast form. Mace then hand writes the names of the birds in glass cane. The artists are interested in the human desire to name things, and the complex classification systems given to an indifferent natural world.



Marvin Oliver
(Quinalt/Isleta Pueblo, 1946-2019)

Petroglyph Basket

Made at Museum of Glass in 2010

Blown, fused, powder coated and water-jet cut glass

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



"My works are formulated by merging the spirit of past traditions with those of the present...to create new horizons for the future."

—Marvin Oliver

Over a prolific career that spanned 45 years, Marvin Oliver worked in a variety of media, drawing on his Northwest Coast heritage for inspiration. Works range from graphic formline designs in his prints and wood carvings to interpretations of Coast Salish imagery in bronze and blown and slumped glass. His series of Petroglyph Baskets are inspired by old photographs of petroglyphs located on the banks of the Columbia River Basin that are now submerged as a result of the dams. His choice to reimagine this imagery in glass was motivated by his desire to bring them back to life in a new form, as he puts it, "carrying on tradition through innovation."

As Professor of American Indian Studies and Art at the University of Washington, Oliver taught studio classes in carving and formline drawing of the Northwest Coast, and mentored generations of students and many notable regional artists, including Preston Singletary.

Benjamin Cobb

(American, b. 1979)

Tannin Stain Slides

2014

Glass

Courtesy of the artist



Benjamin Cobb is the director and lead glassblower (gaffer) of the Museum of Glass Hot Shop Team who has worked with the museum since 2002. Through this role, Cobb has helped hundreds of artists realize their ideas in glass, including most of the artists in this exhibition. He states his nature as a problem-solver drives him to understand how to achieve each artist's specific vision, which has allowed him, in turn, to grow as an artist.

Originally intending to become a marine biologist, Cobb found glass early on and instead chose it as his focus at Rochester Institute of Technology. After college he moved to the Pacific Northwest to immerse himself in the rich glass community for which the region is known.

His interests in the natural sciences carry over to his sculptural glass work, which reference abstract biological forms. Some of his amorphous blown vessels recall internal organs or smooth river stones, while others reference microscope slides. *Tannin Stain Slides* started as blown and shaped cylinders that were then cut open and cooled flat into sheets. The patterns within the "slides" may reference plant or skin cells, and the associated colors reference the dye or stain used to make those tissues visible.

Amber Cowan

(American, b. 1981)

Shell Pink Bowl

2013

Flameworked and fused glass

(American pressed glass cullet)

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



Amber Cowan repurposes "deadstock glass," or American Pressed glassware that was made primarily in the early- to mid-twentieth century and is now no longer in production. Cowan finds this glass in the form of candy dishes, teacups, and plates at thrift shops and eBay, breaking it into small bits. She then softens the glass with a hand-held torch to re-form the malleable pieces into delicate objects and patterns with the aid of hand tools. While richly detailed, her works are monochromatic to keep the focus on the intricate shapes and designs, but also as a necessity of the material, as different colored glasses are often incompatible and cannot be fused together. Her works pay homage to the history and nostalgia of the glass manufacturing industry, yet their contemporary transformations breathe new life into these kitsch objects.

Kait Rhoads

(American, b. 1968)

Wintergreen

Made at Museum of Glass in 2011

Blown glass, cane drawing, and cane. Cut, slumped open, water jet cut and cold worked. Mounted on steel

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



Kait Rhoads lives and works in Seattle, but spent large amounts of her childhood living on a sailboat in the Bahamas and Caribbean. Growing up on and in the water has greatly informed her artistic practice. She interprets aquatic life such as coral beds and seaweed into flowing sculptures of glass that comment on the fragile nature of marine ecosystems. Having studied glass in Venice, Italy, on a Fulbright Scholarship and worked as a teaching assistant to Italian Maestro Lino Tagliapietra at Pratt Fine Art Center, Rhoads is steeped in the Venetian traditions of glassblowing, yet her sculptures diverge from the patterned vessel work most commonly associate with Venetian glass. Instead, Rhoads' process often entails creating intricate hollow murrine that she then cuts into cross-sections and weaves together into large-scale sculptures that inspire a sense of wonder for what thrives in the ocean depths.

Joseph Gregory Rossano

(American, b. 1962)

Bold 22

c. 2015

Silver, glass, acrylic, and DNA

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



Joseph Rossano employs traditional forms of artmaking while integrating science and technology to reveal both the beauty and complexity of biological species and their ecosystems. Rossano apprenticed with William Morris in the late 80s at Pilchuck Glass School, and subsequently held the position of Dale Chihuly's studio manager for seven years. Since these early experiences within the Studio Glass community, the artist's collaborations have expanded to include working with architects, scientists, engineers, and designers.

Karen Willenbrink-Johnsen

(American, b. 1960)

Jasen Johnsen

(American, b. 1973)

Barred Owl Requiem

2009

Blown and off-hand sculpted glass

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artists



Karen Willenbrink-Johnsen and Jasen Johnsen work together in their hot glass studio in Bow, Washington, but also share a love of nature, and particularly bird-watching. Close observation and attention to detail come into play in both their study of birds and artistic practice sculpting and interpreting the natural world in glass. Willenbrink-Johnsen worked on William Morris's team for sixteen years and met Johnsen at Pilchuck where the two now team up to teach classes together. They often combine hot sculpting with their blown glass which entails adding lampworked components with tools to shape smaller structures which are then fused to a blown glass base. The success of this hinges on delicately balancing both time and temperature to create a finished piece. Some sculptures are so large and elaborate they can take up to a month to complete. For the artists and many others, glass is a performance, and the couple often works in the hot shop with music cranked and an attitude that is light and spirited.

William Morris

(American, b. 1957)

Fish Trap

2007

Blown glass with steel stand

Courtesy of the artist



Fish Hook

2007

Blown glass with steel stand

Courtesy of the artist



Lau Lau

2007

Blown Glass with steel stand

Courtesy of the artist



In 1977 at the age of 20, William Morris drove a delivery truck for Pilchuck Glass School. By the early 1980s he was working alongside Pilchuck co-founder Dale Chihuly, and assisted as lead glassblower (gaffer) in Chihuly's studio for a decade.

An avid outdoorsman, who fishes, paraglides, dives, and climbs the Pacific Northwest terrain, Morris lives his art and explores the entwined relationship between man and nature. Particularly, he examines symbols and rituals across cultures, such as fishing seen here, to probe this bond.

A virtuoso in the field, Morris rejects the beauty of glass and its translucent, glossy, and reflective qualities. He has an uncanny ability to transform glass into something entirely unexpected. Using acid washes, etching, and surface powders to push the material beyond recognition, the artist creates textures that resemble stone, bone, clay, wood, fiber, or other natural materials. As he has been influenced and informed by those who came before him, many artists have worked with Morris and learned from his processes and perspectives over the years, including Rik Allen, Shelley Muzykowski Allen, Kelly O'Dell, Ross Richmond, Joseph Rossano, Raven Skyriver, and Karen Willenbrink-Johnsen.

Raven Skyriver

(Tlingit, b. 1982)

Descend

2015

Blown, off-hand sculpted and sandblasted glass
Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



Kelly O'Dell

(American, b. 1973)

Raven Skyriver

(Tlingit, b. 1982)

Treasure-trove

2016

Blown and sculpted glass
Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artists



Raised in Hawai'i, Kelly O'Dell grew up familiar with glass. Her parents worked in stained and furnace glass and she gravitated to the material as a student at the University of Hawai'i, which provided further opportunities to study at Pilchuck Glass School.

Raven Skyriver was raised on Lopez Island, and began working in glass in high school under the mentorship of Lark Dalton. He met O'Dell at Pilchuck where they both worked on William Morris' team for many years.

Both artists communicate their deep connection to nature through their work—with O'Dell centering on conservation and the fragility of endangered species, and Skyriver focusing more specifically on marine ecosystems, such as the Salish Sea he explored in his youth. They both achieve striking detail through their honed techniques and observational skills.

O'Dell and Skyriver value teamwork in order to accomplish their complex works. It often requires the involvement of up to six people to create a blown sculpture in glass. Skyriver states, "When the combination of teamwork, timing and skill coalesce, the result is artistic gratification. I continually strive to translate the fluid property of the material into the finished piece, imbuing the work with a spark of life."

Ginny Ruffner

(American, b. 1952)

Bouquet of Muses

2020

Lampworked glass and mixed media
Courtesy of the artist



Ginny Ruffner has been an innovator in her field for more than forty years. From her groundbreaking lampworking skills that have transformed the potential of the technique, to her recent explorations combining large-scale glass installations with augmented reality, her work envisions a boundless curiosity for the world that she observes around her.

Bouquet of Muses demonstrates Ruffner's sustained interest in the natural world in the form of a floral centerpiece. She cites her home garden and the ever-changing seasons of growth and decay as constant sources of inspiration. Hybridization is also a theme that runs through her work and shows itself within the detail of the miniature painted abstract portraits in each flower's center. Whether she chooses to combine glass, metal, and paint, or juxtapose images and themes into complex works, she's always giving the viewer rich opportunities to discover.

By the Mid-80s Ruffner was a key player in the Studio Glass movement, teaching her revolutionary style of lampworking for years at Pilchuck Glass School alongside other peers and faculty, including Flora Mace, Paul Marioni, Joey Kirkpatrick, Richard Royal, and William Morris.

Beth Lipman

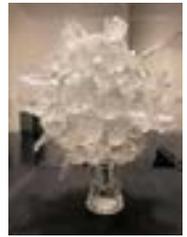
(American, b. 1971)

Peach and Tulip Centerpiece

Made at the Museum of Glass in 2006

Blown and hot-sculpted glass

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



Though this is a stand-alone centerpiece sculpture, Beth Lipman is known for incorporating a work like this as a component within a larger banquet-style installation. Her elaborately hand-crafted feasts and table-scapes, much like those depicted in seventeenth century Dutch still-life paintings, are entirely created from clear blown and lampworked glass, often composed in a state of disarray and partial consumption, with items spilling off the table and shattering onto the floor.

Her choice to use transparent glass distills her subject matter in a way that focuses the attention on the material's elusive qualities, relating glass to the transience of life. The idea of vulnerability, failure, and disorder in relationship to refined cultural objects add to the narrative in her work. Lipman uses glass as an effective tool to draw the viewer in with its expressive light and opulent beauty. Once engaged in the material, a deeper discussion about the content behind the work is possible.

Benjamin Moore

(American, 1952-2021)

Uranium Platter

1987

Blown glass

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of Washington Art Consortium



Benjamin Moore's involvement with Pilchuck dated back to the school's early beginnings. In 1974 he became Dale Chihuly's first assistant and from 1974 through 1987 was Pilchuck Glass School's creative and educational director. Like Chihuly before him, Moore apprenticed at the Venini factory in Murano, Italy, and in the summer of 1978, invited Venetian Glass Maestro Checco Ongaro to teach a workshop at Pilchuck. The following year Ongaro recommended his brother-in-law, Lino Tagliapietra, an equally accomplished Maestro, to come teach at Pilchuck. These turn of events are the foundation of the lasting influence of the Venetian style of glass working that generations of Pacific Northwest glass blowers have adopted over the years, including Moore.

Moore expressed a distilled focus in his craft, which he stated is "...to achieve simplicity, balance, and clarity of form...I use color generally to attract attention to contour, but utilize very little surface decoration that would take away from the purity of the object's form."

Uranium Platter reflects these qualities. Moore demonstrated his skill in blowing glass on-center by creating a perfectly balanced, rounded base. The color he used references the Uranium glass that was factory produced and popular from the late 1800s through the 1920s. With its low uranium content it will glow bright green under UV lighting.

Sonja Blomdahl

(American, b. 1952)

Untitled (SP5387)

1987

Blown glass

Whatcom Museum collection, gift of Safeco Insurance, a member of the Liberty Mutual Group, and Washington Art Consortium



Originally from Massachusetts, Blomdahl headed west to Pilchuck Glass School in the summer of 1978 as a teaching assistant to her professor Dan Dailey. While there, she happened to witness a pivotal moment in American Studio Glass history, as well as for her own practice.

Checco Ongaro, noted Venetian glassblower, was invited to Pilchuck that summer by then Artistic Director Benjamin Moore, to share the once-proprietary techniques of the Venetian glassblowers with American glass students. Blomdahl observed Ongaro as he demonstrated the traditional Venetian *incalmo* technique, which fascinated her. This precision process involves joining together multiple bubbles of blown glass. Blomdahl has explored the relationship between form, color, and proportion through *incalmo* in her work ever since.

Yellow/Orange/Plum

1992

Blown glass

Whatcom Museum collection, gift of Safeco Insurance, a member of the Liberty Mutual Group, and Washington Art Consortium



"As an artist my focus has been with the vessel. In the vessel, I find the form to be of primary importance. It holds the space. In a sense, the vessel is a 'history of my breath': It contains the volume within. If I have done things correctly, the profile of the piece is a continuous curve; the shape is full, and the opening confident. Color is often the 'joy' in making a piece. I want the colors to glow and react with each other. The clear band between the colors acts as an optic lens; it moves the color around and allows you to see into the piece..."

—Sonja Blomdahl

Sydney Cash

(American, b. 1941)

Untitled

1985

Glass and mixed media

Whatcom Museum collection, gift of Safeco Insurance, a member of the Liberty Mutual Group, and Washington Art Consortium



"I understand [my process of creation] as the ultimate of play. Like a little kid exploring how something works, to me that's a kind of profound relationship with the world."

—Sydney Cash

Sydney Cash began working with glass in 1969. Like most artists exploring the media at that time, he was largely self-taught and worked with the glass in an experimental way. He was particularly interested in material science and creating optically kinetic works that seem to shift as the viewer walks around the piece.

Though he was a visiting artist at Pilchuck in 1986, Cash was based out of New York City and lived in a building in Tribeca that was once part of the White Street Glass Factory. It was here that he salvaged industrial glass materials left behind in the defunct factory space. He also created slumped glass forms with found material—a process in which sheets of glass are allowed to partially melt over a metal mesh mold. In this way Cash blends the hard lines of industrial sheet glass with the messy and fluid drip work that shows the process of its making.

Ann Gardner

(American, b. 1947)

Blown Glass R

Made at Museum of Glass in 2018

Blown glass

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



When Gardner created this work at Museum of Glass in 2018, her goal for the residency was to visualize the way glass “holds a breathe.” The artist describes blown glass as “one of the only processes where you’re really blowing your breathe and creating a thin barrier between what’s outside and what’s inside....”

Contrary to the desire of most glass blowers to create symmetrical vessel forms, Gardner sought to intentionally blow her forms off-center, resulting in looser, more organic bubble forms. The thinness and subtle wash of color recall a thin liquid skin, expressing just how tenuous that line of holding and losing control of the material really is.

Erich Woll

(American, b. 1970)

Mistakes Will be Made (blue-footed boobies)

Made at Museum of Glass in 2014

Hot-sculpted glass

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



Woll was attracted to the blue-footed booby as a subject because of the bird’s peculiar mating habit of stomping and showing off their strikingly bright blue feet. The title could infer that perhaps these quirky birds were nature’s mistake, or it could point back to the vulnerability of the material of glass, and its potential to be broken and shattered at any point in time.

Despite the light-hearted humor that characterize this and other works by Woll, the artist is highly skilled at what he does and has assisted some of the leading figures in the field, including Dale Chihuly, Richard Marquis, Debora Moore, Ross Richmond, Preston Singletary, and Lino Tagliapietra.

Though he is technically proficient, Woll considers technique secondary to strength of concept, and enjoys the challenges of creating new context and associations for his chosen imagery. He often employs language and wordplay with bold and distilled forms that coalesce in powerful statements.

Norwood Viviano

(American, b. 1972)

Mining Industries: Downtown Seattle

Made at Museum of Glass in 2010

Rapid prototyped pattern kiln-cast glass; fabricated steel

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



Mining Industries: Microsoft Corporation Headquarters

2014

Rapid proto-typed pattern kiln-cast glass, fabricated steel

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



As a busy sculpture professor at Grand Valley State University in Michigan, Norwood Viviano takes advantage of the time and focus that residencies like the Museum of Glass and Pilchuck Glass School afford him to help propel his investigations forward in new directions. This includes the development of his *Mining Industries* Series.

For more than ten years, Viviano has used mapping in combination with industrial materials like glass, steel, and clay to visualize the relationships between industry and population shifts in major American cities, including Seattle.

In clear, kiln-cast glass, Viviano sculpts with precision processes such as 3D modeling and printing technology. He charts the changes in land use over time, including rapid industrial growth and decline. Overlaying maps from earlier eras tells the story of these changes as the translucent material both reveals and obstructs the chronology. The artist states, "The fragility of glass serves as a metaphor for balance between time, efficiency, and the inability of manufacturing to change and meet future needs."

Max Cregar

(American, b. 1954)

8887934 S/90

1990

Blown and sandblasted glass with electroplated copper

Whatcom Museum collection, gift of Safeco Insurance, a member of the Liberty Mutual Group, and Washington Art Consortium



Max Cregar was a teaching assistant at Pilchuck in the early 90s, where he would have crossed paths with many other notable glass artists at the beginning of their careers, including Rik Allen, Kait Roads, Preston Singletary, and Karen Willenbrink-Johnsen.

With this piece, Cregar developed a complex process of exposing the work's interior surfaces, which he feels are as intriguing as the exterior form. The artist combines processes of glassblowing, sandblasting, wire work, electroplating, and other processes to create a work that feels like an artefact from another era. He explains, "I stopped bringing the found object to my work and started thinking of my work as the found object."

Cregar draws inspiration from the coastal region. He states, "The beach here with the sand, surf, heat of the sun, and fluid qualities of the water are a direct correlation to the medium of glass. I believe that all of these influences have subconsciously surfaced into my being as a glass artist."

Ethan Stern

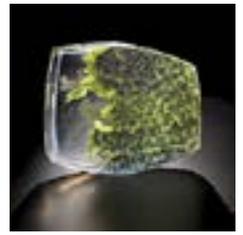
(American, b. 1978)

Green Coastline

Made at Museum of Glass in 2011

Blown and wheel-cut glass

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



Stern grew up in New York, with a background making functional ceramics, but his journey to understanding glass took him to the Pacific Northwest where he lived and worked for sixteen years. His techniques in glass grew from his desire to manipulate the material in the tactile ways he was used to working with clay.

Stern's *Coastline* series draws from his personal interactions between the urban and natural environments, where nearby industries, such as the shipping harbor, trains, and factories collide with the surrounding views and vantage points of the mountains and waterways. Stern combines the industrial material of glass with organically etched patterns and colors that reveal a fantasy-geography.

To make each piece, Stern works with a hot shop team to create hollow glass forms, much like a blown vessel, with multiple layers of color fused within. After the form is cooled, he "cold works" the glass to engrave, polish, etch, and carve into the surface. The results reveal a combination of matte, rough, and smooth terrains on the surface, allowing Stern to put more of his personal mark on his sculptures.

Dan Friday

(Lummi, b. 1975)

Kulshan Bear

2020

Furnace-sculpted glass

Courtesy of the artist



Copper Lightning Basket

2019

Blown and woven cane mosaic glass

Courtesy of the artist



Dan Friday has been blowing glass for 25 years and cites mentors Dale Chihuly, Paul Marioni, and Preston Singletary as great influences as he has developed his unique voice in the medium.

A member of the Lummi Nation, Friday grew up with traditional Native American artistic practices his entire life. His great-grandfather, Joseph Hillaire, a totem pole carver, and his Aunt Fran James, a master weaver, both inform his contemporary workings in glass. Friday's glass baskets are made from cane, or individual rods of glass, that are fused together in a mosaic pattern. He works closely with Coast Salish weavers to develop his basket patterns.

Friday values the influences in his life and acknowledges he could not create his work alone—that it takes a team working together to achieve a common goal. As an established artist, he in turn, commits his time toward making glass available to Native youth. Friday recently established the Natives in Glass program at Pilchuck Glass School, which opens the glassblowing facilities to Indigenous students in the region.

Shelley Muzylowski Allen

(Canadian, b. 1964)

In The Morning Light

2018

Blown, hand sculpted and engraved glass, steel

Courtesy of the artist



Muzylowski Allen works with the expressive forms of animals to create contemplative scenes that call out the fragile nature of animal species through the vulnerable material of glass. Here, a horse rests only for a moment, possibly to view its reflection or to take a drink, and like the title of the piece suggests, expresses a still and fleeting moment in time.

As a painting student at Emily Carr University of Art & Design in Vancouver, BC, Muzylowski Allen came to an interest in glass from the suggestion of a friend that she look into visiting Pilchuck Glass School. It was there she saw the potential for blown glass to communicate her artistic ideas.

Immediately drawn to the material, she honed her skills and eventually joined the William Morris sculpture team as a glass sculpting assistant where she worked from 1998 to 2004. She was inspired by Morris's ability to push the material to new limits. This included using acid etching and cold engraving to reveal depth in the color and define gestural form, relying less on the reflective nature of glass to draw the eye. The artist currently lives and works alongside her artist husband Rik Allen, in Skagit County.

Suzanne Head

(American, b. 1994)

Black Rabbit Mask and White Rabbit Mask

2019

Fused glass powder and enamel

Courtesy of the artist



A classically trained figurative artist, Head was motivated to translate her drawing skills to the particularly challenging media of glass. She moved to Seattle from Ohio in 2018, first to take classes at Pilchuck, and then to study and work with glass artists April Surgent and Nancy Callan. But the processes she employs in her work are specific to her skills as an illustrator.

Starting with a detailed pencil sketch to map out the composition, Head meticulously "draws" with layers of a sheet of plate glass. She sifts the powder onto the plate similar to the process Tibetan monks use to create sand mandalas, using tools to push and erase the material to form her drawing. The final image is kiln fired up to 1400 degrees Fahrenheit, which fuses the powder to the glass.

Head employs the imagery of specific animal species and their natural characteristics to draw parallels to human behavior. She further underscores this connection by converting the animal head into a mask for a human counterpart to wear and embody.

April Surgent

(American, b. 1982)

360° of You

Made at the Museum of Glass and artist's studio in 2016

Cameo engraved glass, steel

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



From her studio on the Olympic Peninsula, April Surgent creates detailed and large scale works in cameo engraved glass. Cameo engraving is a technique first used by the Ancient Romans and popularized in England in the late nineteenth century. Surgent shifted her focus to cameo engraving in 2003 after taking courses with the renown Czech engraver Jiří Hrcuba at Pilchuck Glass School. The time intensive process involves etching and carving designs through fused layers of differently colored sheet glass to create highlights and shadows in an image.

Surgent takes a contemporary approach with the process, drawing on her own landscape photography and scientific research to create her images. The artist has traveled to remote oceanic locations including Antarctica, the Hawaiian Islands, and Alaska to conduct conservation fieldwork and document vulnerable ecosystems. Her glass depictions are archival records of often rapidly changing and climate-impacted environments.

Randy Walker

(American, b. 1959)

Red Cedar

Made at Museum of Glass in 2009

Blown and sculpted glass, glass powders

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



A resident of Bellingham, Randy Walker first attended Pilchuck as a student in 1989 and has worked and taught at the school in a variety of capacities over the years. He was a key member of William Morris's team for sixteen years and, like Morris, is similarly informed by nature and a deep connection to the ecology of the region.

Walker is drawn to the colors, textures, and processes of growth and decay found in the Pacific Northwest forests. He uses molten glass to draw out the essence of his observations in nature, referencing the textures and colors of cedar tree bark or the delicate, ridged patterning in the veins of oak leaves. He often exhibits his tree vessels in groupings to suggest a dense forest.

Sabrina Knowles

(American, b. 1955)

Jenny Pohlman

(American, b. 1960)

Untitled from the Himba Portrait series

Made at Museum of Glass in 2016

Original Image: Screen-printed, kiln-fired, blown, sand-carved,
and sand-blasted; steel with patina finish; copper, beads

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artists



Jenny Pohlman and Sabrina Knowles first met in 1989 while on staff at Pilchuck Glass School. As collaborators for 28 years, they draw inspiration from life experiences, travels abroad, and studies of both ancient and contemporary cultures with an emphasis on women.

The artists traveled to northwest Namibia in 2008 meeting and photographing women from the Himba culture. Their work incorporates photographic portraits with blown glass surfaces in a process that allows them to maintain the image quality by using a process similar to screen printing. They achieve this by applying fine grain enamels through a screen onto a blown glass patty, or flattened sphere. The glass is then blown into large orbs which are later set in metal and embellished with beads and patinas resembling large jewels to further reinforce ideas of feminine sensuality and power.

Cappy Thompson

(American, b. 1952)

Sweet Dreamer

Made at Museum of Glass in 2003

Blown, cased, and hydrofluoric-acid-etched glass

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



For more than forty years, Cappy Thompson has honed a variety of techniques, including engraving and painting on glass to create her richly detailed, stylized narratives.

Whether on an intimate or grand scale, Thompson maps out her scenes in sketches that she then translates to either flat glass or vessels. Her works present an amalgamation of ideas. Through a folk-art style, she draws from her own dreams and life experiences intertwined with universal mythologies and references to spiritual traditions across cultures, including Islamic, Buddhist, and Christian traditions.

Experiencing her "picture poems" in the round, gives the feeling of viewing a medieval scroll painting and the circle format implies a timeless and continuous flow to the story.

Sarah Gilbert

(American, b. 1982)

From the *Perfect Strangers* Series

2019

Blown and engraved glass, graphite drawing

Courtesy of the artis



Sarah Gilbert works full time in the fast-paced and always changing environment of the Museum of Glass Hot Shop. As part of a team of four, she supports artists in the making of their blown glass creations through the museum's residency program. However, her own interests in the medium veer toward the cold processes of etching and cameo engraving in order to create detailed figurative works that comment on the everyday.

Gilbert owns a large antique lathe from the Czech Republic that she uses to cut away layers of glass to create a drawing with shading and detail. She finds the meditative process of engraving a welcome contrast to the hot and noisy chaos of the hot shop she works in by day.

The images, drawn in graphite and etched with surface patterns to distort and diffuse, are portraits that Gilbert sources from photo-booth snapshots. A private yet public setting, photo booths tend to capture both the mundane and surprising, which is reflected in the expressions on these faces. Gilbert makes these transitory gestures permanent in her indelibly engraved and cut glass.

Mildred Howard

(American, b. 1945)

Whispering Roar

Made at Museum of Glass in 2011

Blown glass

Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, CA



Berkeley-based artist Mildred Howard works in a variety of media, and particularly likes transforming familiar, everyday objects so that they take on entirely new meanings.

Howard created a whole series of grammatical editing and punctuation marks while in residence at the Pilchuck Glass School in 2010, and later at the Museum of Glass in 2011. She interprets these common symbols in hand-formed, voluptuously shaped blown glass. Isolated on the wall, the glossy, shock-red figurative forms become icons seen in an entirely new light. What is being communicated through these lively visual expressions is open to the imagination.

Walter Lieberman

(American, b. 1954)

Speak No Evil

1984

Plate glass sculpture

Whatcom Museum collection, gift of Safeco Insurance, a member of the Liberty Mutual Group, and Washington Art Consortium



Walter Lieberman was a faculty member and visiting artist at the Pilchuck Glass School between 1983 and 1998 when he began working with blown glass. He explored the technique of sandblasting to create images on glass surfaces, deciding to tackle social and political issues, a direction that runs through much of his work.

While Lieberman was at Pilchuck in the 1980s, he got to know a number of artists from all over the world, including Stanislav Libenský, Jaraslava Brychtová, and Jiří Harcuba who hailed from pre-revolution Czechoslovakia.

Harcuba had been jailed in his country for his anti-communist beliefs and it was remarkable that these artists would have even been allowed outside of Iron Curtain to create work internationally, particularly in the U.S., at that time. Lieberman created *Speak No Evil* to reference the oppressions imposed on his fellow artists in their home countries.

Paul Marioni
(American, b. 1941)

Pink Head

Made at Museum of Glass in 2011
Blown glass and enamels
Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



“...we built the Studio Glass Movement on cooperation, not competition, because there was no past.”

—Paul Marioni

Largely self-taught, Paul Marioni was involved with the Studio Glass movement from its beginnings in the 1960s. He moved his family to Seattle in 1979 to be more involved with the development of Pilchuck Glass School throughout the 70s and 80s.

Always one to push technique and explore new processes, Marioni feels that technical mastery of the medium is secondary to communicating his ideas, and particularly those around the complexities of human nature.

The figure is a prominent motif for the artist that he translates through his enamel portraits on blown glass, stained glass compositions, or cast glass faces that reference masks. His narratives convey ideas of humor, ornamentation, human folly, and sexuality, though he largely prefers his work be left open to interpretation.

Walt Lieberman
(American b. 1954)

Dick Weiss
(American, b. 1946)

Frye Me To The Moon

Made at Museum of Glass in 2004
Blown glass, enamels
Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artists



Both Walt Lieberman and Dick Weiss have worked collaboratively with many glass artists over the years, including Dale Chihuly, Richard Marquis, Dante Marioni, Benjamin Moore, and others. But the two have worked with each other frequently as the collaborative team DW40+.

With this piece, Lieberman began by forming the shape of the vessel, while both artists worked on the compositional drawing on the three-dimensional surface. They use a grisaille painting technique, which is an application of grey and brown paint made from iron oxide. When mixed with fine bits of ground glass that are then fused to the vessel, the effect is a painterly image, with shading and fine detail. Working in drawing on a three-dimensional, translucent form of the vessel creates a complex, layered image that can be experienced from many angles.

Richard Notkin
(American, b. 1948)

Blowin' in the Wind (Study #3)

Made at Museum of Glass in 2009
Blown and hot-sculpted glass, hand-carved stoneware, and glaze
Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



Many artists come to the material of glass by way of ceramics. But Richard Notkin's primary medium is clay, and he often employs it to communicate his perspectives on politics, war, and the destructive nature of humans.

While in residence at the Museum of Glass and Pilchuck Glass School in 2009, the Montana-based artist was, for the first time, able to produce several works that combined the specific, fluid qualities of blown glass with the hand-carved and tactile material of stoneware. Using red translucent glass, he conveys ideas of shock and trauma through blood-red splashes created in glass.

Nancy Callan

(American, b. 1964)

Smoky the Snowman

2019

Blown glass

Courtesy of the artist



Nancy Callan has a background in graphic design, worked in the restaurant industry, and was a roadie for a punk rock band. These early experiences have greatly informed her work in glass, including negotiating a team environment. Her bold forms and patterns reference pop graphics of the fashion world and comic book superheroes, yet her technique is steeped in the Venetian glassblowing tradition. She honors that history as she propels it forward down new avenues of exploration.

Callan's high level of training comes from nineteen years as a key member of Lino Tagliapietra's glassblowing team, where over time she worked in every role to support the Italian Maestro's art. Other apprentice experiences such as working as a gaffer for Ginny Ruffner, and her organic-free-form nature and the intensity of working with Flora Mace and Joey Kirkpatrick, have helped Callan define her own voice.

She extends her depth of knowledge to new generations of glass blowers by teaching and sharing her skills at Pilchuck, Pratt Fine Arts Center, and in workshops and schools across the United States.

Callan's forms are playful and iconic—tops, clouds, dancers, and snowmen—give her opportunity to use the bumps and ridges of those shapes to marry the pattern of the cane with surface design.

Ned Cantrell

(Danish, b. 1975)

The Emperor's New Clothes

Made at the Museum of Glass in 2019

Hot blown and sculpted glass

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



Cantrell's work often references pop-culture and literary allegory. He comments on the foibles of consumer society through his virtuoso technique. *The Emperor's New Clothes* is titled after the 1837 Hans Christian Andersen story of the same name. The piece was made during a recent residency at the Museum of Glass where Cantrell created several contemporary interpretations of Andersen's folk tales.

The tale is about an emperor who is deceived by fraudulent tailors into wearing a suit made from magic cloth—which is only visible to wise people. The emperor, and his advisors, all claim to see and admire "the clothing" he is wearing because the alternative would be to admit their folly.

Cantrell's version connects the classic story to political lobbying by the fossil fuel industry, with tattoos of oil company logos across the emperor's body, and a base of oily flames. In the fairytale, the emperor is first exposed when a child speaks the obvious truth, "But he hasn't got anything on." This is paralleled today by Greta Thunberg, amongst others, who are making us aware of a very uncomfortable truth.

Jen Elek

(American, b. 1972)

J.B. 253

Made at Museum of Glass in 2013

Blown glass

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



In 2007 Elek developed a process where she could work on large-scale blown objects by heating the blown pieces one by one, then welding them together inside the annealing oven. This work is an example of how she has successfully created blown works by building up modular components in dynamic colors and compositions. Elek has a background in metal welding, a process similar in its approach to permanently connecting super-heated glass together.

Jen Elek

(American, b. 1972)

Jeremy Bert

(American, b. 1972)

Human Heads (white)

2013

Blown glass, neon tubes, wire, switch

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift in loving memory of Bennett Scott McKnight



Jen Elek and her husband Jeremy Bert met as students at Alfred University in New York. After moving to Seattle in 1995, Bert established a business as a sign electrician and Elek in glass equipment fabrication, while both pursued their careers as artists. Elek immersed herself in the regional glassblowing community, working in the studios of Sonja Blomdahl, Nancy Callan, Dale Chihuly, Ginny Ruffner, and as bench assistant to Lino Tagliapietra for fifteen years. Elek and Bert have passed on the skills learned from these groundbreakers to the many students they have instructed at Pilchuck over the years.

This collaborative piece playfully combine's Bert's skills in neon fabrication with Elek's luscious blown glass forms to create a character of shifting moods.

Ben Beres

(American, b. 1976)

Incantations in the Round

Made at Museum of Glass in 2019

Blown and sand-blasted glass

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



Beres, a Seattle-based printmaker and one third of collaborative artist trio SuttonBeresCuller, created a series of more than a dozen blown vessels while in residence at the Museum of Glass in 2019. The artist composes poems that he works into the vessel surfaces in a graphic pattern through a process of masking and sandblast etching. The words create a swirling typography that snake around the shape of the vessel. The meandering text is only deciphered as one walks circles around the piece to read it, submitting the viewer to participate in a dance with the work.

Beres works in a variety of media to express his conceptual ideas, including installation, public works, performance, and print. Working with the Museum of Glass hot shop team to translate his ideas to glass is yet another avenue for the artist to explore his playful and provocative expressions.

Jasen Johnsen

(American, b. 1973)

Flaming Electric Guitar

Made at Museum of Glass in 2005

Hot-sculpted glass

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



This hot-sculpted glass electric guitar brings to mind the parallels between working collaboratively on a hot shop team and performing music in a band. In both scenarios there is a choreographed rhythm with several bodies working together in concert to create something, whether a song or a finished work in glass. Each performer puts forth an effort and applies their unique skills toward a shared goal of creative expression.

The piece also humorously, if not irreverently hints at what invariably happens after an 80s guitar solo when the instrument is ceremoniously smashed onstage. Johnsen blends the lighthearted nature of the subject matter with the technical skills and precision required to achieve such a piece.

Deborah Oropallo

(American, b. 1954)

Untitled (from the Under Fire series)

Made at Museum of Glass in 2002

Blown glass, molded plastic

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



In the early 2000s, painter Deborah Oropallo had a live/work studio in the industrial zone of Berkeley, California, and came home one day to an enormous fire that broke out in a candle factory across the street. Artworks from that period in the artists' career circled around themes of risk, vulnerability, and survival. Around the same time, Oropallo was invited for a week's residency at the Museum of Glass, where she was able to realize a body of work in a material closely linked to these ideas of danger and fragility.

Creating in new media and processes took the artist outside of her comfort zone, but it also gave opportunity for growth in her practice. Her experience in the hot shop opened both new doors and old ones for the artist, as she had started out as a student in the glass department at Alfred University in 1974, making sculpture before ever becoming a painter.

Claire Kelly

(American, b. 1970)

Blue Beach Ball

Blown Glass

Made at Museum of Glass in 2018, finished in 2019

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



Claire Kelly integrates traditional Venetian glassblowing and cold working techniques using cane. These bundled, multi-color rods are fused together and cut into cross-sections to form a mosaic-like composition which are then melted onto a blown form during the hot-sculpting process. The effects are vibrant plays of dense color and complex pattern that translate into whimsical and approachable sculptures.

The artist cites Venetian masters like Carlo Scarpa and American Studio Glass innovators like Toots Zynsky and Richard Marquis as influences for her work. Her cheerful sculptures, often resemble innocent childhood toys, which create an access point to deeper themes of reflection, such as the consequences of human impact on the environment.

Richard Marquis

(American, b. 1945)

Teapot Cartoon Car

Made at Museum of Glass in 2013

Blown glass; granulare technique, wood

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



Richard Marquis is one of the defining voices of the American Studio Glass movement. He studied glass and ceramics at University of California, Berkeley in the late 60s, and his irreverent style can be linked back to the California funk movement that informed his aesthetic beginnings.

Marquis was one of the first Americans to learn the traditional Venetian glassblowing techniques. A Fulbright scholarship in 1969 took him to the Venini factory on the island of Murano, Italy, where he studied the traditional murrine and cane techniques of the Venetian glassblowers. Marquis has shared his expanded technical vocabulary of glass with generations of glassblowers and adapts these techniques to align with his conceptual ideas. His sculptures are humorous and colorful and play with ideas of kitsch and nostalgia, achieved through incredibly technical and sophisticated forms.

In 1983 Marquis moved to Whidbey Island where he lives and works today. He is a prolific collector of a vast array of objects including vintage salt shakers, antique oil cans, rubber squeeze toys, paint by number paintings, and many other categories. Marquis will sometimes combine his collected objects with glass to create assemblages that reveal his folk art interests and idiosyncratic vision.

Rik Allen

(American, b. 1967)

Hypernicus

Made at Museum of Glass in 2009

Blown glass, silver leaf, mold-blown glass

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



Many of Rik Allen's sculptural works take the form of imagined rocket ships. The artist has long been fascinated by space technologies and the way these ideas are explored in film and literature. Allen creates stylized, retro-futuristic crafts to reference his curiosity for science. They also convey humor and lightheartedness when connected to science fiction's antiquated and simplistic visions of the future. Allen uses a painted silver foil in combination with painted glass powders on the surfaces of his blown glass forms to simulate the shiny metallic sci-fi icons.

Originally from Rhode Island, Allen came to the Northwest in 1995 to work at Pilchuck Glass School and as a member of the William Morris sculpture team. Today he and wife Shelley Muzyłowski Allen run their own glass studio in Skagit Valley and teach nationally and internationally, including at Pilchuck.

Kalakala

Made at Museum of Glass in 2014,
completed in 2020

Blown glass, silver leaf, steel, silver foil, moldblown glass

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



This work is loosely imagined in the vision of the *M.V. Kalakala*, a Washington State ferry that operated from 1936 to 1967. Allen was inspired by the ship's bold streamlined shape and art deco style.

The retro-futuristic aesthetics of Allen's fantastical glass spacecrafts align with the sleek metal design of the ferry. The artist's interpretation of this iconic vessel, which has had a storied afterlife in the decades after its use as a ferry, melds with themes of creative journeying.

Richard Royal
(American, b. 1952)

Golden Intersect from Geometric Series

2011

Blown glass

Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artist



Richard Royal was born and raised in the Pacific Northwest and has served on the faculty at Pilchuck Glass School for nearly twenty years. He was first invited to Pilchuck in 1978 at a time when the school was the epicenter of the Studio Glass movement. It was there he learned innovative techniques from Czech and Italian master glass blowers and forged his own career while working alongside his mentors and peers, including Dale Chihuly, Dan Dailey, Joey Kirkpatrick, Flora Mace, Dante Marioni, and Benjamin Moore.

Royal often works with the interplay of light, shifting color, and optics, which is especially evident in his Geometric series. He is inspired by elemental concepts of mathematical sequencing and the prominence of geometric structures in nature. Creating blown forms as components that he then assembles into larger, more complex sculptures, Royal references fractal forms such as snowflakes or the Fibonacci curves of the nautilus shell.

Ann Gardner

(American, b. 1947)

Untitled

1995

Cast glass and silver leaf

Whatcom Museum collection, gift of Safeco Insurance, a member of the Liberty Mutual Group, and Washington Art Consortium



Ann Gardner studied painting, ceramics, and drawing at the University of Oregon and Portland State University before moving to Seattle in 1979. She initially created hand-painted ceramic tiles and mosaics, but soon became acquainted with glass artists in Seattle. Gardner was invited to the Pilchuck Glass School as an artist-in-residence in 1985, returning in 1987 and 1993.

At Pilchuck, Gardner began blowing glass into clay molds, bringing together the hands-on approach of molding clay with the hands-off approach of working with molten glass. She interprets the subtle qualities of reflected light and shadow to create volume in her work. Today, her work has expanded to include large mosaic public works and blown glass installations.

Bennett Battaile

(American, b. 1960)

Third Wave

1998

Flameworked glass

Whatcom Museum collection, gift of Safeco Insurance, a member of the Liberty Mutual Group, and Washington Art Consortium



Battaile started working in glass in 1996 after being introduced to flameworking in a course at Pilchuck taught by Anna Skibska, one of the masters of the technique. Here, you can see Battaile's lace-like stitching of glass rods, created by heating and melting the rods together while shaping their forms using a hand-held torch. The effect is an interconnected webbing that creates a strong structure while maintaining an airy and delicate appearance.

Battaile's formal education is in mathematics and computer science, subjects he folds into his glass creations. With this and other works, he illustrates theoretical possibilities or communicates mathematical concepts through aesthetic forms.

Ellen Ziegler

(American, b. 1949)

Hypnagogue 1

2009

Diptych of mirrored glass, light and shadow

Whatcom Museum collection, gift of the artist



While the Studio Glass movement is primarily centered around blown glass, many artists employ the material in their work using other processes. Seattle based artist Ellen Ziegler, discovered glass in the 1990s while transitioning from a career in graphic design to studio art, when she was awarded a scholarship to attend a residency at Pilchuck Glass School.

While glass is one of many materials that Ziegler works in, it was the residency at Pilchuck that led her to a period of creating a series of works in mirrored plate glass. She explores reflection, transparency, and opacity as light travels through the glass in *Hypnagogue 1*. Using light and shadow to create compositions on the wall, Ziegler hints that optics and perception are the subjects at hand. "This medium suggests to me the visual and auditory hallucinations that sometimes occur during the period between waking and sleeping known as the 'hypnagogic state.'"

Doris Totten Chase

(American, 1923–2008)

Late Autumn

1997

Glass and metal

Whatcom Museum collection, gift of the artist in honor of

Mr. and Mrs. Arch Talbot



Touch Me

1998

Sandblasted glass

Whatcom Museum collection, gift of the artist



Doris Chase was a teacher, painter, sculptor, and well-known pioneer in video art. Driven by experimentation, Chase challenged herself constantly by trying new media and methods of working throughout her career.

She had the opportunity to work with glass for the first time in her mid-70s as an artist-in-residence at Pilchuck Glass School. She later made a video about her glass sculptures, photographing the glass to emphasize its kinetic properties of shifting color and light.

The title of the piece *Touch Me* plays on the tactility and luscious surface texture she was able to achieve with sandblasting. Chase toys with the viewer's desire to want to touch the surface of the object, a museum "no-no."

Dr. Martin Demaine
(Canadian/American, b. 1942)

Dr. Erik Demaine
(Canadian/American, b. 1981)

Let It Swirl

Made at Museum of Glass in 2014
Blown glass and paper
Collection of Museum of Glass, gift of the artists



Father-son collaborators Martin and Erik Demaine are computer scientists and artists based at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Their interests span between mathematics and art, including curve-crease origami paper sculptures and blown glass. They often combine the two media into holistic works to express a material relationship. The Demaines create the complex folded paper sculptures using computer algorithms to plot the design. The paper is then compressed within its tight folds and inserted into the clear blown glass forms.

Their works move from the theoretical to the playful, with discovery at the core of their practice. "We find that the dialog between our scientific work and our artistic work inspires both our art and science in directions that would not be possible in isolation." At MIT, the artists collaborated with Italian glass virtuoso Lino Tagliapietra to develop a computer software program that generates new combinations of Venetian cane designs. The program is available for anyone to explore at Virtualglass.org.



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