

FIRE & FORM

NEW DIRECTIONS
IN GLASS

AUGUST 20 -
DECEMBER 19, 2021

THE LONG ISLAND MUSEUM

STONY BROOK, NEW YORK



PUSHING THE GLASS ENVELOPE

Fire and Form: New Directions in Glass is the first large-scale contemporary glass exhibition organized by the Long Island Museum.

It has been twenty years since I served as Chief Curator at the Museum of Glass in Tacoma, Washington. That museum was built around a cone-shaped hot shop, and it was possible, in the course of a day, to leave my desk and step inside the jump-back heat of that shop and witness the improvisation, technique, athleticism, aesthetics, chemistry, physics, wild experimentation, and focused tradition involved in the creation of glass art.

Glass is unique. Solid and liquid. Fragile and strong. Transparent and richly hued with colors so deep and true they can make you rethink color itself. Incorporated with other materials, glass takes on metal. Stretched out into threads, it fuses into organic shapes. Its beauty and power lie in the very act that defines it: transformation. As for the role of glass in the art world, I think my favorite answer to the question “Is it craft or art?” is Judith Schaechter’s response: “Yes.”

When we first began talking at LIM about doing a glass exhibition, we all agreed that we wanted to show where glass was now, at this moment, with artists who were across a spectrum, who all had one thing in common—making artistic leaps with the medium.

There are a multitude of traditional and advanced techniques on view in the Museum’s gallery in *Fire & Form*. The sculptural and narrative possibilities of glass are explored. Each artist takes on the medium with courage. That’s the challenge of glass; working with molten material, an open flame, tools, furnaces, kilns—it takes dexterity, a healthy appreciation for chemistry, and nerve.

Joshua Ruff, Deputy Director and Director of Collections and Interpretation, has led the team on this comprehensive exhibition. Joshua and LIM Curator Jonathan Olly, along with the rest of the

Curatorial team of Andrea Squeri and Molly McGirr, have created a visual and experiential tour de force. Joseph Esser has raised exhibition design to new heights with his inspired idea of creating an environment for the viewer to enter and be immersed. Graphic designer Wendy Midgett, both on our catalog and exhibition panels, has conveyed a clean, fresh look. On behalf of the Board of Trustees and our Museum colleagues, we thank them for bringing *Fire & Form* to life.

Organizing and presenting an ambitious exhibition like *Fire & Form* takes a financial commitment on the part of the Museum and we were extraordinarily lucky to have sponsors whose generosity allowed this exhibition to take shape. We send out a heartfelt thank you to them here. Funding for *Fire & Form: New Directions in Glass* was provided in part by: Premier Sponsor, Olivia & Harlan Fischer; Media Sponsor, WSHU Public Radio; Art Alliance for Contemporary Glass; Humanities NY; New York Community Bank Foundation; New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; The Order of Colonial Lords of Manors in America; The Peter & Barbara Ferentinos Family Endowment; Robert W. Baird Incorporated/Baird Foundation, Inc.; Smithtown Community Trust.

Finally, a note on the unusual challenges in bringing the exhibition to LIM. The home stretch took place during a calamitous and uncertain year of a global pandemic. I’d like to thank the staff of LIM, in every department, who never flagged as we mastered working remotely and keeping the exhibition on schedule, with all its moving parts. The artists took our challenges in stride. Their sheer creativity, dedication, and willingness to help us safely choose, ship, and install the art was above and beyond. We are all immensely proud of this exhibition and are looking forward to seeing the galleries once again full of our audience, who are ready, once again, to be inspired.

Neil Watson
Executive Director

Visible waves of heat roar outward from a 2000° Fahrenheit furnace. The glassmaker dances between tools—blowpipe, punty, torch, tweezers—in a scorching, sweat-soaked serenade. Variations in technique, timing, and materials lead to startling changes in color, texture, and form. All at temperatures that could cook a pizza in seconds.

This describes just one of many approaches to the creation of glass. There are a myriad of other methods, including slumping, or mold casting; the assemblage of stained glass; and cold-working processes that require no heat at all. So many roads to glass alchemy, all seen in this exhibition.

Beth Lipman has explored allegories of abundance and life's transience. Toots Zynsky's vessels, made from thousands of layers of multicolored glass threads, are organically shaped, brilliantly colored powerhouses. Judith Schaechter creates stained glass with magnificently layered landscapes as backdrops to complex human dilemmas. Joseph Cavalieri uses arresting imagery conversant with pop cultural images and graphic arts. Deborah Czeresko, winner of season 1 of the Netflix series *Blown Away*, explores themes of gender and artistic representation.

This exhibition also includes exceptional artists living and working in the Long Island region. The married couple Bengt Hokanson and Trefny Dix, based in East Hampton, produce glass originating from many different visual influences. Marianne Weil, an artist in Orient, integrates cast and blown glass with metal in work that summons the ruins of lost civilizations. Working from Amagansett, Andy Stenerson creates rondelle glass sculptures of wonderful color and varied opacities.

Glass is a sculptural creation of near-infinite artistic and narrative variety. The artists here illustrate many different paths and inspirations. And they include some of the most important practitioners working in glass today.

Joshua Ruff
Deputy Director, Director of Collections & Interpretation

JOSEPH CAVALIERI

“My challenge in life is to take stained glass out of the church and just bring it into people’s homes, into galleries, and into museums.”

Born and raised in the village of Pleasantville in Westchester County, New York, Joseph Cavalieri was introduced to stained glass making by two of his older sisters after they had taken a class together in the 1970s. The experience stayed with him through earning a BFA in Graphic Design in 1984 from the School of Visual Arts in New York to working as an art director for *GQ*, *People*, and *Good Housekeeping* magazines. Amid this career, he started taking classes at UrbanGlass in Brooklyn in 1996, and began showing his stained glass work in museum and gallery exhibitions.

While still working full-time as an art director, Cavalieri was selected in 2008 by the MTA to create a work for its Arts for Transit program. Cavalieri designed a series of stained glass windows for the Philipse Manor Station in Sleepy Hollow that included a haiku written along the branch of a family tree, and other design elements that referenced local history. By the time of the installation of *North, South and Home* in 2009, Cavalieri had already completed his first artist residency abroad, in Scotland, and left his magazine career to be an artist and educator.

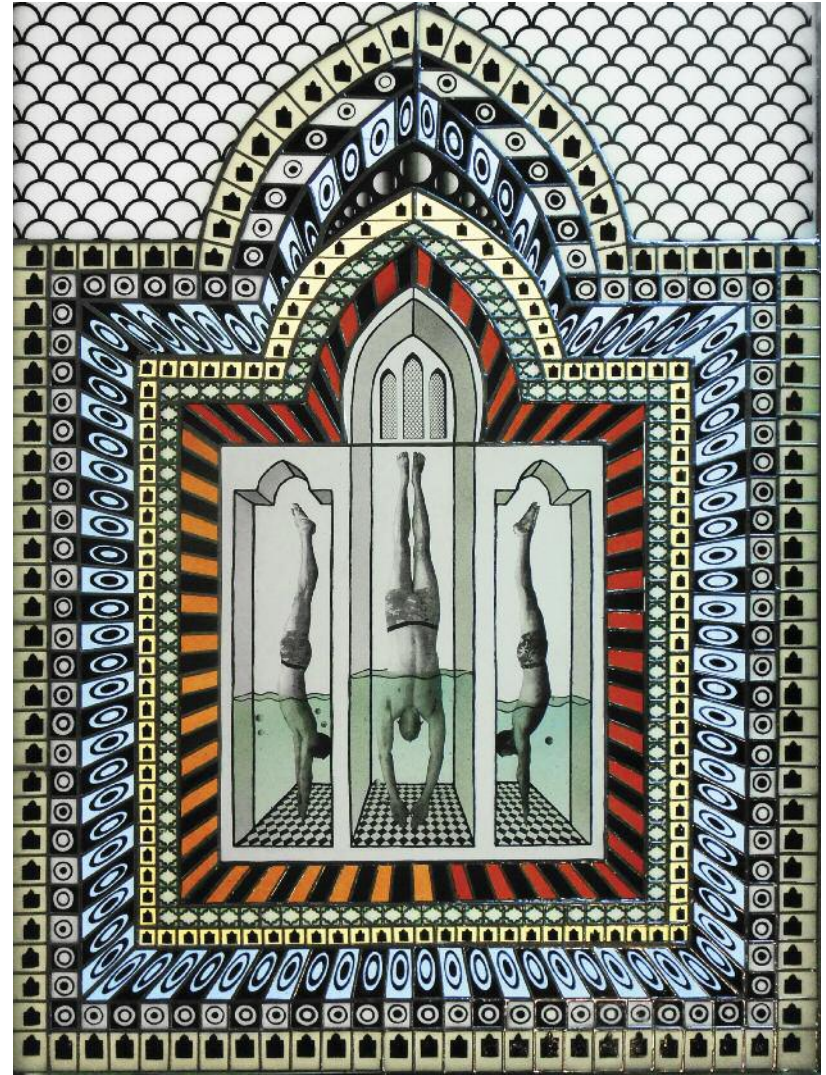
Embracing a medium that had first inspired him as a child, Cavalieri sought to secularize and popularize stained glass. “My philosophy, or my challenge in life,” he observed in 2011, “is to take stained glass out of the church and just bring it into people’s homes, into galleries, and into museums.” He does this by blending subjects drawn from contemporary pop art, historic fables, and human and architectural icons with medieval stained glass techniques and those from his

graphic design career. All designs begin as pencil sketches that are then scanned and redrawn on his computer. After many adjustments, the final composition tells a visually appealing story with captivating colors. Cavalieri then hand cuts each piece of glass so they’ll fit tightly together. The images are painted, air-brushed, and silkscreened onto the glass. Fired in a kiln, the enamel paints melt permanently to the glass. Individual pieces are then soldered together, and often layered to give the design depth. Finally, the work is installed in an LED light box. Series have included the Simpsons, Robert Crumb comics, New York icons, fables, Italian American actresses, and Jackie Kennedy Onassis.

While based in his Manhattan studio, Cavalieri has taught classes on painting, airbrushing, and printing on stained glass in over 40 locations in the US and abroad, and been invited to 17 artist residencies around the world, including the US, Scotland, Australia, Brazil, India, Italy, and Finland. In Brazil in 2017, he worked with the Sacatar Foundation to install a six-foot-wide circular stained glass window in the Our Lady of Mercy Church on the island of Itaparica in the state of Bahia.

Cavalieri continues to produce other public and private commissions amid participation in numerous solo and group exhibitions. Through all of his work, viewers can enjoy his sense of humor, pop culture storytelling, and continuing a millennia-old tradition of fine hand painting on stained glass.





Clockwise, from top left:

Helen Hayes, 2019. Silk-screened and airbrushed enamels on glass, set into a steel frame with LED lights. Courtesy of the artist. *Dive, 2015.* Hand-painted and silk-screened enamels on stained glass. Collection of Graeme Reid. Joseph Cavalieri at work, Chris Kendig Photography.

DEBORAH CZERESKO

“I wanted to make glass the great equalizer.”

Deborah Czeresko, both in the content and the production of her work, has been a part of the shifting terrain of glass that has seen increasing opportunities and subject matter emphasis for women artists, even as the field has often remained dominated by male practitioners. As she said in a recent interview, “I’ve long been interested in women occupying these spaces that involve physicality, where they’re perceived as not belonging. I wanted to make glass the great equalizer.”

After studying psychology at Rutgers University, Czeresko eventually began working with glass in 1987, taking classes at the New York Experimental Glass Workshop (which later became UrbanGlass, in Brooklyn). Czeresko studied with master glassmaker William Gudenrath and then moved on to Tulane University, in New Orleans, in 1991, where she studied hot casting and large-scale glass sculpture with Gene Koss, who had started the program there. She also studied for a time with Czech glassmaker Petr Novotny and Venetian makers Lino Tagliapietra, Pino Signoretto, Dino Rosin, and Elio Quarissa.

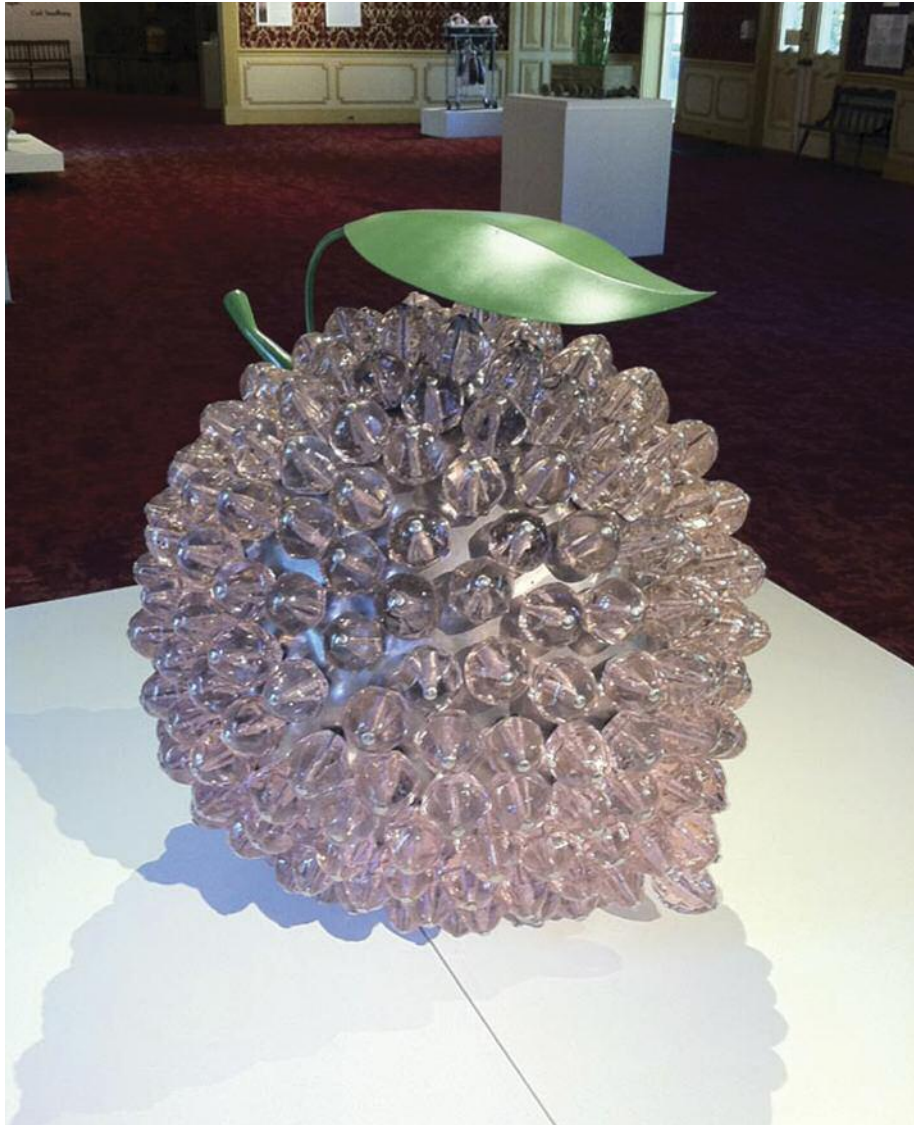
A former member of the Board of UrbanGlass, Czeresko has lived and worked in New York City for decades and currently has her studio at Brooklyn Glass, located in an industrial section of Gowanus, Brooklyn. Over the years, she has taught and been a visiting artist at many universities and schools throughout the United States and in Europe, including Tyler School of Arts in Philadelphia, College of Creative Studies in Detroit and LUCA School of Arts in Ghent, Belgium. She has also fabricated projects for important contemporary artists

such as Kiki Smith, Rob Wynne, Lorna Simpson, and Eric Fischl.

In 2019, Czeresko won the inaugural season of Netflix’s reality competition, *Blown Away*, which awarded her a cash prize and a six-week residency at the Corning Museum of Glass. The experience was intense and also a door opener for new accomplishments in her career. Over the 10 episodes, shot in a converted warehouse in Hamilton, Ontario, program viewers saw Czeresko turn out a tour de force of exceptionally creative and technically-proficient glass. Evincing one of her interests in creating beauty from life’s imperfections, she made a small group of aging potatoes with tendrils of sprouts emerging and a foot rising with its heel stuck to bubble gum.

Coming out of this experience, Czeresko also gained further perspective on her abilities to use glass to make statements coming out of her personal perspective and experiences. “I’ve really been doubling down on glass because of the metaphorical power for who I am. I think it’s me,” she says. “I see glass as an androgynous material, embodying both masculinity and femininity. It’s sharp when it breaks, and can also be soft when it forms. It occupies all these different states. As a material, I connect with it very much in that way. It’s in my DNA, you’ll never get it out of me.”





Clockwise, from left:
Peach, 2013. Sculpted glass and fabricated stainless steel. Courtesy of the artist. *Hubcap*, 2021. Blown and sculpted glass. Courtesy of the artist. Deborah Czeresko at work.

HOKANSON DIX GLASS

“We are attempting to make, or capture, a moment in time when the glass, energized by its state of balance, or unbalance, its color, pattern, and form, expresses movement.”



L to R: Bengt Hokanson and Trefny Dix.

Partners in life and art, the team of Bengt Hokanson and Trefny Dix have been working on glass together for 25 years. Dix grew up in North Carolina and earned a BFA in Sculpture and a BA in Art History from Indiana University Bloomington in 1993. The following year, she moved to New Orleans and learned glass casting at Studio Inferno, a hot glass studio and artist space founded three years prior in the Bywater neighborhood. It was here that she met Hokanson.

Originally from Long Island, Bengt Hokanson is the son of sculptor Hans Hokanson, who came to the US from Sweden and settled in East Hampton in the 1960s. Moving to Louisiana for college, Bengt earned a BA in Anthropology from Tulane University while also studying glass blowing there. After graduation, he worked as a gaffer for the head of Tulane’s glass program for two years, as well as studied and worked as a teaching assistant at the Pilchuck Glass School in Stanwood, Washington.

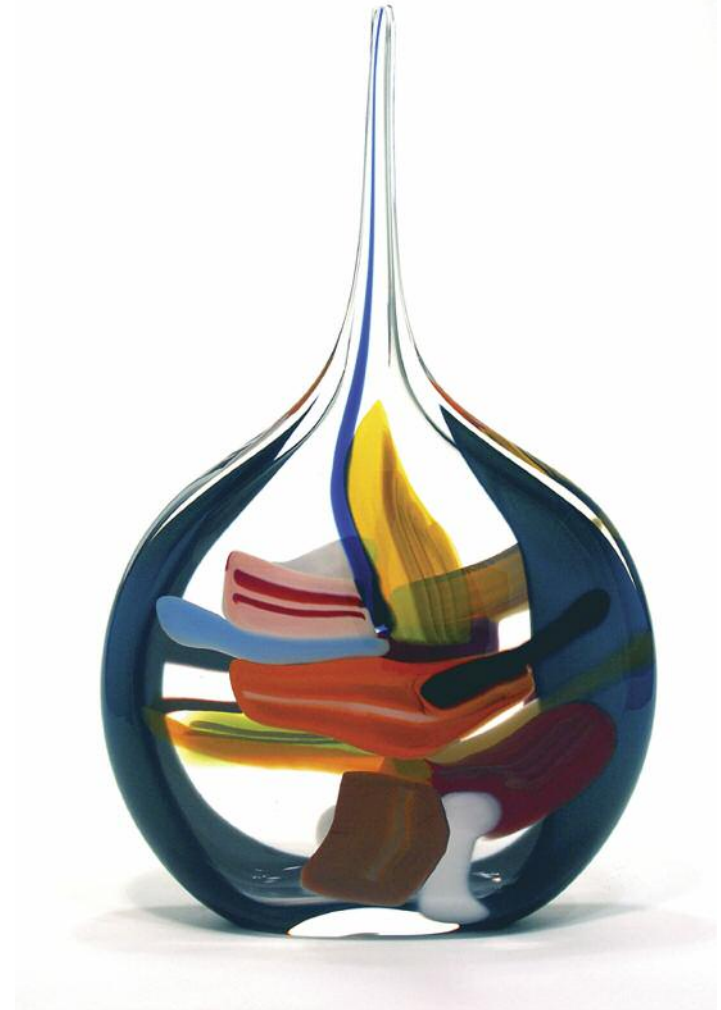
Moving to Long Island in 1996, Hokanson and Dix opened a glass studio in Greenport to cast glass for custom architectural projects and their individual mixed media glass sculptures. In 2000, they began collaborating under the name Boar Glass on a series of blown glass vessels in which they experimented with vibrant colors, murrinis, incalcos, and cane work. The couple relocated their studio to Burnsville, North Carolina, in 2007, and then to Durango, Colorado, in 2010 under the name of Hokanson Dix Glass.

In 2013 Hokanson and Dix returned to Long Island’s East End, moving into the house built by Bengt’s father. The site now serves as their home, hot shop, and studio, with the resulting glass partly an expression of heritage. According

to Dix, “Bengt’s family background is Swedish and my family background is Czechoslovakian. Both...have rich glass working and glass art traditions whose influence can be seen in our work. We use many Swedish glass blowing techniques...[and] the Swedes’ use of thick, clear glass, vivid color, and simple forms has influenced our style and aesthetic.” From the Czechs, “their interest in glass as pure form, one that defines the object, has inspired us to use light refraction and transparency as major elements in our work. We often use the interplay of patterns and reflected light to emphasize our forms and to suggest motion.”

Inspiration for their glass pieces come from many sources including urban graffiti, handbags, marine organisms, landscapes, and abstract painters such as Mark Rothko and Arshile Gorky. Coastal Long Island is reflected in their *Sail* series, which began in Greenport. Each vessel’s curves and unique murrini pattern recall the spinnaker of a sailboat caught by the wind. Contrast this with *Black Sea*, a piece developed in Colorado. With its opaque black and transparent gray incalmo areas, it doesn’t lead the eye into the depth and detail of the work but is instead reflective and speaks to the spiritual element that the couple found in the landscape of the Southwest.

Over this past quarter century, Hokanson and Dix have continued to hone their craft. Both have taken classes at Pilchuck and The Studio of The Corning Museum of Glass, with Bengt also studying at UrbanGlass and Trefny at the Art Students League. Today, their glass contains a variety of expressive and fascinating forms, with inspiration drawn from their life experiences. Their work is represented in more than 40 galleries in the US, UK, and Canada.



Clockwise, from top left:
Black Sea, 2021. Blown glass. Courtesy of the artists. *Sail*, 2021. Blown glass. Courtesy of the artists. At work in their East Hampton studio.

BETH LIPMAN

“If I knew exactly what was going to happen before I did something, I probably would not have the drive to do it.”

Beth Lipman is an internationally-renowned artist best known for her large-scale work in glass sculpture and highly accomplished in a variety of other media: metal, clay, and photographic composition. Originally from the Philadelphia area and growing up in nearby York and Lancaster counties, Lipman was exposed to glass as a teenager in the Horizons New England Craft Program, now known as Snow Farm. Her BFA in Glass and Fibers was earned in 1994 from the Tyler School of Art at Temple University. After spending the early part of her career in Brooklyn and Manhattan, Lipman has lived and held a studio in Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin, since 2006.

Her large-scale transparent glass banquet tables, overflowing with abundance and detailed far beyond what a single glance can absorb, have referenced Renaissance and Baroque still-life paintings, and she has also created work inspired by artists from more modern eras in art history, such as Thomas Hart Benton. She has done many site-specific projects in her career for museums around the United States, including Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, the Milwaukee Museum of Art, and the New Britain Museum of American Art. A major retrospective of her work, *Beth Lipman: Collective Elegy*, is on view this year at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York.

Lipman’s work has often revolved around themes of history, identity, consumption, and environmental degradation. While extensive research guides her narrative directions and the methodologies she chooses, she does not always know the exact destination when commencing a new project. “I love the mystery, I love the unknown,” she says. “If I knew exactly what was going to

happen before I did something, I probably would not have the drive to do it.”

Lipman’s works in this exhibition, *Whatnot II* (2010) and *Northern Monkshood Composition* (2020), were done at very different stages of her career. The use of black opaque glass in *Whatnot II* (which has a sister-companion piece now on view at the Museum of Arts and Design) was born out of a fascination with Victorian furniture and mourning traditions. A “whatnot” was a piece of ornamental furniture during the 19th century that had slender upright posts and multiple tiers containing personal objects and mementos. Lipman consciously embraces the anthropomorphism of this work, considering it “a reflection of the self through objects.” The shelves contain both objects collected from nature and specific artworks given to her by friends over the years. In this way, the composition speaks to “the amassing of things that come into our lives” – as true to Victorian lives as it is to our own – and how that can influence our directions.

Northern Monkshood Composition, completed in the early part of the COVID pandemic, takes its title from the hauntingly beautiful and highly toxic flowering plant, Northern Monkshood (*Aconitum noveboracense*). As Lipman has continued to explore the roles of climate change and the continued onslaught of human damage to the natural world, this plant’s ancient history and folklore as a poisonous species to be handled with great care was also alluring to her. “I love the juxtaposition of this endangered plant that can also kill you,” she says. “Who’s going to kill who first?”





Clockwise, from top left:
Whatnot II (detail), 2010. *Whatnot II*, 2010. Glass, paint, adhesive. Courtesy of Beth Lipman and Nohra Haime Gallery. Photographs by Eva Heydua. Artist at work in her studio in Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin.

JUDITH SCHAECHTER

“Glass put my head where my hands were.”

Defying easy categorization – and, in fact, avoiding all simple paths, methods, tropes, and subject matter – Judith Schaechter has worked tirelessly and innovatively in stained glass since the early 1980s. After completing 239 stained glass windows, it is no exaggeration to state her success has redefined the medium’s possibilities. Her impact also goes beyond her work as an artist and includes her many years as a dedicated teacher at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

People normally associate stained glass with the peaceful light refraction inside Gothic church sanctuaries or the Art Nouveau windows of John LaFarge and Louis Comfort Tiffany. Schaechter has used the inherent power of the medium to create evocative and complex narrative imagery of breathtaking colors and textures. Her work is in the permanent collections of 25 major museums, including the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and the Corning Museum of Glass.

The daughter of an immigrant microbiologist father and a mother who was a concert pianist, social worker, and the director of a school for children with autism, Schaechter grew up just west of Boston and frequently visited the Museum of Fine Arts during her childhood. Her grandmother was also an artist, and Judith, an inveterate doodler as a child who finished her first oil painting at the age of 8, moved towards a creative life. Studying painting at the Rhode Island School of Design, she took stained glass as an elective with Ursula Huth and quickly immersed herself in the medium. Compared with painting, she found it a way to express herself more fully that was compatible with her meticulous intensity and interest in the process.



“Glass put my head where my hands were,” she says. She has described the revelatory discovery of her life’s work in various interviews as “like being hit by a truck” or like “clouds parting.”

If Schaechter was assured of her chosen path, it was still a road of hard knocks, experimentation, and occasional setbacks before the growth of her reputation in the 1990s. Working from a studio in her house in Philadelphia, she gradually developed her working technique which often begins with drawings and manipulating assemblages from her vast database storage of digital imagery. In starting a new work, she does not have a preconceived final destination, but works in conversation with the evolving art. Schaechter uses sheets of two-foot by three-foot flash glass, a material with a very thin veneer of intense color. She applies stenciling, sandblasts the work, and paints with vitreous enamel, firing the work at high temperatures in a kiln. She uses a variety of drills and flexible-shaft engraving tools to achieve extraordinary nuanced and beautiful results. The glass is layered to achieve different effects in light and texture.

While she has explored real and mythological animals and ecologies, Schaechter has very often created female protagonists that bravely stand in contextual landscapes that can be phantasmagoric, subversively funny, or provide serious social commentary. But these works also often carry ambiguity and are meant to connect with the viewer more through resonance of familiarity than through “direct connection.” Of her famed female protagonists, Schaechter qualifies them as often experiencing that “absolute moment when suffering turns into something else, something meaningful, something beautiful, something hopeful; where despair turns into hope.”



Clockwise, from top left:
Human/Nature, 2016. Stained glass. *The Minotaur*, 2009. Stained glass. Works courtesy of the artist and Claire Oliver Gallery. The artist at work on a light table.

ANDY STENERSON

“Two weeks in, and I was crazy about it.”

Moving out of Brooklyn’s famed hot shops and heading eastward, there are a relatively small number of glassblowers and fine arts glassmakers on Long Island. One of those few is Andy Stenerson of Amagansett, who notes that the cost and scarcity of equipment and specialization of skill explains the rarity of glass artists across the region. Stenerson moved to Amagansett in 2002. Several years later, he built a 1,000-square-foot studio behind his house off Montauk Highway, where he makes his own sculptures, vessels, and lighting elements that are often produced in collaboration with local architects and interior designers. For larger works, he often uses the UrbanGlass Studio in Brooklyn.

Stenerson grew up in Shaker Heights, Ohio, a suburb of Cleveland. An excellent art student, he enrolled in the Cleveland Institute of Art, which attracted him due to its strong industrial design and sculpture programs. He knew that he would be working in three-dimensional art, but a freshman elective course on glass hooked him. “Two weeks in, and I was crazy about it,” he says. A significant professor and influence at Cleveland was Brent Kee Young, a famed studio glass artist with work in the collections of the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Museum of Glass in Tacoma, Washington. Two visiting star artists, William Morris and Dale Chihuly, also left an impression during a glass blowing demonstration. “I was awestruck by how easily glass could be manipulated,” Stenerson says. “Their vessels were so beautiful—and quick to make.”

In his senior year, Stenerson had a chance meeting with visiting artist John Lewis, of Oakland, California,

and ended up moving to the Bay Area on Lewis’s invitation. The Lewis shop did large-scale cast glass for architectural installations: clear glass sinks, bathtubs, wall panels, and the like. Stenerson was a key figure there by the time he left in the early 1990s and his West Coast experience exposed him to other glass artists, such as Rob Stern and Dante Marioni. Stenerson also had the opportunity to study and train with famed Venetian artists Lino Tagliapietra and Pino Signoretto, and burnished his skills and also ended up teaching at Pilchuck Glass School, in Stanwood, Washington. He has also taught at UrbanGlass.

Stenerson moved to South Williamsburg, Brooklyn, with a former Cleveland classmate Kim Petro, in 1994, where they worked together for 8 years. Many of their collaborative glass vessels exhibited striking combinations of line and form which resembled a variety of complex fabric patterns. After years of commercial and studio work there, Stenerson ended up moving out to the East End where he has been ever since. Fashioning ornaments, vases, and sculptures for several local businesses, he has maintained steady work in lighting design. About 10 years ago, he began experimenting with striking circular-form rondelles, and then turned more seriously to the form 4 years ago. He loves that they are “like a canvas,” and enjoys the manipulation of light and color. “You can make them translucent or opaque, and they look very different when backlit,” he says.





Clockwise, from top left:
Green Expanse, n.d. Rondelle glass sculpture. Courtesy of the artist. *Amethyst Splash* and *Green Expanse*. Rondelle glass sculpture. Courtesy of the artist. The artist in his Amagansett studio.

MARIANNE WEIL

“That’s one reason I was led to glass — because of the transparency. I wanted to see further in.”

Born in Mount Kisco, New York, Marianne Weil was introduced to art and archaeology at a young age. Her mother was a painter and aunt a sculptor. And the family’s travels to Europe included a visit to Stonehenge when Weil was 16. After first taking art classes at the New School, she transferred to Goddard College in Vermont, where she majored in sculpture and graduated in 1974. Moving to Pietrasanta, Italy – a Tuscan town famous for its marble studios and bronze foundries – Weil learned traditional marble carving and bronze casting techniques, and participated in her first group exhibitions.

Back in the US after eight years, she pursued a MFA in Sculpture at the School of Visual Arts in New York, graduating in 1986. Around this time, Weil purchased a property in Orient, Long Island, that became her home and studio. Using the lost-wax casting process, her abstract bronze sculptures took inspiration from structures and archaeological fragments encountered at prehistoric sites she visited throughout Europe. With textural impressions and irregular openings, her contemporary bronzes appeared ancient and enigmatic in purpose, with their titles sometimes borrowed from ruins like Skorba in Malta, and Knap of Howar in Scotland. Stateside, Weil taught sculpture and metal casting at Stony Brook University from 1997 to 2006, and Haverford College from 2006 to 2009. At City University of New York, College of Staten Island, since 2010, Weil is now Associate Professor of Sculpture and Studio Art Coordinator.

Alongside her teaching and solo and group shows at museums and galleries in the US, Canada, and Europe,

Weil has also received numerous awards, grants, and artist residencies in Canada, Scotland, Iceland, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, and Denmark. While abroad, she travels for inspiration to prehistoric and ancient Greek and Roman archaeological sites. “I have a modest travel kit with only basic tools, paper, and wax to sketch and capture my ideas,” says Weil. “I want to minimize the distractions and incorporate found and invented materials to introduce dimension and texture into my work.” Archaeological sites such as the Chalcolithic Los Millares in Andalusia, Spain – which contains important early evidence of copper smelting – have inspired series of bronze sculptures and reliefs, and monotype prints.

Since 2010, her work has merged metal sculpture and blown or cast glass, a combination she first experimented with in Italy in the 1970s. Her work continues to reference a variety of prehistoric history and classical mythology, often abstractly recalling the aged patina and artifactual remnants of lost civilizations. And places that she wants to peer deeper into. “The forms are generated by imagery that I see and then I interpret and reinterpret. A lot of these pieces have the puncture, the window openings that are inspired by walking through the caverns and tombs. And I think that’s one reason I was led to glass — because of the transparency. I wanted to see further in. The density in the bronze didn’t allow that.” Glass has been a dynamic and challenging choice for her to move towards but one that has paid off in memorably evocative creations.



Marianne Weil. Photograph by Steve Fenn.



Clockwise, from left:
Photograph by Lloyd Ziff. *Settlement*, 2006-2012. Blown glass and cast bronze. Collection of the artist. *Rim*, 2013. Cast glass, forged bronze, on a welded steel stand. Collection of the artist.

TOOTS ZYNSKY

“The entire physical and thought process is similar to drawing, painting, and sculpture combined.”

Born Mary Ann but known as Toots since infancy, Zynsky grew up in Massachusetts and knew by the age of 11 that she wanted to go to the Rhode Island School of Design. In her first year she was attracted to the energy and movement of those working with hot glass in the new department headed by Dale Chihuly. Zynsky began working in the medium at RISD in 1970, and eventually mastered casting, fusing, blowing, and slumping of heated glass. From 1971 to 1973 as a student she assisted Chihuly in founding and establishing the Pilchuck Glass School in Stanwood, Washington, and earned a BFA in Sculpture/Glass at RISD in 1973. The 1970s were a period of experimentation for her, working with glass and other materials in video performance, with a return to RISD in 1979 as a special student in the advanced glass program.

In the early 1980s, Zynsky served as the assistant director at the New York Experimental Glass Workshop (now UrbanGlass, in Brooklyn) and taught classes at the Parsons School of Design. It was at this time that Zynsky developed a technique she named *filet-de-verre* (“glass thread”) using thousands of glass threads that are fused and shaped in a kiln into unique sculptural pieces. In 1983 Zynsky moved to Europe, residing in Amsterdam and Paris and traveling widely, including to Ghana for six months to record and research music.

In Europe Zynsky’s process matured. Work starts with meter-length glass cane from Murano, Italy, in dozens of colors. A machine she developed with Dutch engineer Mathijs Teunissen Van Manen heats one end of the cane and draws it out into a fine thread which is cut at

meter-length intervals. One cane can produce seven kilometers of thread. A small completed vessel can require about 32 kilometers of thread, necessitating a large inventory of glass to begin any project. Zynsky next lays thousands of glass threads onto a heat-resistant plate, creating swaths of color. Transferring the plate to a kiln fuses the threads together. Depending on the desired final form, the glass is then either slumped into a bowl-shaped metal form or over a cone-shaped form for taller works. While the piece is in the kiln, Zynsky repeatedly reaches in with heat-resistant gloves to shape the mass into a sensual vessel.

“The glass threads are simply my raw material,” observes Zynsky. “The entire physical and thought process is similar to drawing, painting, and sculpture combined. My work is largely inspired by music.” As a person with synesthesia, when Zynsky hears music it translates to color.

In 1999, Zynsky returned to the US and settled in Providence, Rhode Island, where she first began her journey in glass. It continues in her latest series of vessels, *Endangered Species*, which are inspired and named for birds threatened by human development and climate change. Since 1975, Zynsky has been a guest lecturer/visiting artist at more than 50 schools, museums, galleries, and companies in 16 US states and nine foreign countries. With artwork in over 75 museums around the world, Zynsky is renowned for her distinctive vessels that capture movement, music, and painting within each sculpture.





Clockwise, from left:
Ascesa, 2019. Filet-de-Verre; Fused and thermo formed colored glass threads. Courtesy of the artist and Heller Gallery. *Geometry Lessons II*, 1992. Filet-de-Verre; Fused and thermo formed colored glass threads. Courtesy of the artist. Zynsky making Ascesa, 2019.

Fire & Form: New Directions in Glass Exhibition Checklist

JOSEPH CAVALIERI (b. 1961)

Dive, 2015
Hand-painted and silk-screened enamels on stained glass
Loaned by Graeme Reid

The Two Nanny Goats, 2003
Hand-painted enamel, stained glass, solder, and LED lights
Loaned by Susan and Fred Sanders

Pop Culture Children, 2019
Kiln slumped glass set into a steel frame with LED lights
Loaned by the artist

Hansel & Gretel, 2019
Pen on draft film, stained glass, solder, wood, and LED lights
Loaned by the artist

Lay Back and Think of England, 2019
Silk-screened and kiln-fired enamels on layered glass set into a steel frame with LED lights
Loaned by the artist

Helen Hayes, 2019
Silk-screened and air brushed enamels on glass, set into a steel frame with LED lights
Loaned by the artist

Isaac in Red, 2015
Silk-screened and kiln fired enamels on glass
Loaned by the artist

DEBORAH CZERESKO (b. 1961)

Peach, 2013
Sculpted glass and fabricated stainless steel
Loaned by the artist

Fruit Bowl, 2013
Blown glass, woven glass, and mirror base
Loaned by the artist

Maquette for Fruit Bowl, 2013
Blown glass, woven glass, and mirror base
Loaned by the artist

Bicycle, 2012
Solid sculpted glass and mirror base
Loaned by the artist

Hub Caps, 2021
21 individually blown and mirrored glass sculptures
Loaned by the artist

Exhaust Muffler, 2021
Sculpted and blown glass
Loaned by the artist

HOKANSON DIX (BENGT HOKANSON, b. 1969, AND TREFNY DIX, b. 1968)

Made with Deborah Czeresko, *Hydrant I*, 2005
Cast glass
Loaned by the artists

Black Sea, 2021
Blown glass
Loaned by the artists

Juliet, 2012
Blown glass
Loaned by the artists

Romeo, 2012
Blown glass
Loaned by the artists

Tapestry, 2019
Blown glass
Loaned by the artists

The Valise, 2020
Blown glass
Loaned by the artists

Sail Series I, 2021
Blown glass
Loaned by the artists

Sail Series II, 2021
Blown glass
Loaned by the artists

Purse Series-red, 2021
Blown glass
Loaned by the artists

Purse Series-blue, 2021
Blown glass
Loaned by the artists

Horizon Lines, 2021
Blown glass
Loaned by the artists

BETH LIPMAN (b. 1971)

Northern Monkshood Composition, 2020
Glass, wood, metal, paint, and adhesive
Courtesy of Beth Lipman
and Nohra Haime Gallery

Whatnot II, 2010
Glass, paint, and adhesive
Courtesy of Beth Lipman
and Nohra Haime Gallery

JUDITH SCHAECHTER (b. 1961)

Our Ladies, 2012
Stained glass
Courtesy of the artist and Claire Oliver Gallery

The Minotaur, 2009
Stained glass
Courtesy of the artist and Claire Oliver Gallery

Mother, 2013
Stained glass
Courtesy of the artist and Claire Oliver Gallery

Human/Nature, 2016
Stained glass
Courtesy of the artist and Claire Oliver Gallery

Odalisque, 2015
Stained glass
Courtesy of the artist and Claire Oliver Gallery

Realism, 2016
Stained glass
Courtesy of the artist and Claire Oliver Gallery

ANDY STENERSON (b. 1963)

Made with artist Kim Petro,
Amethyst Peanut Plaid, 2002
Blown glass
Loaned by the artist

Made with artist Kim Petro,
Tall Green Plaid Cylinder, 2002
Blown glass
Loaned by the artist

Amagansett Salt Frost, 2019
Rondelle glass
Loaned by the artist

Amethyst Splash, 2020
Rondelle glass
Loaned by the artist

Green Expanse, 2020
Rondelle glass
Loaned by the artist

Amber Gumdrop Lamp, 2021
Blown glass
Loaned by the artist

Pentagonal 2 Color Lamp, 2021
Blown glass
Loaned by the artist

MARIANNE WEIL (b. 1952)

Settlement, 2006-2012
Blown glass and cast bronze
Collection of the artist

Simulacrum, 2012
Blown glass and copper
Collection of the artist

Shooting Star, 2015
Cast glass on welded steel stand
Collection of the artist

Cobalt Dream, 2015
Cast St. Petersburg imperial blue glass
and copper
Collection of the artist

Alight, 2017
Cast glass, cast bronze, and copper
on welded steel stand
Collection of the artist

Rim, 2013
Cast glass, forged bronze, on welded steel stand
Collection of the artist

Waking Muse, 2019
Cast glass, cast bronze, and copper wire
Collection of the artist

Switchback Pass, 2017
Cast glass, cast bronze, and copper
Collection of the artist

TOOTS ZYNSKY (b. 1951)

Geometry Lessons II, 1992
Filet-de-Verre; Fused and thermo formed
colored glass threads
Courtesy of the artist

Ascesa, 2019
Filet-de-Verre; Fused and thermo formed
colored glass threads
Courtesy of the artist and Heller Gallery,
New York City

Ombroso, 2019
Filet-de-Verre; Fused and thermo formed
colored glass threads
Courtesy of the artist and Heller Gallery,
New York City

Itricato, 2015
Filet-de-Verre; Fused and thermo formed
colored glass threads
Courtesy of the artist and Heller Gallery,
New York City

Invernale, 2014
Filet-de-Verre; Fused and thermo formed
colored glass threads
Courtesy of the artist and Heller Gallery,
New York City

Raggiana Bird-of-Paradise, 2020
Filet-de-Verre; Fused and thermo formed
colored glass threads
Courtesy of the artist and Heller Gallery,
New York City

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Front cover:

Beth Lipman (b. 1971)
Northern Monkshood Composition, (detail) 2020
Glass, wood, metal, paint and adhesive
Courtesy of the artist and Nohra Haime Gallery
Photograph by Rich Maciejewski

Back cover:

Toots Zynsky (b. 1951)
Geometry Lessons II, 1992
Filet-de-Verre; Fused and thermo
formed colored glass threads
Courtesy of the artist

Artist biographies written by Joshua Ruff
and Jonathan Olly

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