the
Gather
Summer 2012
Members’ Magazine
Dear Members,

This is my first communication to you in The Gather, and I want to start by thanking you for your ongoing support of the Museum. It is your interest that keeps us planning for the future, with new acquisitions, new exhibitions, new publications, and new programs, all of which are designed to keep you engaged with us. And in 2014, we will have impressive new spaces to share with you that will be used to display our ever-growing contemporary glass collection and to demonstrate glassmaking. So stay tuned as we continue our work with Thomas Phifer and Partners on the design of these novel spaces.

This year, we’re celebrating the 50th anniversary of the American Studio Glass movement, and this issue of The Gather features a number of exhibitions and activities at the Museum that celebrate this half-century love affair with glass. Whether you are a glassmaker, or a contemporary glass collector or admirer, you too are a participant in the love fest that began in 1962. Personally, I am a scholar of ancient Roman glass, but since arriving in Corning last August, I have jumped headfirst into a love affair with modern and contemporary glass. And what better place to learn about this innovative field than at the world’s best glass museum, where the rich collections are complemented by the visits of leading artists and designers who are actively taking glass art and design into the next half-century? It is truly a thrill for me to be able to stroll through our galleries, taking in objects made over two millennia that exemplify the history of glassmaking, and then to walk over to The Studio to see the current generation of glass artists practicing the same craft that began thousands of years ago.

After spending my scholarly career wondering what was going on in the minds of the ancient Roman craftsmen who created the first blown vessels, I now have an opportunity to hear from contemporary artists as they discuss their creative process. And when I can’t make it to The Studio, I’ve taken advantage of the Museum’s growing archive of live-streamed demonstrations and events to learn more. These videos can be found on our newly redesigned and improved website; I hope you’ll take the opportunity to visit it and to explore the many new resources that are now available for all lovers of glass. With this website redesign, we are able to better fulfill our mission to tell the world about glass.

Thus far, my first year at this incredible Museum has been a rewarding and enriching experience, and I look forward to meeting you at one of our many events and programs.

With all best wishes,

Karol Wight
Executive Director
Earlier this year, the Museum launched its redesigned website. The site features a new integrated search function with access to more than 200,000 records from both the Museum’s comprehensive collection of art and historical glass and the Rakow Research Library’s collection of archival and reference materials on the history of glass and glassmaking.

Highlight features include more than 30 years of images available to view online for the first time from the Museum’s prestigious annual journal New Glass Review, as well as a mobile site, online registration for glassmaking classes at The Studio, and an All About Glass section featuring more than 350 videos, 100 articles, and 225 recently digitized books.

The Museum partnered with IMA Lab of the Indianapolis Museum of Art to design and develop the site. Those unable to make it to the Museum for live glassmaking demonstrations and lectures now have the opportunity to join in from anywhere in the world. For the first time last summer, the Museum introduced live-streamed Studio demonstrations by some of the best-known artists and instructors in glass. In March, hundreds of school children participated in Meet the Astronaut with Cady Coleman, live streamed to their classrooms. Upcoming live streaming events include Meet the Artist lectures, sessions of the 2012 Annual Seminar on Glass, and, this summer, a weekly series of live-streamed demonstrations at The Studio. See cmog.org/live for details. Videos are posted on the Museum’s YouTube channel following the live events.

Junior Scientists

This spring, the Museum kicked off its newest teen program, Junior Scientists, with a trip to The Studio, where the students created—and destroyed—their own Prince Rupert’s drops. This initial hands-on experiment was an introduction to the ideas of stress and tension in glass. Students in this first inquisitive group come from local middle and high schools who meet at the Museum once a week. The Junior Scientists were tasked to design, create, and conduct their own experiments. They used resources at the Rakow Library and met with scientists at Corning Incorporated to ask questions and receive help with their experiments before presenting their findings at a Finale Event, which took place on June 12.

Made in Corning, NY

The former Steuben store space in the Museum’s GlassMarket has been transformed into a “Made in Corning, NY” shop, featuring the works of local glass artists. At the opening event on October 7, 2011, local artists cut 22 ribbons, celebrating each artist represented in this section of the GlassMarket.

National Design Awards

For its 2011 National Design Award, the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, partnered with The Corning Museum of Glass to design a new take on the trophy’s original twisted asterisk form.

Museum glassmaker Eric Meek made multiple prototypes as part of the Museum’s GlassLab program. The two museums chose a piece that offers significant optical interest and distortion in the glass.

The award trophies were given to more than 10 designers for their achievements in industrial design, communication design, landscape design, and more at the prestigious National Design Awards Gala in New York this past October. You can read about the making of the award at cmog.org/blog.
On June 7, more than 200 people joined in celebrating the official groundbreaking of the North Wing Expansion, a $64 million project fully funded by the Museum’s major benefactor, Corning Incorporated.

Designed by Thomas Phifer and Partners, the 100,000-square-foot expansion features new light-filled galleries to show contemporary works in glass, and one of the world’s largest facilities to support glassblowing demonstrations and live glass design sessions.

“Over the past decade, we’ve experienced tremendous growth: in our collections; in our increasingly diverse audiences; and in the breadth and ambition of our public programs, especially those that allow visitors to experience the energy of artists and designers at work,” said the Museum’s executive director Karol Wight. “This is a transformative design that responds to those demands.”

A new building, designed by Phifer, will feature a contemporary gallery design with a sophisticated daylighting system. The Museum will be the first to have a large-scale installation of contemporary glass using natural light. Tina Oldknow, curator of modern glass, notes: “The new daylighting system represents a dramatic change in how contemporary works in glass are viewed, and the Museum’s monumental sculptures will have an exhibition space appropriate to their size.”

The design also includes an innovative renovation of the iconic ventilator building of the former Steuben Glass factory, which is adjacent to the Museum’s current building. A new energy-smart hotshop will support daily glassmaking demonstrations, guest artists, and glass design sessions. The new glassmaking space will accommodate 500 people and features a gallery-level balcony running around the perimeter of the venue and offering 360-degree views of the glassmaking below.

Landscape architecture firm Reed Hilderbrand Associates has designed new outdoor gathering areas for the public, including a 1-acre campus green that will provide views into the luminous new gallery and glassmaking spaces. A 150-foot-long window wall on the façade of the contemporary gallery building will provide views out to the campus green and into the galleries.

The contemporary gallery façade will be made of white aluminum, with perpendicular blades of ultra-thin specialty glass. Inside, visitors will encounter soaring, light-filled spaces as they move seamlessly from the admissions lobby, through the contemporary galleries, and into the new glassmaking demonstration venue.

As part of the facility improvement, the GlassMarket Café was recently renovated by Haigh Architects to provide improved and expanded kitchen facilities, and increased seating capacity for visitors. Smith Miller + Hawkinson were also invited to revisit their 1999 design for the Museum’s orientation theater and transform it into an additional dynamic new glass demonstration venue, which opened in early July.

This new North Wing will effectively complete the Museum’s circulation plan, linking three generations of architecture spanning 60 years. The new master plan respects the original architecture, repurposes spaces to better serve both the Museum and its research and academic programs, and enhances the visitor experience. The construction process will be documented online.

The Museum will remain open during the construction phase, offering all programs and galleries. The construction will be completed in 2014.

Follow along to find out what’s happening by visiting cmog.org/expansion. We’ll post updates there on a regular basis.
Masters of Studio Glass: Erwin Eisch showcases 22 vessels and sculptures by Eisch, one of the founders of studio glass in Europe. The exhibition recognizes Eisch for his achievements in developing glass as a material for artistic expression, and, along with other Museum exhibitions in 2012, it celebrates the 50th anniversary of the birth of studio glass in the United States. The exhibition, which opened on March 15, is on view through February 3, 2013.

Erwin Eisch, Art, and Glass in the 1960s

Eisch was born in 1927 in the Bavarian town of Frauenau, where his father was employed as a master engraver. Eisch grew up around glass, and, at 19, began apprenticing with his father, learning glass cutting and engraving while studying at the well-known Glasfachschule (glassmaking school) in the nearby town of Zwiesel.

In 1949, he completed his course at Zwiesel, and he enrolled in the Akademie der Bildenden Künste (Academy of Fine Arts) in Munich, where he studied interior design, painting, sculpture, and glass. Taking a break from his studies in 1952, Eisch returned to Frauenau to help his father and brothers start up a glassworks of their own, the Glashütte Valentin Eisch.

Eisch resumed his studies in Munich in 1956. He remembers this as “the time of abstract art, Art Informel, of Jackson Pollock’s action painting.” Ever the rebel, Eisch gravitated in his art toward social criticism and anti-art-establishment actions, creating provocative paintings, sculpture, and installations.

In 1962, Eisch married the sculptor Margarete (Gretel) Stadler and they moved to Frauenau. There, while raising a family, Eisch and his wife, who had studied with him in Munich, made glass objects at the family’s glassworks with expressionistic forms and non-traditional engraved and enameled decoration.

Erwin Eisch and Harvey K. Littleton

In August 1962, Harvey Littleton and his wife, Bess, were in Germany on a European tour focused on researching glass and glassmaking. A visit to Zwiesel was a key destination, and in town, Littleton happened to see a “squashed” vase made by Eisch. Inquiring as to where he could see more of Eisch’s work, Littleton was directed to the glassworks in Frauenau, where he met the Eisches.

Although Eisch spoke limited English and Littleton limited German, they formed the beginning of a friendship that would last a lifetime. It was a memorable meeting. Many years later, Littleton recalled, “I saw [Eisch’s] work and I realized that he was doing what I wanted to do—play with the glass, make forms that had no other reason for being than that he wanted to make them. Function was something to be used or not used. Totally free. . . I knew I had met someone of great importance to what I wanted to do.”

Eisch’s observation on their serendipitous meeting was, “It is astonishing how the wind acts, and the spirit wafts. . . You can call it coincidence if you want to, but I believe that there are mysterious forces (of the spiritual kind) which spin and weave their connecting threads, bringing together what is meant to be.”

In 1964, Littleton brought Eisch to the United States. Eisch visited The Corning Museum of Glass for the first time, where he met the Museum’s director, Tom Buechner. After Corning, Littleton and Eisch continued on to Madison, WI, where Eisch taught the first of many workshops in the United States.
In addition to the glassmaking equipment at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Littleton had a furnace on his farm in nearby Verona. “There, in the barn, which recently had been home to 27 cows, stood a small furnace, several annealing ovens, and tools and machines of all kinds,” Eisch remembers. “This was all very new for me.”

In 1988, Eisch established a summer art program in Frauenau, Bild-Werk, that focuses on instruction in painting and artistic glassmaking. Now in his mid-80s, Eisch is still active in the studio and in participating in Bild-Werk.

**Exhibition Objects**

The Museum’s exhibition features objects by Eisch that span 40 years of his career in glass, from 1964 to 2004.

The earliest works in the exhibition include vessels that Eisch made in the United States as well as popular pieces designed for the Glashütte Valentin Eisch. His expressionistic and gestural sculptures from the late 1960s and early 1970s, most of which are untitled, are personal works that explore the body and its parts. A group of objects made in the 1980s demonstrates Eisch’s ongoing concern with imperfect forms and impenetrable surfaces.

One of the most influential aspects of Eisch’s work in glass, for American artists, was that its dark colors and opaque decoration intentionally denied the qualities of glass that were traditionally its most prized. Eisch felt free to treat the glass any way he wanted, and to completely disregard function in the service of poetry.

The most characteristic aspects of glass are its transparency and its ability to manipulate light. This is not what interests Eisch, however, who favors mystery, exploration, and emotional depth. For him, transparency negates all these things. It is shallow, easy beauty. Eisch prefers that beauty be challenging, that “perfect” glass be rendered imperfect, so that it reflects the totality of experience.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is Eisch’s monumental portrait, *Eight Heads of Harvey Littleton*, which he made in 1976. In each head, a different facet of Littleton’s personality is explored. We see Littleton as a gentleman, a poet, a teacher, a man of Frauenau, and a worker. We see him with a headache, or fragile, and most typical for Eisch, we see his spirit. As would become standard practice for them, Gretel Eisch modeled the head in clay and Eisch made the mold, blew the glass forms, and painted them with enamels.

Following this homage to Littleton, portrait heads emerged as a predominant theme in Eisch’s sculpture, which includes numerous self-portraits and portraits of personalities influential to him, such as the Buddha and Pablo Picasso.

Eisch’s work in glass exhibits a strong expressionistic quality that links it to German Expressionism; it also contains elements of folk culture, a darkness and obscurity reminiscent of Art Informel, and an interest in cartoonish humor and exaggeration typical of Pop and Funk. Cognizant of all of these movements and styles, Eisch developed a unique approach to, and philosophy of, making that is intensely individualistic and humanistic. Working with glass in a manner out of the bounds of traditional craft, he found a means to engage with the issues of contemporary art.

You can see more images of Eisch’s work at cmog.org/exhibitions.
Like most pioneers of the American Studio Glass movement, Fritz Dreisbach was first drawn to the possibilities of blowing molten glass. It was the 60s. He and such early designer-artists as Dale Chihuly and Marvin Lipofsky were happily blowing organic, eccentric, free-form objects purposefully shunning both the traditions of European glassblowers and the glass industry's focus on function. “It was all brand new. We didn’t know where it was going... The spirit of the times was one of experimentation and freedom, and glass seemed like the perfect medium,” recalls Dreisbach.

Though some of his peers veered into other ways of working with glass, and some returned to ceramics, Dreisbach has stayed with glassblowing for almost 50 years. His work is notable for expressing the fluidity and weight of glass and capturing the gooey “wet” quality of glass in its molten form. He has also become a student of historic glass traditions and glass chemistry. He mastered the Venetian techniques of filigree long ago, though the delicate, colorful strands make unexpected appearances in his heavy, undulating “Mongos,” which purposely simulate the “out-of-control” movement of hot glass. Applied bits of glass flow down the sides of his vessel from a massive, wet-looking lip, and appear to pool at the base. Overlays of transparent glass refract and magnify the filigree, which seem to sway and shimmer in sunlit waters, or darken in shadow, depending on the light and the viewer’s position.

More recently, he began experimenting with cutting and carving colored blown-glass “blanks.” While the glass is still hot, he adds bits of glass to the original bubble to vary thickness and color. Then he carves sharp, non-geometric edges in the glass to amplify thick-to-thin variations and create the appearance of perpetual movement. He is also exploring surface treatments that balance smoothness and roughness. “What I am after is glass that light moves through easily, appearing never to stop.”

A founding member of the Glass Art Society, 1993 recipient of the Museum’s Rakow Commission, 2002 recipient of the Society’s Lifetime Achievement Award, and unofficial historian of the American Studio Glass movement, Dreisbach has played a singular role in promoting glass as an artistic medium. In the early years, he traveled the country, demonstrating glassblowing, and organizing workshops and classes. Since then, he has taught in glassmaking schools and programs worldwide. Like his glass—colorful, spontaneous, and exuberant—he has inspired so many artists to try working with glass that he has rightly been dubbed the “Johnny Appleseed” of the American Studio Glass movement.

You can watch the full video of Dreisbach’s June 7 Meet the Artist lecture online at youtube.com/corningmuseumofglass.

Meet the Artist
Fritz Dreisbach

Commemorative Pokal Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the 1962 Toledo Glass Workshops and Fritz Dreisbach’s 30 Years of Working with Glass, Fritz Dreisbach with the assistance of Lark Dalton, 8th Rakow Commission, 1993.
Making Ideas: Experiments in Design at GlassLab

Tina Oldknow, Curator of Modern Glass

This summer’s major exhibition, Making Ideas: Experiments in Design at GlassLab, showcases the Museum’s signature design program, GlassLab, in which international designers are invited to work with hot glass. The exhibition, on view through January 6, 2013, features over 150 design prototypes by nearly 50 designers. Presented during the 50th anniversary year of the American Studio Glass movement, Making Ideas celebrates the spirit of freedom and experimentation with material and process that characterized the early years of studio glass.

GlassLab grew out of a Corning Museum–sponsored workshop at the Domaine de Boisbuchet summer design program in southwestern France. The workshop, called “Liquid Fusion,” was organized by architect and designer Paul Haigh. The aim of the workshop was to introduce design students to the properties of glass by allowing them to work with it in a molten state. Inspired by this, and with the help of Haigh, the Museum developed a program for professional designers, called GlassLab, which has made public appearances during important art and design fairs at Design Miami in Miami; the Vitra Design Museum in Weil am Rhein, Germany; and the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, in New York City.

At these venues, international designers are invited to work on GlassLab, where, with the help of the Museum’s artist-glassblowers, they have the rare opportunity to develop concepts in glass. In public “design performances,” designers and glassmakers collaborate, using the immediacy of hot glass as a catalyst for innovation through the rapid shaping of forms, and through the exploration of the unique properties of glass.

Accessing Glass
Histoirically, glass is a material to which access has been limited, unlike materials such as ceramic, bronze, wood, and stone. Molten glass is traditionally found in the industrial environment of commercial glassworks, which are not open to outsiders who might want to experiment. A designer’s involvement with the material typically consists of submitting a series of drawings and then examining prototypes sent for approval. This kind of limited interaction gives the designer little idea of what the material is capable of doing and how it may be manipulated and developed.

Although designers do not need to know how to make objects themselves, it is helpful to have knowledge of the process in order to better understand the material and to design innovatively for it. In the case of glass, a material about which so much is unknown, it becomes even more important for the designer to understand its properties through process.

Because glass is a demanding material to form, designers in a glassworks are often promoted from within. Glass cutters and engravers, as well as professional glassblowers, are thought to know best how glass can, and cannot, be used. This practice, over the decades, has narrowed the field of vision for what might be possible, resulting in conservative and repetitive designs for glass. To encourage experimentation and innovation, some glass companies, like Venini in Italy and Steuben in the United States, hired outside artists, designers, and architects to make designs for glass.

A Program for Designers
As sculptors and painters experimenting with glass have profoundly influenced the ways in which the material can be expressed in art, so may designers influence the ways in which we encounter glass every day. In today’s more fluid and receptive design environment, glass, in particular, has the opportunity of being used in newly expressive ways.
Encouraging new design in glass means that the ways in which the material is traditionally accessed must be broadened. Such new access is demonstrated by GlassLab’s focus on material and process, which aims to help the designer realize new forms, functions, and meanings for glass. Although design in glass goes back to antiquity, designing for glass remains a new frontier.

The goal of GlassLab is not to design a “perfect” product but rather to offer the designer meaningful insights into the material. Using the resources of GlassLab, designers have the opportunity to work with multiple glassforming processes. The GlassLab program is an immersive and collaborative experience that is informed by the ever-changing and immediate nature of the material itself.

Making Ideas
The Making Ideas exhibition centers on material and on the activity of thinking and making. It emphasizes the role of designers and the process of creation and collaboration using glass as a design material.

Prototypes range from explorations of anatomy, such as Sigga Heimis’ organs of the body, to inspirations from the natural world, such as Michele Oka Doner’s seaweed bowls. Some designers, such as Olgoj Chorchoj (Michal Froněk and Jan Němeček), work with ideas about space and transparency, while Tim Dubitsky transforms two-dimensional graphic concepts into three dimensions.

Constantin and Laurene Boym destroy glass by breaking and shattering it, while Wendell Castle considers the classic martini drinking set. Jeff Zimmerman and Paul Cockedge examine process in different ways by immersing themselves in the performative nature of glassmaking. Most importantly, all of the designers have fun, and this is especially evident in the toy-like creations of Nacho Carbonell and Sebastián Errázuriz, and the explosives of Stephen and William Ladd. Together, these typologies, or categories of investigation, build an expanded design vocabulary for glass.

To learn more, download our web-based app at cmog.org/glasslab that draws on the extensive documentation of GlassLab, providing information about the designers, process videos, photographs of drawings, glassworking processes, and prototypes, as well as links to the designers’ websites.

GlassLab design sessions will take place throughout the summer, both at the Museum and on the road.

At the Museum
Tuesdays & Wednesdays, May 29–August 29, 2012
10am to 12pm
on the Hot Glass Show Courtyard Stage
May 29–30
Josh Owen
June 5–6
Jason Miller
June 12–13
Peter Sís
June 19–20
Wendell Castle
June 26–27
Sigi Moeslenger & Masamichi Udagawa
July 3–4
RIT Metaproject students
(Daniel Ipp & Tom Zogas)
July 10–11
Sebastián Errázuriz
July 17–18
Jon Otis
July 24–25
Tom Scott
July 31–August 1
Michele Oka Doner
August 7–8
Constantin & Laurene Boym
August 14–15
Tim Dubitsky
August 21–22
Harry Allen
August 28–29
Steven & William Ladd

Governors Island, New York City
Weekends, June 30–July 29, 11am–6:30pm
Partnering with the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, the Corning Museum will present design performances featuring graphic designers included in the exhibition, Graphic Design: Now in Production, co-organized by the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum and the Walker Art Center, and on display on Governors Island this summer. For a schedule of GlassLab sessions on Governors Island, visit cmog.org/glasslab.

Hot Glass Nantucket 2012
Nantucket, MA
August 10–12
As part of a weekend of hot glass sponsored by Nantucket’s Dane Gallery, New York designer Ted Muehling will participate in a GlassLab design performance. More details at danegallery.com.
There is a sign in the Museum’s Admissions Lobby that features a red line and the words “High Water Level, June 23, 1972.” This simple label fascinates visitors, but only hints at the epic story of immense damage and brave recovery.

Those who study the red line realize that if water filled nearly three feet of the current Lobby, it must have inundated the lower level of the Museum, which now houses the GlassMarket. What the flood line sign doesn’t convey is that the flood that caught everyone unaware in the early hours of that June day scattered display cases and historic glass objects across galleries and gutted the Museum’s renowned Library. Or that it sent 17 people and two dogs onto the roof, where they were rescued by helicopter after dawn. Or that in the Steuben factory next to the Museum, flood waters rose to a height of 25 feet.

All of this from a shallow, placid river, which is a block away from the Museum and sits more than 20 feet lower than the Lobby floor.

At the time, then-president of the Museum, Thomas S. Buechner, accurately dubbed the flood of 1972 “the greatest single catastrophe borne by an American museum.”

The story of the flood and the remarkable recovery that followed is told in an exhibition in the Museum’s Rakow Library, The Flood of ’72: Community, Collections, and Conservation, which opened May 24. Marking the flood’s 40th anniversary, the exhibit looks at how the flood-ravaged city and Museum not only came together to clean up but also helped improve disaster response protocols for museums around the world.

John Fox, then director of the Corning Glass Center (the Center also housed The Corning Museum of Glass and its Library and glass collection), recalls that two out-of-town Museum visitors and about a dozen neighbors gathered at his home across the street from the Museum the night of June 22. Though Tropical Storm Agnes had stalled over the area for three days, dumping record levels of rain, and the river had nearly reached the top of the dikes, the National Weather Service (misled by primitive computer technology) had assured residents that the Chemung River would crest below flood stage.

Around midnight, Fox and his guests took shelter on the third floor of the Glass Center. Peering anxiously out the windows around 5am, Fox recalls that he saw a wall of water coming toward the Museum from the north, where a dike had broken. Soon there was another wall of water from the southeast (where a railroad bridge weighted down with 15 coal gondolas had collapsed).

“The water circled the Museum, carrying our cars away. The Hall of Science and Industry was flooded. We could hear glass crashing everywhere.” Fox ran into the Museum, hoping to save anything he could. He fixed upon a Venetian dragon-stem goblet, but could not open the case.

As the water continued to rise, Fox returned to his guests. Grabbing a ladder, they heaved themselves onto the roof, where former soldiers among them erected a teepee with pieces of lumber and covered it with carpet torn from the room below to protect the women, two of them elderly, and children from the driving rain until they were rescued by helicopter.

Puzzled by the lack of electricity and silent radio stations, Joe Maio, a former Museum preparator, climbed the hill behind his house. “Where there used to be a river, now there was a valley filled with water.” Thousands of people, awakened before dawn, had hurriedly left their homes and were in evacuation centers.
As the water receded, cars, houses, and debris that had been carried downstream in the dirty, swirling waters could be seen dumped blocks, even miles away. Four inches of slippery “flood mud” covered streets, buildings, floors, and furniture. Eighteen people perished in the flood. Four thousand homes were destroyed or damaged. A quarter of the area’s population was temporarily homeless. While the community struggled to rebuild homes and lives, the Museum fought to save their historical collection of glass and Library items.

In the aftermath, the staff, volunteers, and expert restorers brought in from around the country and Europe faced daunting challenges. A case of rare Persian glass objects, borrowed for a temporary exhibition, lay face down in the main gallery, shattered, everything in it covered with “flood mud.” Most of the objects inside were broken. Another case was found 60 feet away, its contents in pieces.

As the water had risen, glass objects had floated, then come down slowly, some crushed by shelves or heavier pieces that settled on them. Others rested precariously inside the cases. Objects that had once been repaired with water-soluble adhesives had come apart, and fragments were embedded in the mud underfoot. A dark line on display cases and walls marked the height of the water in the Museum: five feet, four inches.

In the Library, the case of 600 rare books and manuscripts had fallen over, its contents soaked. The Library was a muddy shambles. To retard mold, 7,100 damaged books were frozen, first in home freezers, then walk-in freezers. The books were thawed, sterilized, and cleaned page by page, then rebound. More than 3,500 books printed on coated paper were thawed and vacuum-dried in a GE “space chamber” developed for the United States space program. Periodicals, slides, and photos of the collection were a complete loss.

A professional glass restorer was summoned from Germany, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s master restorer was called out of retirement. One of the Museum’s exhibit builders, Ray Errett, proved to be immensely talented with his hands and became the Museum’s first official glass conservator. The idea of freeze-drying water-soaked books came from Carolyn Horton of New York City, who had been involved in book conservation after the 1966 flood in Florence, Italy. Horton restored hundreds of the Museum’s books.

Despite the devastating damage and massive clean-up required, Museum president Thomas S. Buechner declared that the Museum would open on August 1, 1972, six weeks after the flood. The deadline galvanized staff and volunteers. At 9am on August 1, the Museum welcomed 3,000 visitors. However, the collection restoration took four years. Of the Museum’s 13,000 glass objects, 481 damaged objects were painstakingly restored; 38 could not be saved; and nine would await future advances in glass restoration.

Learn more about the flood at cmog.org/exhibitions.
This year, The Studio has invited 12 artists to research and experiment with new techniques as Artists-in-Residence.

Resident Artists at The Studio

Matheiu Grodet (March)
French-born Canadian artist Grodet creates thin and elegant glass objects in classic Venetian style, engraved with imagery that addresses modern-day ideas and issues. Grodet's first engraved goblet, now in the Museum's collection, announced what would be the maxim for his future body of work: “My conscience is my only master.” During his residency, Grodet used the Museum’s Rakow Library to research forms and styles for vessels, as well as sketches for his final drawings on the vessels.

Norwood Viviano (March)
Viviano uses digital 3D modeling and printing technology in combination with the casting process to create his sculptural works. His focus is on “smaller Midwestern industrialized cities that witnessed a huge population exodus during the second half of the 20th century.” In his residency, Viviano created an industrial landscape of the Kohler Factory out of kiln-cast glass as an extension of previous installations.

Inganela Klenell (May)
Klenell’s work explores the ideas of fragility and vulnerability, both in the material of glass and in life itself. She creates ways to transcend the limits of techniques and of her own skill and creativity. At The Studio, Klenell worked on a project called Travelers. The project is based on the history of cultural exchange in trade relations between Venice and Egypt, inspired by a collection of glass shards found in Egypt that date from 1100 A.D. to 1400 A.D.

Laura Donefer and Jeff Mack (September)
Laura Donefer is an established Canadian artist best known for her colorful mixed media work. She has taught around the world and many of her trademark classes involve pushing the boundaries of glassmaking. Jeff Mack’s work references more traditional techniques. In their September 2012 Instructor Collaborative Residency, Donefer and Mack will imitate classic vessels in the Museum’s collection, adding crazy “Doneferian” twists, and loading them with texture.

Marta Ramírez (May)
A glass artist and industrial designer who teaches in Bogota, Columbia, Ramírez is inspired by water, which is reflected heavily in her work. She explores the similarities of this element and the material of glass through her art. In her residency, Ramírez interpreted the works of Shinichi Maruyama, a Japanese artist who uses the camera to capture frozen images of moving water.
Anna Boothe and Nancy Cohen (September)
Booth’s art addresses issues of balance, compassion, internal vs. external, and communication. Her work incorporates fabricated metal and found objects in kiln-cast glass. Cohen’s works are comprised of many mediums. She uses repetition to transform objects into rays of morphed forms that crawl across the surface of a wall. In their Collaborative Instructor Residency, Boothe and Cohen will create an installation piece inspired by a historical textile. Both artists will translate symbols into three-dimensional forms to create a visual reinterpretation of the tapestry.

Joanna Manousis (October)
Manousis’ work captures and animates transitional moments, revealing a world in which objects, being, and places are interconnected and in flux. She uses glass to induce reflection—both physically and metaphorically. At The Studio, Manousis is interested in working on a new body of work that alludes to both nature and to man-made artifice, creating a series of blown molded forms in clear glass that have thin layers of pâte de verre strategically inlaid into the blown surfaces.

JuYeon Kim (October)
Kim holds The Studio’s 2012 joint residency with the John Michael Kohler Arts Center. She will work on a “white bathroom” based on her recent enclosed room installations that are either blindingly white or dark—giving the viewer a sense of either infinite or claustrophobic space. Says Kim, “A bathroom has differing functions and connotations for people...The room has the function of a meditative space that allows the viewer to reflect on her thoughts while mindfully being aware of the daily activities practiced in the bathroom.”

Charles Stern (November)
Stern’s work references the decline of glass manufacture in western nations. A previous work, World of No Craft, involved making a selection of about 100 pieces that he used to create digital models and animations showing objects morphing from one shape to another. During his residency, Stern will create an interactive installation that acts as a link between the applied knowledge involved in glassblowing and a museum archive.

Andrew Erdos (November)
Erdos’ work is Pop, sarcastic, and humorous, with a hint of social commentary. He incorporates sculpture, video, performance, and sound to explore the current clash at the intersection of culture, technology, and nature. Erdos will use his residency to create work for his upcoming solo exhibition at the Claire Oliver Gallery in New York City. He will continue working on his series of mirrored, blown glass animals combined with new media elements.

Free Lectures
Thursday, October 25, 12pm
Joanna Manousis
Tuesday, November 27, 12pm
Andrew Erdos and Charles Stern
AIDA Fosters Emerging Israeli Artists Working in Glass

Although the first glass furnace in modern Israel was built at Jerusalem’s Bezalel Academy of Art by Marvin Lipofsky in the mid-70s, the first formal academic glass training program was not started until 1997, spurred in part by Dale Chihuly’s exhibition, Chihuly in The Light of Jerusalem.

If interest in glass as art was late to take hold in modern Israel, it is surging now, thanks in large measure to the work of The Association of Israel’s Decorative Arts (AIDA), which was founded in 2003 by the late Andy Bronfman, her husband Charles, and Dale and Doug Anderson. AIDA’s mission is to foster the development of contemporary decorative artists from Israel—including artists working in glass—by connecting them to galleries, collectors, institutions, and other artists internationally.

During a trip together to Israel in 2001, the four friends became impressed by the high quality and variety of craftsmanship in the small country and committed to garner international attention for the artists and their work. Although makers of jewelry and ceramics were fairly well established, emerging artists working in glass faced special challenges. Bezalel had the only large glassmaking furnace in Israel, and it was reserved for current students.

One of AIDA’s early initiatives was funding scholarships for blowing and casting in the first private glass hot shop in Tel Aviv, started by Maayan Feigen and Boris Speisman in 2007. AIDA also arranged for scholarships and internships for Maayan and Boris at the Pilchuck Glass School and the Museum of Glass in Tacoma.

AIDA began supporting scholarships at the Corning Museum of Glass’s glassmaking school, The Studio, in 2007, and a year later sponsored a workshop given at Bezalel by The Studio’s Resident Adviser, Bill Gudenrath. Last year Amy Schwartz, director of The Studio, traveled to Israel as AIDA’s guest, spending a week visiting glass artists with Aviva Ben-Sira, AIDA’s director.

Also in 2011, Andy Bronfman’s children—Jeremy, Pippa, and Tony Cohen—decided to formalize the relationship with The Corning Museum of Glass with an annual gift to AIDA in their mother’s memory. The gift funds five scholarships to The Studio and travel stipends. In Tony’s words, “Our mother would be proud of what AIDA has done to bring world attention to Israeli artists and to provide them with training and international opportunities to exhibit their work. She’d have loved this.”

Today AIDA has partnerships with The Studio, Pilchuck Glass School, Haystack Mountain School, Penland School of Crafts, and the Watershed Clay Center.

Ben-Sira adds that at The Corning Museum of Glass, the artists not only take classes but also have access to the Museum’s collections and curators, as well as the resources of the Rakow Library. “The importance of this generally comes as a surprise and is tremendous.”

Learn more about The Studio’s scholarship program and classes at cmog.org/thestudio.

Katerina Verguelis, a 2011 recipient of an AIDA scholarship at The Studio. Says Verguelis: “During my stay in Corning, I realized how much this place benefits artists... I am endlessly grateful to AIDA for the great opportunity and the perspectives their scholarship opened for me.”
Reverse painting depicting the Brant Mansion, St. Louis
M.A. Bugel (artist, no dates) and C. Kleinschmidt (sketch artist, no dates)
United States, about 1850–1860
Glass, paint, gliding, paper, pastel, wood, metal
Overall H: 71 cm, W: 81.7 cm, D: 4.1 cm
2012.4.36
Purchased in part with funds from the Gladys M. and Harry A. Snyder Memorial Trust
This elaborate reverse painting on glass, still in its original frame, is signed “M.A. Bugel, St. Louis. Sketch taken by C. Kleinschmidt.” The Brant Mansion was located at 806 Chouteau Street in St. Louis, and occupied an entire city block. It was built in the late 1840s by Colonel Joshua Brant (1790–1852), a veteran of the War of 1812. General John Charles Fremont rented the mansion in 1861, during the Civil War, when it was one of the city’s most prominent houses. However, the painting appears to date from the 1850s, before Fremont’s occupation.

While the Museum holds other American reverse paintings on glass, this is one of only a few actually signed by the artist. It is also much more elaborate than any others in the collection. Little information survives about the artists Bugel and Kleinschmidt, although both were clearly skilful artists. It is also unclear as to who commissioned the painting, but it seems most likely that it was the person living in the house at the time.

—Jane Shadel Spillman, Curator of American Glass

Candelabrum with Engraved Panel
T.G. Hawkes & Company
Corning, NY, 1920–1930
Overall H: 20.9 cm, W: 27.8 cm; Base Diam: 10.1 cm
2011.4.54
This piece was made in Corning, NY, by T.G. Hawkes and Company, which was one of the largest and longest-running cut glass manufacturers in the United States. It dates from the 1920s, a period from which relatively few objects from the company are represented in the collection. T.G. Hawkes and Company added a silversmith to their staff in 1912, allowing them to make their own mounts in house.

This candelabrum, whose engraved panel is decorated with a scene of swimming fish, is Art Deco in style, and can be precisely dated because it is shown in a 1925 photograph of the T.G. Hawkes showroom, located on Market Street in Corning. Most of the other glass cutting companies in Corning went out of business in the 1920s, but Hawkes was able to modernize its designs and thus stay in business until 1962.

—Jane Shadel Spillman, Curator of American Glass

“Multi-Vase” Lamp
Tejo Remy (Dutch, b. 1960) and René Veenhuizen (Dutch, b. 1968)
The Netherlands, Utrecht, Atelier Remy & Veenhuizen, 2011
Reclaimed glass, bonded; electrical fittings
H. 50 cm, Diam. 50 cm; length of hanging cord 160 cm
2011.3.135
The Dutch design partners Tejo Remy and René Veenhuizen are internationally known for their products that emphasize sustainability. In their Utrecht studio, they produce an array of visually arresting and intellectually stimulating furnishings. These range from benches made of repurposed bright yellow tennis balls (for the Boijmans van Beuningen Museum in Rotterdam) to colorful thick carpets made of recycled blankets that tip a hat to the long tradition of American rag rugs.

Remy is widely known for the iconic objects he created for Droog Design in the 1990s, such as the “Chest of Drawers,” made of discarded dresser drawers precariously bound together, or the “Rag Chair,” made of 15 bags of rags bundled with steel straps. Remy also designed the “Milk Bottle Lamp” for Droog, one of which hangs in the Museum’s Modern Glass Gallery.

Remy and Veenhuizen’s “Multi-Vase” hanging lamp, specially commissioned by the Museum, is made of reclaimed glass vessels. It is unique, because the bowls, cups, mugs, and vases used to make the lamps are—and always will be—different. In their exploration of the lives of objects and materials, Remy and Veenhuizen give new meaning to the concepts of reuse and reinvention.

—Tina Oldknow, Curator of Modern Glass
Catherine Thuro Research Archive

The Catherine Thuro Research Archive has taken its place among the Rakow Library’s superlative subject collections. This treasury contains the most complete body of information on kerosene lamps and lighting in a single grouping.

Assembled by Catherine Thuro over the past 35 years in the course of her research, much of it is the source material that she used in her three principal publications: Oil Lamps: The Kerosene Era in North America (1976); Oil Lamps II: Glass Kerosene Lamps (1983); and Oil Lamps 3: Victorian Kerosene Lighting 1860–1900 (2001).

Internationally recognized as the authority on the subject, Thuro began collecting kerosene glass lamps in the early 1970s, recording and eventually exhibiting them in galleries and museums. She has contributed a key entry to The Canadian Encyclopedia and served as consultant on historical lighting for Ontario’s Parliament as well as the Canada Science and Technology Museum in Ottawa. Her enthusiasm and scholarship have helped to promote the history of kerosene lighting in North America.

To date, the Library has received a large set of handsome black and white photographs showing significant examples of finely decorated lamps that appeared in Thuro’s first book. An extensive series of patents, enhanced by Thuro’s own reference system and annotations, adds a strong documentary dimension to the archive. As well, forthcoming imagery will make it one of the Library’s richest visual resources. For both preservation and wider accessibility, the Library plans to digitize as much as possible of this important illustrative material.

-Diane Dolbashian, Librarian

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Shallow bowl with abstract decoration
Hans Stoltenberg Lerche (German, 1867–1920)
Italy, Murano, Fratelli Toso, about 1912–1914
Blown, applied glass powders
H. 6 cm, Diam. 27.5 cm
2011.3.138

Hans Stoltenberg Lerche was a sculptor who explored many materials. He worked in a small ceramics factory in Germany before traveling to Florence in 1886 to continue his career. He later moved to Paris, where he modeled small sculptures in ceramics, gold, silver, bronze, and glass. He moved back to Italy—to Rome—in 1902, and he lived there until his death in 1920.

While in Rome, Lerche worked as a freelance designer for the Fratelli Toso glassworks on Murano, which produced mostly traditional millefiori glasses. At first, Lerche wanted to learn glassworking from the masters at Fratelli Toso. He tried to blow glass, but after several frustrating months of attempting to make things, he gave up in vexation. After that, Lerche relied on the maestro Vittorio Toso to execute his designs.

The Museum’s shallow bowl with abstract decoration was probably made between 1912 and 1914. It is a rare example of Lerche’s work, and it demonstrates the modern approach and strong Art Nouveau sensibility of his designs. His irregularly shaped bowls with mottled tints were created using applications developed in France (and new to Murano), such as colored glass powders, granules, and metal compounds.

-Tina Oldknow, Curator of Modern Glass

Learn more about these new acquisitions and others using the Museum’s new online collections browser: cmog.org/collection/search.
A Important Gift of Glass by René Lalique
Given to the Museum by Stanford and Elaine Steppa

In December 2011, the Museum received an important collection of approximately 400 objects by the famous luxury glassmaker René Lalique (French, 1860–1945), from Maryland collectors Stanford and Elaine Steppa. Dating primarily to the years between 1912 and 1936, the Steppa Collection includes a variety of pieces, ranging from the famous pressed-glass vases to ashtrays, boxes, clocks, car mascots, lamps, perfumes, statuettes, inkwells and blotters, and tableware.

Lalique began his career as an innovative Art Nouveau jeweler who incorporated glass into many of his bijouterie creations. Perfume bottles were some of the first objects that he created in glass, and he began working solely with glass between 1909 and 1912. The flacons that Lalique designed for well-known parfumeurs, such as François Coty, helped to elevate the status of perfume, and propelled French perfume into international luxury markets. One of the perfume bottles in the Steppa Collection is Bouchon mûres (Blackberry stopper), designed about 1920. This rare bottle has a colorless mold-blown body with enameled orange stripes and a mold-pressed orange stopper. It was not created for a specific perfumery; rather, it would have been filled by a consumer with her favorite perfume.

Lalique embraced the idea of the Gesamtkunstwerk, or total work of art. This concept was reflected in most Art Nouveau interiors, where a single motif or theme might be present on all of the furnishings of a room. One rare example of a Lalique lighting fixture that may have been used in this way is the table lamp called Paons (Peacocks). Peacocks were a popular decorative motif at the turn of the 20th century.

A photograph of Lalique, taken in 1910, shows the plaster model for the Paons lamp on his desk. The pressed and frosted glass elements of the lamp were made in molds with incised peacock decoration that were then acid-etched and stained with a gray patina.

One of the masterpieces of the Steppa collection is the heavy cire perdue vase called Martins-Pêcheurs sur fond de roseaux (Kingfishers on a background of reeds), created in 1930. Cire perdue, or lost wax, is a technique commonly used for casting bronze, and it was mastered by Lalique for casting glass. The Museum’s collection contains several original wax molds from the Lalique glassworks, which would have been used to create other unique cire perdue glass vessels. One has the same kingfisher design as the Steppa vase.

Other significant gifts from the Steppas include the remarkable clock, Le Jour et la nuit (Day and night), and the iconic Art Deco statuette of a dancer, Suzanne. Combined with the Museum’s holdings of glass objects and wax and plaster models by Lalique, and the drawings and photographs housed in the Rakow Research Library, the gift of the Steppa Collection makes the Museum the preeminent international repository for the study of Lalique glass. Look for objects from the Steppa Collection to appear over the coming months in the Museum’s Modern Glass Gallery.

Perfume Bottle, Bouchon mûres, René Lalique, Combs-la-Ville, France, R. Lalique et Cie., about 1920.

Clock, Le Jour et la nuit, René Lalique, Combe-la-Ville or Wingen sur Moder, France, R. Lalique et Cie., about 1927.

Vase, Martins-pêcheurs sur fond de roseaux, René Lalique, Wingen sur Moder, France, R. Lalique et Cie., 1930.
Donor + Member Events

Meet the Artist: Klaus Moje  November 9, 2011
1) Meghan Bunnell and Holly Hatch
2) Ennion Members Daniel Schwoerer and Lani McGregor

Seminar on Glass  October 21, 2011
3) Seminar attendees enjoying the Meet the Rakow Commission Artist: Ann Gardner reception

Meet the Artist and Astronaut: Josh Simpson and Cady Coleman  March 8, 2012
4) Members Jim and Linda Varner, and Mike and Linda Plummer
5) Stephanie Steward and Ashley Simpson
6) Ennion Members and featured speakers Cady Coleman and Josh Simpson

Meet the Artist and Astronaut (cont.)  November 9, 2011
7) Ennion Members Cady Coleman, Charles Wantman, and Roberta Elliott
8) Charlotte, Natalie, Kay, and Ema Rogus (Ennion Member), with Marie McKee, president of the Museum

Ennion Dinner  October 19, 2011
9) Ennion Members Marian Burke and Russell E. Burke III, and Fellow Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen
10) Lino Tagliapietra demonstrating at the dinner, assisted by Ennion Members Marcia Weber and Dick Sphon
It all began in the 1970s, when Elaine and Stanford Steppa would stop at antique shops during Sunday drives. Elaine would purchase affordable works made by French luxury glassmaker René Lalique to use as accessories around the house. When a friend of Stanford’s was given a gift of Lalique glass for 25 years of service upon retirement, Stanford became impressed with Lalique and he too began to purchase Lalique objects. As the collection grew, Elaine suggested that Stanford learn more about what was worth collecting so that the glass didn’t overtake the house. Stanford then became not only a discriminating collector, but a knowledgeable one. He learned to recognize spurious Lalique objects and fake signatures.

Over the years, the Steppas amassed an impressive collection of 400 Lalique objects that included a variety of pieces, ranging from the famous pressed-glass vases to ashtrays, boxes, clocks, car mascots, lamps, perfumes, statuettes, inkwells and blotters, and tableware.

When the Steppas started thinking about a new home for their collection, they began to discuss The Corning Museum of Glass as a place to preserve and display the collection. Stanford wanted to keep the collection together, and it was important to the Steppas that the objects be in a place where their children and grandchildren could visit. Elaine says, “Although the entire collection won’t all be on display at any one time, it is a legacy that my grandchildren can show to their children when they visit The Corning Museum of Glass and say, ‘I remember when this was in Poppop and Grammie’s house.’”

Many collecting groups and other organizations often visited the collection in the Steppas’ home, so they wanted the objects to be housed somewhere where others could enjoy and study the collection. The gift of the Steppa Collection now makes the Museum the preeminent international repository for the study of Lalique glass.

“The collection evolved as a labor of love for us, and we are happy that others will enjoy it now too,” says Stanford.

You can read more about the Steppas’ Lalique collection on page 16.
Have you ever seen something and felt like you had seen it before? That's pretty much what happened when I walked into the Museum's Ben W. Heineman Sr. Family Gallery of Contemporary Glass about seven years ago and saw this incredible, translucent life-sized dress.

The dress was softly illuminated from above. A glass shawl was draped over imaginary open hands, as if someone was caressing a treasured dress, or committing a precious moment to memory. I could even see the imprint of fingers in the shawl. It was if I was looking at the innermost details of a frozen moment in time that might have happened long ago or just a minute ago. Fashion has always been very important to me, even when I was a little girl; more so as a teenager. This was a dress I could imagine myself wearing to a ball. I wonder how many visitors, particularly teens, must stand before this dress, made by American artist Karen LaMonte, envisioning themselves wearing it to their prom or wedding.

Fascinated by LaMonte's work, I wanted to see more. I didn't have to go too far. The Museum also has her Blue Dress, the size and style of a little girl's dress. The sculpture is made of glass that gently shifts from translucent to opaque in hues of deep-blue and green/turquoise, with ruffles on the sleeves. You can almost see the little girl who loves it. I look forward to walking through the Museum with my granddaughter and standing in front of this life-sized dress. I wonder what she will be thinking.

I have a deep appreciation for artists such as LaMonte, who have devoted their careers to creating sculptures that have extraordinary visual appeal, but also dare us to imagine, think, and, yes, even dream, of “what if's.”