Dear Members,

2015 has been a remarkable year for The Corning Museum of Glass. We continue to enjoy sharing our fabulous new Contemporary Art + Design Wing with visitors from across the globe!

At the end of our very busy summer season, visits by our local community, including our members, is up 31% from last year. Our customer satisfaction survey has shown that 99% of our visitors would recommend a visit to their family and friends. The quality of our galleries and exhibits scored a 9.6 out of 10 in our satisfaction ratings. We are thrilled with these results, and they are a testament to our hardworking staff whose efforts on the front lines ensure that our guests have an outstanding visit to our Museum.

While our Contemporary Art + Design Wing is providing new reasons to visit, this year’s exhibitions—staged in other spaces—continue to generate excitement.

Our Ennion exhibition featuring mold-blown glass from ancient Rome, opened in May, and as works on loan from other museums and private collections left in October, new objects were added. Visit us before the end of the year to see the new iteration of this exhibition before it closes in early January.

In June, we opened an exhibition at the Rakow Research Library celebrating the impressive 100-year history of Pyrex. This exhibit has brought many new visitors to our doors, becoming the most visited Rakow exhibition ever within the first three weeks. It also drove traffic to our new website, Pyrex Potluck (sponsored in part by World Kitchen). This site allows visitors to uncover all aspects of Pyrex, from a visual index of patterns and advertisements to oral histories with designers.

This fall, I traveled to Europe to represent the Museum at several notable venues, first at the tri-annual conference of the International Association for the History of Glass in Fribourg, Switzerland, and next in rural France at Domaine de Bosibuchet, a summer design program to which we have sent our mobile hot glass shop for the past 10 years. These glass design courses have been led by internationally renowned designers, and attended by students from around the world. It was inspiring to see this collaboration in action. Read a story about Boisbuchet and its vital connection to our GlassLab program on p. 7.

Amidst a successful summer full of happy visitors and fruitful partnerships, we also said farewell to some of the people most influential in making our Museum what it is today.

At the end of August, Nicholas Williams, the head of our photographic team, retired after 42 years with the institution. Nick carried the Museum through the transition from film to digital imaging of works of art, and his beautiful photographs have graced our publications for decades. Nick talks about one of his favorite objects to photograph in an article on the back cover.

In late September, we toasted Tina Oldknow, whose 15-year legacy here was perhaps most notably marked by her role in the development of our new wing. She will continue contributing to the world of contemporary glass and to the Museum as a writer and editor of numerous publications, and as an expert guest for many events.

This month, Jim Flaws will step down as vice chairman of Corning Incorporated. In his 42 years at Corning, Jim was (and remains) a loyal supporter of, as well as a donor to, the Museum. We are delighted that he plans to remain on the Museum’s Board of Trustees for many years to come. A profile of Jim and his wife, Marcia Weber, can be found on p. 18.

Every moment of growth and change we’ve experienced this year sets us up for a bright and interesting future. We look forward to welcoming new talent, exhibitions, visitors, and each of you to the Museum very soon!

Karol B. Wight
President and Executive Director
Ennion Society Visits Venice

Earlier this year, Ennion Society members got the chance to explore Venice in a way that few people do—by interacting with some of the world’s finest glassmakers. The week-long trip was filled with glass-centric experiences from watching demos by Pino Signoretto, Dino Rosin, Davide Salvador, and others, to visiting the studios of Cesare Toffolo and Lino Tagliapietra.

“We saw some of the best glassmakers in the world demonstrating a variety of glassworking techniques,” said Amy Schwartz, director of The Studio, and coordinator of the trip. “We spent time with artists who teach at The Studio, including attending a gallery party with all the top Venetian flameworkers. We saw mosaics in Roman Ravenna and mosaics in Aquileia. We had a private visit to St. Mark’s cathedral and a private Vivaldi concert. It was an amazing week.”

Ennion society members can look forward to next year’s trip to Sweden and Denmark, where Schwartz says there are “lots of wonderful contemporary glass artists and a totally different sensibility of glass.”

The trip will be held September 15-22.

Tom Patti Selected for Next Specialty Glass Residency

Known for his body of work comprising visionary architectural systems, Tom Patti was selected as the 2015 Specialty Glass Artist-in-Residence, and began working in July. This residency is a joint program of the Museum and Corning Incorporated that supports artists in exploring the use of specialty glass materials to inform their body of work. The first Specialty Glass artist was Albert Paley.

Working in glass since the 1960s, Patti has received international attention for his small-scale sculptural glass works and large-scale public commissions, which integrate the aesthetic and technical concerns of glass. During his residency, Patti will not focus on a specific specialty material for artistic use, but instead will explore the way changes in temperature affect different kinds of glass. He will work extensively at Corning’s research and development facility, Sullivan Park.

“I want to explore temperature ranges not used in the traditional glass studio,” said Patti. “For me, the process is as important as the outcome; my art is a result of the way I conceptualize and the vision I set for myself as I work. I hope to explore temperature ranges in glass in a way that both Corning and I can learn from.”

Luce Grant Enhances the Sparkle of American Brilliant-Cut Glass Collection

The Museum’s American brilliant-cut glass collection will soon sparkle just a bit brighter. Thanks to a grant from the Henry Luce Foundation, the Museum hired two assistants dedicated to enhancing the understanding of and accessibility to its comprehensive, 1,565-piece collection of American brilliant-cut and engraved glass items.

Cut and engraved glass from the American Brilliant Period (1870-1940) is one of the most challenging types of material to identify accurately due to similarities in patterns, lack of company records, and the movement of glassworkers from one factory to another.

With the assistance of the Luce Fund in American Art, the Museum brought on Tiffany Williams as a curatorial assistant, and Lauren Bell as a photography assistant, to work exclusively with American brilliant-cut and engraved glass for one year. Williams will identify patterns, styles, and more bibliographic information on companies and their workers, while Bell will assist the photography department in post-production on new photos of the entire collection.

“American brilliant-cut and engraved glass is one of the highlights of this collection,” said Kelly Conway, curator of American glass. “Our goal is to better help people understand and appreciate not only our collection of this glass, but their own, as well.”

A Glittering Tradition: The Steuben Holiday Ornament

The Steuben holiday ornament tradition continues with the release of the new 2015 Snowy Owl Ornament. Hand-blown using the finest quality material, the enchanting Snowy Owl Ornament is available exclusively through The Corning Museum of Glass Shops.

Representing good fortune if sighted, the snowy owl is an exquisite creature—and the Snowy Owl Ornament is no different! Brought to life in stunning detail by longtime Steuben artist, Taf Lebel Schaefer, the owl’s wide eyes and detailed plumage make it a must-have for collectors and a wise choice for those on your holiday shopping list.

The Corning Museum of Glass has been overseeing the production of small-batch objects under the Steuben brand since 2013, including classic Steuben designs and stemware. The holiday ornament is made in Corning, NY.

As always, each Steuben item is meticulously hand-crafted and inspected to ensure perfection. From the classic Steuben grey box to the signature in the glass, these pieces represent the brand’s uncompromising excellence in materials, design, and craft.

You can purchase Snowy Owl and other Steuben items exclusively at The Corning Museum of Glass Shops, in-store or online at steuben.com.

New Membership Services Specialist

Christal Wheeler has always had a passion for art and museums. From a young age, she enjoyed drawing and painting, and, over time, she has found herself increasingly drawn to contemporary art.

Wheeler joined the Museum as the membership services specialist in March. In her new role, she also provides daily support to the Guest Services team. She previously was an administrative assistant/procurement aide at Corning Incorporated’s research facility, Sullivan Park.

“I absolutely love the atmosphere and overall sincerity at The Corning Museum of Glass, and I am delighted to be a part of it,” she said.

A Louisville, KY, native, Christal moved to Monterey, NY, as a child and has lived in the area ever since. She married her high school sweetheart, and together they celebrated 22 years of marriage this year, as well the college graduation of their two children, Ashley and Robert. In her spare time, Christal enjoys camping, fishing, hiking, crafting, and spoiling her two dogs, Mocha and Sadie, and two cats, Charlie and Tucker.

“I am looking forward to engaging with Museum Members at future member events and building a rapport,” Christal said. “My goal is to ensure all members have a positive experience every time they visit.”

Christal replaces Miriam Martinez, who retired from the Museum in January 2015.

Contact Christal to introduce yourself at 607.438.5248, or send an e-mail at WheelerCG@cmog.org.
Expanding Horizons: Furthering Glass Education for Underserved Youth

"Corning has offered me this great opportunity," said Hector Maldonado, a student who participated in the new Expanding Horizons program held at The Studio in July. "It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. This will be part of my art future."

A collaboration between The Studio and the Robert M. Minkoff Foundation, this program was envisioned to help at-risk high school students expand their knowledge of glassmaking.

"At-risk students tend to do very well with hot glass," said Amy Schwartz, director of The Studio. "A lot of them are non-traditional learners who need focused activities. With glassmaking, you can't be thinking of other things. It's a 'flow' activity. You're not sitting still. Teamwork and process often work for them."

The best students from at-risk studio glassblowing programs from around the country, such as Little Black Pearl in Chicago and Watts Labor Community Action in Los Angeles, were encouraged to apply, and six were chosen to attend the week-long workshop at The Studio. Their mentors from their local programs accompanied them, offering support along the way.

The Robert M. Minkoff Foundation has been working to assist youth programs since 2011, and has placed an emphasis on continuing glass education for underserved youth following the foundation's successful involvement with the past two Glass Art Society (GAS) conferences. But they wanted to do more. That's when the foundation's director, Andrew Page, began talking with Schwartz.

"One issue identified during panel discussions at GAS was the limited opportunities for students once they finish these other glass programs," Schwartz said.
“We were looking for ways we might help these students get a sense of the wider landscape of glass art. We wanted to help the most promising artists get a foothold. And The Studio has been the most amazing partner in this project.”

From July 20-25, six students and their mentors came to Corning from programs in Los Angeles, Chicago, Newark, NJ, and Benton Harbor, MI, to focus on skill-building and professional development. The program not only immersed them in the techniques of glassmaking, but in the Museum’s collection and resources. The students toured the collection with a curator, browsed the archives of the Rakow Library with a librarian, and explored the science of glass with Museum science staff. They listened to presentations on social media, selling and promoting their work, and connecting with collectors.

“We really tried to give them a broad survey of things that we felt would help them once they left the Museum,” said Jessi Moore, special projects team leader at The Studio.

Moore was the lead instructing artist for the program, ensuring they not only focused on enhancing skills, but teamwork. Each day, Moore asked a student to lead a lesson for their peers.

“This is one of the greatest experiences I’ve had so far,” said Maldonado. “I think learning from different people is really important. Every time I make a piece, I’ll use the skills I learned here, and it will help me adapt my style.”

The students also had the unique opportunity to work with visiting artist Laura Donefer, who worked with them to create a piece that required lots of hands.

“She’s a force in the studio,” said Moore. “All the students had the chance to bring her bits and help out. One of our goals in the hot shop was to promote teamwork and communication, and I think Laura really drove these skills home for the students. Together as a team they were able to accomplish something more than they could have as individuals.”

That teamwork and camaraderie were celebrated throughout the week.

“I thought it was beautiful to watch the open sessions in The Studio when the students were able to work with a different mentor, or, most powerfully, with one another,” said Page. “Horizons were indeed expanded, and new relationships were formed. It was those moments when each was sharing a unique skill or technique, bridging the space that divided them, by communicating through the language of glass.”

The Expanding Horizons program is scheduled to take place again next summer.
Inspiring Ideas: Boisbuchet and GlassLab

It’s the picture of perfection. Winding pathways lead to a stately chateau, set against the backdrop of horse pastures and a meandering river. A stroll along the grounds reveals a collection of buildings designed by architects from all corners of the world, which somehow come together in perfect harmony here in provincial France. Integrated with the landscape, these previous projects—most of which were built on-site—provide inspiration today.

There’s something in the air that’s hard to put your finger on. Whether it’s the scenic beauty, the seemingly slow pace of life, or something else entirely, this is a place where creativity, collaboration, and inspiration absolutely thrive. It’s a place where experimentation is encouraged, failure is a stepping stone to learning, and new ideas are celebrated. A place where the phrase, “I’m not sure if this will work,” is replaced by, “let’s give it a try!” A place for dreamers, designers, and makers to come together to test the boundaries of possibility.

This is Domaine de Boisbuchet, a place where nature intersects with design. And this is where GlassLab, the Museum’s signature design program, was born and continues to thrive today.

Boisbuchet is the passion project of Alexander von Vegesack, former director of the Vitra Design Museum in Germany. For the past 20 years, von Vegesack has offered summer workshops at Boisbuchet, bringing together world-renowned designers and students who wish to learn from them. A week-long workshop offers both students and teachers a respite from daily life. They turn off their cell phones. They do not interact with existing clients. They focus solely on exploration and the creative process.

“‘I think it is very important to look into other fields for education,” said von Vegesack. “If you are analyzing what you are doing, why are you doing it, and what the discovery is for you, then you can use it in other disciplines. I think this kind of holistic education is very important. We need a collection of knowledge and experiences to enrich our potential. We cannot overload our heads.”

It is this shared vision that drives designers, artists and architects to teach at Boisbuchet. Architect Paul Haigh had been
leading workshops for a number of years when he realized he wanted to do something different. A former designer for Steuben Glass, he was a friend of the Museum, and thought it would be very interesting to teach a design workshop using glass. He asked the question: Is it possible?

The Hot Glass Team knew Boisbuchet was in the most remote location to which this studio would probably ever go, and had the most limited resources, so they worked with Haigh to design a customized ultralight glassblowing studio and stage for Boisbuchet, all housed in a shipping container. In 2006, the first gather of glass was taken during Haigh’s workshop at Boisbuchet, and GlassLab was officially realized. The container has since traveled to Boisbuchet each summer, along with a selection of talented glassblowers who can help students realize their ideas in glass.

This year, the GlassLab workshop was run by designer Josh Owen, chair of the industrial design department at Rochester Institute of Technology. Having worked with our team to prototype some of his own designs during previous GlassLab sessions, Owen knew the power and potential of seeing your ideas come to life in this molten material. His workshop, Contradiction and Connectivity, focused on taking elements found in the landscape of Boisbuchet, and designing vessels that performed a social function.

“The experience at Boisbuchet was nothing short of transformative,” said Owen. “Placing the GlassLab facility in the context of the pastoral estate felt natural alongside architectural, sculptural and design innovations nestled throughout the grounds. The students came from many countries and backgrounds, bound only by their passion for the topic and point of view. All were passionate and committed to the project, and we quickly became a micro-community.”

Eleven students participated in Josh’s workshop, working with Museum gaffers Eric Meek and Chris Rochelle, along with two glass artists from France.

Maurisse Gray first took a glass workshop at Boisbuchet last summer, and this year, she returned for more.

“I think it is fair to say that 11 very different and endlessly creative projects were born during this workshop,” Gray said. “Glass is a fascinating medium to use because it can be so many different things. I came away with several ideas I would like to pursue in the future given the opportunity again.”

For more information about Boisbuchet and GlassLab, visit cmog.org/GlassLab.
Pyrex Test Kitchen: Echoes from the Past

Typewriters clattering, designers at drafting tables, phones ringing—all the sights and sounds of a typical 1930s office building—but in the offices of Corning Glass Works amid the typical business activity wafted scents of chicken roasting and cakes baking. Pyrex’s test kitchen, supervised by Lucy Maltby, the director of Corning Glass Works Home Economics Department, was located in the center of Corning Glass Works’ administration building. The test kitchen evaluated product designs, monitored consumer reviews, suggested design innovations, and, as a result, sold more Pyrex. Maltby and her staff also developed recipes and trained a mostly male Corning Glass Works sales force to boil water, prepare dough and batter, and make coffee and tea.

Fast forward to today. The Pyrex brand turned 100 this year, and the Museum is commemorating the occasion with a special exhibition, America’s Favorite Dish: Celebrating a Century of Pyrex. It represents the best of what everyone loves about Pyrex—colorful patterns, classic bakeware, and fun advertisements. But one visitor made an unexpected discovery when she walked into the exhibit.

L. Elaine Halchin had heard her mother, Lilla Cottright, talk about her days spent working with Lucy Maltby in the test kitchen at Corning Glass Works. She knew she helped test consumer products, even bringing her work home to try out at her own dinner table from time to time.

When Elaine heard about the Museum’s Pyrex show, she knew she had to visit. She thought maybe, just maybe, she’d be able to spot a picture of her mother on a label or in a small display. But never did she expect to see a wall-sized mural—the centerpiece of the exhibit—giving her insight into a chapter of her mother’s life.

“I am so grateful to know her contributions were recognized,” said Elaine, “and so very proud of the work she did in the test kitchen. She would surely have appreciated knowing that the accomplishments of Lucy Maltby and the rest of the test kitchen staff were acknowledged.”

Lilla worked in the Corning Glass Works test kitchen in the 1940s and again in the late 1950s and early ‘60s.

Elaine says that while her mother enjoyed her work at Corning, her passion was always education. Like her own mother, Lilla knew teaching was her calling. After her second stint in the test kitchen, she attended Pennsylvania State University to pursue her PhD in Home Economics Education, a degree she earned in 1965. She went on to become the chair of the Home Economics Department at what was then Mansfield State College in Pennsylvania.

With all of Lilla’s expertise in the field of home economics, coupled with her time in the test kitchen, Elaine reaped the benefits of her mother’s tremendous cooking!

“I remember her ham loaf,” she said. “It’s on p. 60 of Pyrex Prize Recipes (1953). And the popovers (p. 22), and the brownies (p. 44). My mother would make my dad’s favorite cake, three-layer German chocolate, using the round Pyrex cake dishes, which reminds me of the delicious apple crisp she’d bake in the 8” x 8” square Pyrex dish.”

Pyrex by nature plays to nostalgia, conjuring up fond memories of cake batter made in bright red bowls or grandma’s special Thanksgiving dish served in a whimsical “Gooseberry” Pyrex casserole dish. America’s Favorite Dish: Celebrating a Century of Pyrex has delighted visitors with so many familiar objects.

But for Elaine, the exhibit showed her a glimpse into her mother’s time in the Pyrex test kitchen—time her mother spent helping to shape these dishes on display, and, subsequently, the brand that millions of people know and love.
Corning Museum of Glass Names Bernhard Schobinger 2015 Rakow Commission Artist
Recognized as a key figure in avant-garde contemporary jewelry, Bernhard Schobinger's subversive approach to art spans more than 45 years and has earned him a reputation for rebelliousness and innovation. By denying his jewelry its function as a status symbol, he uses it as a vehicle for social expression, such as when he links diamonds with objects that may have been retrieved from the garbage, a gesture that brands their glitter, too, as the detritus of a throw-away society.

"It is not often that a jeweler is recognized with the Rakow Commission. Schobinger's unconventional world view is one of an artist rather than a jeweler, his work extending into the realms of sculpture, photography, and performance," said Tina Oldknow, recently retired senior curator of modern and contemporary glass. "Schobinger does not focus exclusively on discarded materials. Rather, he works, almost alchemically, on creating blends of precious and poor materials in particular proportions."

Schobinger gathers and processes all kinds of things, which includes discarded objects. From colored pencils, spent underwear elastic, precious stones, combs, or worn eraser nubs to coins, diamonds, glass, prickly saw files, or poison bottles: all of these scavenged materials are sources of aesthetic and physical richness that challenge conventional histories of body adornment.

His creative process starts with gathering things, meaning both picking things up and keeping them. The reason for gathering an object may be that it possesses an interesting formal quality or material property, but it might also impart a particular symbolism. For Schobinger, it is qualities like these, rather than intrinsic "value," that make an object worthy of being transformed. The gathered things are the materials from which he starts. He then processes them, cutting, drilling, linking them with other found objects, or combining them with precious materials such as platinum, tantalum, or black diamonds.

"The progress of work carried out in the workshop is marred by instability, a fragile state of mind constantly oscillating between euphoria and resignation, acceptance and rejection," said Schobinger. "Love and curiosity as well as anger and aggression can be the motivating forces driving excursions into the last blank spaces on the map of the aesthetic world, which may lead either to discoveries or shipwreck."

Schobinger began his studies at the Zurich Kunstgewerbeschule (School for the Applied Arts) in the early 1960s. The prevailing climate was one of rebellion and confrontation. The early avant-garde movement Dada, which originated in Zurich, was rediscovered at that time, and became the subject of a lively international discourse.

Aware of Dadaist text collages and witty puns and plays on words, as well as Surrealist ideas of design and invention, Schobinger was inspired by the Swiss artist Franz Eggenschwiler (1930-2000) to make use of materials that had nothing to do with jewelry, such as shards of glass and pottery, nails, piano keys, screws, and curtain rods. Combining these seemingly worthless bits and pieces with precious metals and stones, Schobinger—like the Dadaists—cultivates calculated coincidence rather than free fall. The results are objects of often bizarre, archaic, and symbolic radiance and power.

Inaugurated in 1986, the Rakow Commission is awarded annually to artists whose work is not yet represented in the Museum's collection. The commission supports new works of art in glass by encouraging emerging or established artists to venture into new areas that they might otherwise be unable to explore because of financial limitations. It is made possible through the generosity of the late Dr. and Mrs. Leonard S. Rakow, Fellows, friends, and benefactors of the Museum. Each commissioned work is added to the Museum's permanent collection and is displayed publicly in the Museum's galleries.
A team at the Rakow Library has been working hard to assess and conserve a selection of stained glass cartoons from the Whitefriars company collection the library received in 2008 as a gift from the Museum of London. With 5,000 to 7,000 large-scale design drawings, ranging in size from 4 to 20 feet in length, selecting objects to focus on was no small feat.

In 2014, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) awarded a National Leadership grant to the Rakow to develop a cost-effective method to preserve, digitize and offer public access to the Whitefriars collection.

Earlier this year, phase one of the three-part planning grant had Rakow staff working with the Museum of London to select the first set of rolls to be preserved and digitized. Roughly 15 rolls containing about 150 works were chosen, representing important artists and installations, as well as local pieces of interest for both the Museum of London and the Rakow.

But the Rakow faced several conservation and storage challenges when it came to this significant collection. The cartoons were dirty from being used as working documents on the factory floor, and they had been stored in less-than-optimal conditions in a warehouse for several decades. How would the now-brittle cartoons be safety unrolled, let alone conserved?

That’s where phase two came in. The Rakow brought on two interns to preserve the selected rolls in conjunction with West Lake Conservators. Nicole Monjeau and Natasa Krismanovic worked in the Rakow from June through August. Nicole is a 2014 graduate of Camberwell College of Arts, University of the Arts London, holding a conservation master’s degree in art on paper. Natasa is a Queen’s University at Kingston student in the master of art conservation program. She holds a bachelor’s degree in art history, specializing in the history of printmaking, early photography, and materiality/digitization of art objects.
Nicole and Natasa spent their time in a newly established preservation lab at the Rakow, unrolling and separating objects, making condition reports, photographing and surface cleaning the objects, and mending them once they had been humidified to lie flat. Once repaired, the objects were placed in housing materials and returned to the stacks.

But it wasn’t all about mending tears and taking notes. They made some fun discoveries along the way.

“I really like to see little bits and bobs doodled around the objects,” said Nicole. “We’ve found a dog doodle, sketches that show they were trying to get the right proportion and position of hands and feet, notes, and tea stains. It gives a sense that a lot of these, the waxed canvas tracings in particular, were working documents for the Whitefriars workers.”

During their internship, Nicole and Natasa were able to visit several churches to see the finished windows for which they’d been preserving the cartoons. They looked at more than 30 windows in St. Stephen’s Church in Olean, NY, discovering that cartoons they thought were smaller windows were, in fact, centerpieces for larger installations. They also visited Saint Thomas Church in New York City, for which the Whitefriars Company made all but two windows. The windows tower over the sanctuary, some 60 feet off the ground. The church is currently having their windows restored, and Nicole and Natasa were able to see some of the reinstalled works. Both church visits helped them glean insights into their own work in the Rakow’s preservation lab.

There are more projects planned for future interns including digitizing the cartoons and drawings that have been humidified and conserved, matching the cartoons and presentation drawings from the Museum of London, and researching the installations to acquire information and images from the actual windows. The Rakow will apply for another grant to continue the work Nicole and Natasa have done, but on a larger scale. The final phase of the Whitefriars project will focus on planning a website for the digitized works, and a crowd-sourced database where people can share information about the collection.

Nicole and Natasa documented their progress on the Museum blog and on Instagram. For more information, visit blog.cmog.org/tag/Whitefriars, or search the Museum’s Instagram feed @CorningMuseum.
SOMA 2015
Ayala Serfaty
Israel, Tel Aviv, 2015

Borosilicate glass rods, fused and flameworked; polymer membrane; LED lighting, 2015.3.12

Ayala Serfaty is an Israeli designer whose work lies somewhere between design and art, function and idea. Her designs are based in nature, and the Soma series was inspired by landscape formations. Serfaty writes, “Soma, the Greek word for body, is an installation representing the topography of light. . . . I want my pieces to be. . . . a reminder that life is a mystery and we should celebrate it as much as try to understand it.” Serfaty’s structures are both functional lighting and conceptual sculpture. Resisting definition, they are design and fine art.

It took Serfaty six years to develop the Soma sculptures, which are made of flameworked borosilicate glass filaments encased in a polymer membrane. The glass rods, handmade in Italy, are fused and flameworked in Serfaty’s Tel Aviv studio. The finished glass structures are then sprayed with a clear polymer—developed in the late 1940s by the U.S. military to protect ships in long-term storage—to create a skin-like membrane.

Soma 2015 is one of the special commissions made for the Museum’s year-long Light Series. Celebrating the opening of the Museum’s new Contemporary Art + Design Wing, the series focuses on artworks incorporating glass and light.

URN WITH CLASSICAL SCENE OF A YOUTH AND TWO HORSES
Giorgio de Chirico
Corning, New York, Steuben Glass Inc., dated 1940

Mold-blown glass, engraved. H. 28.5 cm, Diam. 19.3 cm, 2015.4.4

ADAM AND EVE
Arthur Eric Rowton Gill

United States, Corning, New York, Steuben Glass Inc., dated 1938

Blown glass, engraved. Largest: H. 35.2 cm, Diam. 11.8 cm, 2015.4.7

These vases are two of the 27 designs that formed Steuben’s Twenty-Seven Contemporary Artists series, produced in 1938-1939 and exhibited in January, 1940 in New York City. Made at Steuben in Corning, using the company’s iconic lead glass, the series was one of the company’s most important projects in its over 100-year history.

The untitled urn, showing a youth with two horses, was designed by the painter Giorgio de Chirico, and the pair of vases, depicting Adam and Eve, was designed by the sculptor and graphic designer Arthur Eric Rowton Gill, called Eric Gill. The Museum owns the original drawings for both designs, which were the gift of Corning Incorporated in 2000.
Design Drawing for the Beatitudes Rose Window

Dieterich Spahn
United States, Minnesota, 1980

Watercolor, ink, and gouache on heavy paper. H. 77 cm, W. 58 cm. CMGL 143545

Design Drawing for St. Ambrose Catholic Church

Peter Dohmen
United States, Minnesota, 1959

Watercolor and ink on board. H. 71 cm, W. 46 cm. CMGL 143543

Design Drawing for Trinity Lutheran Church

Peter Dohmen
United States, 1964

Watercolor and ink on paper. H. 76 cm, W. 26 cm. CMGL 143544

Earlier this year, the Rakow Research Library acquired a small collection of design drawings for stained glass windows by artists Peter Dohmen and Dieterich Spahn. These designs, the first in our collection from either artist, were purchased upon the recommendation of Corning Museum of Glass Fellow Rainer Zietz. Not only are the works visually striking, but they were created by German-born artists working in the American Midwest in the second half of the 20th century and thus narrow a gap in our collection’s scope on stained glass designs and designers.

Dohmen was a well-known stained glass artist in Germany prior to World War II. Following the war, he and his family immigrated to the United States as soon as they were able and Dohmen established the Peter Dohmen Studios in St. Paul, Minnesota. In 1961, Dohmen invited Spahn to join him as an apprentice. Spahn would later go on to purchase Peter Dohmen Studios.

Each of the twelve designs was created in America, the five by Dohmen between 1958 and 1964 and the seven by Spahn between 1980 and 1990. All designs were previously in Spahn’s collection and most are for churches in the Midwest.

Sugar Bowl

Probably New England Glass Company, Cambridge, Massachusetts; possibly New York City or Jersey City, New Jersey

About 1837-42. Blown and cut glass. H. 20.1 cm, Diam (max): 12.4 cm. 2015.4.5.

The green sugar bowl is a very rare example of American glassmaking during the late 1830s-40s when broad-flute cutting was combined with a single richly colored glass. A broad flute is a relatively flat surface of a glass object created by cutting away the outer surface of a glass blank. The wide flutes were a stylistic departure from the strawberry-diamond-and-fan pattern popular in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The effect produces a very simple, modern look, albeit demanding the most sophisticated technical skills and very thick blanks to execute well.

During the same period, companies began experimenting with opulent new colors, often coinciding with trends in other industries such as interior furnishings, textiles for clothing, and printed materials. Thomas Leighton Sr., superintendent of the New England Glass Company, corresponded with John Ford of the Holyrood Glass Works in Edinburgh, Scotland, regarding formulas, including one that yielded a vivid green.

This combination of technique and color treatment was short-lived. The broad-flute cutting style was cost-prohibitive and glassmakers shifted production to pressing technology to achieve the same design aesthetic. Simultaneously, glasses made of one solid color fell out of favor as cased glass become popular in the United States by the late 1840s.
Ennion and His Legacy: Mold-Blown Glass from Ancient Rome
Members Opening
MAY 15, 2015

America’s Favorite Dish: Celebrating a Century of Pyrex
Members Opening
JUNE 19, 2015
Donor Profile

Jim Flaws and Marcia Weber

Since moving to Corning in the 1970s, Jim Flaws and Marcia Weber have been enormously supportive of the community they call home. During his 42 years of service with Corning Incorporated, the last 17 of which he spent as vice chairman and chief financial officer, Jim has served on many boards, including that of The Corning Museum of Glass. He and Marcia have greatly contributed to the growth and success of the Museum, from Marcia’s active role in helping to establish The Studio, to Jim’s unwavering efforts to secure funding for the new Contemporary Art + Design Wing. Additionally, Jim and Marcia are great appreciators and collectors of contemporary glass art, generously donating beautiful works that enrich our collection.

“We believe in contributing both time and money to the organizations that provide the services, necessities, and culture that enrich our society,” said Jim. “We give to CMoG to help it continue to succeed in its mission and because we enjoy it so much.”

During her first trip to The Corning Museum of Glass at age 12, Marcia watched with wonder as a Steuben gaffer formed a vessel out of molten glass. But it wasn’t until she worked with former Museum director, David Whitehouse, to help recruit Amy Schwartz and Bill Gudrenath to establish The Studio that she actively got involved with the glass world.

“Our appreciation for CMoG grew with our understanding of the wonders of glass and our opportunities to meet practicing glass artists,” said Jim. “Amy and Bill were instrumental in introducing us to world-class artists.”

In the early days of The Studio—nearly 20 years ago—Marcia enjoyed learning to make her own glass, participating in Bill’s first summer class.

Fast forward to the grand opening of the Contemporary Art + Design Wing last spring, when Lino Tagliapietra asked Marcia to help arrange murrini for a piece he was making in the new Amphitheater Hot Shop—a day she remembers as an absolute highlight of her involvement with CMoG. Jim and Marcia arranged to purchase the piece for their own collection thereafter.

The couple has enjoyed making connections with glass artists, like Lino, through Ennion Society trips, of which they have attended three.

“We have been able to see great art, often in the artists’ own studios,” said Jim. “We’ve met the artists and interacted with them, perhaps over a meal, experienced new locations, and made new friends who have the same passion for glass art as we do.”

In addition to developing an impressive contemporary collection of their own, Jim and Marcia have contributed to the acquisition of significant pieces to the Museum’s collection—many of which are prominently displayed in the new wing—including Through the Cone by Stanislav Libenský and Jaroslava Brychtová, and, in part, The Portland Panels: Choreographed Geometry by Klaus Moje and Endeavor by Lino Tagliapietra.

“We have given funds to help CMoG continue to expand its collection, knowing that museums must not be static—they need to keep their collections current,” said Jim. “We hope visitors will appreciate the exciting new pieces and experience the same joy that we do as they observe and study the new work.”

“Jim has always had a very deep interest in how the collection grows and is shaped,” said Museum president and executive director, Karol Wight, adding that Jim has long served on the acquisition committee. “Jim and Marcia’s aesthetic and taste as collectors has touched the Museum.”

--- Jim has been chair of the Museum’s board since 2007. Learn more about his contributions to the Museum at blog.cmg.org ---

The
Ennion
Society

Due to the generous support of our donors, this year’s fundraising campaign has raised $397,000 towards glass acquisitions and other special interests. The Museum wishes to especially thank 20 households for their increased giving which will enable us to acquire a work of art to commemorate the opening of the Contemporary Art + Design Wing.

And the Museum is pleased to welcome the following new Members to the Ennion Society, who have joined since the last printing of The Gather.

John and Gwynne Bayne
Elisabeth Corveleyn and Thomas E. Reilly
Elinor and Willard Geller
Ron Meshberg
Imran and Sabeen Mukhtar
Arlie Sulka and Andrew Freedman
Gary and Margaret Wendlandt
Pati Young
My Favorite Thing

by Nick Williams

For the last 42 years, I have been surrounded by stunning works of art in glass, and have treasured my relationship with them. Before retiring in August, I was the head of the photographic department, tasked with the responsibility of capturing each object in the best possible manner to represent the Museum’s collections and high standards.

One of the images I’m proudest of making is that of the Moorish Bathers cameo plate, an object with an excruciating amount of detail. It would be almost impossible to capture it all. The intricacy of the carving and the overall beauty of the object are but a few of the reasons that this is one of my favorite pieces in the collection, not to mention the fact that it took George Woodall eight years to complete under conditions that today we would consider “primitive.”

As with any object I photographed, I had to thoroughly examine the object, and its subtle nuances and details, see how they respond to different types of light, and determine how to not only show the depth and detail of the cutting, but also the shading and various colors. My responsibility was to represent all of this in a single photograph—and the resulting image has always been one of my favorites. I hope George Woodall would feel it adequately represents his piece.

I had the pleasure of working with Google Art Project to create a gigapixel image of this piece. We helped them recreate the set-up, and modify it for their equipment. It was a tremendous project! You can now take advantage of this technology and zoom into the image to appreciate the detail and amount of work involved to create this masterpiece.