Corning Museum of Glass

the Gather

Fall 2010/Winter 2011
Members’ Magazine
“Stewardship” is one of the watchwords in museum management. The American Association of Museums (AAM), which reviews the accreditation status of its member institutions at 10-year intervals, describes stewardship as follows:

“Stewardship is the careful, sound, and responsible management of that which is entrusted to a museum’s care. . . Collections are held in trust for the public and made accessible for the public’s benefit. Effective collections stewardship ensures that the objects the museum owns, borrows, holds in its custody, and/or uses are available and accessible to present and future generations.”

The Corning Museum of Glass takes stewardship very seriously. In order to be excellent stewards of the Museum’s assets, our strategic goals for the next three years include preserving the highest standards of collections management and facilities maintenance, continuing to improve safety excellence and crisis preparedness and management, executing capital improvements on time and within budget, implementing a strategy for integrated data management, expanding the archive of the Museum’s history, and continuing to implement “green” improvements.

Four times each year, we update the Museum’s Trustees on our progress on various initiatives that address these strategic goals. Recent advances related to stewardship include:

• Refining the flow of glass objects through our receiving and exhibition preparation areas by renovating our staging and storage areas.

• Continuing to develop the glass collections database and to update our research and cataloging records.

• Completing the expansion of our conservation laboratory and identifying new opportunities for the care of the collections.

• Beginning to digitize the publications of our Scientific Research Department, which we hope will lead to the creation of a full-text online database.

• Installing compact shelving at the Rakow Research Library, which increases the available shelf space by 300 percent.

As I was completing this letter, we received the welcome—although not unexpected—news that we have successfully completed our latest reaccreditation process with the AAM. That process culminated in a report noting that “care of objects at CMoG is state of the art.” The report specifically mentioned our recently updated conservation lab and our environmentally controlled on- and off-site storage facilities.

This encomium from our profession’s highest authority confirms that our efforts have led to significant improvements in the growth and care of our collections, and in the other areas that are regarded as essential to the good stewardship of the Museum. They are necessary components of our mission to preserve the world’s most comprehensive glass collection and the library of record on the art, history, and early technology of glass, and to share our resources with the world at large.

David Winterbone

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Research Grants will Support Studies on European Glass Vessels and Serruys’ Sculpture

The Museum awarded two research grants earlier this year. The first went to Dr. Jerzy J. Kunicki-Goldfinger, a researcher of historical glass at the School of History and Archaeology at Cardiff University. He will use the grant to support his study of vessel glass made in central Europe from the late medieval period to the end of the pre-industrial era. Kunicki-Goldfinger, who is taking a materials science approach to his subject, intends to publish a book based on his research.

The second grant was awarded to Dr. Marjan Sterckx, a professor of 19th-century art at Ghent University. The grant will support her research on the designs of Belgian sculptor Yvonne Serruys (1873–1953). Between about 1905 and 1910, Serruys designed models for more than 300 objects to be made in pâte de verre and blown glass by the factory of Georges Desprez (1862–1952) in Jeumont, France. Sterckx expects her research to “lead to new knowledge and insights…on the collaboration of artists/sculptors and glass factories, and on the fashion for glass-paste objects during the Belle Époque.”

The Rakow Grant for Glass Research was founded by the late Dr. and Mrs. Leonard S. Rakow. It is awarded annually to support scholarly research on the history of glass and glassmaking.

New Publication

Notable Acquisitions 2009 is the first in a series of annual publications presenting the most remarkable additions to the glass and library collections of The Corning Museum of Glass. Fifty objects are highlighted through beautiful color photographs and descriptions by the Museum’s curators and librarians.

The cost of the book is $14.00 (Members’ Price: $11.90). It is available through the GlassMarket, in-store, or online at http://glassmarket.cmg.org.
First Annual GlassFest a Success

On the 40th anniversary year of the creation of Corelle® dishware and the discovery of optical fiber (both Corning innovations) the city of Corning fittingly held its first inaugural GlassFest, celebrating the rich glass heritage and culture of America’s “Crystal City.” The three-day event kicked off with a hot glass ribbon cutting at The Corning Museum of Glass and a special 2300° event with live glassblowing by Michael Rogers. The event featured lectures, a glass identification clinic, fire arts demonstrations, live music, tours, and an evening of neon art (organized by Alfred University) in the Gaffer District’s Centennial Park. The Rakow Research Library also began recording oral histories of community members who are glass artists or have worked in the local glass industry, to preserve these stories in the Library’s collection. The second annual GlassFest will take place Memorial Weekend, May 26 – 29, 2011.

Scholarship Winners

Two high school seniors were awarded scholarships from The Corning Museum of Glass in June. Both wrote essays requiring research at the Rakow Research Library. Anne Rich (above left), from Horseheads High School, received $1,000 for her essay “Forest Glass: The Potash Revolution.” Lauren Burt (below left), from Corning-Painted Post West High School, received $750 for her essay on glass trade in ancient Egypt.

Conference on Medieval Art and Architecture

On Saturday, November 13, a special one-day symposium is being held at The Corning Museum of Glass in honor of noted stained glass historian, Meredith Lillich, distinguished professor at Syracuse University and one of the Museum’s first recipients of a Rakow Research Grant. Speakers include Michael Cothren, Alyce Jordan, and Renee Burnham. No registration is required and admission is free. Contact Florian Knothe at knothe@cmog.org or 607.974.8312.

Ennion Society Trip to Venice

The Museum will offer a trip to Venice, Italy, for its Ennion Society Members. The trip will take place May 4 – 13, 2011, and will visit artists, private collections, and highlights of the city, which has been a center of glassmaking for more than a thousand years. Cost and travel details will be mailed to all Ennion Society Members.

The Ennion Society is comprised of donors at the $1,000 level or above. If you are interested in becoming an Ennion Society Member or have questions about this trip, please contact Becky Congdon at congdonra@cmog.org or 607.974.4270.

Museum Receives Reaccreditation

The Corning Museum of Glass has once again achieved accreditation by the American Association of Museums (AAM), the highest national recognition afforded the nation’s museums. The Museum has been accredited since 1973. Of the nation’s estimated 17,500 museums, 775 are currently accredited. The Corning Museum of Glass is one of 63 museums accredited in New York State.

All museums seeking reaccreditation must undergo a rigorous review at least every 10 years to maintain accredited status. Accreditation examines all aspects of a museum’s operations.

On August 27, 2010, AAM president Ford Bell presented Museum president Marie McKee (pictured below) with the accreditation certificate in a short ceremony for staff and local media.
East Meets West:
Cross-Cultural Influences in Glassmaking in the 18th and 19th Centuries

By Florian Knothe,
Curator of European Glass

The allure of the “exotic” and the appeal of materials unknown to the West—such as hard-paste porcelain and lacquer—stimulated the production of glass objects imitating the treasured Eastern imports. Western scientists did not know porcelain was a clay-based substance and mistakenly assumed it must be a vitreous one. Therefore, their efforts to reproduce porcelain resulted in the production of a variety of opaque white “milk glass” objects, as well as the discovery of production methods for hard-paste porcelain—supplying a market that had previously relied on East-Asian imports and glazed European earthenware.

At the same time, finely painted and gilded opaque black and red glasses emerged—mainly from glasshouses in northern Bohemia—that imitated red Chinese and black Japanese lacquer objects in style and iconography.

East Influences West
In Western Europe, the influence of East and South Asian products imported by the English, Dutch, and French East India Companies in the 18th and 19th centuries had a significant impact on style and art. European artists, fascinated by Oriental designs, architecture, and decorative arts, developed a chinoiserie style (characterized by use of Chinese motifs, shapes, and materials) that gained popularity in Europe in the second half of the 17th century.

Above: Rose water sprinkler with cap and beaker, Miotti Glasshouse, Venice, Italy, about 1730 (sprinkler) and 1725–1730 (beaker).

Top right, facing page, left image: Snuff bottle with cork stopper, China, 1736–1795. Gift of Marian Swayze Mayer.

Top right, facing page, middle and right image: Two views of a snuff bottle with stopper, China, 1730–1820. Bequest of Marian Swayze Mayer.


Snuff Bottle with stopper, China, 1736–1795. Gift of Helen Swayze Mayer.
During the 19th century, chinoiserie patterns on glass endured, and enjoyed a resurgence of popularity during the Neoclassicism of the 1810s to 1830s. Increased cultural exchange also led Europeans to collect curiosities such as vessels carved from jade, rock crystal, bamboo, and ivory. Consequently, glasshouses, such as Baccarat (founded in 1764), Escalier de Cristal (founded in 1802), and Thomas Webb and Sons (founded in 1837), and designers, including François-Eugène Rousseau (1827–1890), emulated, in color and form, the carved naturalia imported from East Asia.

Following Japan’s political opening to the Western world during the Meiji period (1853–1867), a Western Japonisme style introduced elegant ornamentation that was less playful and more sober than the theatrical chinoiserie designs.

**West Influences East**

In East Asia, the arts of hardstone carving, bronze casting, and porcelain-making enjoy a long history and are noteworthy for their widespread influence. By contrast, the East-Asian tradition of glassmaking, which dates back at least to the Warring States Period (475–227 BC), was less inventive and more dependent on Western techniques and styles.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, East-Asian glass imitated indigenous stone-carvings and porcelain, but began to use European glassblowing and cutting methods. European Christian missionaries brought to Asia glassmaking formulas and skills that revolutionized the local manufacturing practices in China. One such missionary and scientist, Kilian Stumpf, organized a glassworks in Beijing in the 1680s.

Glass produced during the Qing dynasty in China (1644–1911) and Edo dynasty in Japan (1603–1868) shows unique characteristics reminiscent of the cultural influence the Western Jesuits had on East Asian glass technology. Chinese opaque white glass from this period resembles porcelain and also shows the tradition of decorating vessels with enamel colors presenting landscapes, flora, and fauna adopted from scroll paintings.

Carved pieces of glass incorporated the highly developed Eastern traditions of stone and lacquer carving, as well as the translucent and multicolored overlay techniques used in Europe. Ruby glass, for instance, led in the East to an array of finely executed objects using the deeply colored and yet translucent material and employing the meticulous cutting, grinding, and carving methods long practiced on nephrite stone.

Influenced by imported Western brilliant cut glass and pressed glass, Japanese glasshouses adopted Western practices during the second half of the 19th century. High-quality tableware from the Satsuma Clan factory, for example, gained a reputation for its high-content lead glass and its cut geometric patterns, which were reminiscent of English and American “cut crystal.” Japanese manufacturers also explored the possibilities of pressed glass, and imitated their own cutting by pressing more economically produced and thinly executed domestic objects with floral and arabesque patterns.

Technological exchange and stylistic influences continued into the 20th century, with ongoing global influences in glass design and the emergence of an international scene of glass artists who skillfully employed traditional techniques and newly interpreted historic craft traditions.

Members-only tours will take place Saturday, November 20, at 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. The tours will be provided by curator Florian Knothe. RSVP at 607.974.8442 or hawbakerml@cmog.org.
of local and national renown, and as the father of a sweeping preservation and revitalization plan for the City of Corning’s historic center.

“Most corporate leaders would not have hired Tom. He was that different, but we did—and what a find,” states retired Corning Incorporated CEO Amory (Amo) Houghton Jr. “The Buechner shadow was long and deep for all of us.”

Buechner served as director of The Corning Museum of Glass from 1950 to 1960, eventually building the collection, establishing the Museum’s library of glass (now called the Rakow Research Library), and inaugurating a number of firsts in the world of glass. Director of the Brooklyn Museum during the following decade, he led that institution through a time of innovation, returning to Corning in 1971 as president of the Museum, while also holding positions at Corning Glass Works. Upon retiring in 1981, he remained an active Trustee of the Museum; a successful painter of portraits, landscapes, and still lifes; a teacher of painters; and a strong voice in civic life.

“He set the initial agenda for the Museum,” states David Whitehouse, the Museum’s executive director. “For him, the focus was not about our collection. It was to be about glass as a medium. That was profound.” Buechner focused on discovering how to interest people in glass and then using that understanding to appropriately design exhibits and programs.

Paul Perrot, who became Buechner’s assistant in 1952 and succeeded him as director of the Museum in 1960, speaks about “the energy with which he tackled a field unknown to him and to most of the public. He became so totally involved that the result was the total transformation of the knowledge...
of glass around the world. He was so cheerful and engaging, people loved him, and that went a long way in establishing the Museum in a milieu that could have been skeptical. Tom convinced [collectors and experts] of the integrity of what the Museum wanted to be. “He played a formative role in making it “a serious intellectual enterprise.”

When Buechner was hired in December 1950, Steuben had already given the Museum its collection of English glass. Buechner then embarked on making the collection encyclopedic. In his 2006 oral history, he recalled how he would visit curators at the Metropolitan, saying, “I have this new job. I am going to be directing this glass museum. They all thought this was hysterical because here I was, a kid from the Display Department.” Although individual curators would not provide the names of the dealers they used, they were happy to tell their former colleague about the sources used by other curators. He traveled internationally, acquiring objects and gaining entry to the then-small community of scholars, dealers, and collectors of American, European, Islamic, ancient, and even Chinese glass, whom he enlisted as advisors and donors to the glass collection and to the Museum’s notable Library.

Two particularly momentous events during Buechner’s first tenure as director of the Museum occurred in 1959. One was the juried exhibition, Glass 59, which provided a view into the state of contemporary design and foreshadowed a seismic shift about to occur in the world of glassmaking: a move from mainly factory-produced glass to objects designed and made by individual artists. The second event that year was the introduction of the Journal of Glass Studies, which remains both an outlet and stimulus for research on glass, with impact around the world.

Glass 59 grew out of Buechner’s involvement with major designers associated with glass factories worldwide. Although designers far outnumbered individual artists, the exhibit included a history-making cast-glass sculpture by the then-unknown Czech artists Stanislav Libenský and Jaroslava Zahradníková (nee Brychtová). The slide submitted by Libenský was small and poor, but the jury wanted to have Czechoslovakia represented. When the piece arrived, Buechner thought that Head I resembled a soldier’s shin guard. Only when it was on display, with light shining through it, did the outlines of a head emerge. Buechner was “awestruck.”

By the time he championed New Glass 79, during his second stint as head of the Museum, “the tables had turned,” says Whitehouse. “Individual artists were designing and making the objects, and glass was recognized as an artistic medium.” During his career, Buechner befriended and encouraged many postwar Czech artists, a young Dale Chihuly, and other pioneers of the Studio Glass Movement. He is widely acknowledged as a protagonist of the movement in America. He also started the annual publication, New Glass Review, to heighten awareness and appreciation of contemporary glass.

A pivotal moment in his second tenure as head of the Museum came late in June 1972, when Hurricane Agnes unleashed a flood that nearly submerged the Museum, overturning display cases and destroying a third of the Museum’s Library. “Without consulting with anyone, Buechner announced that the Museum would reopen in one month,” recalls Perrot. “That took vision and determination that few would have had.” The Museum reopened on schedule August 1.

Another highlight of his second tenure was working with architect Gunnar Birkerts to design the expansion of the Museum, which opened in 1980. Dwight Lanmon, who was then deputy director of collections, and later director of the Museum, recalls the intellectual intensity with which Buechner planned how visitors would encounter and react to objects in the Museum. “He was all about people and making glass interesting. He wanted to lead people into a discovery.”

Corning-area painter Marty Poole has similar recollections about Buechner’s focus on people and how they see art. “He was a rarity among artists, gregarious, an organizer. He loved to create opportunities for artists to meet other artists, to help people used to working alone work as a group and to focus their thinking about painting. He held classes in his studio, organized Sunday morning painting sessions, and painted with friends. He was good at helping us understand how an image gets into a viewer’s head. Buechner created an umbrella under which we all could grow.”

Sixty years later, the Museum that Buechner helped establish is the premier glass museum in the world. The core collection of 1951 has grown to more than 45,000 objects, spanning 35 centuries of glassmaking. The Library he helped create houses one of the world’s most comprehensive collections on the art and history of glass. Also, the scientific research on ancient and historic glass, publications read around the world, the Museum’s support of contemporary artists, and its embrace of the community—all tenets of his leadership—not only continue but flourish.
Mirror to Discovery: The 200-inch Disk and the Hale Reflecting Telescope at Palomar

By Ken Burns, Public Services Assistant, and Regan Brumagen, Education and Outreach Reference Librarian

By 1610, Galileo Galilei had begun refining the basic spyglass to create greater and greater magnification and began to turn his telescope to the night sky. In March of that year, he published Sidereus Nuncius (Starry Messenger) and radically altered the world’s vision of the solar system with his observations of the moon and the Milky Way, as well as what he perceived to be stars “flying about” Jupiter. These “stars,” which Galileo named Medicean Stars, for the grand duke of Tuscany, Cosimo II de’ Medici, are the largest of Jupiter’s 63 moons. The largest of these, Ganymede, is bigger than the planet Mercury.

Galileo made his discoveries using a refracting telescope, constructed with two lenses on opposite ends of a long tube that bend, or refract, the light from distant objects. Throughout the next few decades, theoretical work by a number of mathematicians showed that another type of telescope, which uses a mirror to reflect light rather than a lens to bend it, should be possible. However, attempts to produce such a device were largely unsuccessful due to technological limitations—it was too difficult to make a mirror to the exacting specifications necessary to be useful in a telescope.

In 1668, Sir Isaac Newton solved the problem of how to properly curve and polish the mirror and created what came to be known as the Newtonian Telescope, which continues to be a favorite design among amateur astronomers. Early reflecting telescopes still produced poorer quality images, however, and over the next century, while mirror-making technology was refined, refracting telescopes remained the instruments of choice.

Bringing the Heavens Closer

The largest working refracting telescope, installed at the Yerkes Observatory outside of Chicago in the 1890s, used a 40-inch lens. At this size, the refracting telescope topped the limits of what was technically feasible, as larger lenses would start to sag under their own weight, distorting the images seen through them. Reflecting telescopes allowed for the creation of increasingly larger machines, which meant seeing increasingly further into the universe.
George Ellery Hale, the astronomer responsible for the construction of the refracting telescope at Yerkes, dreamed of just such a machine. While he was still working at Yerkes, Hale commissioned a 60-inch mirror blank from the Saint-Gobain glassworks in France. Hale had the blank shipped to an astronomer at Yerkes, George W. Ritchey, who began the task of designing the housing for the reflector and grinding and polishing the mirror.

Although work on this telescope originated at the Yerkes Observatory, the 60-inch disk eventually wound up in California at the Mount Wilson Observatory. Before it was completed, Hale and Ritchey had found funding to order a 100-inch glass blank from the St. Gobain glassworks. Making a disk of this size posed technological problems, for the molten glass could not all be poured from a single pot. Instead, three large pots had to be melted simultaneously and then poured into the mold. The resulting disk St. Gobain shipped to Hale was full of imperfections but was the best the French company was able to produce at the time. The blank, after five years of grinding and polishing, was installed in the Hooker Telescope at Mount Wilson Observatory in 1917.

Despite the success of the Hooker Telescope, Hale didn’t stop imaging bigger reflecting telescopes. In 1928, he began publicly advocating for a 200-inch disk in Harper’s Magazine: “Starlight is falling on every square mile of the earth’s [sic] surface, and the best we can do at present is to gather up and concentrate the rays that strike an area 100 inches in diameter.”

No one had yet solved the technological issues of pouring a disk larger than 100 inches. Hale commissioned General Electric to make a 200-inch blank from fused quartz, an experiment which failed to produce even a useable 60-inch blank.

**Casting the Disk**

In 1929, Hale decided to experiment with Pyrex® borosilicate glass as a material instead, and gave Corning Glass Works the go-ahead to try. Under the careful direction of Dr. George McCauley, trial castings of 26-, 30-, 60-, and 120-inch disks were made. In March, 1934, Corning poured a 200-inch disk but part of the mold broke loose during the pouring, ruining the blank. McCauley decided to continue with annealing (a process required to slowly cool the glass) as an experiment. That disk is suspended in the Museum’s Innovation Center.

The second attempt at pouring was successful, and after a year’s annealing time, the disk was finished and shipped to California, where it was ground and polished and eventually, in 1948, completed and installed in the Palomar Observatory. The creation of the disk captured the interest of the media, which converged upon Corning, NY, to observe the pouring of the largest piece of cast glass ever attempted. Renowned news broadcaster, Lowell Thomas, referred to the disk as “the greatest item of interest to the civilized world in twenty-five years, not excluding the World War.”

Through original photographs, drawings and archival materials, Mirror to Discovery tells the story of the two disks envisioned by Hale and engineered by McCauley, as well as the story of the evolution of telescopes and the history of space exploration. The exhibit will be on display in the Library’s Reading Room and Atrium through October 30, 2011.
Library’s Growth Increases Capacity

When the Museum opened in 1951, it included a “Glass Reference Library.” It was to be an integral part of the Museum’s educational endeavors, with a goal to be the world’s “library of record” on glass and glassmaking, open and accessible to the public. The original book collection numbered about 2,000 volumes, and the Museum planned for the growth of the Library based on the best wisdom of the time—which held that libraries tended to double their collections about every 20 years.

In 1999, almost 50 years later, the Library (by then named the Juliette K. and Leonard S. Rakow Research Library, in honor of two of its major supporters) had actually grown to 75,000 volumes, and was in need of more space. A year later, the Library moved into a beautiful, spacious new home across the parking lot from the Museum. The new collection area included 6,258 square feet of unused space designated to hold future archival collections.

Thanks to the Library’s strong reputation and the generosity of artists, collectors, and other institutions in donating their archives and collections, that growth space began to hit capacity by 2009. Moreover, the static shelving system in the area was not flexible enough to efficiently suit the variety of sizes, shapes, and preservation needs of the fast-growing and diverse archives. The lighting system and environmental controls in the space also needed updating.

The Museum decided to implement a compact shelving solution with units that sit on a carriage and move back and forth easily with the turn of a handle. Compact shelving can be tailored to meet the specific needs of a collection and provides the ability to create aisles by moving the shelves forward and backward. The mobility of the units allows for more efficient use of space.

Lori Fuller, associate librarian for collections management, led a team of librarians to plan the best layout for the collections. She says that “this was also an ideal time to review our processes, the way we were organizing the collection, and the ways we could better preserve our collection while optimizing both service and access for users.”

The three windows in the room were removed, the entire room was sealed, and better temperature controls were implemented to maintain the temperature at 65°F with 48-percent relative humidity. In addition, many of the collections became more integrated, including the trade catalogs, flat files, and institutional archives. Jumbo rare books were laid flat on their own individual shelves that pull out, lessening the need to handle the objects. Printed materials and drawings that were previously framed were unframed and stored in flat file drawers, protected from the light.

One of the biggest contributors to the growth of the collection has been the increase in archival materials. According to Fuller, archival growth is hard to project. While some archives are small, or even digitally based, others, like an archive from Cummings Stained Glass Studios donated in 2006 and the Whitefriars collection donated in 2008, measured 1,000 cubic feet each. The Whitefriars collection included about 5,000 rolled, full-scale cartoons for stained glass windows.

During construction, all materials in the area had to be temporarily moved to another location. The Library staff started the work of preparing the collection move at the end of 2007. In October 2009, Naglee Fine Arts moved the materials—a nine-day process.

The wall between the rare books room and the archival space was removed. Special raised rubber flooring was used; each tile had been sent to Canada to be covered with a special epoxy that would not emit gasses harmful to the collection. Rails for the shelving were laid down, and the shelves installed. In mid-May 2010, Naglee began returning the collection, completing the move in 12 work days, on June 4.

“This project has involved every member of the Library staff—21 people—in some form,” says Fuller. Librarians continue to organize vertical files and other materials that are currently stored in the stacks where periodicals, audiovisual materials, and circulating books are stored. The goal is to reorganize the stacks and, by mid-October, open the entire area for public browsing. The area with compact shelving will remain secured, with materials available through requests to the reference desk.

Library staff have calculated that, even with the existing collection fully installed on the new shelving, expansion capacity is 300 percent. And there’s no question that the space will eventually fill with more rare books, archives, auction catalogs, and trade catalogs.
ARCHIVAL GROWTH SINCE 2001

The Rakow Library receives archives about and from individual artists and scientists, from glass studios and firms, and from other institutions, and on a range of topics. “We collect comprehensively,” says Fuller. “If an item fits our mission, we do our best to find a way to acquire it, integrate it into the collection, preserve it, and, if possible make it as accessible as we can.”

In the past 10 years, archives acquired by the Library include:

Steinberg Foundation Collection
More than 3,000 original drawings, dating from the late 1940s to the 1970s and acquired from the Steinberg Foundation in Liechtenstein, this collection features work by important Czech glass artists and designers.

The Notebooks of Frederick Carder, 1885–1936
The archive holds more than 30 personal notebooks of Steuben design director Frederick Carder, filled with notes and formulas for making glass. It also includes his 1902 travel diary, with entries from visits to various European glassmaking centers.

Robert Willson’s Papers, 1930–2000
A rich resource of sketches and design drawings from which Willson produced his sculptures, this archive also holds images of the finished pieces, exhibition materials, Willson’s published and unpublished writings about glass and other topics, and a memoir by Willson.

Heller Gallery Archive
Thirty-six boxes from this working gallery detail its association with different glass artists. There are artist binders, résumés, correspondence, catalogs, show cards, advertisements, press materials, photographs, images, and Heller publications.

Josh Simpson Archive
This archive holds 16 boxes of materials, including articles, clippings, exhibition materials documenting living artist Simpson’s career since 1981, catalogs, letters, and posters.

American Cut Glass Association (ACGA) Archive
The 17 boxes in this archive house the original certificate of incorporation and photographs, clippings, and correspondence about founding members. There are also business documents, information on conventions, and ACGA catalogs.

Lalique Perfume: The Glen and Mary Lou Utt Archive
1905–2003
Assembled during four decades of collecting, this archive holds more than 2,500 images—mostly of Lalique perfume bottles. It also includes clippings, letters, advertisements, exhibition brochures, posters, price lists, a Lalique trade catalog, and other catalogs.
Making Chemistry Come to Life

“Chemistry? I am never going to have to use chemistry! Why do I need to learn this?”

Horseheads High School chemistry teacher Melanie Anastasio heard that question one time too many. A regular attendee at the Museum’s Evening for Educators (a program offered twice a year to provide teachers with insight about how to incorporate Museum exhibits and collections in the classroom), Anastasio decided to take her Regents chemistry class to The Corning Museum of Glass to show them exactly why and how chemistry works in everyday life.

“Chemistry is an applied science. The Museum offers a chance to show my kids how it is applied. I can show them how the things we learn in the classroom are relevant in a real world situation. We all see and use glass every day,” says Anastasio.

“Whether it’s art or fiber optics, there’s a chemistry component involved. When I can present through that broad range of topics, I can really catch everybody’s interest. It’s a great way to bring chemistry to a kid that really loves art. For a kid who loves math, there’s a lot of potential for analysis within the Museum.”

Approximately 30 students in Anastasio’s class fused glass and made glass flowers in The Studio. They saw a Hot Glass Show and a Glassbreaking Demo. And they toured the Museum, pencil and worksheet in hand, answering tough and practical questions about chemistry and glass.

“It’s a really big deal to get these kids out of class,” Anastasio says. With Horseheads’ block scheduling, missing a class period is like missing two sessions. So Anastasio felt strongly the trip to the Museum should be more than “just a tour.” She worked closely with Museum staff to create an experience and an assignment that could be graded and that would both excite the students and align closely with class curriculum.

“I had to make [the trip] very valuable and worthwhile, and that’s where the Museum’s Education Department really helped me,” Anastasio says. Creating this experience involved a lot of preparation, planning and collaboration. But the effort was well worth it for Anastasio’s class, and it will be for future classes as well. Anastasio already plans to bring next year’s Regents chemistry students for the Museum experience, and is working with Museum educators to modify the assignment for her general chemistry class in the fall. What’s more, the Museum’s Education Department is keeping the worksheet on file for use with teachers and students from other area schools.

“We’ve already used it once with another class, and they liked it a lot,” says Mechtild Zink, the Museum’s education programs assistant.

Zink says the rigorous assignment is best implemented when teachers have the worksheet at least three months in advance and have the opportunity to incorporate into their curriculum information on the chemical components of glass and glassmaking.

Anastasio says she never would have been able to create such a gratifying experience on her own, and credits Zink; docents Bill Horsfall, Erin McLaud, Dr. Stephen Tong, and school and docents program coordinator Dorothy Behan for a successful out-of-class experience.

Getting students excited about science is a chemistry teacher’s dream, and a mission of The Corning Museum of Glass.

“I have a chance to hit many different types of learners by doing this with the Museum,” Anastasio says.

The next Evening for Educators takes place November 18 at 4:00 p.m. Contact Dorothy Behan at behandr@cmsg.org or 607.974.8635 for details.

“Whether it’s art or fiber optics, there’s a chemistry component involved. When I can present through that broad range of topics, I can really catch everybody’s interest. It’s a great way to bring chemistry to a kid that really loves art. For a kid who loves math, there’s a lot of potential for analysis within the Museum.”
New Hot Shop in a Box Goes to Europe

In June, The Corning Museum of Glass had seven Hot Glass Show hot shops deployed around the globe, bringing a whole new meaning to the Museum’s mission “to tell the world about glass.” Three were on the top decks of Celebrity Cruise Solstice-class ships, three were at the Museum in Corning, and one was in Europe. (This, of course, does not include the multiple hot shops also deployed in The Studio for classes and Make Your Own Glass experiences!)

The hot shop in Europe was supporting the Museum’s GlassLab program, which brings top designers together with Museum glassmakers to explore and prototype designs in glass. At the Vitra Design Museum in Weil am Rhein, Germany, during the annual Art Basel fair (June 14 – 20), Museum glassmakers worked with designers Atelier Oi, Nacho Carbonell, Wendell Castle, Michael Fronek, Paul Haigh, Sigga Heimis, Max Lamb, Tomáš Libertiny, David Wiseman, and Jeff Zimmerman.

Designer projects ranged from experimentations with glass and gravity (Haigh), to the creation of gigantic and surprisingly beautiful organs in glass (Heimis), to the exploration of using traditional techniques and tools to inspire glass design (Lamb). Videos, drawings, and project and details can be found on www.cmog.org/glasslab.

The hot shop then moved on to Domaine de Boisbuchet in Lessac, France, a design retreat center sponsored by Vitra Design Museum. Glass design workshops were offered for young and emerging designers, for the fourth year in a row.

Moving a hot shop around the world is not easy, but the process has been made simpler by a new container designed by architect and designer Paul Haigh (who also designed the Voices of Contemporary Glass exhibit at the Museum). Haigh designed a special 20-foot shipping container to contain a fully equipped glassblowing demonstration stage. The container can be shipped on a cargo ship, and then loaded on to the back of a tractor trailer to reach its destination on land.

The trailer contains everything necessary for glassblowing, including a 130-pound gas-fired melting furnace, up to two glory holes, an annealer, an iron warmer, a place to heat color bar, a canopy, spare parts, glassblowing tools and supplies, tools to repair the equipment, and a sound system. The container has a gas distribution system, which can use either natural gas or propane, and an electrical distribution panel.

This system is extremely flexible and allows the Museum to blow glass in locations that were previously impossible or impractical. Twin doors on the front of the container are opened so that the container will form the back portion of the stage, and a stage can be built to suit the location.

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Luke Jerram describes himself as a “color-blind installation artist, who fuses his artistic sculptural practice with scientific and perceptual studies.” He creates sculptures, installations, soundscapes, and public art projects that investigate how the mind works, particularly in connection with perception and reality. His work is inspired by his research in the fields of biology, acoustic science, music, sleep research, ecology, and neuroscience.

For the Rakow Commission, Jerram will create a pair of flameworked and blown glass sculptures from his “Glass Microbiology” series, in which he explores the tension between the beauty of his sculptures, the deadly viruses that they represent, and the global impact caused by these diseases. Unlike the falsely colored microbes—such as bacteria, protists, and viruses—that are commonly illustrated in journals and newspapers, Jerram’s sculptures are colorless and transparent, like the microbes themselves.

“Scientists and artists start by asking similar questions about the natural world,” Jerram says. “They just end up with completely different answers.”

Jerram’s approach to art-making is multidisciplinary, and he uses whatever materials are most appropriate to realize his ideas. His projects, which have garnered much media exposure, range from placing upright pianos in outdoor locations in cities around the world for the public to make music (“Play Me, I’m Yours”), to studying the effect of sound on dreams (“Dream Director”), to the creation of a wind pavilion (“Aeolus”).

For his project “Glass Microbiology,” Jerram worked with the virologist Andrew Davidson to research the physical structures of viruses, taking inspiration from high-resolution electron microscopic images and scientific models. With the help of scientific glassblowers Kim George, Brian Jones, and Norman Veitch, Jerram created scientifically accurate depictions of notorious viruses and bacteria such as HIV, E. coli, SARS, smallpox, and recently, H1N1.

Jerram earned his B.A. from the University of Wales Institute (School of Art and Design) in Cardiff, U.K., in 1997 and he has participated in numerous international exhibitions since then. He has received important grants and awards in the U.K. for his wide-ranging projects. In addition to his independent studio practice, he is currently a research fellow at the University of Southampton.

You can learn more about Jerram at his website, www.lukejerram.com.

Jerram will provide a Members-only Meet the Artist lecture on Friday, October 15, at 5:00 p.m. The lecture (which will be a remote broadcast) will be followed by a reception and unveiling of his commission. Both the reception and lecture are free to Members. RSVP: 607.974.8442 or hawbakerml@cmog.org.
Calling himself “a creature of happy and joyful accidents,” Oscar- and Emmy-Award-winning independent documentary filmmaker Robin Lehman started visiting The Studio 10 years ago without realizing where the experience might lead.

He came with his two children, then six and eight, at the invitation of William Gudenrath, resident adviser at The Studio, and Amy Schwartz, The Studio’s director. As Gudenrath helped the children work with glass, Lehman captured the experience with his video camera. “When I saw how incredibly visual the hot glass was, I was hooked,” he says.

Soon after his first visit he started making videos for The Studio: the Glass Masters at Work series. With the encouragement of Gudenrath, one of the top Venetian-style glassmakers in the world, Lehman began flameworking and casting glass himself.

Unassuming about his accomplishments, Lehman insists that all his documentaries have “made themselves.” All that he will admit is, “You have to be there, camera ready, at the right place and the right time.”

Several such “happy accidents” resulted in his Oscar-winning documentaries, Don’t (about Monarch butterflies in Manhattan) and The End of the Game (wild game in Africa), as well as his first encounter with a red-hot, oozing material, while on a trip to observe gorillas in The Congo. Learning that there was a live volcano nearby, he and a volcanologist spent a week filming the interior.

His fascination with “hot stuff,” he says, was fueled by observing an open lava bed that erupted on cue every hour. It was surrounded by “amazing, orange, glowing fissures. You don’t have to have a lot of imagination to think of hell,” he recalls.

Lehman started life as a painter, studied musical composition for many years, and found a way to combine the two with an accidental entry into motion pictures. He made four underwater films, honing his ability to be in the right place at the right time in visually challenging conditions. His films range in subject matter from African wildlife, to theatre, to “what’s good about growing old,” as well as Dogs, shown on TBS, which won him an Emmy.

Most of his documentaries have no voiceover, but are enhanced by music and sounds. The absence of dialogue allows the documentaries to be shown all over the world—no translation necessary. The music in his glass videos has been carefully selected with the input of his wife, Marie Rolf, graduate dean at the Eastman School of Music.

Lehman started making glass himself about six years ago, crediting The Studio’s warm welcome both to inexperienced visitors and established artists. “Bill [Gudenrath] has worked with me tirelessly over the past few years, and together we have shared many wonderful hot glass experiences, not the least of which is a new video about him at work.”

Making videos about glass has significantly influenced his own work with glass, he says. He feels privileged to have videoed such glass masters as Pino Signoretto, Lino Tagliapietra, Mark Matthews, and Vittorio Costantini as they worked and taught at The Studio. His latest work with Gudenrath has further expanded his understanding of the material. “Glass glows, it moves, it gets solid, it breaks. It’s like nothing else on earth.”

“Perhaps the most exciting thing about hot glass is that it’s a never-ending learning experience! I can’t wait to see what it will teach me tomorrow!”

Lehman’s next DVD, Glass Masters at Work: William Gudenrath, will be available for sale in the GlassMarket this December.
**European Glass**

**Florian Knothe**  
Curator of European Glass

**Humpen**  
Fritz Heckert  
This covered beaker can be attributed to the workshop of Fritz Heckert in Petersdorf, in Silesia, Germany. It dates to around 1880, and its colorless glass is decorated with polychrome enameling depicting seven men grouped around a seated figure on a throne. On the reverse side is a bouquet of lily of the valley below the inscription: “Bohmen • Pfalz • Sachsen • Brandenburg • Trier • Colm • Meintz • 1616.” Heckert is famous for his production of high-quality objects in the Historismus style.

Both the figurative scene and the inscription refer to the region’s seven electors: four worldly representatives for Bohemia, Brandenburg, Pfalz, and Saxony; and three religious delegates for Mainz, Cologne, and Trier. The seated figure may be Matthias (1557–1619) Holy Roman Emperor (elect) 1613 –1619, and the inscribed year of 1616 might refer to an actual meeting among these eight men. Gift of Mary Lammon Nitsche and Charles G. Nitsche.

**Chinese Bowls**  
Chinese domestic objects, such as these cut glass bowls, are indicative of cross-cultural influences. Their translucent ruby-red and aquamarine-blue glass derive from glassmaking techniques mastered in Europe and brought to East Asia by traveling Jesuit scholars, some of whom helped establish glass workshops in China. The geometric cutting embellishing the exterior of each of these artifacts, however, originated with local craftsmen trained in the long tradition of hardstone carving. Similar to locally quarryied rock crystal and nephrite, the facets cut in multiple regular rows, exemplify a cold-worked decoration that emphasizes qualities particular to the blank, including the deep even color and translucency observed here.

Objects like these will form part of the Museum’s forthcoming exhibition East Meets West: Cross-Cultural Influences in Glassmaking in the 18th and 19th Centuries, November 18, 2010 – October 30, 2011.

The blue glass bowl is a gift of Ina and Sandy Gadient.

**Untitled**  
Nicholas Africano

Nicholas Africano is an accomplished artist who first became known in the 1970s for his large paintings. His glass sculptures, which he began making in the 1980s, are based on studies of his wife, Rebecca. He sculpts the wax models of Rebecca, who is portrayed nude or partially clothed, and they are then cast in glass by his assistant Melanie Hunter. For this figure, Africano used a dark green glass that was formulated specially for him by the Bullseye Glass Company in Portland, Oregon.

“I have chosen to confine myself to the simplest of means, both in terms of material and subject, and in the end I want the simplest outcome,” says Africano. “I resist the notion that my work is narrative, my interest resides in what cannot be told, in what seems unspeakable.” Gift of Bullseye Glass Co.

**Half-Green Egg with Optical Lens**  
Václav Číger

One of the most important and influential Czech sculptors working today, Václav Číger uses glass to create space. Throughout his career, he has investigated and artistically defined the mechanics of transparency and reflection. His sculptures are not meant to be displayed in neutral contexts, but to absorb, reflect, and interpret the world around them. They are designed to come alive in interaction with their environments. He uses glass not as an end, he says, but “rather as a means of viewing and watching.” His sculptures are “non-technical devices which enlarge, reduce, mirror, and dissociate the outer environment.”

Half-Green Egg with Optical Lens is made of colorless optical-grade lead and dark green glasses that have been cast, cut, ground, and polished. The dark green glass outer surface encloses a brilliant and reflective optical glass core.

**Forest Glass**  
Katherine Gray

Katherine Gray is widely respected as a glassblower and an artist who makes functional and non-functional vessels and sculpture. Her installation, Forest Glass, consists of three structures, or “trees,” made of found drinking glasses stacked on Plexiglas shelves with steel supports. In each structure, the glasses are arranged on the shelves by color to form the outline of a simplified tree.

Although Gray is a skilled glassblower who could have easily made the components of Forest Glass herself, she chose to use only found or “pre-existing” glasses. Forest Glass is about the history of glassmaking and its attendant environmental issues: trees, in fact forests, were obliterated over the centuries so that their wood could be used as fuel for glass furnaces. In this work, Gray reconstructs some of these lost trees out of the material that destroyed them—in effect, recycling the trees with recycled glass.
Vase
C. Dorflinger & Sons
This vase was made by C. Dorflinger & Sons of White Mills, PA, around 1900–1907. It is a large cased vase engraved with flowers in rock crystal style. C. Dorflinger & Sons was a glasshouse that was started by Christian Dorflinger in Brooklyn, NY, and moved to White Mills in 1864. Their pieces were marked only with a paper label, which on this vase has been removed. However, we are certain of the attribution because the Dorflinger company presented a nearly identical vase cased in red to the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1903. The engraving on both vases is attributed to the Dorflinger's finest engraver from 1897 until 1913. The rock crystal style of this vase is rare, but the butter dish, as far as we know, is unique.

Canoe Condiment and Butter Dishes
This pair of canoes belong on the dining room table in an upper class home in the 1880s. These two fascinating pieces are a butter dish and a condiment dish of blown glass, with engraved decoration and silver mountings that make them look like canoes. The engraving on the glass and silver mimics birch bark, while the bow of each canoe has two crossed silver feathers. The condiment dish could have been used for pickles, olives, or any number of foods. The second canoe has a silver drainer in the center and was made to hold butter. The housekeeper would retrieve the butter from the ice water in which it was stored and place it on the drainer so that the water would drip off into the canoe. The butter dish comes with a silver butter knife, made in the shape of a paddle. The accomplished glassblower. It is very similar to a vase now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, which is also attributed to the New England Glass Company. Purchased with funds from the Gladys M. and Harry A. Snyder Memorial Trust.

The Library has received seven embroidered blouses as the most recent addition to the Katharine Lamb Tait archive donated by her four children. Tait acquired the blouses, mostly of central European origin, between 1920 and the 1950s. The blouses provide a new perspective on Tait, reflecting her style and worldly outlook. Tait (1895–1981) designed stained glass windows and mosaics for, and was head designer of J. & R. Lamb Studios, the oldest continuously operating American stained glass studio (founded in 1857, by her grandfather in New York City). She studied at the Art Students League and the National Academy of Design in New York City. In 1921, her first visit to the great cathedrals of Europe was decisive in her choice to specialize in stained glass. She described light coming through glass as jewel-like, always different, a harmony of colors: reds and yellows more brilliant at midday, blues more prominent in the waning light.

Tait's daughter, Barrie Tait Collins, explains that her mother would wear the blouses during family gatherings and that it gave her “pleasure to wear beautiful things...created by another kind of woman artist.” She says that most of the blouses were loving gifts from her father to her mother and adds, “I am glad that the archive includes all aspects of my mother's life including being an artist.”

Tait's archive contains drawings, records of her commissions, and photographs. The work of Lamb Studios may be found throughout the country, as well as in Japan and England. Tait was a prolific, inspirational artist. Before her retirement in 1979, at age 83, she had designed more than 1,000 commissions.
Lani McGregor and Daniel Schwoerer have long been intensely dedicated to glass. Both were artists with their own studio practices before becoming part of Bullseye Glass Company (Dan was a co-founder; Lani joined later). Bullseye, based in Portland, OR, is a leader in promoting glass art worldwide through the production of colored glass for art and architecture, and through research and education.

In the early 1990s, Bullseye created a Research and Education department, which rapidly became the heart and soul of the company. Artists were formally invited to do projects and test products, and they began to use Bullseye glass in brand new ways. Lani and Dan are excited by the research and education focus, and especially love working with emerging artists and with artists who use other media. For instance, Bullseye also reaches out to painters, photographers, and architects to see what they might do with the material. “They have no preconceptions. Most of us in glass wouldn’t try what they try because we know how the material works,” says Lani.

Both Lani and Dan are wonderfully supportive of the Museum, donating supplies to The Studio since its inception in 1996, as well as objects to the collection.

“The relationship between Bullseye and The Corning Museum of Glass feels like a commonality of values, both with The Studio and the Museum. We treasure our relationship with both. We really love education, and The Studio shares a similar vision to Bullseye. We are happy to donate supplies for artists and students to use.”

In 2008, the couple donated Erbium Chandelier (pictured below), by Dale Chihuly, to the Museum. “The chandelier is part of our personal history. Anything we own in glass, and anything we donate is a little piece of ourselves. These works are part of us and it is gratifying to see them become part of the Museum.”
Donor + Member Events

Meet the Artist: Jíří Harcuba and April Surgent
June 24, 2010
1) Members Lisa Francesca Rogerson and Phil Rogerson
2) Members Pavel Kopriva Jr., Paul Kopriva, and Judy Warwick

Meet the Artist: Dante Marioni
February 25, 2010
3) Members Kevin and Dawn Able
4) Member Martha Custer and Dave Schissel

Medieval Glass Exhibition Preview
May 14, 2010
5) Members Faith and Michael Tarby with Janet and Walter Jones
6) Member Robert Cooper gets his exhibition catalog signed by David Whitehouse, executive director and exhibition curator
7) Members Greg and Margie Zack
8) Members Stephen Gottlieb and Kathrine Branning
Bonnie Wright  Gallery Educator

One of my favorite pieces in the Museum is The Morgan Cup, a cup once owned by J. Pierpont Morgan. The Morgan Cup is a piece of Roman cameo glass dated to the first half of the 1st century A.D.

I have several reasons for loving this little cup. First of all is the clever technique used to make the cup. Cameo glass is made by first blowing a bubble of one color of glass, then casing that bubble with one or more layers of other colors. In this case, the colors are opaque white over translucent deep blue. After cooling, the cup was carved, ground, and polished to show a scene in relief. The scene depicts a woman who has ridden a donkey to a shrine where she prays for fertility, and makes offerings.

The earliest glass cameo pieces like this one were made in imitation of stone cameos like those I studied in graduate school. (The Roman Gemma Augusta and the Hellenistic Tazza Farnese are must-see—or must-Google!—examples of how stones may be used in cameo-making.) After watching a cameo-maker at work near Pompeii, I gained the utmost respect for those who have mastered this technique.

What also amazes me about The Morgan Cup is its rarity. In any Roman excavation, you can unearth glass shards. However, you will hardly ever find any intact Roman cameo glass cups! There are only a handful of complete or restored early Roman cameo objects known.

I also adore this cup because it makes me realize the great fortune I have to work at this Museum. While completing graduate studies, I always knew that archaeology was something that I loved, though I was miles away from any collection of classical artifacts. Now that I work at The Corning Museum of Glass, I am able to stroll amid objects like those that I studied, every day.