

Glass for the New Millennium: Masterworks from the Kaplan-Ostergaard Collection

Inspired by its unique ability to absorb, transmit, and reflect light, an array of global makers are using glass to express concept and content as never before. This exhibition showcases and celebrates the vibrant creativity of contemporary glass sculpture. Drawn from the Southern California collection of David Kaplan and Glenn Ostergaard, *Glass for the New Millennium* examines the medium's movement into the 21st-century mainstream, showcasing objects by the most dynamic artists in the field today.

American studio glass emerged out of the curiosity of makers who experimented with glass in the early 1960s. Its pioneering generation faced considerable challenges, especially in adapting the specialized, factory-based knowledge of melting, blowing, annealing, and chemistry to studio practice. Not surprisingly, early studio production tended to be aesthetic and often amorphous. Achieving the level of expression sought by leaders of the field such as Dale Chihuly, Nick Mount, and Marvin Lipofsky (represented by works in this exhibition) required an unprecedented level of artistic innovation. They and others created opportunities for sharing across continents, fostering an extraordinary exchange of technical know-how.

As more artists came to the field, interest grew in the vast history of glass and its manufacture, especially the techniques preserved at historic centers such as Murano, Italy. Techniques brought to the fore of studio glass by the Italian artist Lino Tagliapietra and German-born Klaus Moje expanded the repertoire of processes available, enriching the expression of many. Additionally, artists such as Richard Marquis imbued objects with statement and wit. As a vehicle for ideas, glass proved a medium well-suited to address wide-ranging subject matter on the human body, nature, landscape, and social commentary.

Among the most technically innovative artists featured in this exhibition is the Czech based, American artist Karen LaMonte. A life-size, cast-glass figure by LaMonte evokes a body that is not physically present. What is present is a shimmering casting of a kimono, inspired by her study of the history and tradition of this classic Japanese textile. The ephemerality of the standing kimono is enhanced by the silky finish achieved by sandblasting otherwise clear glass.

As artists increasingly use glass to offer highly personal statements, message is more than ever tied to the distinctive qualities of the medium. The artists from more than 10 countries selected for this exhibition not only trace studio glass's development but look forward to its future as a major sculptural medium.

Glass for the New Millennium: Masterworks from the Kaplan-Ostergaard Collection was organized by the Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, CA.