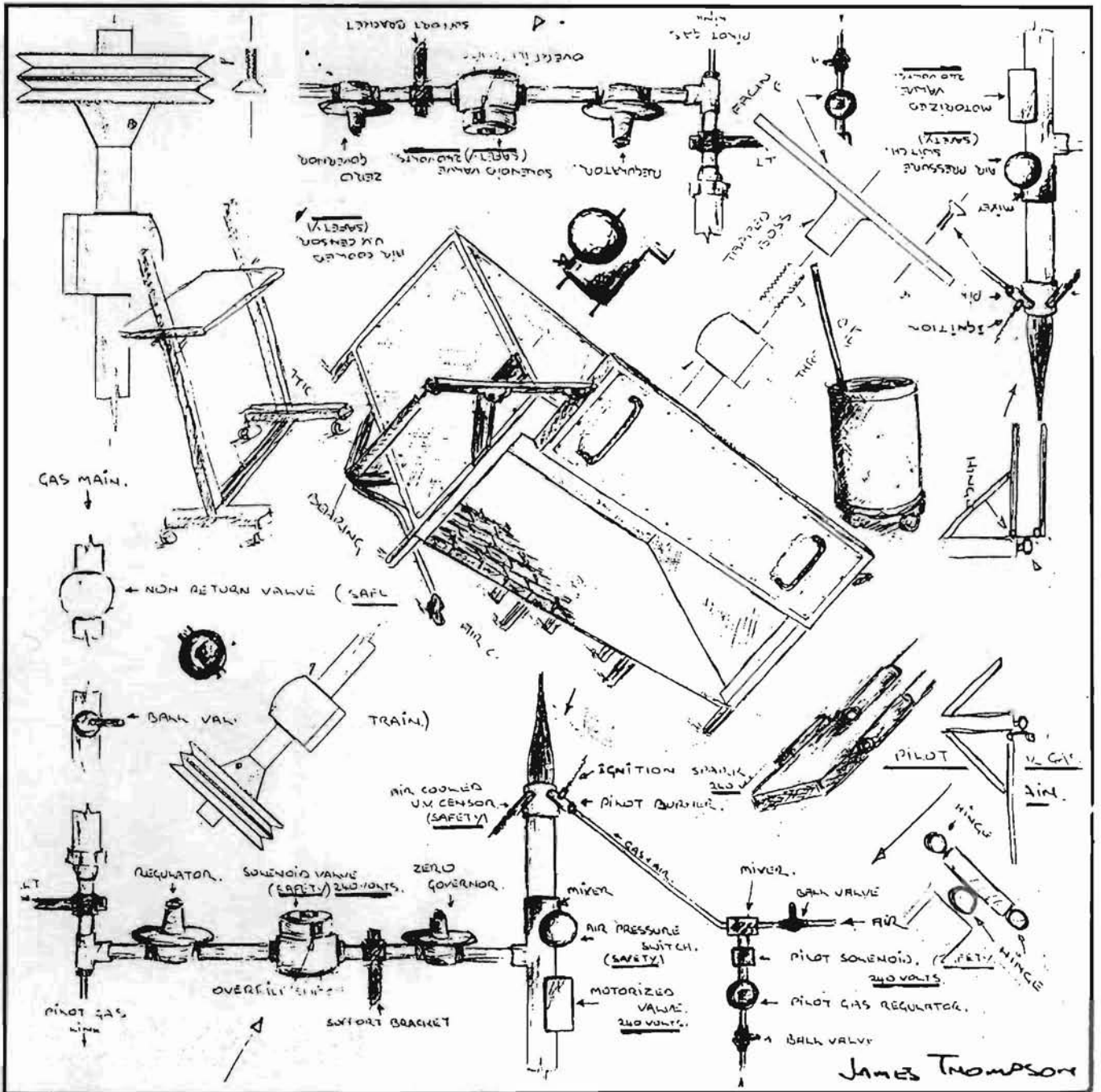


ausglass

MAGAZINE

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF GLASS ARTISTS



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Copy Deadlines for 1993:

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*Please note the focus of the next two issues. Contributions are welcomed.

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**AUTUMN
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P R E S I D E N T ' S L E T T E R



April 1 1993

To the Ausglass Membership

Here I am writing to you in my capacity as the newly elected President of Ausglass. I consider it a privilege to have been nominated and elected at the last AGM held at the end of the conference in Canberra in January 1993. At this stage I have optimism and good faith that my term in office will be successful for me personally and for all members of Ausglass.

I see my major role as convenor of our bi-annual Ausglass Conference to be held here in Adelaide in January 1995. We have not had a conference here in SA for quite some time and, with our new Jam Factory venue, the University of South Australia, the numerous fine galleries and the large number of private glass practitioners resident here, then I think we can put together a fine shebang.

My first duty as National President was to facilitate an election of a National Executive in South Australia. On Monday 2 March, a lively, cheerful meeting was held, attended by twenty people, (there were three apologies too), what a roll up. We actually held elections for the first time for Ausglass South Australia, as we had a number of people nominated for each position. The successful nominees are: Vice Presidents - Peter Tysoe and Claire Belfrage; Secretary - Joyce Louey; Treasurer - Declan Somerville; Minute

Secretary - Barbara Jane Cowie; Meeting Chairperson - Gerry King; and, Committee members - Greg Gepp, Gabriella Bisetto, Ian Moubray and Nick Mount. Congratulations gang!

On March 28 we held our first SA meeting. Our conference sub-committees are under way so we now have an organised base to begin decision making and action. The meeting provided a considerable source of inspiration. We have a number of projects in hand. A tour is proposed in February/March 1994 by renowned glassblowers, Richard Marquis and Dante Marioni in a celebration of the 20th anniversary of Richard's tour of Australia in 1974. State Representatives will have received letters from Nick Mount re this proposal. The sub-committee, Nick and Alex Wyatt are in organisational mode for this Ausglass project. So far there are preliminary plans for events in Canberra, Melbourne, Adelaide and Tasmania. More updates next issue.

Ian Moubray and I have begun to research the legalities of the formation of the Vicki Torr Memorial Trust. We have had an initial meeting with lawyer, Bill Morrow, from Findlaysons in Adelaide. This meeting raised more questions than answers, so the executive will be having an extraordinary meeting after Easter to discuss the many moral and legal aspects a task like this initiates. I think it would be appropriate for me to keep you, the membership, informed about our progress via a public letter such as this, but I ask you to be mindful of the enormity of this proposal. We, the National Executive, will need considerable time to work through and formulate our intentions.

Richard Clements has increased the Tasmanian membership number by 100%. Bravo!

An invitation is hereby extended to all members to join SA members at the Colonist Hotel, Norwood, South Australia, every Friday evening at 5.30 pm to interact. Hope to see you there.

Regards,

Pauline Mount

National President of Ausglass

(According to Roget's International Thesaurus - President = figure-head, nominal head, dummy, lay figure, front man or stooge Oh!)

A R T A N D M E A N I N G

Ian W. Johnston

In a recently televised art review some striking examples of the work of modern costume and jewellery makers was featured. This was not the kind of costume or jewellery which could be worn by ordinary people on normal social occasions but required the use of skilled models and actors for its display. So bold were the costumes and so bizarre the jewellery that they seemed plausible only within the contrived setting and action of the theatre. Clearly the object of the makers was to deliver a dramatic statement. Especially striking was a range of jewellery made to be worn in the mouth. (Yes, the *mouth!*) Finely crafted metal objects designed to project from the mouth whilst held between clenched teeth had been fashioned to represent verbal 'emissions' from the mouth such as barbed remarks and cutting rejoinders. (Was this tongue-in-cheek art?) The collection reminded me of the equipment used by my dentist who likes to fill my mouth with clamps, siphons and assorted dental hardware. It occurred to me also that a biblical precedent existed for this artist's work: Revelation 1:16 speaks of a two-edged sword projecting from the mouth of the Son of Man. In watching and enjoying the TV presentation, my main impression of this novel art was that the handcrafted artefacts themselves were mere props in the drama. That was surely the intention of the artist. This was art not intended to be displayed in galleries but to be viewed on film or pictured in action on the glossy pages of art magazines. Above all, this was art representing *ideas* about verbal communication. Once the *ideas* had been conveyed, the objects could, in the main, be dispensed with since the intended result of the work (drama on film or photographs in art magazines) had been achieved.

There is no doubt that *ideas* form the core of all artistic creativity and one of the most thorough inquiries into how such creativity arises is surely that of Arthur Koestler (Act of Creation, 1964). Stated briefly, Koestler's view is that creative insight arises when unrelated perceptions on two different planes 'intersect', causing a 'bisociation' of perceptions - a synthesis which amounts to a new perception altogether. A clear example of bisociation could be seen in an exhibit displayed at the National Gallery of Victoria a few years ago. Titled, *Bullet and Breath*, an artist had fixed a small mouth-blown bubble of delicate glass to a live infantry bullet. This was a combination of two ideas - the delicacy of a single human breath contained in the glass bubble, and the murderous power of the bullet to extinguish all breath forever. When combined,

these ideas amounted to a 'bisociation' of great force indeed: an anti-war statement.

The examples I have mentioned so far - mouth jewellery and *Bullet and Breath* - seem to illustrate a clear tendency in some modern art that once the underlying ideas are understood the artefacts themselves cease to be important, or at least are diminished in importance. This contrasts sharply with traditional works of art which can be discussed and analysed but never set aside. For example, the works of Turner and Rodin contain important original ideas for art, and in order to apprehend those ideas the viewer must continually return to the works themselves to explore their subtlety and examine their detail. This is an art which must exist in real physical form. It can never be reduced to pure intellect because the personal talent of the artist remains the essential and unique factor in the creation of the work, indelibly inscribed in paint or cast in bronze. Moreover, the artist's skill and sheer hard work in wrestling with a difficult project can be rightly understood only if we have attempted a similar undertaking ourselves at any time. Much of our appreciation of such master works arises from our willingness to come 'cap in hand' to learn from the masters who continue to speak, even from the grave. Hence great works of art may be copied or even surpassed in quality, but never dispensed with. That is surely why museums are at such pains to preserve important works.

In much modern art there appears to have been a shift away from the concreteness of the material world to the 'inwardness' of the personal world. A quotation from Picasso is revealing:

There is no abstract art. You must always start with something. Afterwards you can remove all traces of reality. There's no danger then anyway, because the idea of the object will have left an indelible mark. It is what started the artist off, excited his ideas, and stirred up his emotions... When I paint a picture I am not concerned with the fact that two people are represented in it. Those two people once existed for me but they exist no longer. My vision of them gave me an initial emotion, then little by little their presence became blurred; they became for me a fiction, and then they disappeared altogether, or rather they were transformed into all kinds of problems, so that they became for me no longer two people but forms and colours which nevertheless resume an

experience of two people, and preserve the vibration of their life. (Koestler, p.374)

Here Picasso acknowledges that his art begins with his observation of persons, physical objects, and events, but quickly withdraws into the inward realm of the personal. For want of a better term this artistic perception has generally been called 'abstract', despite Picasso's objection. To be sure, Koestler's 'bisociation' still happens in the art of Picasso, ideas intersecting with artistic technique, but the finished work may become more difficult for the viewer to read because of its idiosyncratic nature. Naturally we would not wish to impose on Picasso and other artists the requirement that all art should faithfully and accurately report whatever comes down the optic nerve. In the artistic equation *interpretation* is the difference between the outward and inward worlds and remains the artist's province alone, never to be dictated by others. It must also be said that there are times when it is appropriate for artistic expression to arise mainly from the artist's inward world. Who could deny that Picasso's "Guenica" is a potent expression of grief and outrage in response to the evil of war? Is the inward world of the artist here more important than the outward world? Who could answer but the artist himself? In fact, all art is a mixture in varying degrees of elements from the artist's inward and outward worlds.

Perhaps it is instructive to compare Picasso's "Guenica" with Goya's "Third of May" - also a Spanish work but painted 129 years earlier. Goya, like Picasso, also expresses the horror of war but does so in a starkly 'representational' way. There is no mistaking the spirit of despair and horror in this work which is overshadowed by a black sky and the absence of all hope of rescue for the condemned. Here there is equal power, but no total retreat to the inward world as in Picasso's work. We are reminded by this comparison that the use of symbolism from the inner personal world is not essential for the complete expression of emotion, and that representational art can be equally expressive of truth as art in the abstract.

Why should it be necessary to justify representational art against abstract art, or for that matter, any form of art against another? Is this not a risky venture? Whilst generalisation is always risky I admit to a nagging suspicion that modern critics are prone to deal unsympathetically with any work which is not abstruse in meaning or heavily abstract in nature. Much modern art is enormously intriguing. It can be assembled in 'thematic' gallery displays which are themselves large 'composite' works of art. It is art for the present moment. Are there not artists who prepare work to be seen just once - to make an artistic statement and then to be retired as having little further interest? Perhaps this is legitimate. After all, why must

every work of art created aspire to being an everlasting masterpiece? Be this as it may, the worrying aspect of some modern art is its lack of commitment to subtlety and to such excellence of technique as would lead the viewer to regard the very soul of the artist, as for example, do Rembrandt's self-portraits. Do we not detect a certain sterility in much modern art? For all its complexity and apparent inwardness of abstraction, do we not feel that in the end we have searched in vain for meaning, or that meaning is lost in ambiguity, or that work is devoid of depth and pathos? So much of contemporary art seems to be intriguing but never moving in character. In short, superficiality seems to be the malaise of contemporary art. Consequently, it will never be possible to talk meaningfully of art which lacks substance. The philosopher C.A. van Peursen, quoting Wittgenstein, wrote of a modern falsehood which he called 'operational thinking'. Whilst he applies it to religion it might also apply to our subjective views of the meaning of art, as the following quotation makes clear: (the phrases in brackets are my insertions - with apologies to Wittgenstein.)

Imagine a game where everybody takes a small box, and then looks for a little beetle to put in it. The beetle may be green, or red, or any other colour. You are allowed to look only into your own box. And then you start a discussion about the beetles you have in your boxes. You say, "Oh, I have a very fine beetle; it is green", and someone replies, "Oh, mine is very nice; it is yellow". And so an interesting game develops. This is the game we are always playing in society. You have already recognised yourself in the game. The point of the game is this; you can play the same game when the boxes are empty. And you can play the game with everything - for instance, with religion (and with art). We talk to each other about gods (and art). Let us call (these games) theology (and art appreciation). Couldn't we play the same games with empty boxes, when there is no God (and no objective meaning)? The whole thing works very well and you have a very fine theology. This is the extreme consequence, the danger, of operational thinking. The beetle, the soul, (art), God: are they only the result of operations, of certain games?

Objectivity, and disciplined learning which moves towards the discovery of substance and authenticity in art, as in religious faith, is our only guarantee that we are not deluding ourselves and others. For people of the Church, biblical faith is a proven mainstay and yardstick for authenticity. More than ever, that faith is needed to inform our judgements about what is real, humane, subtle and of surpassing transcendent quality in art and in the society which it mirrors.

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Koestler, A. *The Act of Creation*, Arkana, London, 1989.
van Peursen, C.A. 'Man and Reality - the history of human thought', *Student World*, 1964.

Ian W. Johnston.
December 1992

Ian Johnston is a minister of the Uniting Church and a part-time worker in glass. He combines his interests to write about theology and art, (see Spring-Summer 1991-92), glass techniques which he has developed (see Summer 1992-93) and to produce large scale glass works for the Uniting Church.

DIAMOND VALLEY ART AWARD

2 October - 9 October 1993

Diamond Valley Civic Centre
Civic Drive
Greensborough

Acquisitions to the value of \$10 000 may be made in the following categories:

**WORKS ON PAPER GLASS
SCULPTURE TAPESTRY**

Artists wishing to be considered for invitation should submit three slides of recent work and a brief resume, plus \$10 00 (non-refundable) handling fee before **2nd July 1993**

Cheques payable to the Shire of Diamond Valley

Slides must be 35 mm and clearly labelled with title of work, date, medium and artist's name.

Selected artists will be invited to submit one work only and by invitation only.

Information:
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Community Services Department
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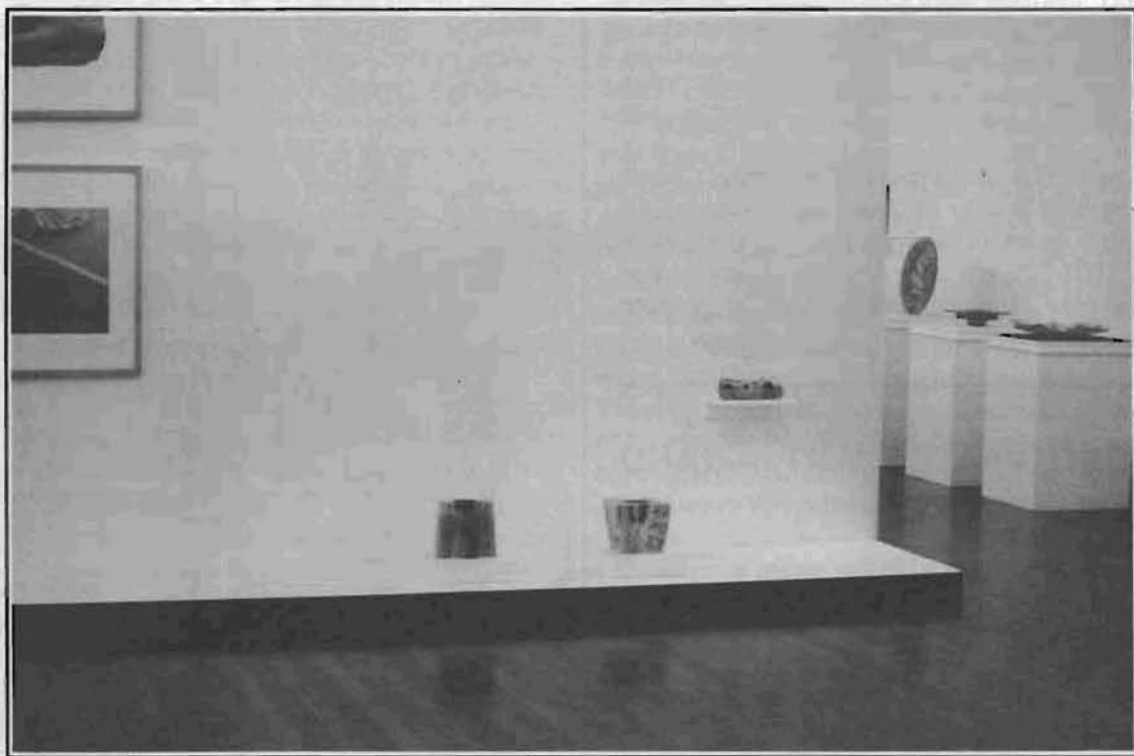


Why is luggage always on top of the spare?

- Don Wreford did his duty and helped change the 'flat' on his mates vehicle as they all returned from the Ausglass conference
- Amanda's car (and chair!)
- Wayne looks underneath
- Don studies the jack
- Linda is ready for action
- Sia just takes the photograph!

AUSGLASS MEMBERS SHOW CANBERRA 1993

Graham Stone



'please don't make me get down on the floor to appreciate them....'

The Ausglass Members Exhibition entitled "Origins and Originality" at the landmark Canberra conference earlier this year revealed that glass continues to inspire and ignite passion both in its own right and as a vehicle for other passions. Also on campus at A.N.U. during the conference was an international show drawn from **Robert Bell's** *Directions in Glass* exhibited at the Art Gallery of Western Australia in Perth last year, and brought to Canberra courtesy of the Australia Council. With four other glass shows around town, it was a feast for glass enthusiasts.

Given that the international show featured work almost uniform in scale (big enough to command attention, small enough to be accommodated in exhibitions/collections) the differences in size amongst the Australian work stood out like a bushfire at night. Of more significance was the variety in style and intent and though there were few truly astonishing pieces in the Members Show, there was a healthy explorative vein running through the whole exhibition. The exploration varied from the conceptual (**Scott Chaseling, Meza Rijdsdijk**) to the stylistic (**Kirstie Rea, Maureen Williams**); the technical (**Michelle Ivory, Julio Santos**) to colouration (**Pauline Delaney, Elizabeth Kelly**) and to form (**Roberta Simpson** and myself). I have chosen to write only about the work for which I was able to verbalise my responses. For some

of it, the words would not come (including favourites), still others spoke a language unfamiliar to me. I did not ask the artists concerned about their work, preferring to offer a fresh appraisal and perhaps even to give pointers to artists about aspects of their work they may not have considered.

Richard Morrell's cast work embodies a masterful command of the medium. Morrell's inspiration does not stem from an intellectual or philosophical base (perhaps that is why his best is so good). Rather, his starting point is technical but an artistic intuition exerts itself and the work emerges with a presence which transcends his technical ability. Contrasts between precision and *laissez faire*, between clarity and obscurity and between various angles of perception all combine to make the work sing. The differences in refraction and depth are worth exploring, but please, please don't make me get down on the floor to appreciate them. The icy beauty of Richard's work would be further enhanced by refinement of the internal vessel decoration and more attention to the polishing. After all, it is the polished surfaces that enable us (indeed, demand of us) to look into the body of the work from at least three sides.

— Like Morrell, **Klaus Moje's** adventures with colour

and composition rely on daring and the interplay between rational intent and the subconscious. The round standing plate in the members show, while every bit as daring as the other, did not contain the magic that can result. The square piece in which warm colours were blended in striations worked much better. Though the colours were still vibrant, they achieved the appearance of belonging together, so much so that they set up a kind of visual resonance which simmered as if seen through a heat haze (or kiln door?). Even the electric yellow which interrupted the striations worked as a counterpoint for the harmonious "background", almost like oblique seams of gold in some still hot larval formation. It was one of the most exciting pieces from Moje that I have seen, and may even herald a new phase in his development.

The subconscious is a less significant factor in the work of **Anne Dybka**. Hers is a celebration of life, nature, skill and representational finesse. Called *Essentials*, her piece had a classic cameo feel with stylistic references to romantic, symbolist and early 20th century American art. Not the style of work I would expect to be drawn to, yet so exquisitely made that I found myself peering into it for longer than any other exhibit. Dybka's skills involve her in the material to a degree most of us can only wonder at. She is in there and it is her interaction with the physical world. Anne gives to the glass all the care and attention she would have us bestow on the earth's biosphere, a notion I know is dear to her heart.

One of **Meza Rijdsdijk's** constructions reminded me of an ancient Greek amphitheatre, except that it was new, hard edged and sharp, unworn by time. The glass had an opaque stone like quality which further prompted the association. The theatre's "seating" contained fine delicate linear decorations and lead the eye down into the stage where a collection of rounded polished "rocks" rested. Their smooth, worn, almost organic shapes were pieced together as if hewn by erosion from the one block. The contrast between them and the sharp lines of the surrounding edifice emphasised their gentle presence and they became a contemplative focus. I enjoyed the experience, not least because it took time to appreciate.

I found **Gerry King's** corrugated glass chair slightly disturbing as no doubt I was meant to. I was unsure of the significance of its "Australian-ness" (by virtue of the corrugations) but every time I looked at it I could not prevent myself imagining sitting on the thing and collapsing to the floor in a shower of glass! For not only was it glass, it was *thin* glass obviously incapable of supporting even my weight. Was it a metaphor for Australia? (Rustic, beautiful yet fragile.) I don't know. It was called *Please Don't Sit*.

Deb Cocks' untitled bowl, though somewhat

standard in form, was a real treat for the eye due to its decoration. Here was delicacy, subtlety, polish and warmth in a composition in which you could lose yourself in its detail and movement. The combination of scratched back imagery overlapping sectioned colours created a fractured dimensional effect something like the way some Koori dot paintings work, not that the style of drawing bore any resemblance to that heritage. A delicious piece of glasspainting.

Ian Mowbray's engaging slices of frozen time have some distinctive and intriguing features. They are peopled by 2-dimensional figures in a 3-D world. The intimate and intricate human forms are semi-submerged in a base of glass strips and appear to me to engage each other, completely oblivious to the sea of glass which threatens to engulf them. My response to a similar piece at Beaver Gallery entitled *Gossip* included a wish to see the destructive result of the activity represented, but perhaps introducing the 4th dimension would have spoiled the "captured moment" effect. Certainly, I couldn't see how to do it without a time factor being involved. At any rate, the members show pieces, *Neighbours* and *Friends* needed no such addition.

I admired **Elizabeth Kelly's** blown pieces at Cupacumbalong but when I finally saw the Members Show work properly (by getting down on my hands and knees on a return visit) I much preferred it. Less impressive in scale, less trendy perhaps and classical in form, they nonetheless showed glorious colour combinations, skilled hot joinery and a keen understanding of proportion. There is a pleasing sensitivity to the material emerging in Kelly's work which combined with her obvious skill augers well for the future.

(Incidentally, **Brian Hirst** was also showing at Cupacumbalong and I was delighted to see that he is still producing the *cycladic* vessels. They have grown in stature, the decoration has been refined, and have not dated one bit. They remain strong and elegant.)

Skill and precision are also the hallmarks of **Ben Edols**. That he can maintain the quality in larger scale vessels is impressive but to my taste they remain a bit too fashionable. The results of adding greater individuality to Edols' virtuosity could be very exciting and, if he chooses, he has the time to develop it. On the other hand, I've no doubt there is a ready and eager market for the work as it stands.

With the work of **Elizabeth McClure**, our esteemed president for the previous 2 years, I find myself still preferring the perfume bottles to the larger blown work. This is especially true of the round bottles that are (at least partially) transparent. There is something about McClure's style that, for me, works better on the

intimate scale of the bottles. Aside from the fact that they are more unique as objects (and they *are* true originals) the bold paint strokes give them a jewel like quality capable of attracting more attention than the open vessel forms, despite the considerable difference in scale. Perhaps it's because the daubs form a greater proportion of the whole.

Stephen Skillitzi's *War Zone* was one of the most enigmatic pieces in the show. The scale and proportions worked well yet the metal embellishments became overpowering and ultimately distracting to my eye. The intensity and complexity of the electroformed metal "growths" seem appropriate to more abstract work where it could be freed from being subservient to definitive and descriptive imagery. I'm thinking of work like Max Ernst's surreal "Europe After the Rain"; abstract yet profoundly suggestive. Of course, abstraction carries its own risks. It can become the refuge of work too vague to be defined (and therefore criticised) instead of something capable of bypassing preconceived motifs and directly entering the imagination and heart of the viewer. In *War Zone*; the gold heads of the two central figures may refer to the gold extracted from holocaust victims but this too was distracting and even ambiguous. Skillitzi's work remains audacious and original but unlike just about every one else I can think of, seems to require restraint if the clarity of the vision is to be realised and the passion less obscured. Being able to see the piece from all sides might also have reduced the obscurity.

Rob Wynne's ambitious combinations of typical blown shapes, vivid colouration, sandstone and float glass tickled all kinds of nerves. The integration was not quite complete but the sense of humour and adventure showed considerable imagination and courage. My feeling was that they did not need the float glass backing plate but were capable of becoming icons of contradiction within the language of glass.

Allison McMillan's leaded panels too have a refreshing eclectic feel about them, yet the disparate elements sometimes have difficulty combining as a whole. This appears to be in the process of being resolved and is well worth the effort because the individual components are beautifully fashioned, particularly the brushwork and the colours. I had apparently seen these works before but did not recognise them because of the difference in lighting! The experience serves to reinforce just how important the lighting of glass is. As we all know, glass and light are vital partners in a medium that exploits the properties of our visual perception like no other. Leaded work is notoriously difficult to light in an exhibition environment but these two were superbly displayed.

Roberta Simpson's "Valediction of Weeping III" is

one of a body of work revealing both grace and strength. Though the piece is perhaps not as technically proficient or as clearly defined as some of the others in the series, it deserves to be the one exhibited because its elegant creativity and resolution of form is stronger. (Hemingway was credited recently with describing courage as grace under pressure. The quote may not be entirely appropriate here but I couldn't resist an excuse to pass it on.) Big isn't necessarily beautiful but Simpson's work deserves to be seen in larger format; it would shine.

I should perhaps have made an exception in **Scott Chaseling's** case and asked him what he was conveying in *Difficult Loves*, because his was one of those works I did not understand. Mystery in a work of art can be a wonderful thing but this onlooker needs to grasp at least something before I can be content with other mysterious elements which may merely suggest possible resolutions. I could find no "handle" in Chaseling's installation to begin an exploration of the meaning. So apologies Scott.

Other exhibits that attracted my attention were the 3 very promising pieces by **Itzell Tazzyman, Michelle Blanche Tilden's** *Neckring 2*, **Velta Vilmanis' Cascade** and the beautiful framework of **Richard Clements**.

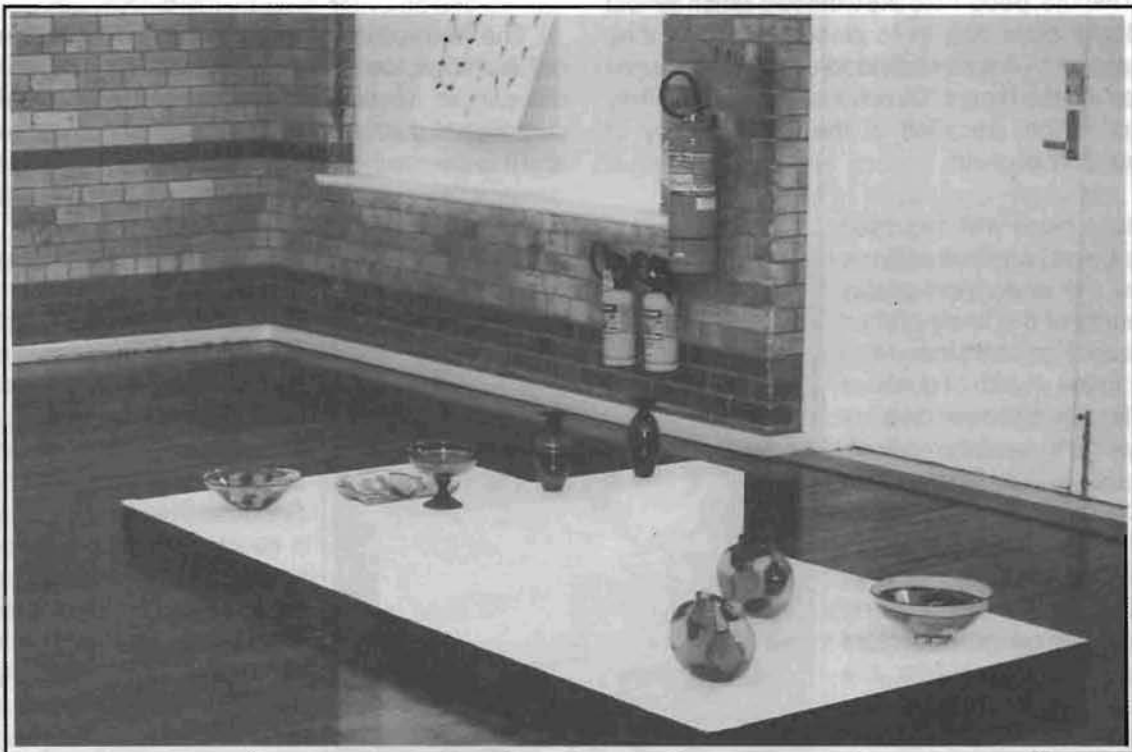
I have already indicated that some of the work in the show was difficult to see properly, yet others were shown admirably. Still others looked a little "flat". It is true that there is room for creativity in mounting an exhibition but it requires a measure of objectivity. Because a curator is dealing with pieces already creative in their own right, there are limitations far greater than those inherent in the making of an individual work. It is also true that a curator cannot display work without value judgements coming into play. It is unlikely, furthermore, that any group exhibition will show every individual piece at its best, and still acquire a cohesion all its own. It is important, however, that the attempt be made. The tradition at previous Ausglass Conferences has been that members' shows were open, casual events giving all a chance to showcase their work. The decision in Canberra to select the work for the first time because there was not to be a separate selected one on campus was in my view entirely vindicated. Here was an opportunity for a broad professionally mounted exhibition in a good space.

The selection panel for the Members Show chose in its wisdom to accept work which showed the diversity of Australian glass. Thus style, content, technique and intent were secondary to excellence, no matter which direction that excellence took. I can't help but feel this approach was compromised by a display in which

some pieces could not be seen properly without the aid of a ladder. Bear in mind that a common condition of exhibition entry is that the work may be rejected if considered to be of insufficient standard. Yes, pieces on plinths at ankle height could be viewed by getting onto the floor oneself but that is an option not available to the aged, the infirm or the disabled. Whether it is significant that the hardest to see were all vessels or contained references to vessels is unclear, but certainly many artists felt that their work had been handled insensitively.

which vendors jockey for the central (selling) shelves, where "slower" items or those from small manufacturers are pushed up or down, out of sight, out of reach.

Whether intentional or not, smaller works remaining on floor plinths became symbolic of lowliness. Given the nature of **Richard Morrell's** work, his was one of the most glaring examples. By contrast, **Klaus Moje's** pieces were beautifully elevated (as indeed they should be) despite the fact that his work is much larger and does not involve looking through from different sides



For someone my height, 188 cm (6' 2"), it was delightful to see the smaller works of **Deb Cocks**, **Richard Clements**, **Michelle Ivory**, **Cindy Hill** and **Liz McClure** at eye level. The shelving was simple, effective, surprisingly unobtrusive and created an inviting entrance to the exhibition. But making other work LESS accessible, even if a different perspective was achieved, implied disrespect.

I would have liked to decide for myself whether **Peter Minson's** glass flower petals were worth looking into, whether **Patsy Hely's** cups and saucers were of interest; but 2 metres from the floor, I was not given the opportunity. Peter Minson himself would have needed binoculars just to see the *underneath* of his flowers (if he was lucky enough to notice they were up there). We need to be wary of a kind of supermarket mentality in

as well as from above. **Ben Edol's** work too was superbly shown, enabling the viewer to appreciate it from all angles. **Warren Langley's** was magnificently positioned as was **Scott Chaseling's**, **Kirstie Rea's** and **Meza Rijdsdijk's**. I doubt that **Ian Mowbray** himself could have shown his work any better. I also enjoyed the single spots illuminating individual works in the darkened side room. It worked well. So why the passion? Because what marred an otherwise strong show and a sensational conference was that the gulf between the well presented and the poorly displayed was greater than I have seen at a single exhibition. Make no mistake, dear members, had the international work been treated in such a cavalier fashion, the repercussions would have been felt from Prague to Seattle.

Graham Stone

Directions - Glass Jewellery 1993

Review of Exhibition:

Walking down Fifth Avenue in New York, one is squeezed down to scale by the enormity of the buildings, with their huge shop windows, laden with a profusion of all the accoutrements of contemporary living, each window competing with the next for your attention. Tiffany's, the famous jewellery store, captures one's attention by placing within a huge blank facade a series of minute, peep-hole like windows which almost magnetically draw one in to closely examine their exotic contents. I was reminded of this experience while viewing the recent "Directions - Glass Jewellery 1993" exhibition, installed in the foyer gallery of Canberra School of Art.

It was a small well focussed exhibition, and I was immediately struck by the underlying quality and integrity of the finely crafted pieces, each significant in pointing strongly to the wealth of qualities glass offers as a complementary or independent jewellery medium. While glass provided this common link, it in no way confused or compromised the conceptual purity of the individual works as jewellery. I particularly appreciated the clarity and content of the ideas. In each case the approach differed, and the success of the exhibition was that it explored the theme on several levels, well introduced and documented by an excellent catalogue.

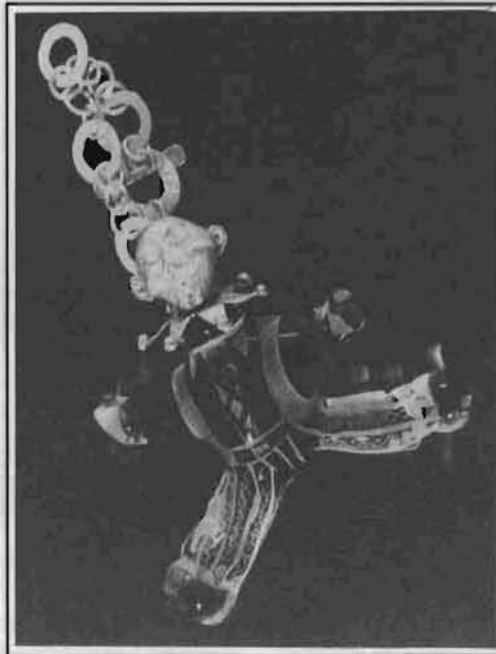
I enjoyed the thoughtful and witty spectacle glass brooches of Anne Neil making a visual pun on the process of looking, seeing and memory. Although taking a more decorative traditional approach, James Minson's work had a strong identity. His pieces had a seductive sensitivity with the rich variety of materials employed, particularly illustrated by his use of crushed paper with delicate lamp blown beads. Helen Aitken-Kuhnen juxtaposed the subtle alchemy of glass colouring with geometric form, giving a strong sense of luminescent nature enlightening a hard edged contemporary world. Robert Baines identified strongly the intricacies and idioms of present day living.

In her catalogue introduction, Susan Cohn,

highlighted some of the obstacles posed to the development of glass as a jewellery medium, by traditional approach to process, separating one discipline from another. Michelle Blanche Tilden's innovative articulation of lamp worked glass elements with finely made metal jointing structures, represented the crossing of these traditional barriers in this current generation, as did the quiet contribution of Sandra Appelby.

The exhibition also affirmed the value of collaboration, towards greater understanding of other disciplines. Kirstie Rea and Rick Barnsley had each contributed particular expertise to the others work, and this seemed to take possibilities forward in a truly constructive way. Kirstie Rea's Brooches illustrate a

wonderful affinity with the surrounding landscape, identifying the patterns and natural designs of the bush as essential decorative elements. By contrast, Rick Barnsley's inspiration by fauna, had led him in a much more whimsical direction. His "Long John" Shoulder Piece series showed a delicious sense of humour, the spirit of invention overcoming any limitations of materials, without losing sensitivity. Leisa Wharington and Felicity Pope have established a collaborative studio, and again the work admirably showed the potential exchange of practice. I appreciated their humour and attention to detail.



Gumby Goes to Town in His New Green Suit. Leisa Wharington and Felicity Pope

The task of an exhibition is to give perspective and this initiative of the Crafts Council of the ACT to mount small, extremely professional, touring exhibitions which pinpoint certain issues, is to be applauded. Credit should go to all those involved. The future is founded on strategic building blocks like this, establishing a useful context and identifying potential for development. It was a pleasure to see this work if you can catch it on it's tour, I recommend the visit.

Stephen Procter

British glass artist, Stephen Procter is currently Head of Glass at the ANU Institute of Arts.

T H E H E R M A N S T A P E S

" A R E W E G O O D E N O U G H ? "

An Interview with James Thompson

Gerie Hermans

Well known for his early association with the Toucan Glass Studio, for his kiln building activities and for his helping hands to staff and students at the Monash University School of Art and Design, JAMES THOMPSON, just back from Pilchuck, and, as always, full of energy, talked with me about originality and identity of Australian glass, 'hot glass hype' and creativity in Pilchuck, about his first journey overseas.

On the evening James and I sat down together to talk together, two other visitors arrived unexpectedly- Allan Crynes and Richard Morell. We started talking about the recent visit of Helmut Ricke, co-editor of Neues Glass, to Australia.

Everybody knew that Ricke had made some critical remarks about Australian glass in an article in Neues Glass reviewing the 'World Glass Now '91' exhibition at the Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art, Sapporo, Japan, but few had read the article.

Ricke writes:

...with each Sapporo exhibition Japan's association with Australia in a joint Asia/Oceanica group has become less convincing. The continuously unfolding individuality and profile of the Japanese artists have increasingly manifested the comparatively poor originality of the Australian glass art and its close alignment to Europe and the USA. It might be advisable to consider an ultimate separation of these rather incompatible spheres.... (Neus Glas p. 26).

Gerie: Is it true that Australian glass art is relatively unoriginal?

James: (who had heard about Ricke's remarks although he had been overseas) Australia is 200 years young! We would have to be influenced by outsiders!

Richard: I don't like the idea of pigeon-holing anything; why compare countries? Ricke's view is purely academic!

James: Japanese work is influenced too, by

symmetry. Ricke makes a statement and that's fine.

Gerie: But does Australian glass have an identity of its own?

Richard: Japan has such a different cultural base compared to Australia and America.

Gerie: There is an identifiable "Australian" painting- Streeton, McCubbin, Boyd....

Richard: That is because of the landscape.

James: Australian mongrel heritage is 200 years young and if you use the word influence... I find it hard... America is 400 years old and Europe to B.C.

Gerie: Skillitzi had the first studio furnace in Australia in 1975, Labino had the first one in America around 1964 Only ten years difference! Why does Dr. Ricke's remark cause such a storm?

James: People are doing the best they can and still have further goals. We would all like to be in that American or European influence. The biggest thing is the massive population difference. Don Wreford has been saying it for years- 550 million people in USA, compare that with Australia..... the percentage benefactors of glass.

Gerie: But then Ricke might be right. Australian glass does have a relatively poor originality, we are young and have a small market?

Richard: He is simply saying that we should not exhibit next to Japanese artists, because we have nothing in common. Why do we have to have all these overseas teachers at the Ausglass Conference?

James: In the workshop sessions during the time I

was at Pilchuck there was only one American teacher, Judith Schaechter, an amazing eccentric painter from Philadelphia. There were also two American resident artists who each had a teaching assistant to realise their designs in glass. For the rest, there were Japanese, Australian and Italian teachers, basically it is an international group. David Wright's workshop in kiln formed techniques had eleven students. There were artists from different media and artists in glass from different countries. One Korean student could not speak English, there were a couple of Mexicans, a Spaniard and a Canadian. Some had never picked up a piece of glass, so one minute you are teaching how to cut glass and the next minute you are explaining annealing and compatibility.

Richard: But American glass is so firmly established; having overseas teachers is not going to disturb their identity.

Gerie: Having overseas teachers is going to strengthen their identity. It should have the same effect on us.

James: The Americans still don't understand the full potential of fusing.

Richard: Yes, there is a lot going on here that is not happening in USA.

Gerie: Let's talk about Pilchuck. How did you get there?

James: David Wright had been asked to give a



James and Grandfather

workshop on kiln forming techniques and he rang me up one evening to ask if I wanted to come as his teaching assistant. My first thought was 'I can't afford it!' I had three days to make up my mind, but I rang David back, three hours later. It was my first journey out of Australia, so it was a real spin for me. We spent the whole time together in America. It was good to be with David, he is on the Pilchuck World Council and was not only asked to give the workshop but also to attend a three day seminar. We had been on the road for about 31 hours when we arrived in Pilchuck. Dinner was served and we were introduced to some very influential people in the glass world. There were gallery owners, museum curators, collectors who all came for this three day seminar. It had been seven years since the last seminar, so it was a very special occasion.

Gerie: Did you get an opportunity to speak with them all?

James: I did not have to worry about that.... they wanted to talk with me! It is a communal living environment and they were sleeping in the students' dormitory and all of us ate in the common eating house. I never sat at the same table. Everybody is a glass maniac, so you don't have to worry about the conversation! The first night of the seminar there was a performance after dinner at the Hot Glass Pad. A construction was built out of bits of steel and chicken wire in a 12 foot high pyramid shape, in the middle of which were cut out metal pictures of, I suppose birth, babies in wombs and various other things. All of this was surrounded by old window frames that served as a protective screen for the audience. It was like a circus! There must have been about ten people all continuously lading hot glass out of the furnace, walking up a primitive stairway and tipping glass over the top of the framework. They must have ladled 100 kilos or more. People thought it was bizarre! Most of them were impressed with the energy of these young people. It was also taken with a grain of salt. At first I thought, 'this is ridiculous', but the wielding of ladle after ladle of glass was awe-inspiring.

Gerie: Maybe people learned something about the fluidity of glass?

James: That was one of the points of the exercise, which I discovered after talking to this guy,



Dynamic Duo hits Pilchuck.

Zesty Meyers, who was the main instigator of the performance. It was a spectacular sight, they had sparklers in the construction and when the hot glass hit them they burst into light. The weird thing was that after everybody had left with a bit of 'ho hum, the kids have put on another show for us', I helped to pull the whole thing apart and what was left was an incredible fairyland of glass hanging down in this amazing shape. It looked fantastic, but everyone had gone to bed! - I went to bed at 2.30 am. David had left the pad around midnight. We shared a bedroom in the dormitory. I had put my toothbrush and toothpaste in a spot where I could find it easily without waking David. But when I gently opened the door he said 'Goodday mate' and we spent the next two hours talking about 'are we good enough?' For me, Pilchuck is demystified now. It is basically a stimulating place. I had this expectation about Pilchuck. I felt really comfortable after I had kicked in some walls. Australians are not fanfare and flags, we are doing what we are doing and there are lots of fields which we are good at. If the Australian attitude to glass is more laid back then that should be recognised as Australian glass.

There is a huge map of the world somewhere

in the dormitory and when you look closely at Australia you can see someone has marked a very tiny spot with the name, 'Fish Creek'!

James: Second day of the seminar there were demonstrations and small workshops going on all the time.... a bit like a market. David and I demonstrated David's piping technique. Paul Stankard was flame-working and asking a group of collectors what they thought of the previous night's performance. They were impressed by the enthusiasm of the young people but they had some doubts about the purpose.

During the day I again spent some time at the hot glass pad where they were preparing another show for the evening. I watched Pino Signoretto- you should see that man make glass! In the beginning, I thought 'this is a wank, calling him 'The Maestro', but I had to respect the man's skills. He lugs 30 kilos of glass around on the end of a punty... very clever.

On the second night he made a huge bowl. In the centre of the pad were all these boxes of sand which were filled with ladles of glass. There were various kilns around the joint filled with pieces which had been made during the day. There were these incredible flowers that Karen Willenbrink had designed

Hermans tapes continued ..

- she was boss of the pad that night. Eventually someone called 'Is everybody ready?' and then they started to stack the blocks of sandcast glass on top of each other, Pino's bowl was placed on top of that and all these amazing flowers were put in the bowl. The whole thing must have been about 10 feet high. And then they watched the whole thing blow up!

Gerie: Oh, I hoped that the end of the story would be...and then a large kiln that was suspended from the ceiling came down to anneal the whole creation!

James: The most relevant thing was the way the audience came in on this performance. The first night everyone was standing behind the line and 'the animals' were in the centre. This night, people were everywhere, photographing the show... I am spewing that I don't have a wealth of photographic material of these events.

James: (On hot glass hype...) Everything is centred around hot glass at Pilchuck. Everyone who works in hot glass should definitely go there. As I said, it is like a circus, there is incredible enthusiasm and applause - very American. I find hot glass studios are living, breathing, bloody things and the blowers living, breathing animals. Just before I went to Pilchuck, I watched Tom Levkovski at Monash. It took him half an hour to create a bubble which was the size of a well blown balloon just to gather enough glass over that to pour into a mould. I instigated applause then.

Gerie: Was there any more to applaud after the first two nights of the seminar at Pilchuck?

James: The third night I watched Dick Marquis make a teapot, mate, a murini teapot. He was part of the show. At the end of the day there was a barbeque and an auction and within an hour and a half \$16 000 worth of glass was sold. I bought three pieces- spent \$295. And that is the difference... there is more glass in Seattle than there is in the whole of Australia.

Gerie Hermans

Gerie Hermans is a Dutch born glass artist residing in Melbourne. She works in hot and warm glass on both sculptural and production works.

**MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY
A R T**

Change of Address

The Power Gallery of Contemporary Art
The University of Sydney
Power Institute of Fine Arts
Sydney NSW 2006

has now changed to

The Museum of Contemporary Art
Circular Quay West
PO Box R1286
Sydney 2000

Fax 02 252 4361
Telephone 02 252 4033

Director: Leon Paroissien
Chief Curator: Bernice Murphy
Assistant Curator: Linda Michael

Open Daily 11.00 am - 6.00 pm



•Christina M Kirk•

DAVID REEKIE IN MELBOURNE

After the successful two week 1993 Ausglass Conference Workshop at the Canberra School of Art, David Reekie continued on to Melbourne.

He was driven by Dick Stumbles via the scenic route, the Hume Highway, then through The Great Divide- and accompanied by Ko Sonnoy. It was she who spotted the koala perched high in the *Eucalyptus regnans* as they made their way over the Black Spur. Real Australian wildlife!

David had a couple of days to recover from the hectic workshop and trip south before being plunged into more work! On the Sunday evening, he opened an exhibition of Monash students' glass at the State Gallery of the Meat Market Craft Centre, (for further details, see *Snap, Crackle, Pop* elsewhere in this issue) and gave a lecture to workshop participants, Ausglass members and the public.

The lecture was an excellent prelude to a two-day workshop, jointly organised by Monash University and Ausglass(Victoria) Inc., and held at the Caulfield Campus of Monash. Thirty participants were treated to a mini-version of the Canberra workshop, and, although time did not permit an opportunity for 'hands-on' involvement, it was an excellent opportunity for other glass artists and students to see David at work.

To allow participants the chance to see many of his techniques, David produced another of the framed figure series, which involved lost-wax casting, clay modelling, mould-making, glass preparation and packing, colouration, kiln preparation and firing.

With his usual generosity, David explained in detail the ideas and processes which have underpinned his output over many years. It was especially absorbing to witness the development from his highly expressive drawings into glass reality.

It was only possible for David to pack the kiln before flying on to Sydney and from there, home to the U.K. Almost a week later, the kiln revealed a successful piece which is awaiting finishing before being added to the Monash University Collection.

Thanks to Ausglass (Victoria) Inc. and Monash University for the organisation of such a worthwhile and successful few days, particularly to Dick Stumbles, Pam Stodus, Bronwyn Hughes, James Thompson and all those participants who sent David Reekie on his way with a better appreciation of Australian wines and hospitality.



David Reekie during his 2 day workshop at Monash University, Melbourne, February 1993, watched intently by glass artists David Turner (left) and Graham Stone.

David Reekie was in Australia at the invitation of the National Executive of the Australian Association of Glass Artists. His participation in the 1993 Ausglass Conference and Workshops was made possible through the generous support of the British Council.



SNAPCRACKLE&POP

DESPERATELY SEEKING SNAP... Missing-Contributions, comments, articles, reviews, criticisms, ideas, problems and solutions, questions and answers, photos, technical info, jokes and anything else from anyone, any where. Due to publication deadlines and the fact that we're based in Melbourne, this first bulletin is rather Melbourne oriented, but we hope to expand our coverage Australia wide for future editions so please send something to SNAP, CRACKLE & POP. c/o Brenda Page, 16 Royal Ave, Mooroolbark, Vic 3138 Australia.



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WHO, WHERE, WHY, WHAT?

At an informal gathering of students at the Canberra Ausglass conference it became apparent that we have a common need and a particular dialogue that is pertinent to our stage of development. Grouping together we found a support network amongst ourselves that was previously lacking. We immediately found ourselves sharing ideas and experiences and discussing technical information. The motivation and drive we collectively generated was a huge inspiration.

Resulting from this we realised the potential of continuing a link between our glass contemporaries. SNAP, CRACKLE & POP has evolved to represent our voice. We are a group of new glass workers committed to furthering creativity and contacts within Australia's glass community.

- **WHO-** Students and emerging glass workers.
- **WHERE-** We know no boundaries.
- **WHY-** To provide support, information and ideas.
- **WHAT-** Whatever is useful, like technical info, exhibition proposals, aesthetic directions, grants and assistances info, academic issues, business ventures and anything we, or you can think of.

Brenda Page, Denise Sullivan, Doreen Willams, Joyce Louey.

GUSH...GUSH...GUSH...

What a hard act to follow. Thank you, Danke, Gracia, Merci, Origato Gozimasu, Ta, Muzzletoff, Stolicznaya, blah, blah, blah... to all those wonderful Canberra students who worked so hard and effectively to organise the exceptionally successful Ausglass Student Exhibition. The exhibition ran for three days, displaying a diverse array of work by students from all over Australia. Attendance was overwhelming with over 700 visitors crowding through the door which in turn provided excellent exposure and encouragement for all the exhibitors.

The feedback from Ausglass guests and the general public was very positive with everyone remarking on the surprisingly high standard of work and presentation, especially considering it was a non-curated selection of virgin talent. We certainly hope that this exhibition will set a precedent for future Ausglass Conferences. Well done Canberra students.

- SNAP, CRACKLE & POP



Some of SNAP, CRACKLE & POP and friends hanging out at the 1993 Ausglass Conference in Canberra.

TRAINS AND GOLDFISH...



Jumping at the opportunity to show work at an interstate exhibition, nine students from Monash University carefully packed 12 boxes of their work to send by rail to the 1993 Ausglass Conference in Canberra. Opps!! Rail freight doesn't unload parcels in Canberra! To their dismay, the date of the exhibition arrived but alas, their work did not.

But from adversity, good things come. For the disappointed Monash students, this took the form of 'Exploration Discovery', a compensatory exhibition held at the Victorian Meat Market in February - March this year. Assembled at a moments notice, the exhibition was opened by David Reekie on Sunday 14. All went smoothly except for the goldfish that were intent on high-diving from Di Piesse's fused glass fountain during some of the opening speeches.

The exhibition displays the diversity of glass work currently being produced in Melbourne from Jackie Page's delicately fused 3D imaginary figures to Wayne Burrowes' monumental sand blasted multimedia light constructions. From the dynamic graphic images on Joyce Louey's cameo blown forms to the organic colours and shapes of James McMurtrie's blown vessels.

Many thanks to Janet England, Browyn Hughes and Denise Sullivan for getting the show on the road and for those of you wondering about Monash University's representation at Ausglass, the University's honour was upheld by students who personally couriered their work to Canberra.

NEIS WORKS AND YOU CAN GET IT.

The New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS) is a training scheme run by the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) to help people receiving employment benefits become self-employed. NEIS consists of a 6 week business training course, income assistance for 12 months and follow-up support.

The NEIS course I did was specifically run to assist artists, craftspeople and entertainers to establish a business and derive income from their creativity. I found this course very comprehensive and surprisingly compelling as they actually managed to make learning about business interesting.

One of the more important areas the course covered was self esteem - how to come to terms with setbacks and how to learn something positive from the experience. From there the main emphasis was on developing a business objective, which included articulating clearly who you are and what your business is, what it is you sell and where, how to consider the future of the business and where you want to be in, say, 12 months time.

The course required doing some market research to establish if there is a market for your product. By talking to retailers, you get an idea of what sells, which is the best area to sell your work and what price range the market can sustain. The research also involves talking to competitors about whether they are busy, whether the market is expanding etc.

I found this stage



Coffee table by Catherine Rinaudo

particularly important as it is here that you decide if your business idea is feasible. Then you can make changes to the basic idea. It makes much more sense to spend a week asking questions rather than diving off the deep end, committing time and money only to discover that the work won't sell or that you can't sell enough to cover your costs, let alone live off it.

The course also covers the legal aspects of business like contracts, leases and the unavoidable accounting. There is also guidance on how to approach banks for loans or overdrafts.

There is an assessment process when you apply for NEIS. I applied three times before being chosen to attend a selection day. Your written application requires a concise description of a business plan and on the day they assess your personal commitment and management ability.

Once you are chosen, they do their utmost to see you through successfully to the end. The course's aim is to get you out there running a small business and they provide you with as much information as possible to help you achieve just that. What you have to do is prove that your idea is

feasible through a business plan which includes your market research, a detailed description of the business and how you will apply this business plan.

On the whole I found the six weeks exciting and engrossing. It was always relevant to my own interests and everyone worked well together in the group. We still meet regularly and I've made some good friends. It was great to see a group of artists come to realise that they could possibly make a living doing what they love best.

Personally, I came to realise that working in glass does not mean being without money. There is definitely interest out there in what we do, and more work than any of us realise. So, the course left me inspired and positive about the future. The other glass artists I spoke to are all happy with the amount of work, and the type of work they get and find it both challenging and satisfying. If anyone is considering the course, I recommend it highly. It is supportive and provides a positive focus for the future. Information about NEIS is available from the CES.

Catherine Rinaudo

**GLASS ARTISTS
AT THE
BREAKFAST
OF THEIR
CAREERS!**

G i s b o r n e, G l a s s a n d

DON WREFORD is well known as a Victorian glass blower with a penchant for deep thought and extraordinary work. He arrived here from England during the 1960's and in the late seventies he worked at Preston Institute, after completing his graduate diploma in glass at Chisholm Institute of Technology, using the tiny facility set up for Eva Armburg. (Amongst many other things, he will be remembered for asserting, straight-faced, "I am a woman!" during the 1993 Ausglass Conference.) He shares some of his experiences with us.....

I have now established my hot glass studio in Gisborne, a town 45 kilometres north west of Melbourne, on the fringe of the Central Highlands District which was profiled in the last Ausglass Magazine.

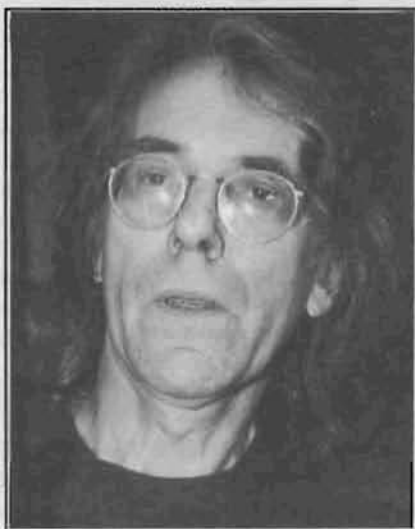
Prior to this, I was travelling 200 kilometres daily from North Carlton to Malmsbury and, after a couple of years, I had developed an aversion to cars. What had previously been a pleasurable activity became a travelling nightmare. This condition was compounded by the sound and vibration of my 1965 Holden. Having decided that there must be a better way, the 17 foot frontage Canning Street House passed under the hammer and was replaced by a verandahed weatherboard on one and a half acres overlooking the Wombat Forest which stretches 40 or more kilometres towards the horizon.

The house is 'a renovator's dream', not without a certain charm and character. My inclination is to do as little as possible to the house, although I have great ideas for its hidden potential, which may remain hidden for a considerable time. However, since moving here more than two years ago, I have been active excavating a site, laying a 40 x 30 foot concrete slab and erecting a Western red cedar studio. It is a pleasant space to work in, although rather on the small side, and a second (painting) studio was completed early last year for my partner, Polly. The second, smaller studio has a pot belly, north facing window lights in the roof and sash windows- all of which create

a good working environment for a painter of portraits and landscapes.

Finally in December 1991, the first imported Correll Recuperator and burner system arrived from USA, at considerable expense when freight, taxes and other costs were added to the price.

I intended to build the most economically run furnace in Australia and give detailed plans to any furnace constructor embarking on a similar course. My early ideas to construct a Pleshett crucible with three tangential supports which was to be housed in an egg-shaped shell proved too complex for clay/plaster mould construction and I spent months modifying my original ideas. I have slides of the construction and would be happy to show them at the next Ausglass conference. Anyone interested in visiting the studio or requiring information on the Correll Recuperator is welcome to phone me: (054) 282 853.



Don Wreford

My objectives for construction of the furnace were: to keep the flue below the crucible; to keep all castables to a minimum weight; to use insulation castables as much as possible; to use fibre wherever possible; and, to have a tight fitting door and recuperation. The importance of fuel efficient apparatus in the workshop is obvious from an economic viewpoint, however, I also believe I have an obligation to conserve natural resources for future generations.

I aim to cut down on production and improve the quality of my output. In the Western world we are swamped with an over-production of poor quality objects; built-in obsolescence. The artist has a duty to take an ethical stance, as Kurt Schwitters, one of the earliest environmental junk artists, has done. One can ponder the dubious environmental position of ACI which recently decreased the wall thickness of its glass product from 3mm, which allowed for washing and refilling many times to 2mm, for breaking and recycling; or the importance the West places on high grade low iron silica for their glass, (unlike the former

C h a o s . T h e o r y

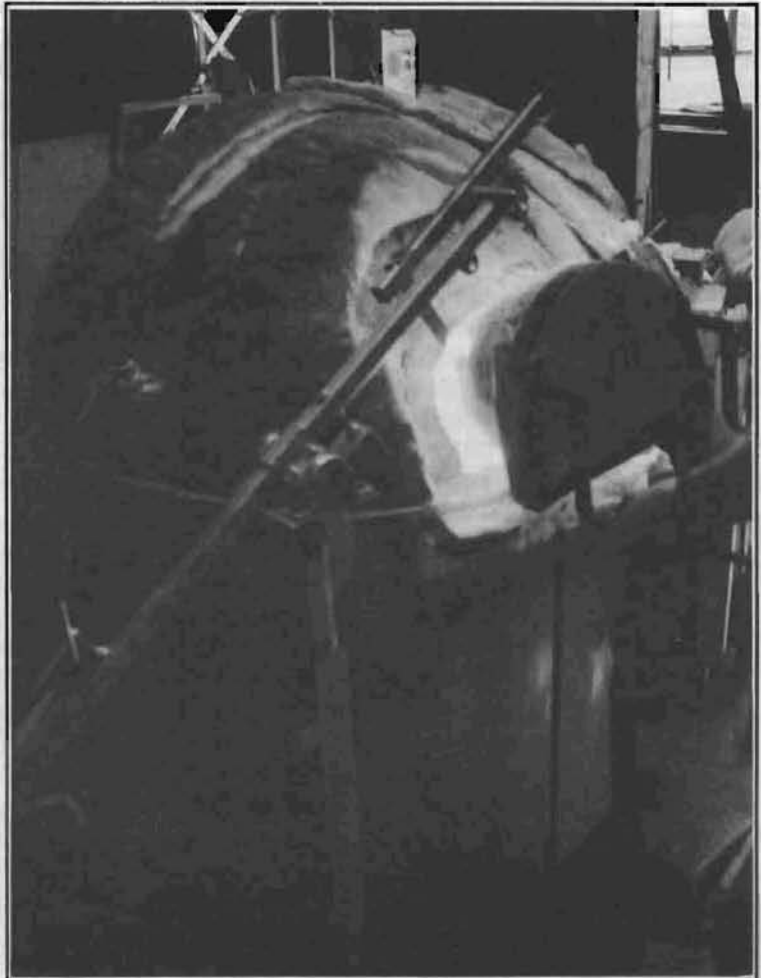
Don Wreford

Soviet Union which used high iron content sands for utilitarian wares).

As early as 1984 I exhibited pieces which challenged the general assumptions about Australian blown glass. I remember how my sandblasted vessels earned the comment that they 'looked more like ceramics than glass'. It came as a shock to many when I replied that, rather, ceramics looked like my work! Clay coated with enamels gives it a veneer which tends to hide the underlying structure, but glass shows the oxides and the silica and the underlying structure. Glass is also structured in such a way that it under limited stress. As with human stress, it is OK if it is not beyond the bounds of management, and can lead to creative development.

My work has been likened to that of Dale Chihuly. Many artists may be flattered by the comparison, but I believe it shows a misunderstanding of my work, although I can see how a mind seduced by the superficial could comment in such a misguided way. Chihuly's work is, of course, centrifugally spun out and gravity assists the blowers to finish the work. Those familiar with my working methods would recognise the differences: in fact, my pieces breathe in and out several times before they come to rest. My work does not have the seductive gloss of USA stamped on it.

Reading James Gleick's book 'Chaos' gave me valuable insights into my own artistic practice. It was with some relief that I came to terms with the material I worked with; I was simply pushing it further than the bounds of the usual. My work seems closely aligned with Chaos theory and practice in the way it collapses the blower's sacred forms- evenness of wall thickness, control over form and colour, indifference to the fluidity of the material and the peculiar qualities of expansion and contraction of differing oxides which shape the vessel to its own inherent forces. Chaos posits a configuration of the universe that is beyond our immediate understanding. What today is chaos, tomorrow is order.



Don Wreford's fuel efficient furnace in the part completed studio.

Don Wreford

TOXIC EFFECTS OF KILN & FURNACE MATERIALS

The following are edited excerpts from "*Potters Beware*" by Rosemary E. Perry; reprinted with permission of the author and publisher. The original is more detailed, contains a larger range of materials and retails for around \$10. The booklet suggests alternatives for some highly toxic substances and contains practical advice on the safe handling of hazardous materials.

Potters Beware is as relevant to glassworkers as it is to ceramists and is available from: Artisan Books at the Meat Market Craft Centre, 42 Courtney St North Melbourne 3051; and from The Potters Society of Australia, 2 / 68 Alexander St Crows Nest 2065.

Materials listed show degrees of toxicity through the skin, by breathing and by swallowing. Toxicity in one of these fields should not be assumed to be an indication of toxicity in another. They are graded low, moderate or high. The latter should be treated with extreme care.

MATERIAL	ABSORPTION	INHALATION	INGESTION
Alumina	Non Toxic	Moderate Powder forms can cause aluminosis, a dust disease of the lungs.	Non Toxic
Borax Na ₂ B ₄ O ₇ 10H ₂ O	Low but toxic if absorbed through broken skin or mucous membrane causing damage to the central nervous system.	Moderate Acute irritation of respiratory tract. chronic poisoning uncertain.	High for Infants Rapidly absorbed. Symptoms delayed. Vomiting & diarrhoea. Skin rash, convulsions. Acute ingestion of small amounts can cause death in infants.
Cobalt Oxide Co ₃ O ₄ Cobalt Carbonate CoCO ₃ Cobalt Sulphate CoSO ₄ 7H ₂ O	Low Repeated skin contact may cause allergic dermatitis	Moderate May cause breathing difficulties and coughing while exposed. Possible lung fibrosis and systemic poisoning from dust and fumes. Cumulative.	Moderate Gastric upsets, chronic ringing in ears. May cause goitre especially in children. Heart damage may be fatal. Cumulative.
Ceramic Fibre (Alumina & silica melted & blasted by high velocity gases into light fibres.)	Moderate Skin irritation.	Possibly High Hazards not yet established. Risks appear high from chronic inhalation, probably similar to fibre glass.	Low Unknown.
Potash K ₂ CO ₃ Soda Ash Na ₂ CO ₂	Moderate Corrosive. Skin & eye irritation.	Moderate Severe irritation. May cause oedema of the lungs.	High Very caustic. Damage to mouth & oesophagus.
Talc 3MgO ₄ SiO ₂ H ₂ O	Non Toxic	High Chronic inhalation-"talcosis" (similar to silicosis). If contaminated with asbestos can cause lung cancer.	Non Toxic
Vermiculite	Non Toxic	High May contain asbestos which causes asbestosis, mesothelioma & lung cancer.	Non Toxic

Graham Stone

FOUNDING FATHER IN SEX SCANDAL

Patricia Allen

An Exhibition Review

Many of you no doubt are familiar with the name Nick Mount on the Australian Hot Glass scene. Well known for his popular and stylish range of production ware and his recent attempt to fill a niche market by manufacturing speciality glass bottles on a relatively large scale in South Australia hoping to take a small percentage of the \$134 million import market. Had it not been for the withdrawal of Nick's major financier from this project, we probably would not have had the opportunity to view his new sculptural direction in glass.

In January, at the impressive Artworks Gallery in Nungurner, Victoria, the people of Gippsland had the opportunity to see this new direction in Nick Mount's exhibition entitled 'Sketches From Life'. The exhibition marks a departure from the Budgerie days, as the pieces are non-functional, sculptural works which incorporate an arguably 'intelligent' use of metal.

Harking back to his interests in life drawing when he was a sculpture student in Adelaide, Nick has produced a set of female torsos in blown glass. He has achieved this by using copper wire to imitate the lines sketched in life drawing by delineating the physical elements of the torso. From a technical point of view, the wire forms a matrix into which the glass is blown to give its own life to the torso as it bulges out at all the apt places. The torsos on display showed the development of Nick's idea to portray the female figure in glass. His earlier attempts were heavily wired, highly defined and voluptuous torsos, as in 'When the Fat Lady Sings', with its legs spread, through to more modestly posed and sparingly wired figures of his more recent forms. Later works on display at the Members Exhibition at the Ausglass Conference, Canberra continue on this development to be more impressionist or abstract, but much less controversial.

What controversy? Unfortunately, the contrast of the soft voluptuous figures of the sandblasted glass contained by the cold rigid wire gave rise to the

criticism that the torsos were, at best, degrading and unflattering, and at worst, were portrayals of bondage being the work of a sick and depraved man. Nick not only received this criticism in East Gippsland, but also in America where he showed slides of his torsos at the G A S Conference.

None of us want to think of Nick as being sick and depraved (though some have suggested he is a touch chauvanistic).. so this is what he says in his defence... 'I'm surprised... it didn't even enter my mind till I was criticised... the wire is delineating the torso, defining the form, not confining it or cutting across it. People are entitled to their own interpretations; there's nothing I can do about it. It [notions of bondage] comes from their mind[s] not mine...'

As a glassblower, my first impression was an appreciation of the overall form of the glass torso, perceiving the wire as the means of achieving this and accepting that it represented lines of the body. As a female, I can see that the earlier torsos are unflattering in their crudity but perhaps Nick can be forgiven in the context of the development of his idea this time. If anything, the criticism, controversy and debate could be seen as indicators that Nick has taken the step from fine craft to fine art... but I'm not buying into that debate here for the sake of those who attended the Ausglass Conference.

There were other works in the exhibition which included large, section blown cane worked cones and bowls as well as whacking high-shouldered vases (whackers?), all technically proficient and pleasing to the eye. Professor Norman Creighton, director of Artworks Gallery, praised the work, saying 'colour control has always been the mark of Nick Mount's glass work, and the refinement of the colour in these new works is outstanding.' My favourites, however, were the smaller sorbet dishes. These are a production item incorporating the use of copper wire. In this exhibition were four white striped dishes blown into **greened copper wire and sheet supporting structures**. These had a very nice European feel... but then, who eats sorbet?

Patricia Allen is a glass blower who has made her home and studio in Gippsland, Victoria.

A LETTER FROM ELIZABETH McCLURE, CANBERRA

Canberra

Dear Ausglass members,

It feels somewhat odd to be writing a final letter as outgoing President while things are in a state of transition and we are still very much in the process of 'winding up' here in Canberra.

Firstly, I would like to thank all members of Ausglass for their encouragement and support for myself and the committee in Canberra during our term of office. I would like especially to thank Maggie Stuart in Sydney who continues to co-ordinate Ausglass membership details (no mean feat!) for the entire country and to congratulate the Magazine Committee in Melbourne who are to a great extent our means of informing the membership of all manner of information and events. Thanks are due to all those involved for their time and generosity in providing this service for the membership.

I would also like to take this opportunity to wish the new President, Pauline Mount and the Executive Committee in Adelaide, a harmonious and productive term of office and every success with the projects in which they are involved.

From all accounts, the 1993 Conference was a most ambitious and successful event, which raised numerous issues and concerns of 'GLASS' people in Australia today. Response to the program and events has been extremely positive.

Initiatives of the past two years have resulted in significant recognition for Australian glass in a number of areas. To list but a few :-

- * Finn Lynggaard, who presented the Title Paper at the conference in Canberra has proposed an exhibition to be held in the Glas Museum in Ebeltoft Denmark in 1995, later touring in Europe.
- * Dr Helmut Ricke has written a very positive article on Australian Glass in the latest issue 1.93 of NEUES GLAS / NEW GLASS.
- * David Reekie presented a lecture on Ausglass '93 at the Miller Gallery in New York, USA in March, following his participation in the Conference and Workshops in Canberra and later visits to Melbourne and Sydney.
- * Franz. X. Ho presented a slide lecture in Germany

on his experiences in Australia during the Conference and Workshops.

- * Makoto Tomana, Assistant Curator of the Hokkaido Museum of Art will visit Australia in mid May to observe Australian Glass and meet artists.
- * Brian Hirst will attend the American G A S Conference in Toledo, Ohio after Ausglass was invited to be represented at initial discussions to establish an international Glass Network. This will also provide an opportunity to propose Australian artist as speakers / participants in the following G A S Conference in San Francisco in May 1994 and at other international events.

Australian glass is without doubt, becoming an even more prominent presence in the international glass scene.

I hope that with a continued spirit of interest and camaraderie from each other that this will strengthen even more in future.

Finally I would like to thank my own committee and members in Canberra who worked relentlessly and enthusiastically towards the realisation of what proved to be an outstanding and inspirational Conference program and related events.

The most impressive and reassuring aspect of all this, being the evident commitment to the development and promotion of Australian Glass by all who were involved and attended.

I am happy to have been a part of Ausglass at this time.

Thank you,
Much success and best wishes for the future of Ausglass,

Elizabeth McClure

P.S. Post Conference papers are due for distribution in early June, all going well!

*The rest
of us
enjoyed it
.... but did
the
panel?*



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PO Box 804, ACT 2601

Jeff Hamilton (NSW)
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Lane Cove NSW 2066

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Bronwyn Hughes, (VIC)
50 Two Bays Road,
Mt. Eliza VIC 3930
ph: 03 787 2762

Alastair Gordon (WA)
23 Carrington Street,
Palmyra WA 6157



STUDIO GLASS DESIGN LIMITED EDITION SERIES

ENTRY FORM

CLOSING DATE: 30 JULY 1993

1993 EXHIBITION CALENDAR:

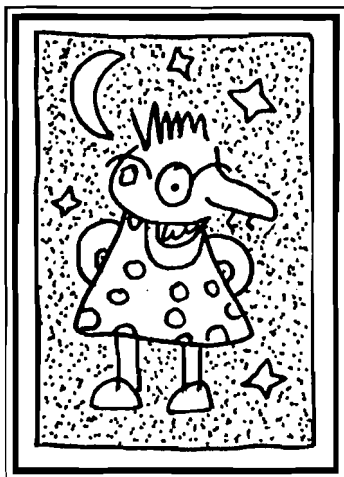
Entry closing date **30 July**
Notification of acceptance ... **13 August**
Delivery of art works **27 August**
Exhibition opening **3 September**

Enquiries :
Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery
40 Gurwood Street
Wagga Wagga, NSW, 2650

Telephone : (069) 235 419 Facsimile : (069) 235 400

Dear Beryl ...

19 January 1993



This is a very serious and compassionate column where readers send any problems they may have and I will do my best to help you through them.

Please don't be scared

Dear Beryl

Reference to English Muffle in Ausglass Crossword

As the creator of English Muffle I find it extremely repugnant to find such adverse references to the glass.

It filled a much needed gap in the market place for soft muted colours - without the 'antique' price tag - and enables restorations and reproductions to be carried out to a degree not possible in the last forty years.

I am saddened by the fact that your magazine has joined the ranks of Aussie Knockers at a time when more people need to get off their butts and produce income for Australia.

I invite your anonymous contributor to contact me so that I can find out exactly why he / she has formed such an opinion.

I am proud of what I, as a hobbyist, have achieved when the industry itself was taking no initiatives. The success of Muffle in Australia, USA, Europe, Canada, Japan, UK and New Zealand speaks for itself.

I do hope you will see fit to publish my letter in view of my relatively tolerant attitude on such a potentially libellous matter.

Peter Foster
The Glassmakers Pty Ltd
22A Gerald Avenue
Roseville NSW 2069

Please address all correspondence to:

Beryl Hartwig
48 Christmas Street,
Northcote, VIC 3070

Dear Beryl,

I am a lecturer at an Art School and find that some students are openly flirting with me to trade their favours for better marks.

I don't want this attention as I believe I am gay. I don't want to hurt their feelings either.

Please help,

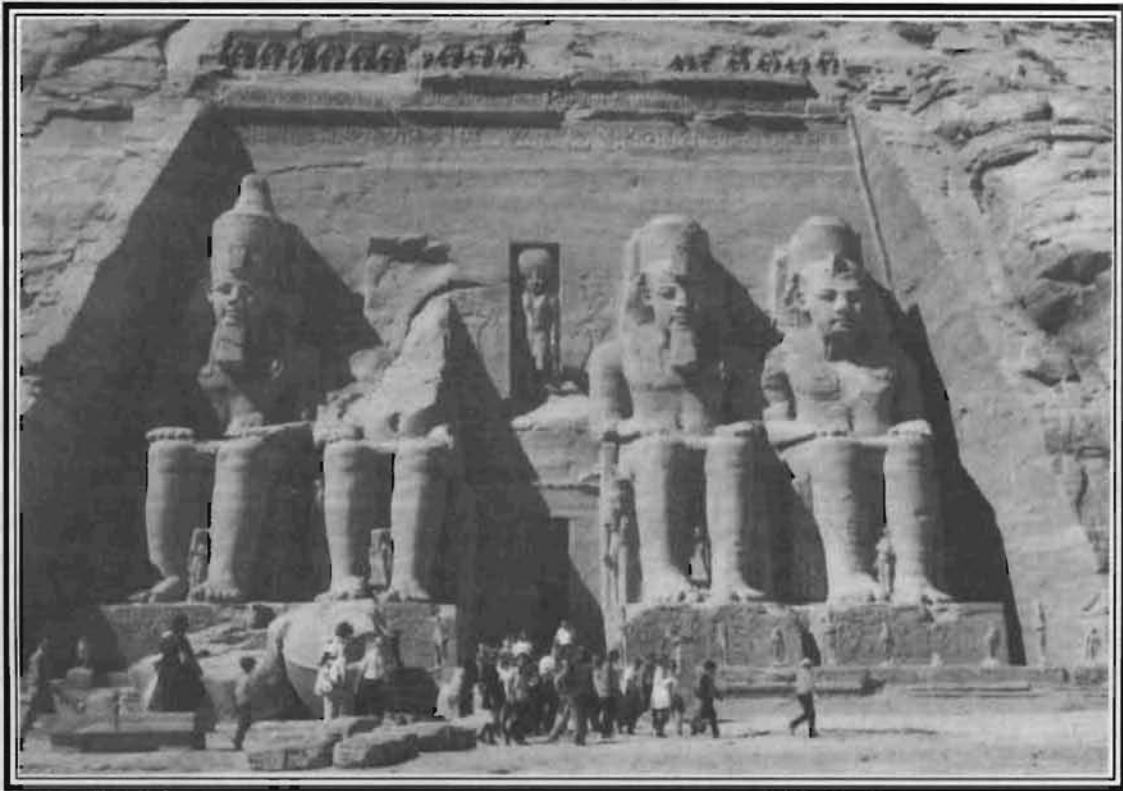
Gay and Clay.

Beryl,

Look here, what's the problem?

Just don't allow them to flirt. Make it obvious you dislike it, dry retch, fart, anything.... and, I tell you, they will stop. Their feelings won't be hurt because they don't really like you.

They just want better marks!



E G Y P T

How's it blowin' dudes? Writes Cathie Jordan as she has a "hoot" of a time touring Egypt.

Temples, men with machine guns, and Tutankhamin's amazing loot. She says "The lifestyle here is hilarious - nobody cares about time. It's a real shame the sky is blue and the weather is hot."

"Hope your punties are on centre."

Cathie

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Members in the south end are currently gearing up for the inaugural Glass Weekend, September 18 - 19 1993, which is threatening to become bigger than Texas.

Graham Stone, Pauline Delaney and Ede Horton form the nucleus of the planning group, and are well underway with organisation of speakers, demonstrations, exhibitions and other . Members should by now have received advance notice of the ACI Glass Exhibition Award, and the U and final details of the two-day program are to be printed in the next (Winter) Ausglass Magazine.

Mr. Makato Tomana, Deputy Curator of the Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art, visited Melbourne as part of a fact-finding tour of USA, New Zealand and Australia. He met with John McPhee and Geoffery Edwards at the National Gallery of Victoria; Bronwyn Hughes, Nick Wirdnam and David Turner at Monash University; visited ART Gallery with Kazuko Eguchi and saw her latest exhibition work; visited the Access Studios at the Meat Market Craft Centre with General Manager, Janet England, Graham Stone and Pauline Delaney; and met a gathering of Ausglass members at the Conference Room where he had the opportunity to see slides and talk to glass artists about their current work.

It was also an opportunity to hear about World Glass Now and its development over the last ten years, but disappointing to learn that 1994 will be the last of the series. However, it seems that Hokkaido will continue its interest in glass through different formats, more appropriate to the diverse nature of the medium in the 1990's.

President, Pauline Mount, in Melbourne for the Rotary Convention, also met Mr. Tomana at the Meat Market. It was also an opportunity for us all to swap information and ideas for future Ausglass activities face-to-face, - always better than by fax machine.

Richard Clements and Robert Clark have been in town too-blowing glass in the Hot Glass Access Workshop at the Meat Market. Last month we had the opportunity to catch up with Jeff Hamilton and Lance Feeney who were here for the exhibition associated with the National Liturgical Music Convention. Local glass studios, Sacred Art and Toucan were also represented.

Congratulations to Leisa Wharington on the recent arrival of daughter number two, Sophie.

Jacqueline Page, recent graduate from Monash University, won a section of the 'Build a Bug' competition, organised by the National Museum of Victoria in conjunction with 'The Gargantuans' exhibition. The winning entry was a large glass creature, dangerously smiling, as it 'flew', apparently unsupported by its glassy pedestal. Jacqui uses GNA to produce these lively colourful fantasy creatures.

Alison McMillan has been awarded a full scholarship to attend Pilchuck Summer School in June. She will participate in the glass painting workshop to be lead by Dick Weiss and Walter Lieberman. Congratulations for a well deserved award.

November 1993 will be another big month for Victoria, as Ausglass and the Historic Buildings Council jointly host a seminar on Conservation and Restoration of Architectural Glass. Planned as a forum for discussion on issues associated with current practice

and future options, it is also intended to raise awareness through all sectors of the community. Further information from Bronwyn Hughes.

The 3rd Annual Darts Night, held at Toucan Glass Studio in April, was another successful social occasion, although the financial gain was somewhat lower than previous events. Richard Morrell was the winner of the \$20 competition, and he has been excommunicated as a result, while THE Glass Dart Trophy was secured for the coming year by

E D I T O R I A L

As you will have read elsewhere in this issue of Ausglass Magazine, the National Executive has moved to South Australia for the next two years. Our congratulations to incoming President, Pauline Mount and her team.

Our thanks must go the outgoing executive who, with exceptional dedication, under the Presidency of Elizabeth McClure, ran the highly successful National Conference in January 1993. It was the first time the National Executive had been located outside the major states, thus proving again the importance of commitment, organisation and hard work rather than a large membership pool.

It was decided at the Annual(?) General Meeting that the Magazine Board would continue on in Melbourne for the next two years. Thanks to all those members who offered comments, criticisms and congratulations at the Conference, but it is important to continue the feedback. Now that the dates for magazine copy have been published in this issue, we hope to carry information from all states and territories of activities of interest to us all: the magazine is the major form of communication between Ausglass

members. Please contact by phone, fax or letter, at any time, on any issue.

During our first term of office, the Board discussed the possibility of a name change for the magazine. A brain-storming session left us with very few alternatives which had not been tried before. We also looked at magazines which had changed their names over the years, such as 'Stained Glass Quarterly', (which was formerly 'Stained Glass' and before that 'The Bulletin for the Stained Glass Association of America') and 'Glass', (formerly 'New Glass Work'). When examined closely, we decided that maybe Ausglass Magazine says exactly what it is, and we should leave it alone rather than create any more confusion! What do you, the membership, think? Another plea for feedback!

1993 started with a remarkable conference. In her letter in this magazine, Elizabeth McClure has outlined just some of the action and flow-on from that event - all of it showing the vibrant state of Australian glass. A brief glance at the range of events and exhibitions which are planned in the remainder of 1993 suggests that diversity, innovation and imagination continue to offer on-going excitement for all of us interested in glass.

Bronwyn Hughes

J A P A N G L A S S A R T I S T S T O U R F E B R U A R Y 1 9 9 4 W I N T E R T O U R

14 DAYS - DEPARTS MELBOURNE
FEBRUARY 5 1994

OPEN TICKET FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO STAY
ON TO ENJOY JAPAN'S WINTER SPORTS OR
TRAVEL SOUTH

COST: \$3198.00 - this is approximate and will depend on the exchange rate and the size of the group. The maximum number will be fifteen. The cost covers all air travel; rail pass for 14 days; twin share accommodation with some meals; transfer from Narita Airport to Ilaneda Airport, Tokyo; and, the flight to Sapporo-Hokkaido. Single supplement \$280.

TRAVEL: Travel will be with Qantas,

departing from Melbourne via Sydney, then direct to Tokyo. It will be a fully escorted tour with Connie Dridan who has travelled extensively in Japan and taken a number of Craft/Art Tours to Japan, Korea and China.

Connie has made contact with several artists and visited Asahara Chiyoji in his studio at Otaru last year. The tour will start in Otaru where the group will visit Chiyoji-san and other artists in the area. Then the tour will return to Sapporo to see the famous Snow Festival before travelling south to Tokyo.

Japan is magical in the winter and the scenery on the way back to Tokyo by train is superb. Weather permitting, a visit to the beautiful Nikko on the way, and while in Tokyo, several visits to Glass Artists, including Fujita Jun and Ikemoto Kazumi. Other artists to be approached are Takahashi Yoshihiko, Ko Takeuchi, Ikita Shibuya and Ogita Katsuya. Other possibilities are Naomi Shioya and Rika Karoki. Further information regarding studios will be available later when a full itinerary is printed.

There are several superb collections of glass, including the Shimonoseki Gallery collection which we shall see on route to Fukuoka.

A step back into history will be experienced when traditional villages like Takayama in the mountains and Kanazawa, Kyoto City and Nara, the original capital are visited.

On the way south to, a stopover in Himeji to see the most beautiful castle in Japan and a train trip through Hakusan Park in the Japan Alps will be a highlight. The tour will spend time in Yokohama, Osaka and Kobe.

Japan has come to the forefront in glass and works seen in the last "World Glass Now Triennial exhibition were stunning. The diversification of technology over the last ten years has broadened the range of expression in glass. Those winning exhibits from the "World Glass Now" show will be seen in Hokkaido's Museum of Modern Art.

There is so much more to entice you to join this tour. For more information on tour details contact:

CONNIE DRIDAN Phone: (03) 560 1520 Fax: (03) 650 1520 or write to:

GLASS ARTISTS TOUR
C/ 44 CHANCELLOR DRIVE
MULGRAVE VIC 3170

GLASS WEEKEND

18th & 19th September 1993
Meat Market Craft Centre

Studio glass is a relatively new phenomenon and there are very few private outlets in Australia where the best of this work can be seen. Partly as a result of this lack of infrastructure, the public remains largely unaware of our achievements. Yet few of us doubt that this is the Glass Age.

The Glass Weekend is an attempt to alert the community, and a core of enthusiasts in particular, to the fact that some of the finest contemporary glass is being produced in Australia. At the same time, we intend to give them a glimpse of the breadth of these endeavours and show some of the processes involved in production. By enabling them to meet the artists, both formally and informally, the whole event should provide the most comprehensive view of the Australian glass world that the public can witness.

Hopefully, the Glass Weekend is sowing the seed of a new appreciation of glass in this country. That appreciation will not occur overnight, and artists should not expect to be

washed away on a tidal wave of buying frenzies. Rather, it is an opportunity to show our best and stimulate interest. As enthusiasts become familiar with our work, they have more to offer us than sales: valuable feedback from a different perspective and the potential to become our keenest advocates.

We are indebted to ACI for their foresight and to the Meat Market for its support. The Glass Weekend is otherwise being funded by the artists themselves and organised by them. The most important contribution we can make to the event is to produce something special for the ACI Glass Award. The second is to notify collectors that the Weekend is happening.

Two of the three judges for the ACI Glass Award have been confirmed: Terrence Lane (Curator of Decorative Arts, National Gallery of Victoria) and Elizabeth Cross (Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology). The Exhibition will be opened by the Victorian Minister for the Arts.

Graham Stone