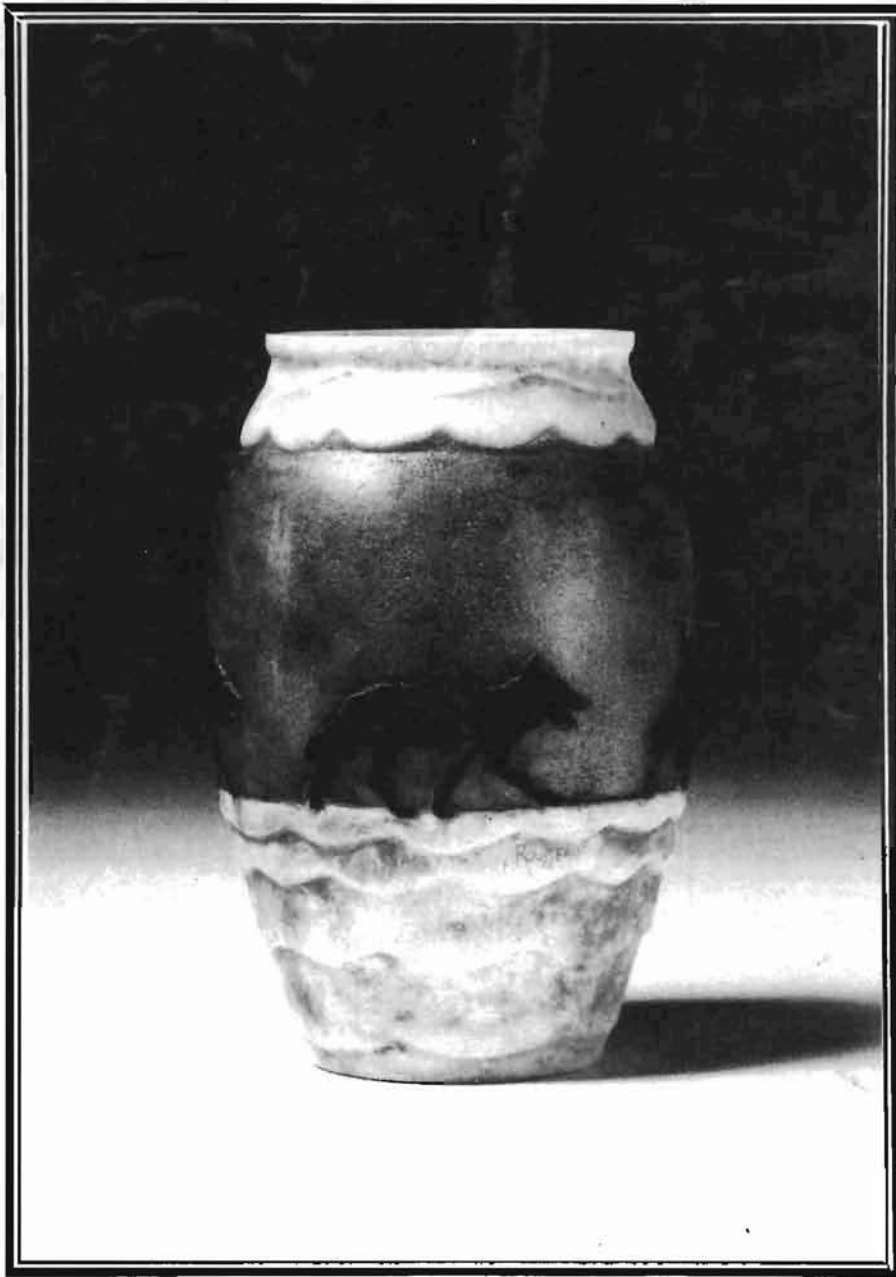


Ausglass Magazine

A Quarterly Publication of the

Australian Association of Glass Artists

ausglass



SUMMER EDITION

1990

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38-40 John Street, Leichhardt. N.S.W. 2040.
Phone: (02) 560 9136

FRONT COVER:

Pertinent to the article on Argy-Rousseau, this photo is of one of his pieces which was auctioned earlier this year by Rushton Fine Arts, 184 Day Street, Darling Harbour. We are grateful for their permission to reproduce this photo on our cover.

Next Issue:

The next issue will be compiled by the new Executive Committee following the 1991 Conference.

Responsibility cannot be accepted by AUSGLASS, its Executive Committee or the Editorial Committee for information in this magazine which may be ambiguous or incorrect. To the best of their knowledge, the information published is correct.

ausglass
magazine

SUMMER EDITION 1990

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AUSGLASS - WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

As is customary, the Conference in 1991 will conclude with an Annual General Meeting. There must be issues about which members have strong feelings. Now is the time to begin writing them down and give serious consideration to those issues which should be incorporated into the agenda. Please send to the Editor at 69 Undercliffe Road, Undercliffe, N.S.W., 2206.

Our most pressing problem - who is going to be President, and where is he/she living? As per our Constitution, the Executive must move - but which State? Though should be given now to the questions:

- * do we need another Conference?
- * what form should it take?
- * who can handle the workload?
- * broad-based involvement/contribution?
- * can it expand as most members wish given the voluntary nature?
- * is a full time secretariat feasible? (how would it be funded - if people can't contribute their time can they contribute financially?)
- * should we establish some sort of data base with information on and for our members or should this lie with the Craft Councils?
- * lack of motivation by most members to contribute in any way towards magazine, etc.!!!!
- * can an umbrella organisation like Ausglass fulfill the specialised needs of members working in very different disciplines - are we spreading ourselves too thinly? Is there still a common bond? If so, what is it?
- * cost of running - members already question what do they get for their \$45 - but administrative costs are high, just in printing and postage alone.

Detail of "Winter", one of a series of commissioned windows by Jeff Hamilton for a private residence in North Parramatta, showing the use of fired paintwork to extend and invigorate the leadline.

Paddy Robinson's workshop "Painting with Light" (23rd-25th January) which will be exploring techniques of glass painting, still has a few vacancies!!



THE 1991 CONFERENCE

Registrations are rolling in for the 1991 AUSGLASS Conference and Workshops, and the deadline is officially closed, so send your registration off NOW!

When you come to Sydney for the 1991 Conference, make sure you allow time to enjoy the pleasures of this city, particularly if you haven't yet caught up with the results of all the Bicentennial activity.

The whole of Darling Harbour displays a wealth of public artworks and urban landscaping. The most beautiful aspect has to be the *Garden of Friendship*. These gardens were designed by the Guangdong Landscape Bureau and built by the Darling Harbour Authority. Construction began in March 1986 and the gardens were opened in January 1988.

These photographs show some of the acid-etched glasswork built into the pavilions within the gardens. The bamboo imagery illustrated provides decorative illumination to the Boat Pavilion. It was designed and executed by Chinese glass artists in Guangdong Province in drawn ruby flashed on clear. The glass panes were installed into their carved timber framing in China and shipped to New South Wales pre-fabricated.

Other pavilions in the gardens incorporate acid-etched glass, including the Pavilion by the Water. The *Cracked Ice* windows shown in the photo demonstrate the skill of the Chinese carpenters who worked on the project. These windows can be found in the Lotus Fragrance Pavilion over Water.

A definite "must see" on your travel itinerary!



YES, THERE IS A MEMBERS' SHOW!!

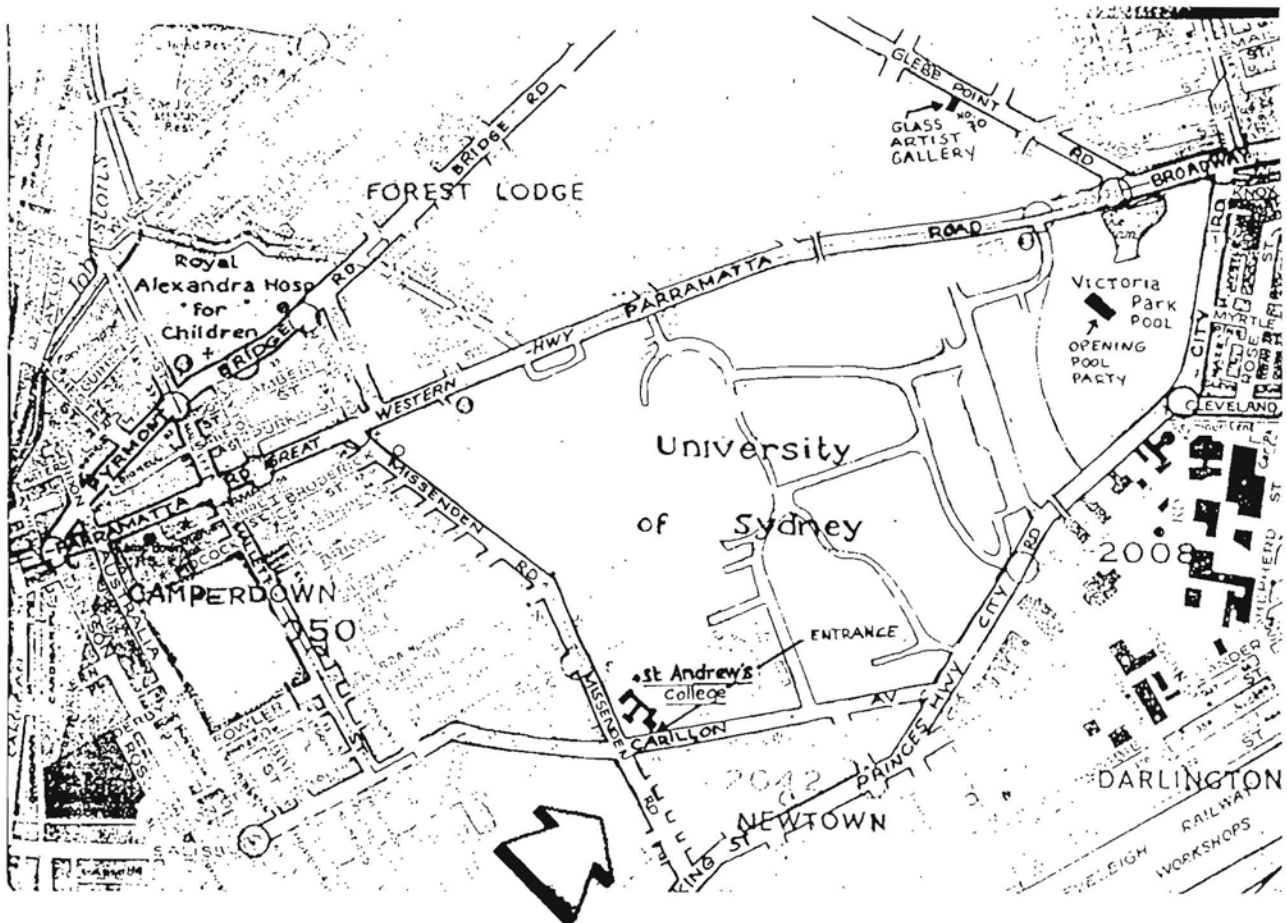
Now that the deadline for the three major exhibitions has well and truly passed, and you have all submitted your entries, there is plenty of time for you to consider what you would like to bring for our "Show and Tell" Members' Exhibition.

A conference wouldn't be the same without one! As usual, this will be an unselected exhibition: it's your show - bring what you would most like others to see.

The venue is St. Andrews College Country Club. Work is to be delivered on Saturday, 26th January, 1991 between 12 noon and 4 p.m., or Sunday, 27th January between 9.30 a.m. and 12 noon to the Country Club, shown on the map below. No work will be accepted after midday. If you can't deliver it before, then you must make other arrangements, either sending by rail or road to Hamilton Design Glass Gallery, 156 Burns Bay Road, Lane Cove or have a friend deliver it for you. This show must be in place ready for viewing by 10.30 a.m. on Monday, so no late entries please.

Work often sells from the Members' Exhibition, with AUSGLASS taking a commission of 25%, so here is your chance of making a bit of money to recoup some conference expenses, and provide AUSGLASS with the opportunity to do the same.

All work should be clearly labelled (with labels that won't fall off), showing your name, title of the piece if appropriate, and either the retail price or "NFS" if the item is not for sale. Should you require any special or unusual methods of display, do let us know in advance so that we can be prepared. Contact Jeff Hamilton by writing c/o 156 Burns Bay Road, Lane Cove, N.S.W., 2066.



THROWING THE BABY OUT WITH THE BATH WATER by Jenny Zimmer

How do we deal with the paradox of the crafts? Every year there are more crafts practitioners, craft production opportunities, marketing outlets and educational/training initiatives.

Craftworking is acknowledged as essential to diverse aspects of contemporary culture. Demands for a clear description of what the crafts are, and critical appraisal of their value, have become increasingly insistent. And yet, the word craft is frequently despised and dismissed - ironically, often by its leading proponents and exponents.

Once, all art was described as craft. Increasing complexity of content and meaning rendered this definition unsatisfactory for what the contemporary world understands as art. Art began to be described differently from craft - and current art theory distinctly undervalues important aspects of the crafts. If in the 1990s all craft were defined as art, its evaluation would be seriously incomplete.

At the same time craft has taken on a modern meaning which has little to do with the hand-crafting of products to patterns or traditional formulae. Nor it is quite what was previously understood as the decorative arts. Instead, it is an innovative/creative/social enterprise built on the natural pleasure derived from and promoted by the skilled manipulation of materials into desirable, useful forms. The crafts, like art, are carriers of images, symbols and meaning but, unlike art, cannot jettison concern for form and function and the skilled experimentation necessary for innovative design and production.

Unfortunately for the crafts, the late 20th century has developed a theoretical disposition which favours concepts. The rationale of the crafts is slightly too pragmatic, insufficiently reducible to pure idea. The arts are more flexible in this respect and have therefore profited from the narrowly focused, deconstructive relativism of modern theory which blurs clear distinctions and creates moveable boundaries.

Because art is the winner, everyone wants to be an artist. Post-modern theory as currently practised is ill-equipped to serve the crafts, and this has proved detrimental to their identity. A project which is limited to the interrogation of images to elucidate not one but all possible meanings is programmatically opposed to the aesthetics of form and function and does not admit discussion (or, much scorned description) of skills and media, and is likely to be exploited by factions with vested interests.

Currently, these include artists who cannot live by concept alone and regularly engage in decorative and applied art (as long as they are not re-categorised as craftspeople!); designers of short-run ecology-friendly, value-added industry products whose major rivals are the makers of one-off craft objects; perpetrators of community projects who value social interaction more highly than the cultural products; and, most insidiously, a number of craftspeople who are prepared to engage in degrees of intellectual dishonesty about what they do. All these constitute a powerful force against the crafts maintaining a distinct identity.

The latter are vocally determined to reduce the concept of studio-craft to those factors which determine the contemporary definition of art. Against this, the vast majority of craft practitioners continue to pursue the more comprehensive objectives which define the crafts. The statistics prove this.

Why do some crafts people wish to hide the real, natural and valuable objectives of the contemporary crafts under the mystifying blanket of high art critique?

There are, of course, perfectly acceptable instances of craftspeople abandoning their interest in the full application of craft criteria and opting for ideas-based art practise. There are also craftspeople and artists who may fulfil the criteria for both art and craft, or move regularly back and forth between the two - they are to be highly admired. But, there are some craft practitioners who simply make high quality, useful, imaginative, ornamental craft objects but demand that they be categorised and criticised under the current definition of art. Their demands seem pretentious and misguided. They abandon, rather than support, their accurate creative base, and hinder its real potential for development.

At the beginning of the 1990s there are signs that contemporary theory is losing its grip. People are questioning its "positions". The crafts are in danger of being homogenised within an all-encompassing definition of art which, despite certain attractive but misleading arguments, remains hierarchical in its concerns. Crafts practitioners must quickly decide whether the word craft is to continue to describe their collective activities and then cease to be apologetic about its use.

Why the Distinction?

Despite optimism about an integrated arts industry and the liberal idea that all art/craft design activities should be subsumed under the term "art", contemporary theory demands that there be art and there be craft: and, in the immediate future, the distinction is unlikely to go away. There is too much invested in it.

If the definition of art were genuinely extended to cover the legitimate concerns of the crafts there would be a good case for abandoning the distinction. But contemporary theory simply blurs it. Under these circumstances the crafts are better served by maintaining and refining the distinction to highlight their particular qualities.

Article by Jenny Zimmer (continued)

The '80s project of exploding or blurring the art/craft definition now seems futile, illogical and gratuitous. Futile because it is impossible to do so while one of the two terms is so firmly entrenched and value laden; illogical, because to remove the distinction under current conditions may lead to losses on both sides rather than composite gains; and gratuitous because, over the broad span of history, good craft always takes its rightful place alongside good art. The museums are full of both.

The crafts, like art, have an irreducible bottom line. If form, function and decoration, and the media and techniques they entail, seem more prosaic than meaning, it is because modern interpretive theory has been fixated on the latter. Break this fixation and the obnoxious hierarchy disappears: the distinction becomes valuable rather than discriminatory. Neither art nor craft need suffer, and both will be better understood.

Amidst frequent calls for improved craft writing and criticism, there is studied avoidance of craft terminology.

Craftspersons are defined as artists, object-makers, design-makers. Craft objects are incompletely analysed as texts. Meaning and social commitment is praised, but craftsmanship is ignored. Craft critique is simultaneously sought and rejected.

If Post-modern theory is really intent on exploding hierarchies, fixed positions and popular expectations, it should examine the relatively narrow confines of its own application. Craft objects can be treated as text, and craftspersons do intentionally build meaning into their work; but the crafts have an additional agenda, and it is this that contemporary art theorists have been reluctant to discuss, or describe (dare I use the word?).

Post-modern criticism, particularly French interpretive philosophy, works for the fine arts and literature because these arts address the individual's transcendental/metaphysical relationship with the world. A work of art can be reduced to a theoretical state; it can be completely reflective; there need not be an object. Skills, materials and techniques are treated as inconsequential.

This is fine for those whose main business is thought - and they may include artists and writers. But those who also work with physical materials to competitive costs and deadlines, with the aim of satisfying aesthetic and functional specifications, must be more pragmatic.

With the drafts, if there is no object, there is no craft. It is as simple as that. An important physical residue demands attention as soon as, or before, meaning has been analysed. How is this residue to be dealt with? Critics, and sometimes even craftspersons, are dismissive of media and techniques and reluctant to give them value. Positions need to be taken which include proper analysis of form, function, ornament, style, media and techniques. Some of this looks very old fashioned. Reluctance to ascribe value to things like form, decoration and choice of media is one of the most interesting aesthetic prejudices of our times. It will take great skill and persuasion to gain appropriate standing for the terms within the language of Post-modern criticism.

An interpretive focus on social context and expressive meanings a propos the crafts has been valuable as far as it has gone, but incomplete interrogation of the crafts has camouflaged inefficiencies, bolstered pretensions and encouraged half-truths. Theory has been used selectively to pass things and positions off as other than what they are.

In the '90s craftspersons are being called upon to act as well as speculate. Craft theory and criticism must be cognisant of this. The question is - do crafts practitioners value craft's distinguishing characteristics sufficiently to retain its discrete identity? If so, determined thought will successfully extend the theory.

The Post-modern era has also been characterised by totally unexpected reversals. Who dreamed of the dramatic return to easel painting in the early '80s? Who thought that conceptualism could be institutionalised? The crafts may appear to be relinquishing their identity, but I predict the '90s will make progressively more demands on the skills and creativity of crafts practitioners.

Conceptualism is ceasing to satisfy, natural resources are becoming scarcer, skills rarer. Products made for a longer functional life will need to be more "precious" and less fashionable. In this context more value will be placed on quality crafts and those who make them. It is already occurring. Innovative and highly skilled craftspeople may finally begin to enjoy more equitable economic rewards.

It would be ironic if the descriptive terminology of the crafts were to disappear just as it is needed for the promotion and clear analysis of the second phase of what has been a determined craft revival.

What went wrong the first time?

Despite the social idealism of the early Moderns, people could not live in Malevich's Suprematist architectons, Tatlin's Constructivist "towers", or Van Doesburg's totally designed Neo-plasticist "environments". They tired of Bauhaus "functionalism" and eventually disowned Le Corbusier's "machines for living in". Modern art failed to deliver societal satisfaction. Could the crafts do better?

The crafts' revival of the '70s was politically expedient and socially aware. Expansively catholic in what is offered, it was intended to democratise the arts and improve the quality of daily life. Tradition and innovation were equally respected - as were form and content.

Article by Jenny Zimmer (continued)

The concept of the crafts helped stabilise an era characterised by technological change, de-skilling, environmental devastation, nuclear threat and the disintegration of traditional family life.

Avant-garde art was understood to provide society's conceptual/emotional outlet - even if it was expensive, alienating and little understood. The crafts, inexpensive, accessible and unburdened by theory, were revived to remind us that historically, much pleasure and satisfaction has been gained by making innovative, functional objects and engaging in ornamental processes which also serve as authentic symbols of their time. Although the crafts never abandoned symbolism, celebration and decoration in their pursuit of functionalism, contemporary craftspeople felt the additional need to emulate artists in their search for meaning. This was quite appropriate.

Barely established, the studio-crafts movement collided with increasingly radical cultural change. Late 20th century interpretive theory and economic speculation converged to create a conflicting cultural context in which the arts were expected to provide an irrational ideas-based outlet for society, but to do so as part of an increasingly bureaucratised and market-oriented commercial system. It could be argued that the arts became too confused and tendentious to emulate, but the crafts, caught up in the euphoria of revival, continued to follow.

If appropriation from early 20th century Modernism helped bring the crafts into the contemporary era, borrowings from theory-laden Post-modernism are problematic. There is a basic dissonance between primarily object-based and primarily idea-based activities. Post-modern theory is difficult to week with the functional, well-made object.

In the late '80s, craftspeople scurried hither and thither, trying this and trying that. Many ended up wanting to be something else - artists, designers, fashion trend-setters, marketers, exporters, administrators, entrepreneurs - and more recently advocates, theorists and writers.

Projects like the Australia Council/Commission for the Future's *Creative Australia*, which attempts to link personal creativity with national productivity, have been predicated on this confusion. Instead of subjecting the crafts to the kind of scrutiny which would reveal the exact nature of the contribution they can make, the project opted for the entrenched hierarchy and resisted the use of craft terminology. Its report described craftspersons as designers or creative artists and generally evaluated skills as less important than support systems and organisational culture. This has added to the identity crisis in the crafts.

Then there is insecurity over funding. Crafts organisations established with a look of permanency just two decades ago are struggling to survive despite their brilliant short careers. The contemporary crafts have been seeded, theoretically and imperfectly amalgamated with the arts, and then industrialised - all in the space of 20 years.

But, in the all-encompassing and relatively successful arts industry some areas have traditionally traded better than others. Supported by hierarchical theory they have developed a more secure infrastructure. The arts industry is commercial, pragmatic: but it, too, is very much a theoretical construct. Other visual arts hope to coat-tail on the success of painting and funding, advisory, educational and advocacy bodies have worked hard to develop "networks", "agendas", "strategies", "policies", "consultancies" and "checklists" to encourage greater productivity across the industry.

Unfortunately, craft support systems are more recently established, intermittent and variable in their professionalism. In the '70s and '80s, sophisticated craft outlets appeared and disappeared. Country towns lost their cinemas, railway stations and banks but gained craft shops which sometimes offer goods of questionable quality. Some craftspeople are opportunistic and insufficiently critical of work offered for sale. Although attitudes are improving, art galleries are generally parsimonious about showing craft. When they do, they like to think of it is art.

These discouraging factors have caused craft practitioners to pursue other models of activity. The latest is design for industry. There could be real gains for the crafts here, as with the arts, but craftspeople need to protect their long-term interests by retaining a distinctive, identifiable role in the process.

Playing the industry game

It sounds chauvinistic, but some Australians are abnormally creative. Marginal culture has both formed and suited them.

Why does Australian art look fresh and alive against the jaded backdrop of late 20th century world culture? Why do Australian crafts surprise sensation-sated international travellers? Because Australians are resourceful. Good improvisers are good game-players; they relish the creative challenge of chance and know how to capitalise opportunities. Individual successes in the arts, sciences, intellectual life and sport are considerable, but now the game must be extended beyond individual pursuits to the integrated, co-ordinated actions necessary for sustained economic growth.

The game used to be how to make things of comparable quality despite Australia's "tyranny of distance" and under-developed technology. Today the game is dominated by talk. Theory dominates practice and research substitutes for production. Conceptual ambitions go far beyond realities, capabilities and practicalities.

Article by Jenny Zimmer (continued)

Both contemporary management practice and intellectual theory are detrimental to action. Relativity reigns; the result, inertia. Today's problem is how to halt the ever proliferating "talk-fests" and move into an action mode which will sustain the crafts and other identifiable creative activities in an increasingly complex, unpredictable and rapidly changing culture.

Throughout the '80s, imported high-tech designer goods met the aspirations of Australia's affluent, young multi-cultural population. Progress in the crafts lapsed as a proportion of the market adjusted away from one-off craft objects to quality designer products. Small craft enterprises, burgeoning at the beginning of the '80s, had failed by the end of the decade. Craft centres, large and small, were forced to recognise the imperative of radical re-organisation. The crafts were at a low ebb.

Then the unexpected happened. Small industries, in their bid for markets at home and abroad, required original prototypes. Post-modern architects and planners, under pressure from society, began re-scaling buildings and public spaces. Some saw value in reviving the concept of working in collaboration with inspired individual artists and craftspeople. Some crafts practitioners acquainted themselves with various technologies.

Politicians were delighted. Social and economic needs could be met if artists and craftspersons applied their creativity to design for industry, the environment, architecture and public spaces. If a re-gearred and design-conscious industry could turn to the crafts for prototypes and inspired solutions, then it was equally possible that craftspersons could establish their own manufacturers and engage in batch production. Suitable aspects of high-technology could be meshed with hand-work. Profitable national and international markets could be sought.

Idealists of the 19th and earlier 20th centuries had advocated a unilateral integration of the arts and crafts with the social progress. Perhaps an arts industry, with all branches intent on socio-economic outcomes, would finally be achieved?

The latter '80s focused first on design. It replaced craft as the key word and catch-cry. Then there was a re-focus to include art and craft. Exhibitions like *Collaborative Designs - Working Together in Architecture* (Melbourne 1988) and seminars such as *Creative City* (Melbourne 1988) and *Urban Thresholds* (Perth 1989) shared a similar rationale. Theoretically, the creative "enterprise industry" infrastructure could be extended in the '90s to include aspects of environmental protection and further programmes for social harmony.

The theory is in place, but will the '90s apply it? A section of the craft population is eager, but many artists remain sceptical, architects seem insufficiently committed and industry is proving too slow to respond. And, the subject is just about talked out. Opportunities for action must be accelerated or the theory may remain marginal and the game will be lost. Keys to action include improved industry backing and innovative education - including consumer education.

Ironically, having achieved a heightened awareness of future possibilities, the economic downturn could dampen initiatives and hinder their application. Affirmative action should be invoked to maintain the impetus.

Obviously this direction will not suit all artists or craftspeople - but it will revolutionise opportunities for some.

There is a justified fear that the arts industry could turn the arts to purely utilitarian ends but measurable economic results in some areas of art/craft practice would provide additional means to support those abstract, ideal, social, ecological and ephemeral aspects of the arts and crafts whose value can only be gauged by the happiness and well-being of the citizenry.

As we enter the new decade there are strong indications that high quality, socially meaningful crafts, utilising ever-diminishing precious natural resources, will be highly sought. It is not the time for craftspeople or others to be confused about their identity. They may miss their main opportunity while pursuing one that has passed.

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WORLD GLASS CONGRESS MEETING - 1991

John Newnes, from Kaleidoscope Stained Glass Studio, has been invited to present Australian Architectural Glass to the World Glass Congress meeting in the USA next year. Newnes is planning a dramatic presentation of new Australian directions in architectural art glass and strong European ties, both past and present.

"Our environment and the unique play of light has an accumulative effect on the diversity of glass art in Australia."

He will be showing a broad expanse of a very active Australia-wide community of glass designers and artists, and has requested us to request any members wishing to send 3-5 slides, fully labelled, to him at the address below as soon as possible. There will be a \$5 per slide handling fee.

John Newnes, C/o Kaleidoscope Stained Glass Studio,
17 Kingsford Street,
Fairy Meadow. N.S.W. 2519.
[Phone: (042) 83 4480]

FOR SALE

ANTIQUARIAN BOOKS ON STAINED GLASS

Stained Glass of the Middle Ages in England and France
by Lawrence B. Saint & Hugh Arnold
\$145.00

The Lost Art
A survey of 1000 Years of Stained Glass
by Robert Sowers
\$48.00

Stained Glass Windows 1953
by William Morris & Co.
\$48.00

The Stained Glass of French Churches
by Louis Grodecki 1948
\$150.00

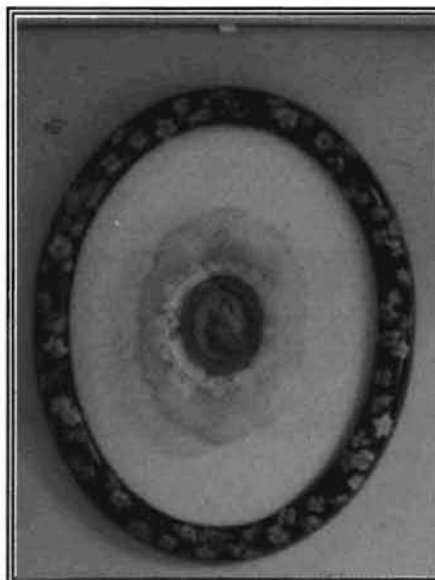
History of English Glass Painting 1913
by Maurice Drake
Hand-made paper, very hard to find book
\$350.00

Magazine, "The Connoisseur", 1936
Article on "Heraldry Glass"
\$35.00

Phone: Steve Taylor, Australian Stained Glass, on (02) 660 7424

Glass Artists' Gallery in Glebe held an Exhibition of Works by Deborah Murphy in October/November this year, entitled "*Lucinda's Room*"

Pictured right is one of the exhibits, a blue oval plate with Madonna in the centre.



ARGY-ROUSSEAU

JOSEPH-GABRIEL ROUSSEAU was born on 17th March, 1885, as Meslay-le Vidame, a small village in the Eure-et-Loire. His family were farm-workers, but his cleverness at primary school won him a scholarship which enabled him to complete secondary school. His special subjects were chemistry, physics and art, so at the age of seventeen he entered the National High School for Ceramics at Sèvres. This was in September 1902. HENRY CROS, who had rediscovered the technique of Pâte-de-verre, had his workshop at the Sèvres Factory, and his son, JEAN CROS, was a fellow student of Rousseau's at the school.

Rousseau graduated in 1906 and took over the direction of a small ceramics research laboratory. He was clearly fascinated from an early age with pâte-de-verre, and soon opened a small workshop of his own at 52 avenue des Ternes in Paris. While experimenting with the technique he also manufactured porcelain teeth in a small factory which was, after a few years, taken over by an American firm.

In 1913 Rousseau married Mariane Argyriades, the sister of a former schoolmate at Sèvres. Her father, Panagiotis Argyriades, was a leading lawyer of Greek origin. On his marriage, Rousseau adopted the first part of his wife's surname as part of his: he was henceforth to be known as Gabriel Argy-Rousseau. In 1914 he exhibited his first designs in pâte-de-verre, as well as carrying out scientific research in other fields. This enabled him to take out several original patents in 1917, including one for a high-capacity bi-polar electrode, and another for a light accumulator.

Argy-Rousseau's earliest pâte-de-verre models were decorated with fruits, flowers and leaves in the naturalistic style derived from Art Nouveau. In 1915 he introduced a model with large blue or purple butterflies which formed a formal frieze around the vessel. Classical masks from the Greek theatre were also introduced that year. As soon as the war ended he introduced new shapes, in particular the night-lights and perfume burners which were ideal for the display of pâte-de-verre designs and colours.

In 1921 Argy-Rousseau also began to produce a range of scent bottles in clear or opal glass, enamelled with motifs of flowers, butterflies and figures of women. The enamel was thick and multi-coloured, the bottles occasionally unsigned, but usually signed in the enamel with the initials "G.A.R." or in full "G. Argy-Rousseau". These were made for a number of shops, but principally for that of Marcel Franck. Glass and pâte-de-verre were exhibited at the Salons, as well as at the Musée Galliéra exhibition and at the Bernheim Gallery.

Gustave-Gaston Moser-Millot, owner of a major decorative arts gallery at 30 boulevard des Italiens in Paris, soon went into partnership with Argy-Rousseau. A limited company, LES PÂTE-DE-VERRE D'ARGY-ROUSSEAU, was formed on 5th December, 1921, with a capital of 200,000 francs. Moser-Millot was both principal shareholder and chairman, while Argy-Rousseau was managing director. A comfortable workshop was opened at 9 rue du Simplon, in which several dozen workers and decorators were employed, while all the new designs were on sale at the Moser-Millot gallery.

Financial freedom enabled Argy-Rousseau to devote his energies to initiating new and more daring designs. He adopted increasingly geometric Art Deco patterns for some decorated sections, while using a curious simplified realism for others. He developed techniques for executing his wares in extremely thin-walled and translucent metal, with decorative motifs modelled in relief in medallions or in a continuous band or frieze around the vessel. He used a variety of floral and fruit patterns, archaic masks, insects, animals and human figures. The models most sought after by collectors are the animal designs (vases with lions, wolves, running deer); the human figures (the apple pickers, various nudes, the water-jug carrier which he named *Libation*); and the more colourful insect bowls and vases with butterflies or spiders.

Colour is extremely important and varies from item to item of the same model, for although Argy-Rousseau developed a semi-industrial technique for using moulds which enabled the same model to be produced a number of times, the actual glass paste had to be mixed with its colour-producing oxides separately for each item and even minimal variations in mixing or firing could produce wide variations in finished colour. Some of the designs form continuous patterns, while others have the principal motif framed in a geometric pattern frequently resembling wrought iron.

Argy-Rousseau produced a wide range of useful and decorative items, including vases, bowls, lamps, lamp shades, night lights, perfume burners, ash trays, book ends, candlesticks, trays, inkwells, fountains and paper weights. He also produced small decorative plaques illustrated with flowers, fruit, abstract designs, animals and insects intended to be worn as pendants and for application to lamp-shades and furniture. These small plaques are usually signed "G.A.R." in the mould.

In 1925 Argy-Rousseau introduced an exciting new model, an amphora-shaped blue vase in which four rows of geometric scales were raised from the surface at the base of the vessel, while the handles, like folded wings, were made of a more translucent substance than the body, pâte-de-cristal. The sobriety of this design and its contrast with his usual search for polychromaticism heralded a new departure.

ARGY-ROUSSEAU (continued)

1925 was also the year of the Paris International Exhibition of Decorative and Industrial Arts. Argy-Rousseau had exhibited his wares regularly in the Applied Arts Section of the Salon des Artistes Français, gaining an Honourable Mention in 1920, a Bronze Medal in 1923, a Silver Medal in 1926 and a Gold Medal in 1928. He had been elected a Member of the Salon d'Automne and the Société des Artistes Décorateurs, and had exhibited at both. He was invited to exhibit *hors concours* at the 1925 Exhibition, where he was also nominated a member of the jury for glass. His brother-in-law and former schoolmate at Sèvres, Nicolas-Constantin Platon-Argyriades, sometimes accompanied him at the Salon, where he exhibited glass vases and bowls decorated with high-fired enamels.

The four years that followed the International Exhibition were to be Argy-Rousseau's busiest. At the height of his fame he designed many new models, including some with floral or leaf patterns which covered the whole surface of the vessel. While continuing the production of *pâte-de-verre* items, Argy-Rousseau began to experiment with *pâte-de-cristal*. As in *pâte-de-verre* this involved mixing crystals of finely crushed glass, made to his own formula, not only with metallic oxides for colour but also with an aqueous adhesive material, and packing this into a fireclay mould. The mould was fired at a low temperature for an extended period of seven or more hours until the crystals vitrified into a translucent, richly coloured crystalline glass which might be coloured through or streaked. The low temperature prevented the colours from running or fusing, while the mould became extremely brittle. An alternative method was to remove the mixture from the mould when only partially dried into a thick, but malleable, paste which could be retouched or finished like clay, then reinserted into the kiln for the completion of vitrification. The preparation of the moulds themselves was a complex operation involving two wax-covered plaster casts and several sections. Once vitrification was complete, the *pâte-de-verre* or *pâte-de-cristal* model had to be annealed for over fifteen hours. It was then carefully brushed to remove particles of clay dust from the mould, washed first in hydrofluoric acid then in water, again brushed and then polished using wood or cork wheels on a lathe, the wheels covered in fine sand particles and water. After the polishing it was washed and given its final hard brushing. *Pâte-de-cristal* vases were made in a variety of shapes, some with Egyptian motifs inspired by the vogue attendant on the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb in 1923, others in chunky geometric Art Deco shapes, still others modelled as birds or animals.

In 1928 the sculptor MARCEL BOURAINE designed a number of models for Argy-Rousseau, which the latter executed in *pâte-de-cristal*. These included statuettes and bas-reliefs of nudes. They are normally signed in moulded shallow relief on the side of the base with both "G. Argy-Rousseau" and "Bouraine". There is a monumental quality in all the *pâte-de-cristal* pieces, whether designed by Bouraine or by Argy-Rousseau himself. They are really glass sculptures, never "decorated glass".

Parallel with his work with glass Argy-Rousseau concentrated seriously on his great hobby, photography. In the course of his life he took several thousand photographs, forming an important body of work. He also invented several new camera techniques. In July 1925 he introduced to the French Academy of Science a new apparatus for taking colour snapshots. This won him a Silver Medal from the Society for the Encouragement of Progress in 1927.

A lessening of public interest in *pâte-de-verre* led to a gradual lessening of production from 1929 onwards. The financial crash of that year in New York soon brought a severe worldwide depression and, in December 1931, Moser-Millot wound up Les Pâte-de-Verre d'Argy-Rousseau. Argy-Rousseau found himself unable to cope with launching a new business, and turned to small production in his own home. He received a few commissions for the manufacture of religious plaques in *pâte-de-verre*: scenes of the crucifixion, images of saints and crosses. Though their appeal is obviously limited, these had as much attention lavished on them as his more ambitious projects. These plaques are either unsigned or signed "Argy" in shallow relief in the mould.

In the years after 1933 Argy-Rousseau concentrated on executing a very small number of highly geometric designs of vases and bowls in *pâte-de-cristal*. Translucent, in rich greens, blues, pinks or ambers, they have streaks and swirls within their walls and their sides are rigidly angular. These vessels are signed "G. Argy-Rousseau" in shallow relief in the mould on the side, as are all Argy-Rousseau's wares.

Argy-Rousseau went on exhibiting at the Salons until 1952. In the mid 1930s he also produced a few enamelled vases, and even mounted some of his vessels in gold, silver and silver-gilt, or platinum, as well as occasionally enamelling some of these mounts.

The post-war years were hard for Argy-Rousseau, who was by then completely forgotten. His entries in the Salons aroused no interest. His sole income came from the royalties on the various scientific patents he had taken out. He died in Paris on 20th February, 1953.

Interest in Argy-Rousseau's wares has not ceased to grow since then, and they have become both rare and expensive. The early snubs, directed at the fact that several examples of each model were executed, have given way to admiration at the great variations in tone and colour, and understanding of the complexities involved in the manufacture of each individual vessel.

AUSTRALIAN CRAFTS FOR JAPANESE TOURISTS

Untapped Potential for Australian Crafts People and Retailers

Prepared by Marjorie Johnson, Australia Council

Chair Marjorie Johnson represented the Australia Council on the Giftware Business Development Mission to Japan in October 1989. Led by Antony Coote, Chairman of Angus & Coote Holdings and managed by Austrade, the mission also included representatives from the manufacturing, jewellery, tourism, packaging, food and wine industries, and from the Australian Wool Board.

A full mission report will be published by Austrade for sale through the Australian Government Printing Service. This preliminary report has been prepared by Marjorie Johnson as a precis of impressions from the mission and information gained during it, which have implications for Australian craftspeople and those who retail their work.

The mission looked at both omiyage¹ and general gift buying habits of the Japanese. It did not provide an opportunity for looking at the fine art end of the spectrum and the gallery scene.

The objective of the mission to Japan was to assist Australian giftware manufacturers and retailers to identify how Japanese tourists can be persuaded to buy more Australian giftware.

The mission included visits to Japanese government bodies, leading department stores, speciality retailers, packaging experts and tourist operators. In particular the mission examined:

- * Japanese consumer expectations regarding design and quality in the manufacturing and packaging of giftware;
- * Japanese consumer expectations regarding customer service, and training of staff employed in the selling of giftware;
- * the significance and traditional background of gift giving in modern Japanese society.

Value in Australian dollars of most gifts purchased for omiyage is in the range of \$10 to \$30, with perhaps more expensive items from \$30 to \$100 reserved for "the boss" or other special person. This means landing Australian goods FOB in Japan for \$10 to \$15 to allow for markups of 100%. Not surprisingly, retailers complain of difficulty in getting appropriate items from Australia. In one major outlet where Australian sales amount to 20% of a \$3 million turnover in 8 stores, the product was very poor, with some "Australian" items made in Korea.

These stores are used by Japanese travellers to pre-purchase their omiyage gifts prior to travel, i.e. travellers will buy their least important gifts cheaply in Japan to avoid carrying them, reserving more important gifts for personal shopping for overseas. This practice is likely to continue while Japanese custom requires such a quantity of gifts to be given after travel.

As a result of our trip, I do not believe that we should try to find low cost items which will fit this pre-travel omiyage market in Japan. Rather, we should promote (through advertising, trade and travel offices etc.) the high quality originality and competitive prices of Australian crafts available in Australia, to encourage a greater proportion of each traveller's omiyage purchases being made here.

The Japanese traveller's import allowance equals \$2,000 and is soon to be raised to \$3,000. Prior to the recent industrial action, including the pilots' dispute, we were on course for a 1989 total of 420,000 Japanese tourists into Australia. This means there is a maximum purchasing power of \$1.26 billion available to Japanese tourists in Australia, with substantial increases expected annually. Australian crafts are ideally suited to compete for a share of this market, since they are made in Australia, by Australians, of Australian materials, and can proclaim their Australian distinctiveness.

In addition to omiyage, the Japanese buy gifts for a number of traditional gift giving occasions. These occasions will be detailed in the official mission report. To get Australian crafts into Japan and successfully target this market would, like omiyage, be difficult. The FOB Australian wholesale price is likely to equal the Japanese retail price and the competition is immense. Japan is a consumer's paradise. The Japanese tend to buy recognised brand names, and there would be no recognition factor with Australian exports. Our exports would be in competition with those from Italy, France, England and other countries. As yet, the Japanese have no reason to buy Australian as a preferred choice because they have no perception of an Australian distinctive style, quality or characteristic.

¹ Omiyage is the gift purchased as a souvenir of travel and, in Japan, is obligatory and ritualised beyond the extent of normal practice elsewhere.

AUSTRALIAN CRAFTS FOR JAPANESE TOURISTS (continued)

Gifts

There is an obvious need to increase the awareness of Australia in Japan - to raise the profile for Australian arts and crafts. This, I believe, can best be done at this stage through cultural exchanges. The Australian Art of Fashion exhibition for instance, if shown in Japan, could introduce the Japanese to Australian creativity in fashion design. Carefully selected exhibitions in galleries and department stores would soften the ground for follow-up approaches by Australian commercial galleries and retailers. The WAKO specialist department store, for instance, has a policy of "gathering from everywhere items for beautiful living" and a selection criteria of high quality. It has a good gallery area. When we visited, it was showing an exhibition of work by the Japanese ceramic artist Hiroaki Morino, whose work we saw in Australia in a recent travelling exhibition of Japanese ceramics. Increased promotion through sister city exchanges, Australian Trade Commission offices etc., would help create a more sympathetic market for Australian work. The awareness of Spain, and Spanish imports into Japan, has increased as a result of the forthcoming Olympic Games in Barcelona. If Melbourne wins its Olympic bid, Australia could have similar opportunity in the lead up to 1996.

At this time however, it would be very hard going, and time and cost prohibitive for most single or small operators to find a niche within the gift sector of the market in Japan. The rewards will be much greater if this energy is expended on pursuing sales opportunities to the Japanese in Australia. A listing in Austrade's report will show the nature of gifts bought at various times of the year for particular occasions. Crafts shops and galleries attracting Japanese tourists might promote objects suitable for the occasion coinciding with the tourist's return to Japan.

The Japanese gift buyer, as distinct from the omiyage buyer, is looking for quality; cheap means worthless to this buyer. We should develop high value, unique Australian gifts for sale in Australia and Australian crafts can take advantage of this opportunity.

Product

While products that are uniquely Australian will be easiest to market to the Japanese, there is certainly scope for a wide range of Australian crafts to test the market.

However, Australia has to create an image of high quality in design and production and good value to appeal to the Japanese buyer, who is used to a choice of the finest from Europe and elsewhere.

Leatherwork: Nearly all leather seen in Japan was more expensive than equivalent items in Australia and much of it was not as good as the best being produced by Australian leather workers. There was some very fine, mostly imported leather, but extremely expensive.

I believe there is a good potential for Australian leatherwork to sell to Japanese tourists. Small items that the Japanese use, such as business card cases, coin purses, telephone card holders, wallets, through the whole range of executive leather items to brief cases.

Textiles: Items which should do well for sale to Japanese in Australia, if distinctively Australian or made from Australian materials, are scarves, handkerchiefs, ties and fabric purses. To be competitive, knitwear and garments need to be very well finished, with neat non-bulky seams, soft to the touch, fine in texture and suited to small people in colours appropriate for black haired people. The Japanese response to colour and pattern is generally conservative. Garments must be lined. Sizes need to be appropriate for the smaller Japanese figure. My request to the Austrade Office in Osaka for details of Japanese size comparisons has produced 70 pages of tables prepared by the Japanese Standards Association and I am still trying to work out how to extrapolate from it.

Ceramics: Ceramics which Japanese gift and omiyage shops sell in great quantities are tea bowls, soup bowls, tea cups and saucers, mugs, teapots, chop stick rests, vases, lidded boxes, very small shallow soup bowls. Ceramic sets, if presented in boxes, as they frequently are in Japan, should be in twos and fives, not sets of four or six. In a numerology superstition, four means death and should be avoided. Ceramic Australian animals, and animals of the Chinese calendar, are also likely to be popular.

Wood: Wood was rarely to be seen in Japan and it was therefore difficult to gauge what might or might not sell. Sydney duty free shops targeting the Japanese do not have it, other than Angus & Coote, who report no success with the bowls of various sizes, serviette rings and other small items they have tested.

Metal and Jewellery: There would be a likely market for a wide range of metal objects in the popular omiyage price range and having Australian imagery; key rings, items carrying flora and fauna imagery, small sculptural animals, desk pieces, lapel pins and tie bars. Jewellery with Australian gemstones is much in demand for personal shopping.

AUSTRALIAN CRAFTS FOR JAPANESE TOURISTS (continued)

Glass: Glass was seen in the more expensive stores and specialist shops, but not in omiyage outlets, no doubt because of price. Some of the one-off pieces seen were much more expensive than they would have been in Australia, but it is difficult to gather from this tour what the Japanese would highly value in glass as giftware.

Packaging

Packaging is extremely important. It was explained that the Japanese believe a gift is given from the heart. Not to package and wrap it with thought and care therefore diminishes its value as an expression of the giver's feelings. It is normal for packaging to cost 25% of the total value. On a wholesale price of \$10 in Japan, \$3 to \$4 would be added for packaging and the object would retail for \$30.

The packaging of Australian gifts should also proclaim their Australian design with Australian flora or fauna on the wrapping or labels and with the city of purchase clearly shown, i.e. if it is made in Hobart but purchased in Sydney, it should say **Sydney** not Hobart, since the traveller wants something to proclaim that he/she visited Sydney. The story behind the object should be explained - who made it, or how made, from what materials, and the history relating to the product or the region from where it comes. This is likely to create interest and overcome preference for known brand names.

The wording on the packaging should be in English to designate what it is and where bought, for instance, screenprinted silk from Canberra, but the explanation inside the packaging, or on the accompanying point of sale information, should be in Japanese.

The Japanese present gifts in their stores fully packaged and wrapped and ready to give as a gift, but with an open example beside the wrapped stack to show buyers exactly what they are getting. Following this practice in Australia would not only provide the Japanese with the service they are used to, but would allow fast service to busloads of tourists all wanting attention in a short stop over.

For larger gifts, packaging might be developed in collapsible form ready for assembly on return to Japan, with appropriate wrapping paper and ribbons also provided.

The quality of the packaging must be consistent with the value and quality of the goods and have the effect of making the gift look as though it cost more than it did. Stickers which guarantee the quality of the goods would also be likely to encourage purchase, e.g. Good Design Award labels. Indications of the credibility of the retailer are also likely to be well received - the company crest or logo, with year of establishment, design or tourism awards. In the absence of a recognised brand name, the Japanese are likely to be reassured by some such imprimatur of quality.

Omiyage items should be pre-packaged and ready for quick sale. The buyer may want multiples of the same item, and so may a number of other Japanese in rapid succession, if tour groups are involved.

If it is a one-off work and purchased as a gift, the shop or gallery should have a range of distinctive wrappings available to offer the purchaser.

Presentation and Service

Presentation in Japanese stores and shops is superb. With this standard as a normal expectation, it could be anticipated that poor display and presentation in Australia would mitigate against purchase at that outlet, whatever the merits of the work on sale. If craft shops and galleries therefore don't pay attention to their presentation, they will lose out to the big department stores and smart duty free shops.

Service is a major feature of sales in Japan and the Japanese expect it. Shops with experienced staff who can explain the product and the story behind it, and who can speak Japanese, will have a distinct advantage over those without. After-sales service is also seen as important. Major suppliers have agents in Japan to handle follow-up enquiry and use this is an advertised sales feature.

Price

As previously stated, \$10 to \$30 is the popular range for omiyage and between \$30 and \$100 for more important omiyage purchases. Prices for other traditional gift giving occasions will also fall into this pattern. With an import allowance of \$3,000 soon to apply, there is scope for much more expensive purchases. The imported labels currently favoured by Japanese tourists, e.g. Gucci, Nina Ricci, Dior, Celine, Lancel, Burberry, Yves St. Laurent, carry high price tags and Australian alternatives could be advantageously priced.

Retail prices should be in round figures - \$30, not \$29.50. Round figures are easier to convert into yen and are easier to calculate in multiple purchases. Tourists tend to discount coins, not being sure of their value. They are valueless when re-converting on departure from Australia.

AUSTRALIAN CRAFTS FOR JAPANESE TOURISTS (continued)

Promotion

The big Japanese chain of stores Daimaru (which will open a store in Melbourne in the development adjacent to the Museum underground station in Swanston Street) states that its essentials for a successful operation are good merchandise, in a good environment, offering good service, in which good communication with customers is a priority.

Promotion of Australian works in Japan is currently seen as best done through Australian trade and tourism offices, with sales displays best through organisations with an Australian association. The Tokyo Gift Fair is not seen as appropriate for Australian crafts promotion, unlike the New York International Gift Fair. Buyers at the Tokyo Fair are said to be looking for known brand name products; in New York they are more likely to be receptive to the new.

In Australia, Japanese inbound bus tours are difficult to attract because of the practice of offering incentives, which is likely to be beyond the means of specialist arts/crafts outlets. There is however an appreciable increase in the numbers of Japanese travelling as individuals, with therefore a freedom of movement and choice not available to tour programmed tourists. The full mission report will contain profiles on the types and numbers of Japanese travellers.

For Australian crafts promotion, an alternative to selling directly from specialist crafts outlets is to sell through outlets which have contracts with Japanese tour operators, for instance, duty free shops whose range in gifts is currently limited and stereotyped. Another alternative is to target Japanese companies in Australia with a range of items suitable for gift giving. The incidence of Japanese buyers coming to Australia looking for suitable omiyage products is likely to grow with the increase in Japanese travel to Australia. Those wishing to appeal to this market would be advised to produce catalogues of items available in reliable quantities.

Marjorie Johnson,
General Manager, Meat Market Craft Centre, Melbourne.
January 1990.

Pictured is a table clock by Alice Whish. The clock is Anodised Aluminium, rubber, glass and silver plate, 15cm x 10cm.

Alice is running the Jewellery Workshop prior to the 1991 Conference - if you haven't booked yet -
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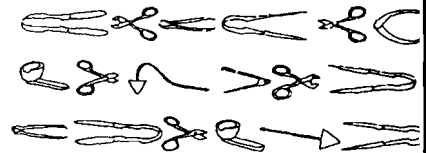
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It would also be appreciated if you would indicate below which category would best describe your involvement with glass.

- Full time occupational
- Part time occupational
- Recreational

NEWS FROM THE NOT SO DEEP NORTH - a Letter from Queensland

Jason Makeig, State Rep

Spring is definitely in the air here in Queensland (well, it was when I wrote this and sent it to the Editor!!). The jasmine's out, heralding the new season of creativity. Just the scent lurches you into a different time zone amid sensations of altered reality. It's the blueprint for setting a new pace. So it is with our glass artists.

Several of them actually managed to contact me upon receiving my letter lobbying for news of their doings. Some, mind you, remained in retreat, preferring to continue with their pre-occupations with glass design alchemy on their own (in other words - are still in the woodwork). So be it! Here's a bit from the more vocal ...

DOROTHY HARTNETT is president of the Sculpture Society of Queensland, and has, in recent years, turned her talents to glass design, her recent exhibition being an example of glass as a tool for important social comment.

In "*Checkmate*", the pieces from a chess game were actual sculptures using a high percentage of glass. The board was 8 feet x 8 feet, with the pieces varying from 300mm to 600mm. The forms created a kind of chronology of social statements with resolution. Themes such as alcoholism and drugs, relationships, violence and environmentalism were interwoven, linking us all, and somehow leading to deeper knowledge, illumination and resolution. (*Resolution? Jochem Poensgen, I hear your voice!*) The chessboard was installed at the Sculpture Society Exhibition at St. John's Cathedral in October 1989.

Dorothy's "*China & the Sanguine Vision*" makes us all aware of the horror of events in China in 1989. (With held breath, the artists of the world are wide awake as the Middle East bears World War III) "*The Phoenix Rising from the Ashes at 5 Provinces*" was the form for this piece with a lot of blood red glass at the base. Dorothy writes:

"Beyond a critical point within a finite space, freedom diminishes as numbers increase. The human question is not how many can possibly survive within the system, but what kind of existence is possible for those who do survive."

Dorothy can be contacted at 85 Pangeze Street, Stafford Heights, Queensland, 4053. Telephone (07) 359 6201.

MARC GALTON has recently set up his glass blowing studio in the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast (or so he reckons)! Here's his rave:

"**MARTINI ART & GLASS STUDIO** combines the talents of Marc Galton and Tina Couper in creating new ideas in multi-medium and glass. Also incorporating production glass, goblets, perfume bottles, sculptural orbs, bowls etc., specialising in 'the Australian sea life collection' glass fish, shells, octopi, whales and dolphins, etc. Also funky clowns with bowls and balls.

Martini is located at Mapleton in the Sunshine Coast hinterland with views of lower valleys and the ocean. Contact them care of Mapleton Post Office, Queensland, 4560, telephone (074) 45 7340.

Then there's some news from **CLASSIC STAINED GLASS** in Toowoomba. Apart from the fact that Joan and Andrew Mladenovic are workaholics in glass, making 7 days a week, and who knows how many nights (don't tell me ... your ankle-biters have grown up!!); and apart from their permanent employment in commissions and glass promotion (what recession?); and apart from their setting up a blowing studio and the biggest fusing kiln in Queensland; they recently landed a beautiful commission on Great Keppel Island.

The commission consists of 20 square metres of multiple layered, fused glass. As an external wall, it had to be cyclone rated structurally. With reds, golds and whites permeating throughout, the motif was based on a circle, abstract in form. Made up of 60 tiles 600mm x 600mm, there has been a very good spin-off in people demanding to own a bowl based on the motif patterns and tile size. It's a good reminder that there is a demand for architectural fused glass out there.

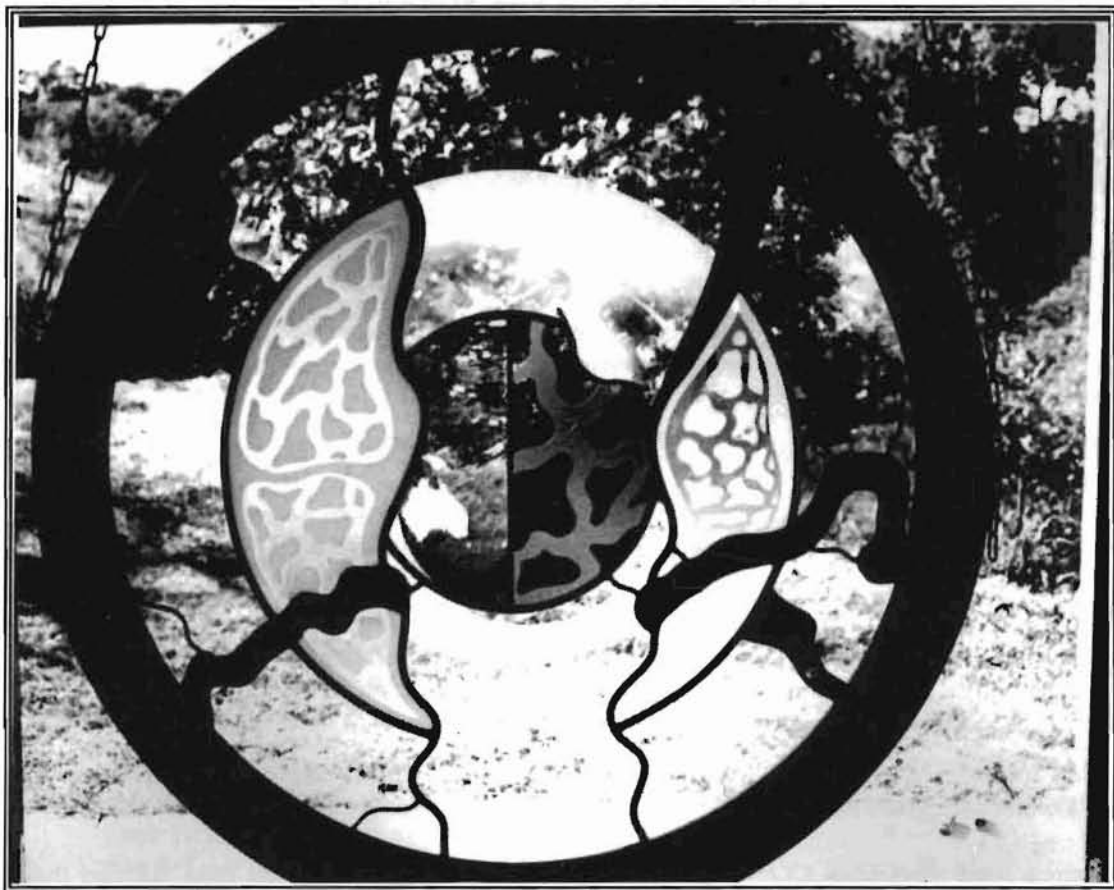
The regular venue that Joan and Andrew promote each year is the *Carnival of Flowers exhibition* that always promises to be a good place to sell glass of high standard. The exhibition will have begun by the time you read this article.

And myself!

I live in the land of sunshine, soul and deforestation,
Where environmental awareness is beckoning a new awakening.
And me, I'm still on the road heading for my next commission,
Trying to blend my economics with survival, art and vision.

See you at the Conference in Sydney.

Jason Makeig,
P.O., Cooran. QLD. 4569.



GLOBAL AWAKENING

Autonomous Stained Glass Panel by Jason Makeig, employing acid etching, sandblasting and various lead techniques, currently on display at Hamilton Design Glass Gallery, Lane Cove.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

from Stephen Skillitzi

The early 1990 "Letter to the Editor" of both AUSGLASS and Neues Glas magazines outlining an intended documentation project focusing on *1974-and-before Australian Studio Hot Glass* has been virtually consummated. Those readers wishing to be sent the without-charge document should write to me, Stephen Skillitzi, Box 377, Brighton, S.A., 5048.

As could be expected, the generally well-informed Australian readership would regard the broad reality of a pre-1974 Australian Contemporary Glass Scene as provable beyond question. Hence, on the whole they would be surprised to read the Neues Glas editor's 1/90 comment "... the question arises of whether or not an original Australian glass scene actually started much earlier than we have until now supposed" (i.e. a 1974 start); and also encouraged by Dan Klein's 6/12/89 intention to "certainly take into consideration (all the notes Skillitzi sent) if I (D. Klein) write about Australian glass again". This document is by no means comprehensive of '74-and-before Australian Contemporary Glass Scene, nor are those artists represented exhaustively, however direct comments were received from Boysen, Haworth, Herman, Jaujietis, Marquis, Minson, Mount, O'Connor, Santos, Skillitzi, Wittman and some non-artist contributors. Others not contacted (or not contactable) included artists Annand, Clements, Dockerty, French, Gleeson, Prest, Saunders, Street. Twelve of the above nineteen artists were active professionally in the Australian contemporary glass scene prior to 1974. This document's raw data can be variously interpreted depending on the narrator's criteria. For instance, the following narration from the collator, Skillitzi, gives a high profile to the USA - initiated Hot Glass Studio Movement as it was introduced into Australia from mid-1970 to mid-1974, but it still allows for the possibility of different emphasis in other data-based narratives.

- * The analogy of a building's construction is useful to understand the current contemporary glass scene in Australia and its antecedents. Every industrialised nation historically has had a wide range of glass products and glass-committed people (including the artistic ones) that could be said to have provided the "bedrock" on which a stable contemporary art glass "edifice" was constructed. For example, if we start with the 1960's, artists working with glass included Bill Gleeson and Regina Jaujietis, exploring kiln-worked glass; Douglas Annand, a noted designer using furnace and plate glass for architectural commissions; David Saunders, creating stained glass panels; and the furnace factories of Crown Crystal Limited and Anna-Venetian Glassworks and Leonora (Phillips Pty. Limited).
- * From mid-1970 to end of 1974, 5 USA trained adherents of that highly influential and much documented phenomenon, the "Hot Glass Studio Movement" (HGSM), migrated to or worked temporarily in Australia. Sequentially, they were Stephen Skillitzi, Ron Street, Bill Boysen, Sam Herman and Dick Marquis.
- * Perhaps 1974 was the movement's "finest hour", since in that year all 5 adherents were actively proselyting support (artists, institutions, industry, the public) via itinerant blowing demos and temporary or permanent furnaces throughout Australia. The January 1974 two-man (Street and Skillitzi) demo. in Western Australia's Institute of Technology was one example of HGSM solidarity, Herman's April '74 Jam Factory, Adelaide workshop attended by Skillitzi, Prest and Jaujietis was another example of influence.
- * Ignoring their vessel-derived works, mixed-media constructions etc., Herman, Street and Skillitzi favoured almost identical sculptural forms in the early 70's. These arose from the amorphous, abstract expressionistic, asymmetric forms of 60's Littleton, Lipofsky and Chihuly and many others within the emerging USA HGSM. Boysen seemed to favour a "funky" humour created via his famous Mobile furnace which included glass "spaceships", and Marquis, with his recent Venetian exposure favoured sophisticated cane and murrini vessels notably funky "teapots". O'Connor, Mount and Dockerty were personally assisting the brief but significant '74 Boysen and Marquis demo. tours and later established their own Hot Glass Workshops.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR (continued)

- * Street, the least known of the five, introduced the HGSM to culturally-isolated Western Australia during his one year at the Perth Art Institute from mid '73. A detailed substantiated chronology of Skillitzi's 1967 to 1975 Australian and USA glass activities is held on archival files at the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney. Their backgrounds, their aesthetic aspirations, and much of their furnace workshop practice were different from those of the indigenous glassmen who were using backyard studio furnaces during that same period - namely Paul Haworth, Jim Wittman, Julio Santos (employees of the lightingware factory Leonora Phillips Pty. Limited in Newcastle which also occasionally allowed off-hand blowing); and Peter Minson (from his father's Sydney scientific-glass-apparatus factory).
- * Making allowance for differing strengths, the three Leonora blowers produced basically Venetian-derived fluidly-contoured vases, platters and animals, fish and swans. Haworth's oil-fired pot furnace design and coloured high-lead batch formulation was gleaned from a Swedish glass factories' visit in the late '60s. Wittman's basic skills were formed within the 1956 Australian context of Crown Crystal Limited (Sydney and Melbourne), and his aesthetic (and also Haworth's indirectly) via Anna-Venetian Glass Factory (Sydney 1965-68). Santos (whose canework inclusions became unrivalled) had worked in a Portugal glass factory, mainly on stemware before becoming, with Wittman, Master gaffers at Leonora. Minson, following an experimental/transitional stage from lampwork to furnace-work in 1971, retained his pre-disposition towards thin-walled production vessels consistent with his ongoing pyrexglass lampwork; his furnace skills coming from ex-Crown Crystal blowers.

For those Australian or European-inspired glassmen (Minson, Wittman, Haworth, Santos) there was a sense of their own ongoing activity that paralleled (but certainly was not derivative of) the five USA-inspired adherents of the so-called HGSM.

- * Yet, despite the obvious divergence of the two groups of studio furnace workers (those USA trained versus those locally trained), they laid collectively a broad-based "Foundation" for the gradually maturing Australian HGSM. That "foundation" was grounded on the "bedrock" and defined by four "cornerstones":-
 - . Teaching - via lectures, demonstrations, planning Tertiary courses, apprenticeships, magazine articles and media interviews.
 - . Innovating - via integration of non-traditional technologies and other media; and absorption of alternative aesthetic criteria into the individual's studio practice.
 - . Exhibiting - via solo art gallery shows for unique works, and craft shops for functional limited series works.
 - . Networking - via dialogue with industry, administrations, and fellow practitioners.
- * The USA HGSM was the epitome of those four essential "cornerstones" and provided an ever-clearer example of the most vibrantly burgeoning force within the world's contemporary glass evolution. Without ignoring their strengths, no other country's glass contribution compares to that sustained synergy of the USA HGSM which has resulted in their acknowledged leadership in the broad field of Art Glass. For two decades, Australia has embraced that dominant influence on many levels, apparently much more than from any other nation.
- * Typical of any building's foundation, its function is to be built upon, covered over, and subsumed beneath the "above-ground masonry" or integrated "rooms under cover", e.g. permanently located workshops, tertiary education programmes, professional affiliation and conferences, and a sophisticated presentation/marketing structure that includes government collections, competitions, critical appraisal, galleries, all serving the Australian studio glass community. This functional "edifice" facilitates far more efficient and mature work than was possible in the "open-to-the elements" largely forgotten pioneer days of "foundation laying".
- * So what has happened to the proselyting energies of the USA-style HGSM since its Australian five man introduction from mid-1970 to mid-1974? "No longer is there the feeling of a "Movement" in the evangelical sense of the 60's ... although the term studio glass remains convenient ...", to quote from Susanne Frantz "Contemporary Glass" 1989 text (page 207). The HGSM did not die out in Australia, but it matured and diversified into other non-blowpipe glass disciplines. It first initiated much of the intangible attitudes and tangible structures and practitioners that define today's Australian Contemporary Glass scene.

CRAFTS COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA - INDEX TO CRAFT JOURNALS

Some Members may be interested in the release of a new edition of the CCA's *Index to Craft Journals*, covering the years 1984-1988, which comes in three volumes, costing \$250. The Crafts Council of Australia has provided the following information on the *Index*.

The *Index* is a comprehensive international guide to over 70 craft periodicals published in Europe, North America and Australia. Originally prepared as an in-house tool for the Crafts Council of Australia, the *Index* is now in its second five-year cumulation; the first edition, which appeared in 1984, covered the years 1979-1983 and provided access to over 50 craft journals. Inclusion of periodicals is decided by consultation with the craft community and new titles are added continuously.

The *Index* can be used to find:

- * biographical information on craftspeople;
- * identification of studio names and trademarks;
- * listings of articles by specific authors;
- * information on a range of specific craft subjects, including -
 - . conferences/seminars in a range of media worldwide
 - . craft education worldwide
 - . craft competitions, national and international
 - . craft law and tax
 - . marketing of crafts
 - . health hazards for craftspeople
 - . conservation of crafts
 - . history of crafts
 - . technical developments in the crafts

The *Index* is arranged in four sequences:

Volume One - Authors: provides access by the name of the person who wrote the article.

Volume Two - Personal Subjects, Corporate Subjects: provides access by personal subject (the craftsman about whom the article is written, or whose work is illustrated by photographs accompanying the article), and by corporate subject (the craft group, gallery, trade name, studio name, private press, museum or educational institution described in the article).

Volume Three - Subject Headings: provides access by the subject headings which describe the content of the article.

Subject headings are organised by five categories: Produce - Material - Technique - Concept - Geographical Location. Thus for example, an article on nineteenth century wool spinning in America would be found under the subject heading Yarn - Wool - Spinning - History 19C - United States of America.

There are numerous cross references to help users find the appropriate subject headings:

U (use) refers to the main heading, e.g. Stained Glass U Glass - Flat; Marquetry U Woodwork - Inlay

RT (related title) refers to other relevant headings, e.g. Dolls RT Toys; Crafts RT Arts, Community Arts, Design, Folk Art

BT (broader title) refers to more general subject headings, e.g. Bricks BT Ceramics; Rugs BT Textiles

NT (narrower title) refers to more specific subject headings, e.g. Clothing NT Buttons, Fans, Gloves, Hats, Masks, Shoes.

CRAFTS COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA - INDEX TO CRAFT JOURNALS (continued)

The subject headings used are highly specific. Therefore for example, if readers want to find all ceramic competitions regardless of technique they must look not only under Ceramics - Competitions, but also under the various ceramic techniques for those competitions restricted to entries in that specific technique, e.g. Ceramics - Painting - Competitions; Ceramics - Saltglazing - Competitions, etc. Likewise if readers want to find all articles written on Japanese textiles they must look not only under Textiles - Japan but also under all other relevant headings, e.g. Textiles - Embroidery - Japan; Textiles - Exhibitions - Japan; Textiles - History - Japan; Textiles - Weaving - Japan, etc.

Contact the Crafts Council of Australia:

Telephone (02) 241 1701

Facsimile (02) 247 6143

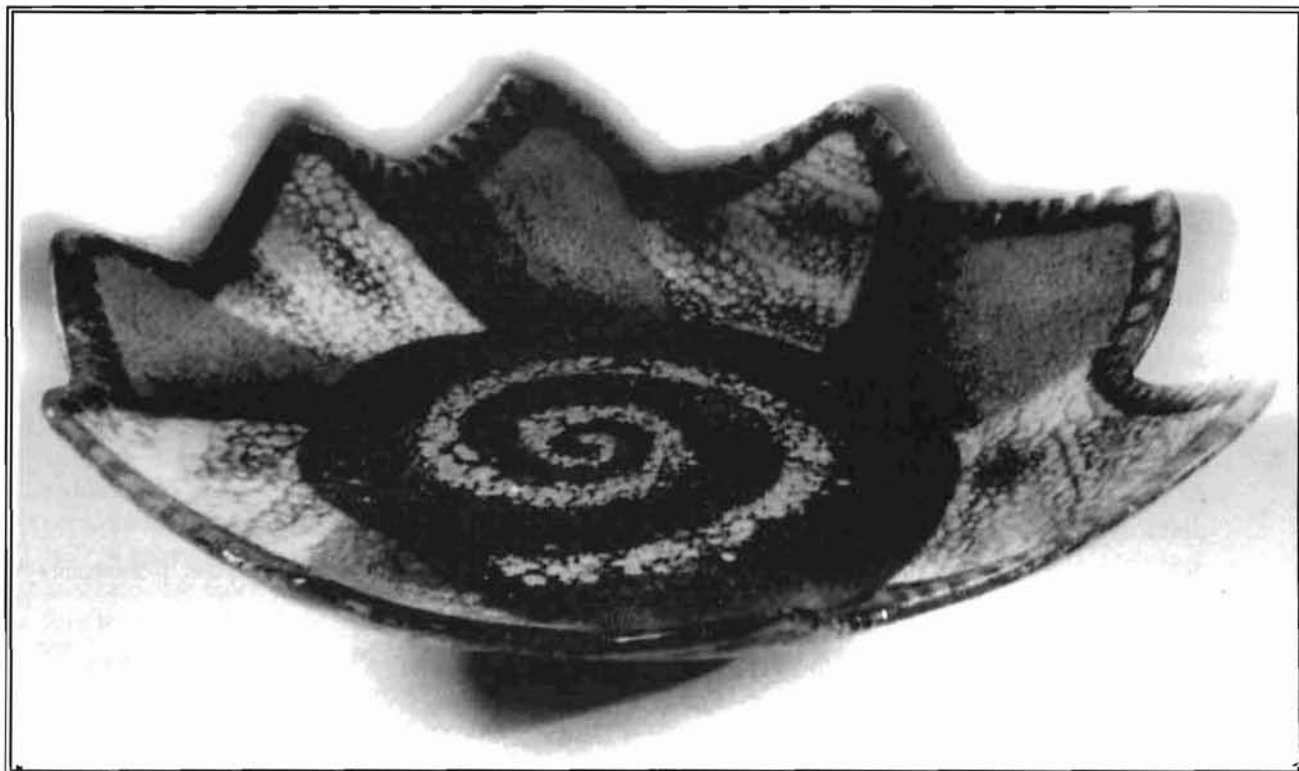
Freepost 5 Information Services Crafts Council of Australia,
35 George Street, The Rocks, N.S.W. 2000.

Don't forget, the Crafts Council of Australia, through its Information Services, produces and manages a range of information resources on the crafts. These now include:

- * *Craftline*, the nationwide computerised database, which has eight specialised applications grouped around the National Biographical Register of over 7,000 craftspeople;
- * The National Slide Library and audio visual products;
- * A range of publications promoting professional development of the craft community and fostering craft research.

The CCA is the peak body of the network of Crafts Councils around Australia. This network consists of eight state Crafts Councils representing the interests of the crafts industry in each state, with the Crafts Council of Australia representing the crafts industry nationally and internationally.

MAKE USE OF THEIR FACILITIES!!



"Pacific Sundial" by Sallie Portnoy was seen in the special glass exhibition at the Australian Craft Show held in Sydney during November.

THE JAM FACTORY GLASS WORKSHOP AND THE STUDIO GLASS MOVEMENT IN AUSTRALIA

In this article *Noris Ioannou* outlines the origins of studio glass in Australia, then traces the prominent role of the Jam Factory Glass Workshop in the development of the movement in this country. It is essentially a story of the transfer and adaptation of technical skills from North America and Europe, mostly through the activities of various pioneer glass craftspeople who provided workshops and/or their leadership within the evolving infrastructure of the Jam Factory Glass Workshop.

Studio glass in Australia in the late 1980s is booming. Yet of all the five major categories of craft media, glass has had the shortest period of development with isolated stirrings at the beginning of the 1970s and, arguably, its fountainhead in the mid-1970s with the establishment of the Glass Workshop at the Jam Factory Workshops Inc. in South Australia. This Glass Workshop was not only the first sustained production glass studio in Australia, but also was, and continues to be, one of the most significant sources of influence in the hot glass movement in the country. Indeed, it has been repeatedly recognised as "one of the single largest influences on the revival of hot glass ..."². Since 1974, this production glass studio has determined guidelines and standards for college courses; acted as a model for the establishment of other studios and workshops; influenced glass artists through its product output; and by way of its unique training-through-production programme, has spawned a large number of successful glass artists now working about the country (and overseas).

The First Wave: The hot glass studio movement developed in two stages or waves: the first wave of studio glass activity involved a handful of individuals about the country, and included Paul Haworth and Jimmy Whitman, both in Newcastle in 1972, and Peter Dockerty in Newport in 1973. But it was Stephen Skillitzi who pioneered the hot glass movement in Australia with the establishment of his first Sydney studio in 1971. Trained by Dale Chihuly, Skillitzi transferred some of the zeal and excitement of the North American Hot Glass Movement into Australia. Some 15 years later, Skillitzi had established no fewer than 10 hot glass studios, and has the reputation of being one of Australia's best-known glass artists specialising in sculptural, architectural and performance works. Since 1974, he has worked in South Australia, and was responsible for introducing glass studies into the curriculum of the South Australian College of Advanced Education in 1976. Currently working in his "Glass Earth and Fire Studios" in suburban Adelaide, Skillitzi maintains his role as a leading (and often provocative) advocate of technical and artistic innovation in Australian studio glass³

As pioneer of this first wave, Skillitzi's perspective lends authority to his comments that this initial activity "did not of itself give birth to the succeeding generation of glass blowers"⁴. This genesis came with the establishment and activity of the Jam Factory Glass Workshop in Adelaide, an event which marked the turning point and the beginning of the second, and sustained wave of studio glass in Australia.

To demonstrate this claim, it is necessary to examine the history of this workshop's origins which is, in effect, the history of establishment of the Jam Factory Workshops as a craft centre.

"...A Civilised Thing To Do." Going back to the decade of the 1960s, when the craft movement was characterised by earth fairs and hippies, rather than the highly-professional structure of today, it was the intrepid Don Dunstan (then leader of the Labor Party), who dared to suggest a vision of the crafts as cottage-industries. Such craft-based cottage industry were seen to hold the potential of providing an alternative to conventional industry, improve the industrial design of mass-produced articles, and provide employment.

Indeed, Dunstan also later spoke (revealing Morrisian values), of the need to encourage the development of craft skills and activity as also "... a nice thing to do, a civilised thing to do."⁵

Following the election of the (second) Dunstan Government in 1970, the idea of a crafts centre in Adelaide was proposed and within a year, was initiated with overseas research of craft-based industries and workshops in Europe and Britain, with particular emphasis on those in Scandinavia. Following the subsequent submission of a report and further investigations, the South Australian Craft Authority (SACA) was established in October 1973, and the Jam Factory at suburban St. Peters opened as its base on 1st November, 1974.

² Zimmer, Jenny "New Developments", *Craft Australia*, 1979/3, p.23; Zimmer, J. "Studio Glass: Australia. The First decade of Exhibitions", *Craft Australia*, 1988/4, p.79; Discussion with Zimmer, 20.5.89; McPhee, John "Contemporary Decorative Arts in the Collection of the Australian National Gallery", *Craft Australia*, 1982/4, p.43; Cooke, G.R. "The Studio Glass Movement in Australia", *Craft Arts*, 1989/15, p.77

³ Skillitzi, Stephen "An Outline of My Directions in Glass", Paper delivered to the AUSGLASS Conference, January 1987; Letter by Skillitzi, *Craft Australia*, 1982/2, p.72.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ward, Peter "Some Notes on the Genesis of the Jam Factory", *Catalogue*, Workshop Heads and Trainees Exhibition 1987, pp2-3

THE JAM FACTORY GLASS WORKSHOP & THE STUDIO GLASS MOVEMENT IN AUSTRALIA (continued)

So began the earliest and one of the most interesting experiments in establishing a regional craft industry centre in Australia. The aims of the newly-established Craft authority included: the provision of workshop advisory services; the operation of a loan fund to assist craftspeople establish themselves; allocating grants aimed at stimulating craft product quality and to promote crafts in the community; promoting the craft industry through various means; and expanding retail and wholesale markets. The overall benefits of developing the craft industry in South Australia were seen in its "potential to make significant contributions to the economic welfare and quality of life in the State⁶."

The First Craft Activity. A key element in the concept of establishing various workshops in the Jam Factory was the placement of a mastercraftsman as the head of each studio. Selecting experienced master craftsmen who were not only skilled in their activity, but also capable of organising the infrastructure and programme of a studio workshop, managing and teaching apprentices, and overseeing production, led to a world-wide search by the SACA for suitable candidates. It resulted in an invitation to Anglo-American glass artist Sam Herman to visit Adelaide and establish a glass workshop at the Jam Factory.

Sam Herman (born 1936), after graduating with a degree in Fine Arts at the University of Wisconsin, had worked under the studio glass pioneer, Harvey Littleton, a craftsman attributed as having revived the movement in North America in the early 1960s. Herman subsequently studied and worked in glass at the Edinburgh College of Art, and later at the Royal College of Art in London (where he was taught by Helen Monro Turner) becoming the tutor, and then Head of the Glass Department.

It was from this considerable background of experience and teaching, and with an international reputation, that Sam Herman came to Adelaide. In April of 1974, Herman conducted a 3 week glass seminar attended to by 15 craftspeople, and College art and craft students, who were taught glass-making basic techniques. There had been considerable interest shown by interstate students and craftsmen to attend the workshop, but limited pace had forced the board to give priority to local applicants.

Hence, though a Jewellery Workshop had been the first activity to be established under a master craftsman at the Jam Factory, and was in operation by July 1974, the glass workshop and seminar was demonstrated in early April. So glass-making was, in effect, the first craft activity initiated in the new craft centre.

The Second Wave. Visits to Australia by other master craftsmen in glass in mid-1974, namely Richard Marquis and Bill Boysen, both from North America, added to this period's significance as the beginning of the second wave of the studio glass movement. However, the subsequent departure of these masters-in-glass left a temporary vacuum. Temporary, because during Sam Herman's visit, the Board of the SACA recognised that this master craftsman would be a superb catch; hence their offer, accepted by Herman, of a fellowship to establish a glass workshop, and work and teach in South Australia. The workshop was to be the focal point for the training of apprentices who, it was hoped, would subsequently establish a handcrafted glass industry in the State. It was to be the first such venture in Australia where trainees would be taught handcrafted glass-making techniques through the production of saleable glass items under the guidance of a master craftsman.⁷

In July 1974 Richard Marquis, the accomplished American glass artist, arrived in Adelaide following his Perth stop-over. He demonstrated glass-blowing at the Jam Factory which was witnessed by Stephen Skillitzi who was then employed at Ross Lighting.

With Sam Herman's return to Australia in September 1974, the furnaces at the Glass Workshop, established in a large iron shed behind the Jam Factory, were re-lighted, hence sustaining the impetus of the mid-year visits. By April 1975, Herman, with the assistance of 4 trainees, had in operation a fully-equipped (one small furnace and two annealers), medium-sized glass workshop, unique to Australia at the time. For Herman, the Glass Workshop at the Jam Factory was "his golden opportunity to establish a glass scene in Australia".

However, given Sam Herman's strong and contradictory personality, it was not surprising that the original concept of organisation and production envisaged by the Authority for the Glass Workshop, proved unsuitable in the circumstances. By mid-1976 Sam Herman had opted to act as an artist-in-residence, rather than a formal master craftsman supervising apprentices, and instead he worked on his own exhibition pieces, providing the role of a "passive" model for the trainees. At this point, Herman also made the decision to close the informal access of the workshop to outsiders - exhibiting an attitude reminiscent of the 19th Century apprenticeship guild system, rather than the stated aims of the Jam Factory or the open sharing of the American system.

This resulted in a situation whereby the Glass Workshop was failing to meet its intended role of training glass craftspeople through the production of saleable items which would pay running costs, and hence allow it to become self-sufficient.

⁶ Report of the SACA, 30th June, 1974, p.1.

⁷ Craft Association of South Australia, *Newsletter*, April 1974, p.2.; Richards, R. "Sam Herman Glass", *Bulletin of the Art Gallery of South Australia*, 1977/35, p.43; *Craft Australia*, 1974/4, No.1, p.17; Reports, SACA, all 1974 for 4 Feb, 1 April and 30 June.

THE JAM FACTORY GLASS WORKSHOP & THE STUDIO GLASS MOVEMENT IN AUSTRALIA (continued)

The production runs consisted of a limited repertoire of paper-weights, storage jars, tumblers and small bowls which, however, did not sell as fast as anticipated, partly due to the relative ignorance of studio glass by the public. Meanwhile, Herman's artistic studio glass output was also produced through the assistance of the trainees who blew the basic shapes as directed, and subsequently decorated by the master. Sam Herman's studio pieces, in this period, were distinguishable by their loose bulbous forms, overlaid with swirling metallic lustre decoration--characteristics that had long-lasting influence on the trainees.

Herman perceived that the trainees were not achieving the desired level of technical proficiency that would eventually equip them with the skills necessary for their independence - and for the workshop's financial break-even point through successful production. It was for these reasons that the glass blower Stanislav Melis was engaged by Sam Herman in mid-1976 as production supervisor.⁸

European Input. Slovakian-born (1947), Stanislav Melis began his training in glass from the age of 14, at the Glass Industry Training School at Lednicke Rovne in Czechoslovakia. Three years later he was selected to study at an art school at Novy Bor (in Bohemia), which was associated with an experimental glass factory run by Dr. Jaromir Spacek, Professor Oldrich Lipsky and Jozef Flek. The glass factory and art school students investigated historic glass-making techniques and glass formulae, and applied these to make architectural and sculptural glass works. After 4 years of practice and theory, Melis emigrated to Australia in 1968, but it was not until his appointment in the Jam Factory in 1976 that he could again re-apply his high degree of expertise in the field of glass.⁹

Herman left the training and production to Melis, and though his English was not proficient, the trainees and the Glass Workshop soon benefited from his considerable glass-blowing and factory production experience.

The period from 1975-1980 was one which saw the greatest activity of studio glass in Australia at the Jam Factory Glass Workshop, but it was not until Sam Herman left in 1978, when Melis became its Head, responsible for training, design and production, that the distinctive format of training-through-production, on a full-time basis, was established.

1979 was a crucial year for the Glass Workshop, and considerable thought went into its re-organisation. This process was assisted by a 2 week consultation with Willy Andersson, a Swedish glass-blower, who had recently completed an 18 month period in Swaziland where he had established a glass production workshop on behalf of the government. Andersson introduced acid-etching and sand-blasting to the trainees, as well as presenting a report to the SACA. Sam Herman was also invited as a consultant, and to assist Stanislav Melis through discussion, and finally submitted a report regarding possible directions. In July, Peter Sjoberg, member of the Craft Authority Board, presented yet another report containing a plan for restructuring the Glass Workshop. Further input came from Swedish glass designer Eva Alemborg, who worked with the trainees for a week, and although she was there mainly as a design consultant, her style of free-blowing goblets was considered of great benefit. She later submitted 10 designs for use in production.¹⁰

Melis also took a study tour about Australia in 1979, visiting various places where he could observe and be involved in glass activity, including the Leonora Glass Factory in Newcastle (where he acted as a consultant for one week introducing new techniques); Nick Mount's studio near Morwell in Victoria; the glass department of the Caulfield Institute of Technology; and Crown Corning Glass in Sydney.¹¹

Re-structuring. By the end of 1979, the Glass Workshop had initiated a number of changes in its first major restructuring process - one of a number in its evolutionary growth. A new, larger furnace which allowed the production of a better quality glass was built by the staff and trainees, and new lines were introduced, leading to an output of a total of 16 glass products from the Glass Workshop. These included a newly-designed tumbler, clear large jugs, celery cylindrical jars, cotton-twist goblets, candlestick holders, and limited series signed bottles for a local winery. Trainees also had access to the workshop facilities after production hours, when they could produce their own artistic pieces - as did Melis himself.

Having viewed the various glass studios and factories about Australia, Melis could confidently state that the Jam Factory Glass Workshop was, in late 1979, "the best workshop of its type in Australia". This assessment was corroborated by a number of distinguished visitors, including a Ray Sanders from the Leonora Glass Factory, who spent two days there in mid-1979 and was "very impressed", and by Les Blakeborough, studio potter and glass artist, who remained there for a week watching the staff and trainees work.¹²

⁸ Interview with Tom Persson, 4 April 1989.

⁹ Interview with Stanislav Melis, 4th April, 1979.

¹⁰ Consultancy Reports on Glass Workshop submitted to SOCKEYE by W. Andersson, 19th November 1979 and Sam Herman, 4th October 1979; Minutes of Jam Factory Workshops Inc., 20th July 1979.

¹¹ Monthly report of the (Jam Factory) Glass Workshop, 9th July 1979.

¹² Monthly report Glass Workshop, 12th August 1979; Annual Report Jam Factory Workshops Inc., for 1978-79, 24th August 1979.

THE JAM FACTORY GLASS WORKSHOP & THE STUDIO GLASS MOVEMENT IN AUSTRALIA (continued)

It was therefore no coincidence that from 29th April to 20th May 1979, the First National Exhibition of Australian Glass was shown at the Jam Factory Gallery. Organised by the Australian Association of Glass Artists (AUSGLASS), the 30 makers on show [which included flat (leadlight) glass-makers as well as blown (hot) glass-makers] demonstrated that, in a period of hardly one decade, a new craft medium had "come of age" in Australia - with its focus at the Jam Factory.¹³

In 1980, the staff at the Glass Workshop consisted of Stan Melis as Head and Tom Persson who had begun his training in 1975 and subsequently become Leading Hand. There were also 6 trainees: Alex Mitrovic, Akihiro Isogai, Don Wreford, Judy Hancock, Michael Hook and Graham McCleod, engaged for a set training period of 3 years. This was the third set of trainees to work at the Glass Workshop.

Stanislav Melis was honoured in 1982 to represent Australian studio glass in a major international glass exhibition "World Glass Now '82" in the Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art, Sapporo, Japan. Melis' own artistic glass production was prolific and ranged from small decorative paperweights and free-blown organic sea forms, through to the exploration of the sculptural possibilities of glass in environmental and architectural contexts. He was amongst the earliest to investigate sculptural glass, in contrast to the functionally-orientated Australian hot glass scene of the early 1980s¹⁴

In 1983 Melis joined with glass sculptor Pavel Tomecko to establish the independent Novart Glass partnership. Tomecko, like Melis, was also Slovak-born, where he had studied art glass making for some 10 years, including 6 years at the Academy of Fine Art and Applied Arts Studio. As well as working in Novart Glass, Tomecko also worked at the Jam Factory Glass Workshop in 1983. He continues today in his own studio specialising in combining opal and optical glass to make award presentation pieces or "architectural jewellery".

British Input. Towards the end of 1982, Stanislav Melis had been forced by health problems to resign from the Glass Workshop. Tom Persson stood in as acting head until June 1984, when English glass-maker Peter Tysoe took up his appointment as Head of the Glass Workshop. His entry marked a new chapter that continues to this day, one which has introduced new techniques and directions.

Peter Tysoe (born 1935) was educated at the Oxford School of Art and Goldsmiths College School of Art, London University, and was awarded, in 1970, a Winston Churchill Memorial Fellowship. From 1966 to 1985, he created and ran his own design and production studios in Dartington, Devon, when he designed and produced sculptural works, murals and lighting features for major architectural schemes in the United Kingdom and the Middle East. Since 1968 he has shown works in over 35 Exhibitions world-wide. Tysoe also has considerable teaching, management and consultancy-design experience in various (British) schools of art, glass factories, and on a number of art and craft boards and committees.¹⁵

As Tysoe settled into his new appointment, he began to make changes which included: the length of the traineeship was reduced from 3 to 2 years; a maximum of 5 trainees at any one time were taken in; he slimmed down the workshop to include 5 trainees, 1 production supervisor and the head; he introduced an incentive payment scheme for the trainees; opened and maintained positions for up to 2 graduates to be given formal training in design and other skills; and began the process of introducing new designs and techniques;

Regarding the latter changes, Tysoe noted: "When I first came here, the forms were, in my opinion, not good - they were tired - they hadn't been changed in 4-5 years. The moulds into which the glass was blown had not been changed over these years. I designed a jug form which refers to the old (late 18th century) Nailsea glass with its subtle swirling colours. Another new form that I introduced was based on a 16th century cider jug, which itself is reminiscent of pottery forms - this interchange between ceramics and glass is very interesting."

Tysoe spoke easily, elaborating on the qualities of the medium: "The thing about glass as a material is that you've got various aspects of it and one of the main ones is that crystal glass is totally transparent, it refracts light and it has a magical effect on people - it's a unique material, it has a mystery. I've been working more and more on opacifying the surface of the glass, so in a way there is almost a run towards certain ceramic highly-fired techniques, and if you go back to the earliest glass pieces that were found in Syria and Egypt (about 3000 to 4000 BC), where glass was largely developed to imitate precious jewels, or as in the early Egyptian coil-formed vessels made for holding perfumes and fine oils, they were all totally opaque. So there is a very interesting connection between ceramics and glass, and the two are connected to this day, to the detriment of glass education, whereby there's hardly a college anywhere where glass is taught or studied in its own right - it always appears to be an adjunct to the ceramics department."

His main influences are Roman glass, 18th century English and European glass, and the 19th century where there was quite a range including the "Nailsea" glass made in Stourbridge.

¹³ Ward, Peter, "Through a Glass Brightly", *The Australian*, 2nd May 1979.

¹⁴ *Craft Australia*, 1982/2, pp.22-24; *Craft Australia*, 1982/2, p.70.

¹⁵ Interview with Peter Tysoe, 6 May 1989, for these and subsequent quotes and details.

THE JAM FACTORY GLASS WORKSHOP & THE STUDIO GLASS MOVEMENT IN AUSTRALIA (continued)

Training Through Production. At this point, Peter Tysoe described and compared the operation of the glass workshops and the glass-training technical school at Stourbridge (a major glass-making area south of Birmingham), with which he is familiar, with that of the Jam Factory Glass Workshop. "At Stourbridge, they run a similar course to that here, but it is not as broad in glass-blowing, and they do not have as much equipment, though they do very fine cutting, grinding and finishing. Trainees pay about \$6,000 to study for a year, whereas in Adelaide, they actually get paid (proportionally) as they learn - that is why the Jam Factory Glass Workshop is unique in the world. In addition, the workshop here is very generous in that it pays people interstate to come here without any contribution from other sources!"

The present format of the trainee course, and particularly the glass production lines currently in operation at the Jam Factory, were shaped according to Tysoe's own experience. He assembled the trainees together to tackle the problem of improving the products. New items have been introduced continuously. When Tysoe started, the trainees were not receiving any direct experience in melting glass, now they all have to mix batches - a filthy job - on a rotating basis. Two clear-glass furnaces are run continuously on a 24-hour cycle. Also the basic bottle-glass used in the past has been replaced with a number of specialist glass mixes (chosen from the 75,000 glass recipes known), where they are clearer, are easier to work and have other good working qualities.

Tysoe explained the day-to-day operation of the workshop: "For 3 days per week, working in two teams of three, we make Jam Factory production lines which are sold by our own manager. For 2 days a week the trainees make their own individual items, whereby 2 people work making their own pieces while the third person assists them. As the day is divided into 3 work periods, everybody gets 2 periods over 2 days. This system works to each of the craftworker's advantage: they can get specific assistance as they require it, or we just leave them to plough through on their own." Another of Tysoe's introductions to the workshop was a reportage system, whereby every 3 months he issues a report assessing the progress of the craftworkers. The trainees do see the point of it.

Artistic Integrity and Business Sense. The training programme has now matured. There is no set formal course here, people come for 1 year at a time though they may stay now for a maximum of 2 years. The workshop is now producing an average income of \$12,000 each month. Previously, the expenditure of the workshop was too high, but within 2 years of Tysoe's guidance, this situation has been reversed. As far as Tysoe is concerned, the Glass Workshop exists to train, wherever possible, graduates who have been through a formal course where they have been educated in design skills. He says "It is these people who may or may not have a realistic notion of what it is like working for themselves, but in reality they can never know. What this place is about, and there's a great need for this world-wide, is that it translates the college experience into the working experience, where if you're going to survive in your own business, you've got to have this work ethic, and you have to face that terrible problem of what you're going to make, to market what to make and at the same time maintain your integrity, so as to have enough mental and physical space available to do your own thing. One thing is for sure, unless you have an alternative source of money, you will not survive on just exhibition work." This is the rationale behind Tysoe's present push with a series of business lectures on the subject of running a small business setup.

Trainees also get paid 30% of any first quality items that they make during their own time, and this individual work, which still remains the property of the Jam Factory, is sold under their own signature. This system therefore provides the opportunity for them to build up their own reputation with the galleries - before they leave - clearly an essential part of the training in this workshop. "So if a trainee 'mentally' gets it together here, they know what sells, they know what prices they can achieve, so they can leave with an order book. They are established in the marketplace already." And in Peter Tysoe's estimation, that is worth 2 years to anybody starting up a business.

It is now very expensive for trainees to go out and start up their own one-man glass studios, so Tysoe is advising them (within his business talks) to combine into teams of 2 or 3 and set up a collective, whereby they are more likely to get a starting grant, and share costs and resources - it makes sense. Indeed, this is one of the areas that Tysoe wishes to see developed in South Australia in the near future: "Rather than trainees leaving after their work experience is completed, I'd like to see follow-up support by the Jam Factory which would encourage small glass co-operatives established here by the ex-trainees." In this way the aim of the Dunstan vision would come even closer to being fulfilled in its original concept.

Tysoe also pointed out that present market demands outstrip production potential, a situation which indicated another direction the Glass Workshop might move into: "Trainees could leave with a contract to provide items for the Jam Factory to sell through its shop. This would give them a firm foundation on which to build their work, and in this way, the Glass Workshop could become the hub of a network of a series of small co-operative producers."

Another innovation, recently implemented, is a contract scheme which is operated out of hours, where ex-trainees and workers can work and make pieces under contract with the workshop, paying them the labour content of the work. This is turning the place, in some ways, into an access workshop - or at least adding that element to its character.

Current Trends - An Example in Simplicity. Regarding the market situation, Tysoe observes: "In the Australian market prices are absurdly low compared to those in Europe and North America, for fine hand-made glass with some integrity and not just purely a craft. In Britain, I had to survive with my own studio output which I divided into 3 categories: there was the production range, which was low cost, say up to \$20; then there was the middle range which was iridescent work \$20 to \$50; and then there was my white glass which could go for anything from \$50 to \$300. It also depended where you were exhibiting. The prices were approximately double what they were here."

THE JAM FACTORY GLASS WORKSHOP & THE STUDIO GLASS MOVEMENT IN AUSTRALIA (continued)

Of the production work made at the Glass Workshop and which carries the Jam Factory label, Tysoe notes: "even production glass has a hand-made quality that machine-made glass can never have ... it has that feel that it is handcrafted. Aesthetically, glass is a dangerous medium in a way, and we've all been seduced by it. Initially, one gets very excited with it, and I started off with a lot of colour and iridescent work, though I've always tried to be very minimal. So what I'm trying to get over to the trainees here, by my own work, is trying to set an example in simplicity, because it is so easy with the availability of such a large pallet of colours, which we get from Germany - it's so easy to throw in these colours and get opulent effects - very nouveau. Trainees also want to be shown new techniques, practically every day - a new trick a day - it's a joke. But I think you must resist that as much as possible because it's your own personality that matters and it should be allowed to come through in the glass. My own work is getting simpler and simpler."

Speaking of the current trends in studio glass in Australia, Tysoe considers that "the vogue now is for kiln-work glass practically everywhere - this is hot glass made by non-blown methods by fusing in kilns. Much prestige work is now made within this area. There is also a strong tendency for sculptural work, but survival by this means is largely unrealistic. Innovation can be tiring, as is the cult of personality that tends to go with it, and as far as I'm concerned in the Glass Workshop, I'd like to get back to some very nice simple forms, and techniques - almost Japanese in integrity ... minimal, well-made work rather than the complexity of the current phase." Rene Lalique, the French glass designer whose superb work in the period from 1900 to 1930s is best known through its successful translation and limited-production runs, holds a current interest for Tysoe. He is experimenting with Lalique's *cire perdue*, lost wax method of casting glass figures and forms. Tysoe had a sculptural background before he went into glass, and still enjoys modelling - though it is a more contemplative process than working with the highly concentrated methods of hot glass.

Focus of a Glass Network. Recent reviews of developments in the studio glass movement over the past years have tended to mention the role and influence of the Jam Factory Glass Workshop only in passing¹⁶ yet it seems to be an overlooked fact that between 50% to 80% of all interstate, self-employed studio glass-makers such as Pauline Delaney (now in charge of the Meat Market Glass Access Workshop, Melbourne), Setsuko Ogishi, Rob Knottenbelt, Don Wreford, Graham Crosby, James Dodson, Neil Roberts, Peter Goss (the first hot-glass artist to work in Queensland from 1979), Eileen Gordon and Michael Hook, have all received training at the Jam Factory Glass Workshops - and at the cost of the South Australian taxpayer. It is noteworthy that, in Wagga Wagga's touring Fourth National Studio Glass Exhibition in 1989, of the 68 works by 45 glass artists, 17 of these works were by those of 11 glass artists who had originated and/or received their training in the Jam Factory Glass Workshop.

Similarly, there are a number of successful ex-trainees of this workshop practising in South Australia, including John Walsh (Mt. Gambier), Fred Tessari (Adelaide), Chris Wright with Scott Chaseling (Adelaide), Ian Driver (Gawler), and Vicki Torr working with Ian Mowbray in Adelaide (who were Access Tenants); while others such as the Japanese craftsman Akihiro Isogai, have moved overseas to work. Yet other ex-trainees work on a contract basis or have become successfully involved in other areas such as arts administration, design, consultancy or education, and include Alex Mitrovic, Ivan Polack, Alex Wyatt, Maria Poletti, Judy Hancock, Gerrie Hermans, Richard Kay, Elizabeth Kelly, and Graeme McCloud. Tom Persson, who has been at the workshop since completing his traineeship in 1978, has worked there as the Production Supervisor, and has contributed significantly in this capacity.

Another area of considerable influence of the Jam Factory Glass Workshop has been in tertiary education. The workshop training staff and facilities have, since 1979, been used by glass students of the Underdale Campus of the SACAE (Adelaide), to further their experience in the medium on a broader scale than is possible in their own department. Students from Canberra, and other Colleges of Art throughout Australia, have also visited and worked in the Glass Workshop¹⁷.

Despite the high number of Jam Factory Glass Workshop trainees who leave to set up interstate, Tysoe does not see this as inappropriate, considering the support given to them by the State Government. On the contrary, he sees all education as being international, and points to his (considerable) education and experience gained at the expense of British taxpayers and now benefiting Australia. He also points out the 2 overseas trainees that successfully completed their periods at the workshops (both Japanese), and refers to a present applicant, a German who is currently working in glass in Sweden who wishes to complete her training here, and a Japanese who is currently at Stourbridge (Dudley College Glass Centre), and who also wishes to become a trainee at this workshop.

These and other prospective applicants and visitors to the Jam Factory Glass Workshop amply demonstrate the international reputation it has earned over its 15 year history. Current trainees include a mix of 2 from New South Wales (Effie Halkidis and Mikaela Brown), 1 from Victoria (Jonathan Westacott), and 2 from South Australia (Patina Visentin and Brian Chaseling).

¹⁶ Zimmer, J. *Craft Australia* 1989/4, pp.74-79; Cooke, G. *Craft Arts* 1989/15, pp. 77-80.

¹⁷ Minutes of Jam Factory Workshops Inc., 20 July 1989; Interview with Lynn Collins, 22 May 1989.

THE JAM FACTORY GLASS WORKSHOP & THE STUDIO GLASS MOVEMENT IN AUSTRALIA (continued)

Unique in the World. The Jam Factory Glass Workshop has now been operating for 15 years. In this time it has made use of the teachings and experience of glass mastercraftspeople from around the world; North America, Britain, Sweden and Czechoslovakia. It has been in a state of continual flux, altering its infrastructure, organisation and processes to continually adapt and remain pertinent to developments within the international glass movement.

Its system of training-through-production has distinguished it as a unique and vital studio glass centre of considerable repute. In this capacity it has functioned as a traditional centre of influence, teaching and production, and through the dispersal of its craftspeople about Australia (and the world), it has, in turn, spread its influences and standards.

As Peter Tysoe says: "A lot of exciting things have happened here over the past few years." And judging from the present training and production programme, as well as the new directions that are likely to be developed, a lot more has yet to happen at the Jam Factory Glass Workshop in South Australia.

MY DAD

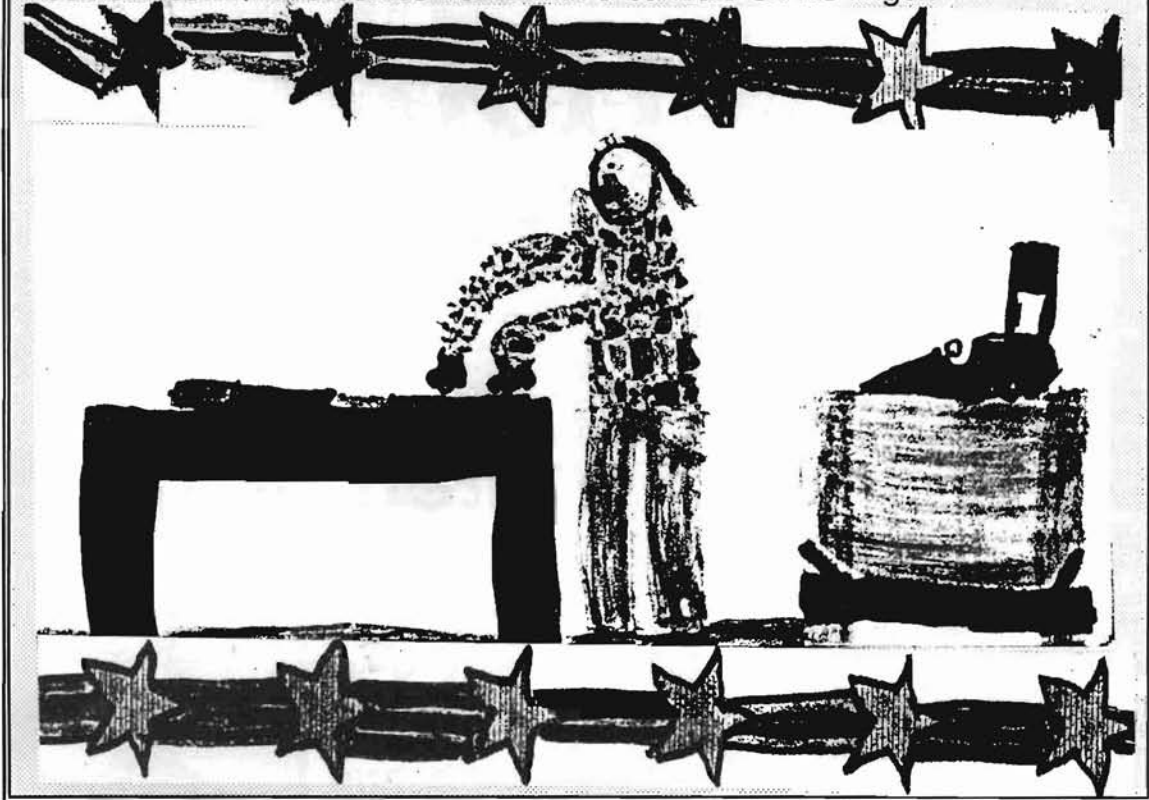
by *Jennifer Hamilton*

My Dad works at a stained glass shop. He has people to help him do his work.

My Dad has grey hair and he has no hair near the front of his forehead.

My Dad always sleeps in in the mornings. When I want to have something and my Mum won't let me, my Daddy usually gets it for me.

Sometimes my Dad comes home with a bandaid on his finger.



6th National Ceramics Conference - 1991: A Ceramics Conference featuring Glass

The 6th National Ceramics Conference is being staged by the Queensland Potters' Association on the campus of Griffith University from 1-5 July, 1991; with workshops and tours to be held on the weekends before and after the conference. This is the first such conference to be held in Brisbane and the committee has made some bold decisions, one of which was to include glass as a full partner to clay.

The theme of the conference is *Arts: Industry Interface* with the conference being a forum for a debate about the future, with strong emphasis upon the potential benefits, and possible disadvantages, of professional interaction between the individual artist and industrial manufacturers, architects and research laboratories.

Many Australian professional potters and glass designers have gained an international reputation but often fail to recognise the potential that working with industry can offer. Conversely, too many Australian manufacturers and developers ignore the creative potential of designer artists and craftsmen. The conference aims at bridging some gaps. Australian designers and craft workers involved in buildings in which the integration of Australian art and craft is a key part of the architectural design, have been invited to lecture and demonstrate their skills at the conference; these include Warren Langley, glassworker from Sydney; Joan Campbell, potter from Fremantle; and Rob and Rhyl Hinwood, multimedia sculptors from Brisbane.

The committee has also invited some outstanding international artists, all of whom have had success in collaborating with industry in the manufacture of tableware and jewellery; and in the case of Sabina Teuteberg and Dorothy Hafner, have established their own production lines for tableware. At the same time, studio craft workers have not been ignored, the committee aiming to improve their work practices and marketing, thereby improving the return on their labours. To this end, Rod Bamford and Karl and Ursula Scheid are doing continuous workshops. Karl and Ursula, like Dorothy Hafner, also collaborate with Rosenthal, but their approach to designing for industry is different and provides an essential broadening of approach.

The convenor of exhibitions, Stephanie Outridge Field, has organised a score of exhibitions, some on campus at Griffith University, others at commercial galleries in Brisbane, and others still at institutional galleries such as the Queensland Art Gallery and the Brisbane City Council Art Gallery and Museum. Glass artists are cordially invited to exhibit and those interested should write to:

Mrs. Stephanie Outridge Field,
P.O. Box 87, Clayfield. Queensland. 4011.

Besides Warren Langley, the committee hopes to obtain the services of other glass artists, and they are currently negotiating with a talented array, such as Brian Hirst, Peter Crisp, Jenny Zimmer and Michael Keighery.

We do hope to have an *Art and Architecture* exhibition of models and photographs, mounted jointly by the Committee and the Queensland Chapter of the Royal

Australian Institute of Architects. In addition to some prominent architects, a modern day Medici, Con Kikiforides, of Niecon Developments, will tell why he commissions artworks for his towers and what he is looking for in the artists concerned.

There is a perception that poor design and quality control are contributing to the non-competitiveness of Australian industry in the international market, or in import replacement. The involvement of artists and craft workers can improve design and quality control and therefore play a part in improving the economic performance of Australian industry. Jana Vujnovich, the product manager for Bristile, the only manufacturer of fine china in Australia, will provide the view of the industrialist.

The venue, a small modern campus, is comfortable and intimate but the size of the main theatre limits the number of delegates to 400, and already 125 have paid their money. Ample university accommodation is available, and for those preferring motel life, there is an excellent one outside the main gates. The enforced limitation in size will enable all delegates and visitors to mingle, and the consequent interaction and learning opportunities increased. The debate will be started on stage, but we hope will be reinforced from the floor, and regurgitated during the ample social occasions, planned and spontaneous.

Registration forms can be obtained from:

The Honorary Treasurer,
PO Box 231, Broadway, Qld, 4006. Phone: (07) 358 5121.

Phil Greville,
Conference Manager. [Phone: (075) 53 4419]

Perhaps not pertinent to this section, but we are grateful to Hero Nelson for the way she has communicated during our term of office.

The goblet shown here is one of four commissioned for the ANG in Canberra. We appreciate the black and white does not flatter glass work, but they do help make the magazine visually more interesting.

