

Only a small selection of personal contributions to this publication provided here.

To see **GLASSOGRAPHY: the Journal (vol. 1)** in full, pilgrimage to either the Rakow Research Library at The Corning Museum of Glass or the Pilchuck Glass School Library.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'd. Schnuckel', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Schnuckel

GLASSOGRAPHY

the journal

janeill **besecker**
jane **cook**
david **fox**
terri **grant**
jonathan **rafael**
david **schnuckel**

volume **one**

Use Your **Foreword(s)**

The first iteration of **GLASSOGRAPHY** took place at the Pilchuck Glass School during the third session of the 2018 program, from June 19th to the 30th.

A handful of **GLASSOGRAPHERS** joined on campus and dove right into the content. Their conversations were rich, their work was illuminating. The course's pace was determined and, as a result, the session went by quick. Course participants were asked to investigate the multi-faceted organism that the field of glass is through various writing exercises and projects; activities that would then invite further conversation between the group on topics of shared appeal (which would, in turn, influence more writing direction).

What made the work that the **GLASSOGRAPHERS** were doing *intresting* was that it might've been the first course of its kind in Pilchuck's history. But what made the work *important* was that it relied heavily on interaction with the community upon the school's campus; crossover with various members and happenings at Pilchuck (in this particular moment) as a focal point in their thinking, writing, and conversation.

They wore many hats in the work they did. They explored various corners of the field through several ways in which writing exists: in lists, critique and criticism, field journalism, the op-ed, poetry, narrative, and the experimental. The work even transcended words and writing by heading into the creation of things, happenings, sound and video work, as well as performance. All different lenses with which to examine this *glass* thing; a variety of methods engaged to help them explore it's various parts.

This inaugural group of **GLASSOGRAPHERS** included Terri Grant, Janeill Besecker, Jonathan Rafael, Jane Cook, David Fox and David Schnuckel.

The following are selections of the work they had done during their time together at the Pilchuck Glass School.

Wunderkammer 3: an exhibition of curious efforts yet to be defined

The Pilchuck Campus Gallery is currently hosting its third iteration of a six-part exhibition series, *Wunderkammer 3*. The series is a rotation of short, temporary visual events that house creative extensions of the young artists who travel from all over the world to volunteer their time and energy as a support system to the Pilchuck Glass School and its community within a given session. In turn, *Wunderkammer 3* houses an eclectic mix of artwork from budding practitioners who pilgrimage to the school...a remote, summer academy for media-specific artists in the middle of nowhere in northwestern Washington overlooking the Skagit Valley. The region is as majestic as it is mystical...a complicated area full of extraordinary pairings to describe its uniqueness. The Pilchuck Glass School isn't any different; a learning destination that is as strange as it is sacred.

As a space within that campus, the gallery is a cramped and oddly shaped exhibition venue. In fact, maybe best not referenced as an exhibition space at all. Existing, instead, as a collection case of sorts; storing and displaying objects, images, and creative residue of all kinds with zero connection to one another visually or conceptually. The only tie that binds these artists is the fact that most of them honor the material with which the school was built to: glass.

If glass isn't physically within the work or used in the process of each piece's making, it's suggested through glass-related thinking. Maybe glass-related in something as provocative as a small paper installation on the wall; Yoshimi The Soo Mei's *Mirror Obscura* using paper in a way that emulates the transparency of glass; it's thin structure and delicate mounting to the wall allowing it to easily move by the hand of air current...speaking to the fragility of glass. Not glass-based work, but certainly work (and thinking) that is glass-related. There's room for both...here and everywhere, in fact.

But aside from a shared material connection, *Wunderkammer 3* is full of sweetly weird gestures of creative identities that are just beginning to know themselves; a collection of objects whose creative potential and technical wherewithal is yet to be defined. It's no wonder the title of these shows is what it is...referencing cabinets of curiosities in Renaissance Europe that would house and preserve natural and religious artifacts whose categorical boundaries were mysterious and yet to be defined.

The Pilchuck Campus Gallery is not an exhibition space as much as it is an exhibition cupboard; *Wunderkammer 3* quite relevantly calling attention to the weirdly wonderful specimens culled from the worlds of creative vision collectively housed in the hands and hearts of those that inhabit STAFF-LAND.



A PILCHUCK BENEDICTION PRAYER

We all own Pilchuck in our own way...we lived our own histories here...we wrote our own legacies here...we defined our own measurements of what Pilchuck is, what it isn't...and the fact that these things are different from one another - and SO different - is a testament to the diversity of experience that this singular entity (this school) is capable of providing...what we all draw from and take away as being valuable...leaving the hill and disseminating all that valuable "stuff" accumulated on it into our lives as creative individuals...bringing it back home and distributing it into our communities as creative civilians.

When I got the first peek at the Session 3 lineup I wonder if the other members of its program were as puzzled by it as I was; a mixed-bag of stoners, academics, digi-geeks, clowns, icons, weirdos and other miscellaneous outsiders.

With two days left in the session I cherish the Frankenstein that we are...the rag-tag assembly of instructors, gaffers, and AiRs that make up a session themed as *METRICS*...perhaps an experiment in measuring the range at which glass is being engaged in current practice, what it is in service to at this particular moment in time. Perhaps even measuring how these disparate parts within the program mix once isolated in a single space...in the middle of the woods...seeing whether we as the substances play well, if we blend well, if we make a mess or possibly annihilate everybody.

I tend to want to think broadly about things that seem easy to perceive...I usually want to penetrate the obvious, peel back the layers. And Pilchuck has much to delve into...it and the experiences here are deceptive...there is much, much more than what meets the eye. Even to those who are here right now...up to their neck in it.

For me, I don't think Pilchuck is about glass, or glass making, or glass learning per se. I think those things exist here, but only as a vehicle for students to develop a deeper connection between their various interests, a deeper connection to themselves, and a broader understanding of how they relate to the world around them.

Students here should know that as much fun as it is to learn new things, to make new things, to even make something you're incredibly proud of in your time here...that's base level accomplishment. Even though part of a GLASS school, glass is but a plinth; a platform for a bigger thing that we've just been a part of...our learning experiences in studio and on campus turning into a unique life experience...maybe even a fulfilling experience...but ultimately an experience that provided opportunities for us to become more in tune with who we are, how we operate, and how we connect with others and all things around us. A two-week session not about glass, but about becoming introduced to the idea of a better version of you...we are capable of becoming them, but not yet...these exquisite versions of ourselves are still out there. But these two weeks got us all 4 to 5 steps closer to realizing the fullness of our individual potentials...potential that could still be 2 to 3 million steps away. We're working on it...

The experience of making, being creative, and material learning this session could very well culminate into all sorts of post-Pilchuck successes for all of you... but none greater than the opportunity to recognize how putting yourself at risk and bold approaches to the possibility of failure in life and learning lend way to some truly prosperous human experiences.

If you had a bad time here, I'm sorry. It was probably your fault, though. Your expectations were too high, too irrational. Or you didn't come to grow, you came to prove something. Or you didn't pay enough attention to what it was you were signing up for. But if a bad time was had and it wasn't your fault, your reward lies somewhere else...you'll get it when you really need it. However, for the record, there aren't many of you. If you're quick to express that your bad time was NOT your fault, you've just outed yourself: it was definitely your fault. You're a piece of work...you're the only one who doesn't see it.

Regardless, if you had a bad time here this session, it's your job to find something valuable within that bad experience. If you are indeed an artist it is your *JOB* to identify the takeaway. When we feel disappointed or let down or cheated out of an experience, it is too easy to dwell on what that experience wasn't instead of seeking out what it, in fact, was. It's work. And if you're unwilling to do the work that says something about the nature of your character...and perhaps that character flaw in and of itself was responsible for you setting yourself up to have a bad time. If you're concerned about the investment (i.e. you spent a lot of money, you spent a lot of time away from home, etc...) doing the work to seek out the takeaway might not only salvage any lost sense of "profiting" from this educational experience gone wrong, it may even be the lesson you desperately needed to have. A lesson that profound is worth the cost of tuition alone. Forget what you thought you came here for. The universe is talking to you...do the work to listen. It's up to you to see it as a wall or a window...

If you had a great time here this session, that was your fault, too. You came with the right mix of curiosity, humility, and adaptability. You have a job, though, too: it's your *JOB* to extend upon all that you had accumulated here. What you saw, what you heard, what you discovered...new things understood, new capabilities developed, new connections made...you need to honor it through rigorous methods of cultivation. Not only within what it is you do within your own making practice, but to figure out a way to have it influence others, too. You were given a gift here...you are obligated to enhance that gift somehow and pass it on.

Something special happens in places like this...bizarre pipe dreams that were brought to life on a stoned whim almost half a century ago and, somehow, developing into something extraordinary. One big glamorous accident. So accidental that even its own function as an educational entity transcends its mission...also by accident. Pilchuck is not just a school, just as Pilchuck is not just about glass; it is a platform for all of us to think about thinking and to learn about learning...and to do that by way of a shared material of interest as a literal and figurative focal point.

Go in good measure,

Amen.



passage

The pasterelli plate is loaded with a shelf of chopped cane straight from the kiln. An arrangement of solid transparent segments of colored and clear glass are arranged in a horizontal orientation. It's rectangular...like a flag...like a flag of some imaginary nation rendered in an 8-bit Nintendo world.

These glass segments are shaped like penne...tubular, 2 inches in length...lined end-to-flattened-end across the shelf. Not all that thick, but thick enough where dwelling in a 900-degree waiting room would make for a less stressful transition into a 2200-degree chamber...a chamber designed to transform these separate entities into a communal whole by way of time and temperature.

Time and temperature are the gods that determine the destiny of all glass...glass of any kind... in any circumstance. Most, if not all, glass bodies used in the hot shop do not deal well with immediate change. Going from room temperature to hellacious is to the detriment of any soft glass object's condition. It's serious...as serious as eminent death. And the other way around, too...falling from hellacious to room temperature as fast as possible is also eminent death.

In this world, time and temperature are not to be fucked with. They are to be respected...to be understood. As the pasterelli plate is lifted from its 900-degree chamber, the neighboring creations sharing space nearby are at risk...the chamber door has been opened to retrieve the shelf of segmented glass penne. A couple of dignified, beachball size mezza stampo vessels cringe...they have just been given life and are caught off guard...they realize that they aren't necessarily in the clear, safe from thermal shock...even though in the 900-degree chamber. Although new to this world, even these beachball-sized mezza stampo creations know that a closed door to the chamber guarantees them safe passage as they transition from hot to lukewarm. But the lid has been opened...the darkened, fiber-fraxed environment now invaded by natural day light; the cozy atmosphere of a consistent 900 degrees Fahrenheit now interrupted. 900-degree heat traveling up as heat does when allowed to leave the 900-degree chamber, released into the real world...forever going upward...up to the ceiling of the hot shop studio and finding some way to even escape again. It doesn't know what sky is but that's where it wants to travel towards until unable to travel any further.

The beachball sized mezza stampo are nervous. They can take the chamber's lid being open for a moment or two, but they have no idea who is opening the lid...or if the lid opener knows that what it is doing is potentially hazardous to the exquisitely created things inside. The shelf of glass segments - organized as jeweled penne - is taken out of the chamber instantly...a smooth, swift and efficient removal. The lid shuts

as quickly as it was opened and the objects inside give one another a silent look of relief.

The shelf of colored glass segments is carried to and rested on a pasterelli fork splayed across a work bench just a few steps away from the chamber from whence it came...the same work bench that will host a phenomenal transformation involving these glass segments...one where the flat, rectangular arrangement of colored penne will be rolled up and joined end to end to make a cylinder, melted together into one seamless body, dipped into molten glass, inflated and tooled.

They thought they were just a pattern; they will soon come to know that they are part of something so much more. That is, if they survive the metamorphosis...a process involving torturous physical experiences like being dipped in a molten pool of their own flesh once or twice, being plucked and strangled by metal tools, relentlessly turned and, therefore, consistently nauseous. If all goes well these glass segments will come out the other side of this experience as a heightened version of what they originally were...with also a heightened understanding of one of life's best curveballs...

...that it usually gets worse before it gets better.

Unless, of course, it doesn't.

List 3: What is RIGHT in the Glass Field (as Statements)

- There are some really special people within our field...
..some of them are even down ^{rough} ~~there~~ with/about Glass
- If sought after the right way a sense of community exists online as it does in real life.
- In terms of Glass technicality what seemed impossible to obtain as a skill on 20 years ago is now accessible to a junior level college student... almost as common knowledge these days... the information has been shared that much.
- There are people within this field that value writing as much as they value making.
- The acknowledgment of issues regarding gender/social orientation/race as being issues to address in the field is happening...
..a first step but moving ^{forward} ~~inward~~ (is still a mainly Caucasian field socially, however...)
- There are some educators of my generation that are changing the game in what Glass education is and does.
- No one is really talking about Glass ~~secessionism~~ secessionism anymore.
- The FB Glassies page has proved to be a helpful cork board for people to see what is ^{new} ~~happening~~ for people in the field.

List 4: What is CONCERNING in the Glass Field (as ?s)

- What's the point of being a student when you think you know it all already?
- What is responsible for the increase in, maybe, do approach to studio practice in the hot shop?
- Will the acceptance of pipe making segue into a sophisticated approach to aesthetic in pipe making?
- Why is the "exquisite art object" so difficult to respect these days?
- Is there any sense that the inclusion of reference to the antique in Glass work will end?... especially by artists born after 1980?
- Why is skill acquisition these days so difficult to acquire in today's student?
- Why do up-and-coming college educators rely so much on Gumick to "present an issue" in teaching?
Seminars?



Given life...
then discarded...
given new life...
then worn away.

A thing
used to find the potential of many, many other things...
things that were already more important than me to begin with.