

## **Mary Mullaney Artist Statement**

Solitary pondering, researching, sketching and hesitation are put aside as a life-sized outline of a vessel is chalked onto the cement floor in the glass studio. Assistants are called over for discussion. The dance of the glassblowers will soon scuff away the image as the artwork comes to life.

As designer and lead craftsperson I direct a skillful team to blow sizeable glass vessels. After they cool, I permanently carve imagery into them, using a sandblaster and diamond engraving tools. The challenging hot glass techniques we use provide me with several thin, transparent color layers which, when carved into, result in the myriad hues and shades of color which characterize my surface compositions. The finished piece is a highly personal, voluminous, sculptural narrative. The story travels the circumference, exploring the undulating curves in the form, and can be experienced from another more complex perspective found by gazing through the front and back walls simultaneously.

The imagery is a sensual and textural interpretation of a moment in time. Suggested in some of my recent works is the view one would have if sitting in the midst of a chaotic bramble of natural botanicals. I appreciate the interrupted light and intricate negative space formed by such groupings as well as the spatial and postural relationships amongst the plants, which I view as almost social. Though classically rendered, there is an animated quality to my carvings. This reflects the fantasy-like experience I often tap into when studying other life forms. The feeling is at times romantic, surrealistic, or conversational, a revelation I attempt to convey to others with my work.

The acquisition of technical and artistic skills for me pays off with the occasional gift of high-quality improvisation. On a spiritual, psychological level, the ability to recognize, receive and respond involves faith and knowing when to let go of attachment to one's own plans and let the universe have its say.

Glass embodies many seductive qualities; I often make use of its delicate transparency and luminosity as well as its ability to hold fine detail. Carved glass is as easily transformed into the crisp, geometric divisions of a dried seed pod as into the tissuey, ethereal and translucent petals of that same plant in full bloom.

I enjoy the lifestyle of an independent artist carrying on the tradition of high-quality craftsmanship, making things with my hands from scratch. I believe that hand made items possess a great deal of humanity and I value this. I am satisfied when I am able to access previously unknown parts of myself, engage others, and make use of some of the mysterious qualities that glass has to offer.