

Artist Statement

I'm having a love affair with a material. That material is glass, specifically molten glass. Since I was little I've always had a desire to create, to make things with my hands. It's visceral and primitive. I'm a maker of objects. It's what I was born to do, but I was never really connected to a material until I met glass in college. It was love at first sight and in the 16 years since, nothing has changed.

Glass has completely captivated me in a way I can only describe as a torrid romance.

It's hot, sensual, and demanding; it's fragile and amazingly strong; and it's sometimes unforgiving. I'm seduced by glass for its utterly enchanting beauty, clarity, sparkle, and fluidity. Glass is passionate. It pushes me physically to the point of complete exhaustion, either gratifying or tragically disappointing me. Its intensity is like no other artistic medium because it demands my complete attention and gives me scathing burns when I don't give it.

Glass wants to be caressed with a loving touch, the kind that only a strong hand can deliver. I'm learning the art of when to control the glass and when to let it go. After years of practice I'm still not the master, not even close. The material continues to show me new possibilities, new aspects of itself that I hadn't dreamt of before. The romance with its flush of excitement and possibility begins afresh each time I work with the material.

In addition to my love affair with glass, I am cognizant of three salient components of being born a maker of objects. They are: the 'craft of making', the 'experience of making', and the 'end result'. Each aspect of the creative process offers me very different and satisfying experiences, each as necessary as the others.

The 'craft of making' is the structured framework of creativity. It's the mechanics and physics of a material, a form, or a thought. It's a linear skill-set development that comes only from the regular, dedicated, and disciplined practice of making. Repetition is key. Making is a physical act.

Craft skills are like tools in your toolbox. They can be used or not used depending on the application but you always want to have them on hand and in good condition. This means you pay in advance to have them. You never know when you might need them. They require regular maintenance.

The 'experience of making' is a deeply personal, inquisitive journey. It's sensory and thoughtful; you ponder and play. It's the process having a conversation with yourself and being completely surprised, yet not really at all, by the answers you find. It's all inside you, yet there is no straight line to discovering it.

During the 'experience of making', you set up a paradigm with rules and limits that give shape to your exploration. Maybe you stay here, or maybe you bend the rules, or maybe you look outside the box. No matter what you do or how you do it, you open yourself up in a consciously unconscious manner. You look into the darkness and you let whatever is out there in. You start a dialogue, you ask questions, you listen.

The 'craft of making' and the 'experience' of making continually reveal things to me that are just outside of my line of sight, both physically and intellectually. What can I do? How can I do it? Who am I?

The 'end result' is the marriage of the 'craft of making' and the 'experience of making'. The 'end result' is often a material or non-material object embodied with an informed aesthetic that leads the creator and the viewer to reflection. This is Art.

Art is nothing more than the tangible interpretation of the experience of being human. Being human is a difficult and often lonely journey in which we strive to understand ourselves and the world around us. Through art we attempt to see ourselves more clearly. Whether reviled or revered, we are affected. Nothing speaks to our humanity more than the arts.

If you ask me as an artist why I make something, I'll tell you I had to do it. I couldn't not do it. It is as necessary to me as breathing. Each piece I create is a part of me brought to life and given to the viewer. Whether deemed successful or not, I continue on my adventure, my love affair, my quest.