

A TOUCH OF GLASS

Newsletter of the Creative Glass Guild of Queensland June 2020 Edition

Update from the President

If you are like me, you are looking forward to the Guild resuming normal operations.. whatever 'normal' looks like in this new and unfamiliar territory.

As Queensland continues to turn the corner on Coronavirus, or at least flatten the curve, your Management Committee is exploring options for re-opening the Guild.

We will be watching with interest the outcomes of the staged approach being adopted by the Queensland Government to provide Queenslanders with more freedom to participate in more activities and hold more gatherings.

Stage 2 commenced on 1 June, which permits public gatherings of up to 20 people.

Further restrictions will be lifted in Stage 3, which is currently scheduled to commence on 10 July.

What is the new normal?

So, what will accessing the Guild look like? Should we require members to have the Commonwealth Government COVID-19 app installed on their mobile telephones to visit the Guild?

How do we keep 1.5 metres social distance from each other? How can we limit the number of members accessing the Guild? Do we need to sanitise all hand equipment? Do we close the

kitchen? Who will be responsible for cleaning the Guild?

These questions and countless others need to be answered before we open, and guidelines sent to members, so we all have a clear understanding of what is required while attending the Guild to keep us COVID safe.



We asked members what they've been doing in glass to occupy their time during lockdown. Inside, you will find lots of examples of beautiful work, including this spectacular work-in-progress 'Sunset Landscape' mosaic by Catherine Conaty.

Regardless of any measures we put into place, it is up to our volunteers to decide if they are ready to assume responsibility of opening the Guild, and for our tutors to decide when they feel it is safe to re-commence courses.

Planning for a move

In other news, the draft architectural plans for lifting and possibly moving the Guild have been circulated. Initial reaction has been favourable by members who have provided ideas to amend the plan to accommodate various needs of members.

The draft plan has been submitted to Brisbane City Council to gauge initial feedback and acknowledgement to proceed to a formal proposal. Initial reaction from BCC has been positive, and we should hear back from Council officers shortly regarding our proposal.

Stay put or move over?

The big question we need to answer is, do we stay put or move onto the vacant sports green next door? The sports club has agreed to the move, but we need to have a mutual understanding of our and the sports club's obligations, with our members' approval and endorsement.

The Broncos have agreed to meet with us at some stage to discuss our shared boundaries of the land behind the Guild. Of course, the Council will have the final say in any future development. Lastly, we obviously will need to seek funding from various government organisations to make the Guild's renovations possible, so any development is still a fair way off.

We're going solar

Also, good news on our application for solar panels – we have been notified of the approval of an \$8300 grant for this purpose.

We will keep you informed about our plan to reopen. In the meantime, keep well, and stay safe.

Best regards, Kevin Grace

Lisa inspired by floral rainbow

In 2016, not long after moving to Brisbane, I attended the Guild's Annual Exhibition. I was amazed at the beautiful artworks on display; however, one piece captured my attention and to this day it remains a source of inspiration to me.

As I walked around the Exhibition, I was drawn back several times to this stunning piece - "100% Recycled" by Catherine Conaty - a stunning rainbow of flowers (pictured below). Something about this piece just struck a chord - the colours, the light, the glass bricks.

Everything recycled

And how innovative, too! The story behind '100% Recycled' is that the window was a roadside find, the coloured glass comprised Catherine's friend's leadlight scraps, and the clear glass came from her sister-in-law's grandfather's shed wrapped in newspaper from 1952!

Imagine my delight when I was able to meet Catherine, who assured me that you did not need to be 'artistic' to do mosaics. Inspired, I signed up for her glass on glass workshop later in the year.

After a wait of several months,

that Sunday in late November finally arrived - the first day of the workshop. Immediately Catherine put us at ease demonstrating how to use the wheeled nippers. After some practice, it was time to get

down to our design.

For me, it was simple; I wanted to create my own flower. Not confident wielding my nippers - I was so slow, so very slow - I bought a pair so I could work on it at home during the week. The following Sunday, I had my first mosaic ready to grout.

Living and working on the southside made it difficult to attend a beginners class. Still, at the next year's Guild Exhibition I signed up for more workshops. Unfortunately, I was unable to participate in either class.

For several years, my love of mosaics and glass lay unrequited when at the start of 2020 I saw advertised, a two-day precision mosaic jewellery workshop with Margo Anton. What better than to combine my love of jewellery with mosaics.

Catherine assured me I could take the course as a beginner! Having not picked up my nippers for more than three years, it was a challenge to say the least. Cutting 1cm squares of mosaic gold into 16 pieces and debutting them was extremely difficult, but in the best kind of way. I loved every minute!

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Pictured (above): Lisa Mills paid homage to Catherine Conaty's '100% Recycled' mosaic by creating a series of round floral hanging mosaics which adorn her garden.

Below: The original '100% Recycled' mosaic, in which Catherine Conaty combined broken wind-screen glass, leadlight scraps and clear glass discovered wrapped in newspaper from 1952.



Lisa's tribute

Cont from previous page

Enthusiastically I signed up for the next beginners mosaic class. I even took Thursdays off work so I could attend. Then, halfway through the course, Coronavirus changed our world. The Guild had to close, my class was suspended and life as we knew it changed.

Mustering all that I had learnt I embarked on creating a series of iso-art. Not having any knowledge of other techniques I stuck to glass-on-glass and completed my 100% Recycled homage series.

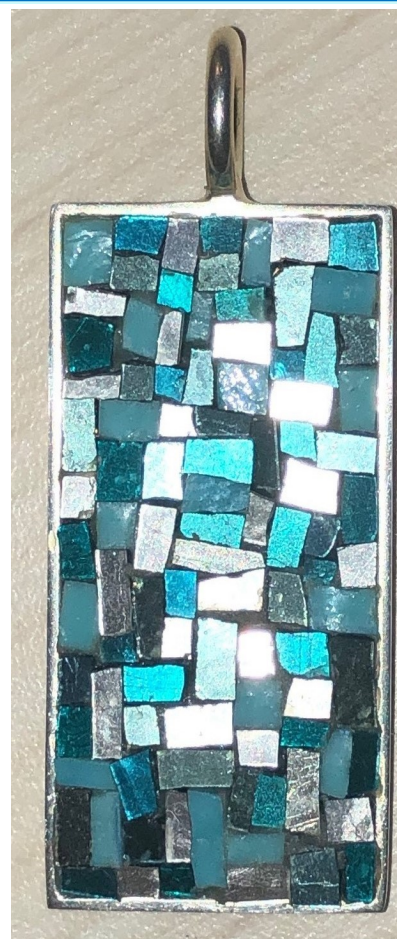
Quietly creating

During these past few months, I have spent many happy hours, quietly creating. Looking at, cutting and creating with glass has been a mindful experience for me and has given me a

lot of peace and joy, at these strange times. I'm currently trying to teach myself how to crazy pave, which I am learning, is more difficult than it looks!

I cannot wait for the Guild to re-open so I can start working on all the ideas I have been dreaming up during these Covid-days.

Regards, Lisa Mills



Pictured (above left): One of the floral roundels created by Lisa as a tribute to Catherine's mosaic which used recycled materials to produce a spectacular floral rainbow. Above right: Lisa combined her love of jewellery with a love of mosaics to create this exquisite necklace piece, after attending a precision mosaic jewellery workshop.

Zoom Zoom

The Guild notched up a first on May 11 when we conducted our regular members' meeting using Zoom technology. Around 20

members (below) met online using the web-based video conferencing tool to discuss the Guild's current issues. Members had to remember not to yawn, doze off or wear their PJs!



A Touch of Glass is published by the Creative Glass Guild of Queensland

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Workshop/Sales:
Saturdays, 9.00am-12.00pm

General meetings: Bi-monthly on first Monday of the month at 7.00 pm (Notice will be emailed to members).

Management Meetings: Alternate months or earlier if required

This butterfly is free at last

Having this unscheduled time at home prompted me to look at the unfinished mosaic projects (fondly or frustratingly known as 'UFO's') languishing in my studio, staring at me and demanding to be completed.

I decided on a 3D butterfly which I had started to mosaic earlier in the year and which I was determined to finish.

The pattern was inspired by a picture of a moth I found in my stash of mosaic ideas. The substrate was constructed in a Concrete Workshop I attended in 2010 (yes, 10 years ago – I count this as my 'thinking time' on how best to approach the project). It is made using Styrofoam, fibreglass mesh and concrete with poly pipe set into the centre.



Barbara's butterfly substrate was constructed in a concrete workshop she attended 10 years ago. It combines Styrofoam, fibreglass mesh, concrete and poly pipe.



The piece features fused dichroic glass eyes on both sides of the head.

Fusing and Slumping Tutor and Mosaic Addict, Barbara Humphreys, has discovered that Covid-19 downtime has been a great opportunity to finish off some of her unfinished (UFO) mosaic projects. Here's her story...

This pipe enables the butterfly to be balanced on a steel pole which is set into a concrete paver buried in the ground – this bit of the project was carried out by David, my other 'mosaic' half.

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Strips of textured silver glass cover the edge, which sparkles in the sunlight.

This butterfly is free

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I decided that I would not buy any glass for the project and used only what I had in my stock.

The dimensions are: height 45cm, not including the steel rod, width 50cm and depth 7cm.

It stands 95cm from its base to its 'antennae' and weighs a few kilos now it is mosaiced.

My only nod towards including any fused pieces were the dichroic glass eyes and the polish fired millefiori pieces which are between the blue and pink glass.

The edge I covered with strips of

textured silvered glass which sparkle on sunny days.

Now this butterfly is free at last for me to enjoy when I sit on my verandah with my morning coffee.

When I become tired of looking at one side, I just twist it around on the steel pole and, voila, I have another view to enjoy.

What's next, you ask? It's a totem made from mosaiced Styrofoam balls (see photo below).

This project is a relatively young UFO – maybe only 8 years on the shelf. Five pieces are now complete and I have a few more to go.

Barbara Humphreys



The blue and pink side features polish-fired millefiori pieces between the blue and pink glass.



The butterfly can be twisted on its pole to reveal the green and pink side.



Here's a sneak preview of a mosaiced Styrofoam ball which is part of a totem being created by Barbara. Five balls complete, and a few more to go!

Evert's lockdown window

Why is Evert Van der Waal looking so happy? He's finished and installed this striking leadlight window in his dining room.

A Covid lockdown project, the window features clear English muffle glass, highlighted by small diamonds in blue glass.

Like most leadlight enthusiasts, Evert is missing his visits to the Guild where he was a regular most Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Bring on the Guild re-opening soon!



Members make MilBi mosaic magic

Members of the Guild recently contributed a range of mosaics created on mesh, which were sent to Bundaberg to be considered as part of a community art mosaic project.

The project, called *MilBi Magic: Archies Beach Community Mosaics*, is a large 32 square metre mosaic on the public amenities block at Bargara, on the Bundaberg coast.

Run by artist Paul Perry and incorporating a series of community workshops in Bundaberg, the project also invited contributions from around Australia.

The design of the artwork will incorporate themes of environmental care, turtle conservation, connection to the Southern Great Barrier Reef, water catchments,



and connection to place and country.

Our mosaic tutor, Catherine Conaty, encouraged members to participate in the project, as in her words: "There is nothing quite like the thrill of having a little piece of your art on permanent location in a public space for the rest of the world to admire!" *Cont next page...*



Pictured (clockwise from above): Shelley's seahorse; Judy finding Nemo the clown fish; Amanda's mermaid; Lyn's parrot fish and Catherine's silver fish.

Organisers of the MilBi community mosaic project were overwhelmed with contributions from all over Australia, so they have asked the local Council for permission to add two new walls to accommodate all the fishy subjects.



MilBi Mosaic Magic

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Quite a few of our members participated, and the results speak for themselves!

The project has been overwhelmed by an embarrassment of fishy contributions from all over Australia, so organisers have approached Council about expanding the project to cover two low walls on the amenities block as well. Any unused aquatic creatures will be returned to their creators in due course.

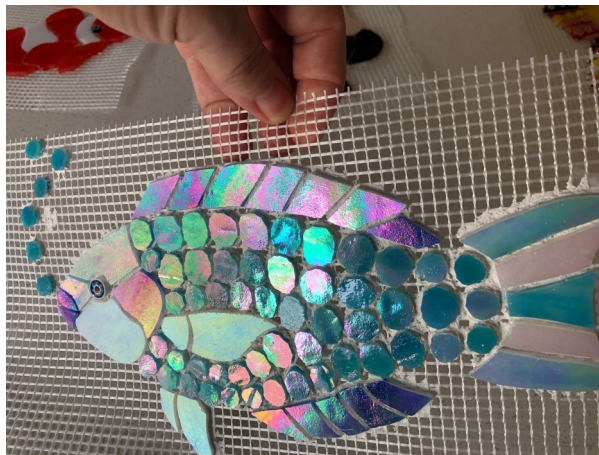
The completed public artwork was to be officially unveiled as part of the Milbi Festival in November 2020, but this will be subject to possible Coronavirus restrictions.

The workshops and final design will incorporate the overarching themes of environmental care, turtle conservation, connection to the Southern Great Barrier Reef, water catchments and connection to place and country. This connection to country is a key theme for the project and is crucial in making this artwork unique to the region.

Local Indigenous groups and the South Sea Islander community will be involved to ensure the artwork reflects the landscape and cultural heritage of the region.

Pictured (clockwise from top right): Suzi's blue & orange tail fish; Catherine's bashful fish; Annette's turtle and Lyn's parrot fish.

Pictured below is the 32 square metre substrate panel containing the variety of aquatic creatures which will be put on permanent display at Archies Beach amenities block.



Asian scenery inspires Grahame's art

My wife Carole and I have now experienced travel to Japan three times, and have always been surprised and overjoyed by our experiences there on each occasion.

It was an observation from one of these trips that solved the problem of a mess of electrical cables in our family room.

Carol asked me to make something to hide them, so I suggested a bi-folding screen similar to the ones we had seen in China and Japan, using coloured glass windows for the panels.

The size of panels was determined by the place the screen was to be situated, and to ensure symmetry with its surroundings. But what to depict in the glass panels?

Given Carol's love of all things Japanese, why not choose a Japanese theme? And what could be more Japanese than Mt Fuji, cherry blossoms and a Shinko gate.

Cherry blossom time

So I set about creating a 3 panel image of Mt Fuji with cherry blossoms and a Shinko gate in the foreground.

Mount Fuji and a Shinko gate would not be difficult to create, but how to emulate cherry blossoms?

I chose light pink water glass – similar to the colour of cherry blossoms, but cherry blossom flowers have form. How to emulate this? I would have to paint on the pink glass.

I would have to learn to paint and

fire glass in a similar fashion to the old church stained glass window makers.

Unfortunately, the Guild does not have a current stained glass tutor or run courses on painting glass, so I reverted to the Guild library

finely crushed glass for stained glass preparation, oil-of-cloves, gum Arabic, small paint brushes, jars, spatulas and a small kiln, I experimented with painting pink glass with various forms to represent cherry blossoms in different shades of paint.



The paint I finally selected was one of several recipes of a combination of glass, water and oil-of-cloves or gum Arabic. After many trials, I found a style that seemed to best emulate cherry blossoms.

I always keep a rough diary of my glass work – dates, work done and time spent.

I started Panel 1 in June 2018 and finished in September 2019. It was delayed about 3 months as I submitted much of it into the 2019 Ekka Creative Arts and Crafts Exhibition. It didn't win a prize – it didn't deserve one (poor alignment of tiles and irregular solder profiles), but the piece did rate an honourable mention.

The final Panel 1 is the left hand panel in the photo. It took about 113 hours to complete

I started Panel 2 (the right hand panel) in November 2019 and recommenced mid-March 2020, at the start of Coronavirus self-isolation. I finished it at the end of April 2020, taking about 62 hours to complete.

I am now onto Panel 3 – and have just completed the lower third. All going well, I should finish it in about 6 weeks if COVID-19 isolation lasts that long.

which provided me with appropriate reading matter and a tutor's box of stained glass materials to view as examples of what is required.

Glass Painters' Method

In addition, I downloaded a copy of the '*Glass Painters Method*' by a couple of English practitioners, teachers and authors, and I made a copy of the firing schedule for stained glass which the Guild keeps in the kiln room.

Armed with small quantities of

Grahame Sawyer

Katrina makes Covid colours

During Covid lockdown, I decided to have a play with Thinset, a cement-based adhesive used in mosaics as a glue, but which can also be used as a grout replacement.

I also ordered some Artistic Tints from Artopia Mosaics. It was a tough choice as they have 20 colours to choose from!

Having not used this product before, I sought advice from fellow Guild members who are Thinset gurus - Catherine Conaty and Margaret Shaw.

Experiment begins

I gathered up a few pavers that have been lying around the house, whipped up some sample blocks and experimented away. I mixed three tablespoons of Thinset powder with a splash of water to form a thick peanut butter-like mix.



I then added 2 drops of tint and applied it to the paver.

The middle section is 4 drops, and the top section is 12 drops. A little bit of tint goes a long way!

So now I have samplers ready for when I want to choose a

background colour for the series of stepping stones I'm working on.

The next phase is to experiment with mixing colours, and getting the perfect finish on the concrete.

Katrina Jackson



A step towards perfection

Katrina has also been creating this very beautiful stepping stone, which is now complete after 6 months of effort!

She spent the last week applying thinset for the background (since her kids went back to school after lockdown).

Much of the design work and intricate cutting was performed in between volunteering supervisory activities at the Guild on Wednesdays (pre-Covid, of course!)

Seems such a pity to walk on it!



Vicki's lockdown jewels

What has our intrepid beadmaking tutor, Vicki Beldan, been up to during the Coronavirus shutdown?

Plenty, by the looks of the sparkling range of earring and necklace jewellery below.

These intricate pieces designed and created by Vicki clearly demonstrate how shape, colour, size, complexity and inclusions can be manipulated into complex designs and figures.

Like all of the Guild's tutors, Vicki is keen to get back into teaching her courses as soon as the Covid light turns green. Watch this space!



Introducing Mark Hufford, glass artiste

How does your vast experience working in graphite and paint inform your approach to painting on glass?

The graphite drawing skills and understanding the importance in the use of values in grayscale or color helps me to achieve dimensional qualities in the subject matters that I paint in fused glass.

These skills also provide me the opportunity to conceptualize pieces from design to completion. I don't often just begin painting with enamels on glass without planning a project all the way through, whether that be in design, layers of glass being used, or using dimensional elements tack fusing or use of textures. These are all planned out in sketches before I begin.

What skills are transferable, and what challenges do you face working on glass?

I find that nearly all of the artistic skills I have developed over the years transfer to glass and simply a matter of finding the correct application and many times knowing when to set specific products in a firing before I can continue to build in layers for the desired results.

The challenges for me as an artist have been developing methods in product uses to accomplish the look, representation, or style in fused glass that can be accomplished much easier in its traditional form.

How did you come to start working with glass?

I really fell into glass after being given a set of fired glass enamels to 'play with'. I started with a microwave kiln, float glass and enamels. Being very limited to

This interview with Mark Hufford, US glass artist, teacher, and author of the go-to guide 'The Art of Fused Glass Enamel Painting' has been reproduced courtesy of our sister namesake, The Creative Glass Guild of the UK.

That is really how I approached it. It is not stretched canvas or paper but a different surface, and just using a different product. I also had previous experience with fired arts having worked and taught in the ceramics industry.

Is there anything aesthetically that you love about painting on glass that sets it apart from working in other media?

From an aesthetics point, I love the reflective light on the surface of glass and the ability to create art in functional works in addition to wall art. That is a difficult thing to do in watercolor, oils, pastels and graphite and other media I work in.

How important is teaching to your practice as an artist?

Teaching is a reward of its own. I wasn't born with these skills and abilities; I worked for it, because I desired it and challenged myself. I believe everyone has the ability in them; it is just a matter of desire and practice. I am still learning and challenging myself daily.

For me, teaching is my motivation to continue creating, developing new techniques and innovative uses for products fused glass painters have available to them.

I don't sell a lot of my work, and I would have to say that 90% of what I do, is to teach others painting on fused glass.

Teaching for me is like gardening in a way (another thing I love), planting seeds, in this case, technical and application processes, providing other artists knowledge they can interpret to their individual style and aesthetics in their work.



the size pieces to work on with a microwave kiln, I painted miniatures on one to two in pieces of glass figuring out as I explored how to transfer my traditional skills to a different canvas type.

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Introducing Mark Hufford cont from previous page

You derive a lot of inspiration from nature, has this always been the case?

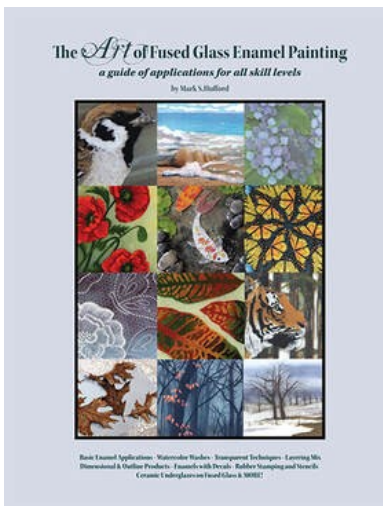
It has always been the case for me. Nature as my inspiration throughout my life has been a saving grace in a way. Life is complicated, things happen, and growing up in a large family of dysfunction I drew from nature and wildlife to escape and find some sense of well-being. A connection or purpose for being, if you will.

Congratulations on the Nature Colour Collection of UGC enamels that you've created. Why did you choose UGC as the brand partner for this collection?

Thank you! I found in my enamel painting, that I was frequently mixing from dry enamel powders these eight colors not found in any enamel brand that I was using. And mixing them myself, there were always inconsistencies. I was ecstatic when conversing with Margot Clark of UGC that they were on board and willing to manufacture my Nature Color Collection.

Your book, *The Art of Fused Glass Enamel Painting*, is a comprehensive and inspiring resource for glass artists. How did you find the process of writing the book and is it exciting to see how artists are using it?

I have published several e-book tutorials and produced 9 video tutorials in the last five years in addition to driving coast to coast teaching in the United States. The time was right to compile all



of this information, fundamental enamel applications and techniques into a workbook as a go to resource for students.

I could not have accomplished writing this without my dear friend and Editor Linda Beard. We worked feverishly via email and chat to get the book ready for the publisher. We both learned a lot from this first book, and are looking forward to the next!

The book has been embraced beyond my expectations and they have been shipped to over 18 countries and the book going on its 8th printing since November 2018. The artists using the book are creating some wonderful works and it is really what it's all about!

What are you working on at the moment and what do you aspire to do next?

What is in the works now for 2020 is a Video Series Course (7 videos) that accompany the book and follow the contents: products and applications, with new practice projects and more in depth information than can be printed in one 150 page workbook. Video One and Two in the series are already available and Video Three was released in March. The videos in the series are being released in 6-8 week intervals.

Chris reaches for the stars

Guild member Chris Scherer has been working on this colourful birdbath during the Coronavirus shutdown, although it's not quite finished as Chris has been called to work full time during the crisis.

The theme she has adopted for the mystic mosaic is a combination of astrological star signs, so family and friends will have fun picking out the Libras, from the Scorpios, from the Aquarians.

This photo shows the birdbath ready for grouting, but by the time this newsletter goes to press, it should be all grouted, filled with water, and looking good in Chris's garden.

No self-respecting bird could resist a bath in this mosaic masterpiece!

