

Glass Addiction Marble Collaborative

by Brad Daphne

Over a special leap-day weekend earlier this year, the Revere Glass Studio and Workshop in Berkeley, California, hosted a marble collaborative by members of Glass Addiction, an online forum for contemporary glass art. A total of eleven members contributed murrine chips to spell out the phrase, "Glass Addiction," which was then fused together into a larger murrina by marble expert, Kaj Beck.

The project proved to be quite labor intensive. Working with fellow lampworkers Ken Schneiderreit, JD Anderson and Mike Close, it took Kaj nearly eight hours just to assemble the word *glass*. He spent most of the day using the ever-impressive GTT Viper. Watching him behind the torch was like seeing a kid in a candy shop. It was an exuberance shared by all of the collaborators at Revere Glass that weekend.

This notion of coming together to share a collective artistic experience through individual efforts was one that inspired the participants. The artists clearly thrived from the well-furnished studio space at their disposal. But aside from the cutting-edge torches and endless tools and supplies, Revere Glass was offering an environment where inquisitive lampworkers of all skill levels looked on to encourage and to learn from what was truly a communal endeavor. It was refreshing to see such openness and geniality in the usually all-too-competitive atmosphere that is modern glass art.

"That's usually the way things work around here," pointed out Dustin Revere, founder and owner of Revere Glass, which he runs with his wife and a small crew of dedicated lampworkers. "We are always encouraging an environment where people can feel good about what they are doing."

The Revere Glass spirit is one that shares its roots with the collaborative nature of the Glass Addiction marble community. Collectors and marble makers share ideas and stories from the artistic community of which we are all members. While not everyone is a member of the Glass Addiction forum, it is clear that this particular marble represented anyone who believes in the cooperative nature of the artistic pursuit. Ideas came together in a virtual world and were then translated into artistic reality.

The vision was realized late on Saturday night when the last pieces of the murrina were brought into a finished marble. When all the torches were turned off and this unique collaboration had concluded, there was a palpable sense of appreciation among the artists for what they had just experienced. Mike Close described it best: "It really is an honor and a treat to be here to see this happen. The project has been pretty awesome and, more importantly, the people are awesome as well!"

