



Vittorio Constantini's Class at Pilchuck

by Daisuke Saito

Pilchuck Glass School suddenly revealed itself from its beautiful surroundings full of nature. At Pilchuck, artists coexist with glass in a natural environment. Every year genuine artists from all over the world come to Pilchuck to blend together with the magnificent environment to learn and produce glasswork.

I was fortunate to be awarded a scholarship by the Nijjima International Glass Art Festival to study at Pilchuck for three months. What surprised me most at Pilchuck was its diversity of natural environment—tall trees surrounding the school, a range of flowers with vibrant colors, and wild animals. This was totally different from what I can see in Tokyo, the city where I grew up. I was very grateful to be given such an opportunity to work in an ideal environment, especially because it was something that I cannot experience in Tokyo. Another fortunate thing was that I was allocated to Vittorio Constantini's class. Vittorio is one of the glass artists whom I respect, and he is known to be a maestro in the world of glass. His work was surprisingly quick and accurate. It was as if he were playing a musical instrument. His works had reality and dynamism within their elegance. "Perfect" was the only adjective I could think of to describe his professionalism. Not only were his skills and his works perfect, but his classes were also always filled with coziness thanks to Vittorio's very tender nature.

Classes always started at 8:45 a.m., kicking off with demonstrations, and went on until approximately 10 p.m., with a couple of meal breaks in between. I always respected Vittorio's passion toward glasswork, and he never ceased to challenge his boundaries. Indeed, during our courses together with Hot Shop, he impressively made two fine and dynamic pieces that were deserved to be called masterpieces. I usually work with borosilicate glass, so such works using Moretti glass challenged me to take my first step toward this new field.

My stay at Pilchuck was very fruitful for me, as I was always challenged to try something new. I am very grateful to Vittorio and my wonderful classmates for providing such a stimulating learning environment. The positive attitude of Vittorio toward glasswork taught me the joy of creation. I can say with confidence that my experience at Pilchuck was a life-changing one.

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