



Louisville ISGB Gathering

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Photographed by Greg Fuchs & Doni Hatz

The 13th annual International Society of Glass Beadmaking (ISGB) Gathering in Louisville, KY was a bead filled experience enjoyed by 560 attendees from around the world and an appreciative bead buying public from the area. There are too many spectacular events at each Gathering to begin to describe just the highlights, but you can tell by these photographs that demonstrations and workshops by master bead makers and educators are a pivotal part of each conference.

This year our international guest presenter was Lucio Bubacco from Murano, Italy. Not only did Lucio lead an informative demonstration for several hundred viewers, he participated in Friday's much loved 'Flame Off' event and Saturday's Bead Bazaar.

The international flavor was such a success that the ISGB Board of Directors decided to sponsor an international program for subsequent Gatherings. While a new site for the 2006 conference is being researched as a result of the devastation of New Orleans, ISGB committees are also making lists of international masters to bring to future events.

Each year ISGB honors one of our own masters by presenting the Hall of Flame Award. This summer the award went to Kristina Logan, long time ISGB member and volunteer, for her efforts to raise awareness about the fine art of glass beadmaking and in nurturing the growth of ISGB. Past honorees include Craig Milliron, Jim Kervin, and Cindy Jenkins.

Not enough thanks can be given to the myriad of volunteers who are so vital to the success of every Gathering.

Local beadmakers stepped forward to help in so many ways and contributed to the success of ISGB fundraising efforts. Louisville marked the highest return on both the Silent and Live Auctions and included specially made 'Derby Hats' to celebrate our stay in the home of the Kentucky Derby.

Another key volunteer who was recognized was Susan Silvy, outgoing ISGB Chairman. For her years of service on the board and the vision of ISGB growth that she sustained, Susan was presented with a bead necklace bearing beads contributed by hundreds of attendees. One can only image just how far overweight her luggage was on the airplane home! Sara Sally LaGrand, former Treasurer, took over as Board Chair on August 1.



Susan was not the only one carrying home heavy bags. Suppliers of glass, tools and support materials reported record sales in Louisville. During the four days of Vendor Sales attendees were able to get their hands on the latest innovations, colors, supplies and gadgets and went home with somewhat lighter wallets.

We've learned though, that the most important thing that happens at every Gathering is the chance for beadmakers to talk beads. So many first time conference attendees commented that they had 'found a home' and other people who 'think like me'. Camaraderie remains the biggest single reason that artists participate in ISGB events, the opportunity to exchange ideas, recipes, and of course, beads.

While the location of Gathering 14 is still undetermined at the time this issue goes to print, beadmakers and aficionados can be assured that ISGB will present another blockbuster event in 2006. In fact, difficulties with the 2005 Louisville City Fire Marshal caused a last minute change to some presentations that fortunately resulted in a

much improved product. It's this kind of innovation and dedication to presenting a quality conference that the National Conference Team, volunteers, Board and Staff of ISGB will continue to produce.

Watch for ISGB updates in the coming months as we continue to represent and promote glass beadmaking at events such as the Sculptural Objects and Functional Art Show, Chicago, the Buyer's Market of American Craft, Philadelphia and our collaborative exhibition, Trajectories, with The Bead Museum, Arizona.

For more information on the International Society of Glass Beadmakers and the art of glass beadmaking please visit www.isgb.org.

