

# broken pipes

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make good *Frogs*



Recycling... Recycle, Reuse, Reduce... Recycle... A mantra ringing through my brain kind of like the ringing in your ears from the fan and the torch, only stronger! As a lampworker I try to take recycling to a new level. Glass is expensive, color is more expensive, and I can't always afford to go buy a case of new tubing every two weeks. I seal tube ends together. I seal rod ends together. I live off the Northstar sample rod stacks and I ceremoniously collect all tiny color tips, drops, or millie snips.

Complex sculpture is another great source of constantly recycled murrinni. Often large in scope of size and quantity of prep work they... BREAK. Yes, folks, often after six hours of work... (crack) breakage of the most frustrating variety. Six hours of work just turned into six hours of weird prep work! Take the pieces and melt them back into new murrinni. I like the continuity of it. I like the idea of broken piece being reborn much like the Six Million Dollar Man TV show from the '70s, into a new and better piece of art. All granola crunching and tree hugging aside, recycling just feels good.

The thing about any job is that there are things you like and things you don't like. One thing that used to irritate me to no end was repairs!!! Now if it's my work, I will gladly repair it, no problem, no hassle, and usually no extra charge. But when it's, "Can you fix this 1935 antique glass paperweight?" What?! Or, "We have this lovely chandelier we got at Pier One Imports and one of the candle votives broke. Why do you want \$55 to replace it?" I used to hate repairs!! After years of aggravation and responsive inebriation, I've come up with this great new policy for repairs: I don't player hate, I just tax that ass! I try to charge the amount it would cost me to remake the piece from scratch, since while it's in my possession for repair I may be randomly tempted to smash it into little pieces and recycle them...

Above all, the biggest pet peeve for me as a lampworker is when someone brings me a broken pipe!!! The last thing I wanted to deal with in my studio was broken pipe pieces clogged lord knows what. In the first place, I don't make pipes; therefore I don't fix 'em. Pipemakers are everywhere! "Go find someone else," I'd say, but still they came like night of the living Deadheads, pockets stuffed with broken tubes and side cars. "Looook, my friend gave me his broken piece tooooo."

What the hell am I going to do with all these broken pipes! Throw them away? Return them? (Not possible.) When the fumes cleared, I knew what to do: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. Broken inside-out, reverse spiral ball dichroic encalmo spoon pipes all make good frog murrinni!!! A good sized chunk (resin free, of course!) cleaned, flame polished and maybe stretched a little bit is almost better than the frog murrinni I spent time on and made myself. (Let me interject here and say that this does NOT mean I want any more broken pipes, so please don't send me any.) So next time a big piece or sculpture of yours cracks, and you can't blame the U.S. Postal Service, just claim that you meant to break it all along! "I'm just making murrinni" or "This is an advanced Italian technique." Your audience will nod their heads knowingly as they think, "What's that smell?"

