

Dragon's Nest

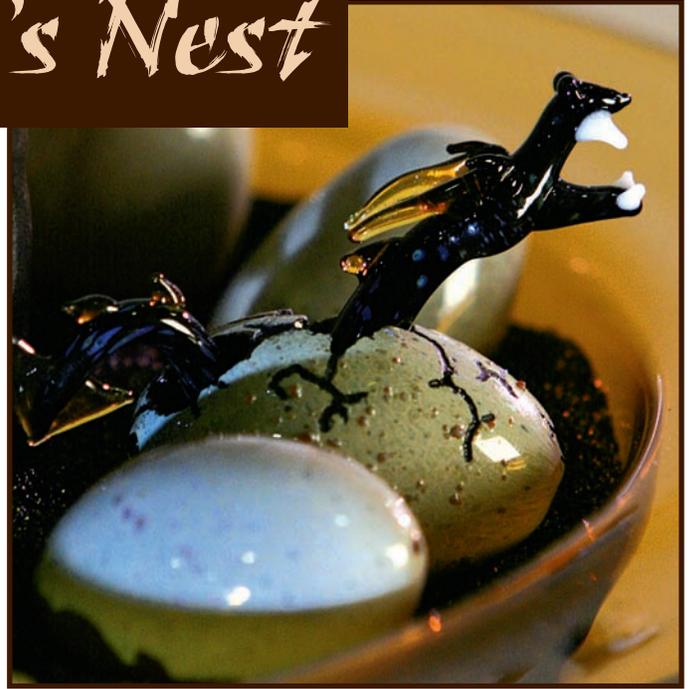
by Josh Bergesen

Being part of the IGHI was an honor for the whole team. The sheer talent that was present at the event was like no other brought together before. Team Centrifugal Force couldn't have been more humbled by sharing the stage with so many innovators in glass. The event was impressively pulled off by selfless volunteers who succeeded in creating an environment for top-notch, original glass artwork to be pushed to its limits like none before.

Preparing the Design

When the team started the design process, it was apparent that ego or creative differences would not be a factor. The team laid out on the table what each of our strengths were and how to best apply them to a design. Through e-mails and telephone calls, the design revealed itself as "Dragon's Nest."

Eric would draw upon his strengths in Venetian techniques by using *incalmos* and large flares that would be the main structure of the whole piece. David brought his talent of large, solid sculpture by designing the mama dragon to be atop the piece. Keeping with the continuity of the "Nest," Lance sculpted smaller dragons to be put into the lower flares, emerging from hatched eggs and chewing on bones. Josh drew his cold working and multimedia strengths into the piece and sandblasted lava tubes that revealed molten lava inside to act as separators for Eric's flares. At the bottom were floral anthuriums by Josh and Lance being influenced by dragon elements.



Getting together only one time at Lucid Visions Studios, the teammates pulled a marathon, working out design issues, experimenting with techniques, and harnessing the creative force that comes with collaboration. It was great for the whole team to be able to get together and not only focus on the project at hand but to build lasting friendships that go beyond the event and glass itself.

The Main Event

In Vegas, the team learned very quickly that the chips were stacked against them. The two-thirds of prep and hard work that had been premade for the show was misrouted by UPS. It would not arrive in time. This meant that the team had to redesign the piece as well as make a very heated phone call. Significant parts to the success of the design were now missing. The LEDs to light up the magma within the tubes were not coming. The two dragons attached to the lava tubes were not coming, and the raw glass that was needed was—well, you know . . . not coming. Taking the news in stride, the team met, redesigned the piece, searched the Bead Expo for raw glass, and decided to just do their best.

The setup for stations, torches, and kilns was great! Wil Menzies, Jennifer Quaid, and their crew were top notch, and Team Centrifugal Force can't speak more highly of their achievement. If they didn't have an answer for you or if you were having any issues at all, they handled it beautifully. All of the volunteers on the floor were glass artists, and they did a selfless job helping out the competitors. All of the teams also had a "pit crew," and it was a great relief to know that someone had your back the whole time.

The performance of the team Friday night was superlative, and all of the challenges that presented themselves were handled with professionalism and cool heads. The pieces needed were made within the time frame and came out great. Our family and friends in the stands supported us and our fellow contestants along the way. The event really opened their eyes to this great family of glass artisans.

Because of the UPS snafu the team's work was unfinished. The piece was designed with multimedia and cold worked elements, and Saturday was spent by the team away from the calling of Vegas sins and working throughout the day. The team had much support, sending Josh's father to pick up items needed to achieve the original design. All in all, the UPS snafu taught the team the importance of camaraderie and rolling with the punches. It was a blessing in disguise and showed the true nature of collaboration.

The judges of the event were not envied in the least bit. The quality and magnitude of the entries left most viewers speechless in a flurry of camera flashes. Our team felt that every piece showed a huge respect for their art and creativity, as well as respect for their fellow contestants. The work pushed boundaries of technique, thought, and ingenuity that left viewers speechless.



David Sandidge



Eric Goldschmidt



Lance Sanford



Josh Bergesen

All in all, Team Centrifugal Force had the experience of a lifetime. We're honored to be part of the glass family. The loving and egoless participants who make it up are above par in their art and, even more importantly, in their persona. David, Eric, Josh, and Lance look forward to participating in more events such as IGHI that bring us all together.

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