



Doni Hatz

photography by Mark Cheadle

A native to Portland, Oregon, my career, which spans two decades, took flight in 1980 while attending Clark College in Vancouver, Washington. In my second year a class in glassblowing would change my life. I was captured by the weightless liquid feel of the glass at the end of the blowpipe being transformed into something functional.

The instructor, Warren Dunn told us about a school in New Jersey offering scientific glassblowing. Looking over a Fisher Scientific catalogue which was thick as a phone book, it showed laboratory glassware: condensers, coils, round bottom flask, distillation columns just like what you see in science class. He said, "You can make a living blowing glass". Seven months later, I was living in New Jersey. I was about to turn 22 when I arrived at Carney's Point with 12 other glassblower wannabees from as many different states. Joe Luisi, a retired scientific glassblower from Ace Glass Incorporated, made it look easy in his daily demonstrations. I discovered the dichotomy of fun and frustration while practicing

blowing six hours a day. We strictly worked at the bench making strange looking things incorporating round bottoms, constrictions, knobs, hooks, tapers, side seals, bends, bulbs and ring seals. I received a grant for the second year of the program and began projects on the lathe. This was no small piece of machinery, and although intimidating at first, I loved the challenge. I waited tables during the summer and a chance meeting with a patron put me in touch with A.A. Pesce Company, and a month later I was making the commute to Kennett Square, Pennsylvania for my first paying glass job.

During spring break there was a job opening at Union Carbide Corporation headquarters for research and development in New York. In a preliminary interview they tested my skills that week. The shop was small with three glassblowers but the facility was in a beautiful area 30 miles north of New York City. A month later they offered me the job at \$10 per hour, twice what I was making at A.A. Pesce. But I had to convince David, my future husband it was worth leaving his hometown. It was hard to break into R&D positions and I didn't want to pass up this opportunity.

At last I was in a real job, being paid to blow glass! The shop was a glassblowers dream with every piece of equipment needed to handle the diverse amount of work—lathes, ovens, belt sanders, lapping wheels, a diamond saw, carborundum saw and jigs for specific set-ups. The work encompassed unusual projects compared to what I saw at school and A.A. Pesce. We made glass-to-metal seals with tungsten, copper and kovar; plated glass tubes with copper



and platinum; worked quartz and alumina; calibrated bulbs with mercury; oil diffusion pumps; fused ground joints on 10 and 22 liter round bottom flasks and more.

I joined the American Scientific Glassblowers Society (ASGS) to advance my training attending the annual conference. The local ASGS Metropolitan New York section met in the Bronx at Erhings Tavern five times a year. It was a small group of colorful characters that involved me immediately electing me as secretary. Through networking at the NY meetings I found a higher paying job at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. Looking forward to living near the beaches, David and I left Peekskill behind and moved to Long Island in 1988.

Rudy Schott, the head glassblower, taught me the old German style of glassblowing. Right away he challenged me to make two liquid nitrogen dewars that were 43 inches long, 6 inches wide and strip silvered. I also learned to seal in frits (glass filters), make flanges, grind and polish glass for optical windows and seal off samples under vacuum. Together we supported 33 professors and 150 graduate students in chemistry. People came to the glass shop to shop. If it wasn't on the shelf they placed an order to have it fabricated.

David and I got married in 1989 and I continued to attend the ASGS conferences. As I got to know other glassblowers I heard about an opening at the Procter & Gamble Company in Cincinnati, Ohio. I got the job and we moved to Cincinnati in 1992 where I started working in research and development again. There was a large demand for customized glassware with the P&G product base growing from 100 to 300 brands.

Once in Cincinnati, I went to the Ohio Valley ASGS section meetings and almost immediately elected regional director. At the board meeting in San Diego, California, I was the only woman among seventeen men. Historically women sparsely populate the science field but times are changing. I have encountered situations that have made me uncomfortable that remind me I am a woman.

Crossing over toamework and glass beads seemed like a natural fit for me; I had always loved beads making jewelry as a kid. It made sense to me, taking glass to its most functional form in laboratory glass. Some glassware has been automated but not everything. It amazes me when people think some pieces are made by machines when there is no way a machine could fabricate it.

While living in Ohio I attended my first conference in the artistic world - the Society of Glass Bead makers in San Francisco, California in July 1994. I had been working with moretti soft glass for a year and I wanted to know how the pros do it. I was convinced to start teaching at a

local bead shop in Cincinnati, and ten years later soft glass bead making is very popular.

My first Glass Art Society conference was in Asheville, North Carolina in 1995 rooming with my friend Sally Prasch. The flame work demos were an hour away at Penland School of Arts and Crafts. I heard it was new for GAS to include additional flame work demos along with the main theme of off-hand glassblowing. Seeing all the awesome talent energy filled the air with dueling demos in practically every studio. I learned so much from the lectures, demos and gallery exhibitions my head was swimming.

My artwork took shape after a class from Robert Mickelsen in 1997 incorporating spirals and montage techniques. I finally had something different complementing the hollow jacketed ovals and floral collage beads giving me a signature style. The scientific skills enhanced my artwork and artwork techniques complemented the scientific.

I started to enter shows: Bed & Button's Embellishment, Ayla's Original in Chicago, Urban Glass in NY, Great Lake bead works Guild in Detroit. The competition was tough in soft glass and I finally realized that I can blow glass and should make hollow beads and sculpture in borosilicate. In Detroit I met Don Miller, a professor who had started glass workshops at the University of Michigan at Dearborn. He encouraged me to teach borosilicate for the first time the next summer. The two-day workshop had 18 students enrolled; I knew that was going to be challenging and invited Tim Drier, a friend from college to assist. We learned a great deal as instructors, my main torch is a Carlisle CC blast burner but in this chemistry lab they had minors, nationals, GTT lynx and Bethlehem burners that all act differently.



Invitations to teach at The Studio in Corning, Salem Community College and numerous other studios kept me busy in my spare time. I demonstrated for the SGB & GAS, slowly getting used to being in front of large gatherings. I was lucky to be published in the new glass review #20 upon my first submission, then in several other books there after.

All the while I was active within the ASGS as a regional director for the Ohio Valley Section and a couple of committees. I learned about every facet of the organization where everything builds to up the annual symposium. I continued to present technical posters at the national conferences and received some awards for my presentations and articles published. In 1999, my fellow glassblowers elected me for president of the ASGS in 2000. For two years I traveled to section meetings throughout the country visiting large businesses and University glass shops keeping the stream of communication alive while working full-time.

I had to cut back on the artistic realm to focus on these responsibilities, but only temporarily. My passion to continue the advancement of educational development within the ASGS, SGB and GAS is important to me. I hope someone can learn from my techniques and pass them on.

Today is just another day at work making laboratory glass as I continue to balance the day job and my passion for glass art. I will always be frustrated with not having enough time to do them both full-time. There is no reason for me to jump the safety net of the day job, I'm being paid to blow glass but who knows- I might retire early. There is so much more to do, more ideas waiting in my head to be transformed into glass. That is why Flow has been so great pulling artists into their magazine showing me new techniques. Finally there is another venue for frameworkeers to share our ideas.

