

Figurine Ornaments

Text and Demonstration by Tara Murray

Photography by Tory Fink

In the Summer 2009 issue of *The Flow*, you'll find the tutorial for how to create the figurine that is the basis for this project. I also wanted to share more complete techniques for making the ornamental rose, hoop, and twist that I used as elements for completing the figurine. You'll find the tutorial for those elements here.

I came up with these figurines to practice sculpting the female figure. The design is a classical torso with no head or arms. My torch is a GTT Phantom, which gives me a pinpoint flame for working in miniature. When sculpting, I use minimal, economical shaping and don't fuss with the figurine's details. If the figure isn't working, I discard it and start again. It's better to make many of them quickly than to spend a lot of time overworking one figurine.

You will want to reheat the figure to a glow in between each step. Keep some photos or drawings of nude women near your bench for reference or find a lady friend to hang around naked in your studio.



Glass

6 mm Clear Borosilicate Rods (3)

Northstar Glassworks

Forest Green

Jet Black

Cherry

For pastel roses, Origin Boro Stix come in beautiful Pinks, Yellows, Oranges, Blues, and an easy-working White

Tools and Materials

X-Acto® Knife Tungsten Pick

Brass Stump Shaper (optional)

Flat-Veined Leaf Masher Angled Veined Leaf Masher

Paddle or Dinah Masher Jim Moore Trim Shears

1



Heat half a rod of Jet Black in a soft flame until it is glowing red and begins to bend.

2



Puncture with a cold seal and bend gently into a horseshoe.

3



Bend into a complete circle, fuse onto the remaining Jet rod, and garage in the kiln.

4



Heat a gather of Cherry red, pressing lightly with the masher to upset the rod and make the gather more squat.

5



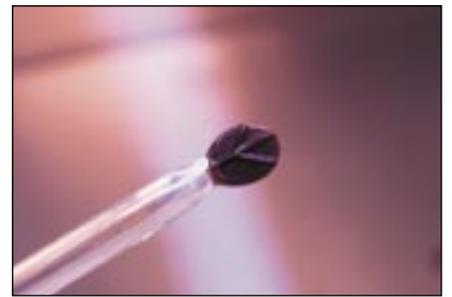
Flatten with the masher and pull off.

6



Make petals in various sizes, creating more petals than you think you'll need.

7



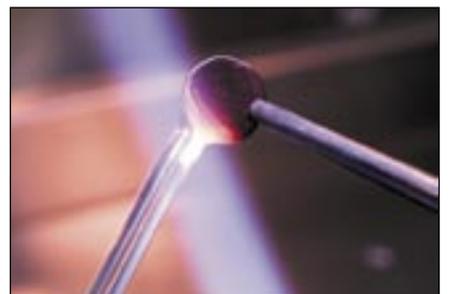
Fuse the tiniest petal to the end of a 6 mm punty.

8



Heat the petal and fold it in half.

9



Attach progressively larger petals, vein side in, by heating the base of the petal and sealing to the punty.

10



Immediately crimp at the base of the petal.

11



With each successive petal addition, crimp all the way around the base of the rose. This seals the petals and creates the shape of the rose base. Reheat the rose after adding each petal.

12



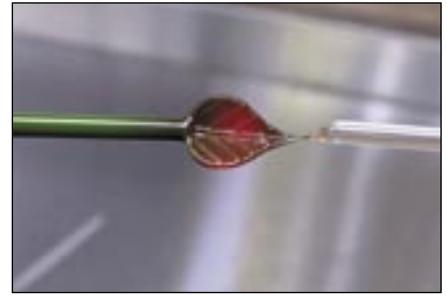
Shape the petals by pulling and nudging with tweezers and use shears to make tiny snips in the outer petals. Heat the cuts gently to create the look of a torn petal. Reheat the rose and garage it in the kiln.

13



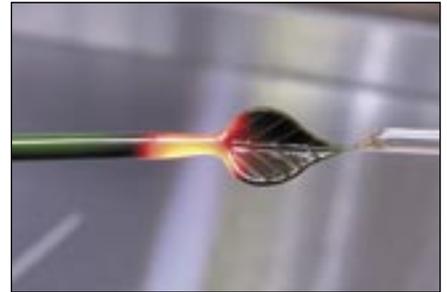
Heat the green rod and smash the drop with the angled, veined masher.

14



Attach a punty to the tip of the leaf, heat the leaf, and pull it into the desired shape.

15



Remove the leaf from the green rod. Repeat until you have several leaves.

16

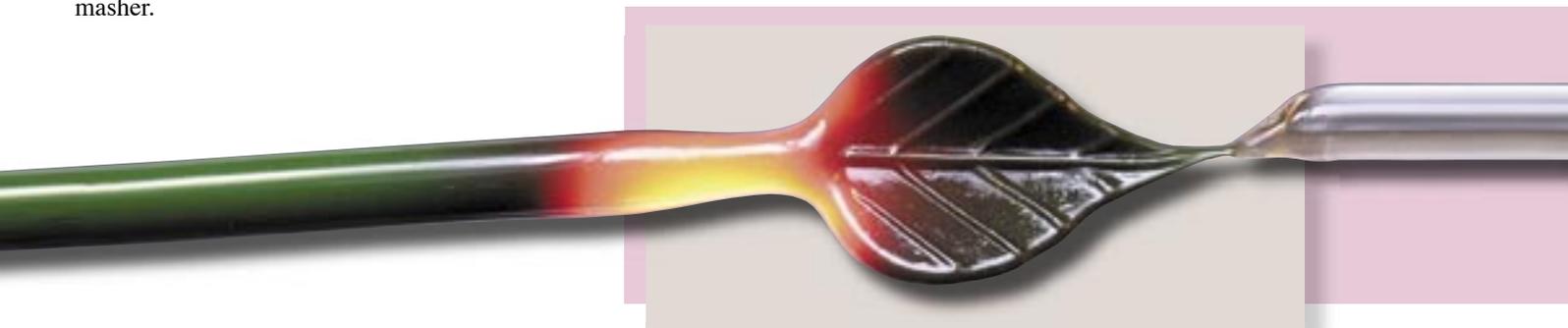


Remove the rose from the kiln, cold-seal a punty to a petal, and remove material from the base of the rose. Add a drop of clear.

17



Fuse the leaves, vein side in, to the clear drop at the base of the rose.





18



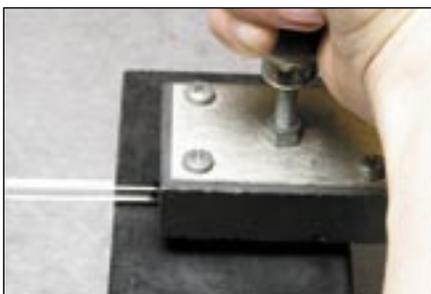
Adjust the leaves as desired. Reheat and garage in the kiln.

19



Heat a gather of Jet Black into an egg shape.

20



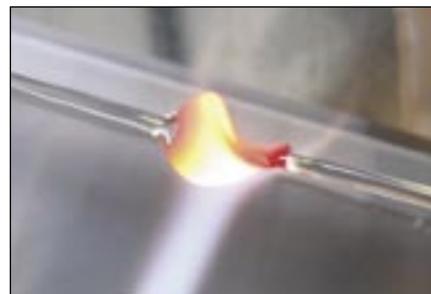
Smash flat into an oval paddle.

21



Fire-polish both sides of the paddle.

22



In a soft, gentle flame about six inches from the candle, gently heat and twist the paddle. As you twist, move the piece to the left, heating the right-hand side to taper the twist.

23

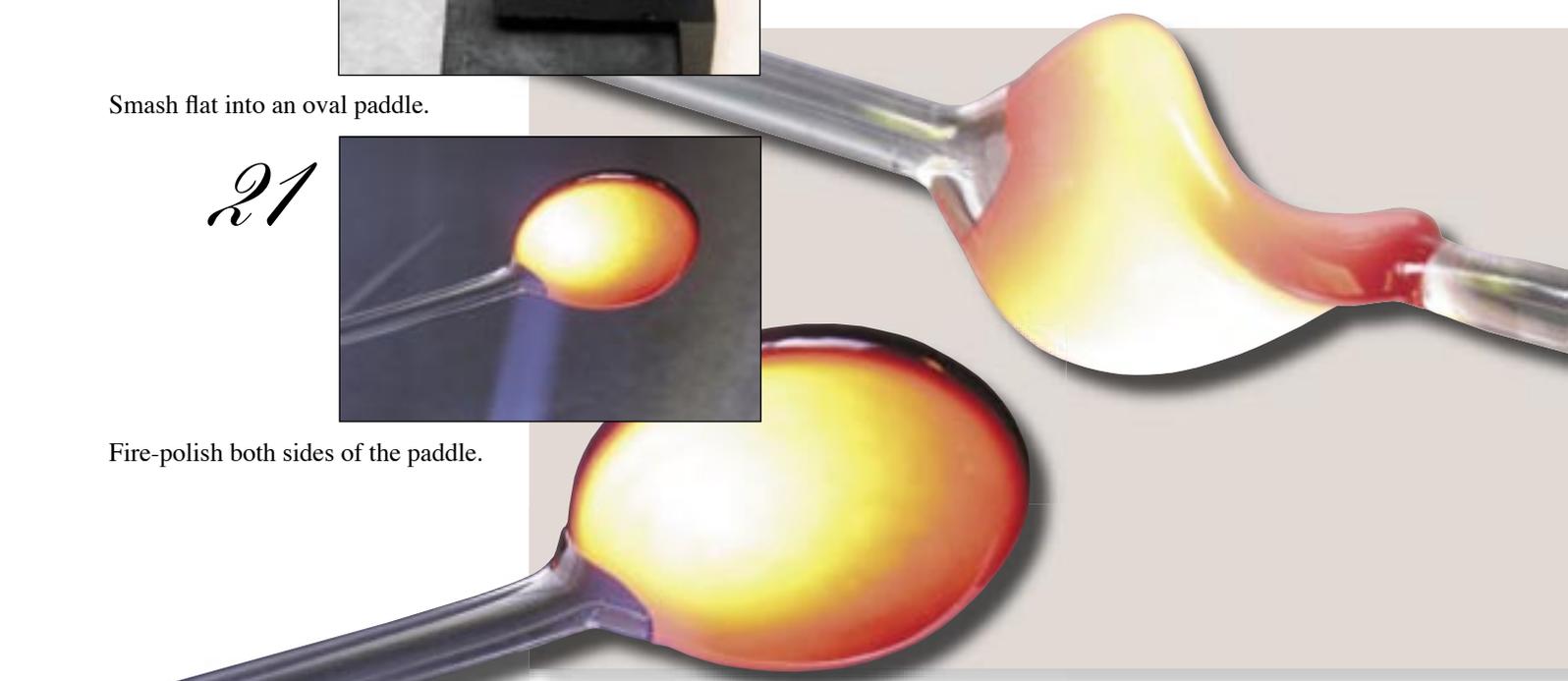


Remove the punty from the top of the twist. Garage in the kiln.

24



Add three clear nubs to the bottom of the hoop as "glue" for the attachments.



25



Fuse the figurine to the top nub and fuse the rose to the front center nub.

26



Fuse the twist to the bottom nub.

27



Heat the Jet Black gently and form the loop.

28



Straighten the loop. Done!

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You'll find the complete tutorial for creating the figurine plus loads of other great projects in the Summer 2009 issue of The Flow.



Born and raised in San Francisco, Tara Murray now lives and works in the artist-rich community of Oakland, California. She first learned glass flameworking from Jay Bridgland at the Crucible, a nonprofit industrial arts school in West Oakland. Tara became Jay's apprentice, jumped into the art world with both feet, and never looked back.

Tara is now teaching in the adult and youth glass flameworking programs at the Crucible. Being part of their supportive, creative environment, surrounded by other artists and craftspeople, has helped her to maintain the confidence required to survive as a working artist. One of Tara's favorite quotes about making art is from Scott Adams: "Creativity is allowing yourself to make mistakes. Art is knowing which ones to keep."