

Cane Flower

Text and Demonstration by Debbie Tarsitano

Vetrfond

791228 Sky Blue Opaque

Effetre

591204 White Pastel Opaque

591060 Blue Cobalt Transparent

Schott

S8 Optical Clear (for clear rod)

Use your own canes and always make sure you are consistent with compatible color and clear.

Tools and Materials

Nortel Minor Torch

Little Torch Hand Torch #5 tip

10 Pounds Oxygen and 5 Pounds Propane (for each torch)

Parallel Masher Tweezers Small Steel Paddle

Cane Cutter Electric Hot Plate 1/4"-Thick Stainless Steel Plate

Optional Stainless Steel Plate with Holes for Stamens

I began flameworking in 1976 when many designs and flameworking techniques were steeped in ideas from the past. It was common to see canes, flowers, and latticino used in traditional forms. The flameworking designs of the 1970s strayed very little from antique motifs, and canes were used primarily as fascinating decorative elements.

In 2000 I began experimenting using canes to express ideas. The pieces I created using canes are few and haven't been seen by many people. I developed extremely complex designs using canes as the main element to define a subject. I began to modernize an ancient technique and bring it forward.

Over many years I have developed what I call the "Tarsitano Method" of flameworking. It is a unique and contemporary approach for successful construction of your ideas in glass. My method abandons many of the old techniques that made it difficult to achieve fine results. I introduced the versatile flat rod, which is the basis of many design elements. I also use little torches and assemble my designs on a hot plate giving the artist more control over the design. I hope you enjoy the demo and that it helps you explore your own ideas using canes and flamework.



1
Create an overlay rod, striping the white rod with opaque blue.

Stripe and heat the rod 1" from top down.



2
Stripe the light blue all around the central white rod, then heat and mash the stripped rod flat.



3
Stripe the transparent cobalt blue over the opaque blue all around.

Heat and mash the two colors together.



4
Heat the flat rod, heating and shaping it to make the sides of the rod square.

5
Here is the overlay rod.



6
Add more transparent blue to the front and sides of the rod so it does not thin when pulled.

7

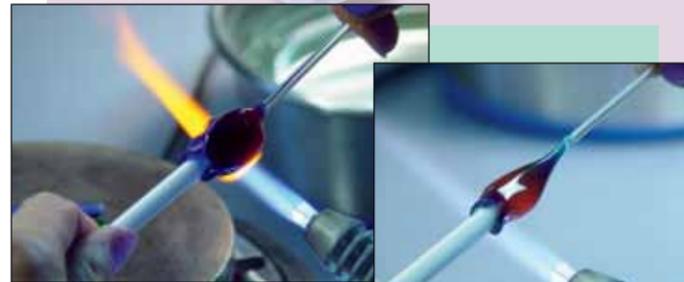


Apply clear S8 to the sides and back of the rod.

8



Stripe a single line of bright color to the back of the rod to tell where the clear is.



10

Attach the clear rod to pull, then heat and pull the rod..



The width of rod depends on how large you want the petal.

11



Heat and pull the tip of rod.

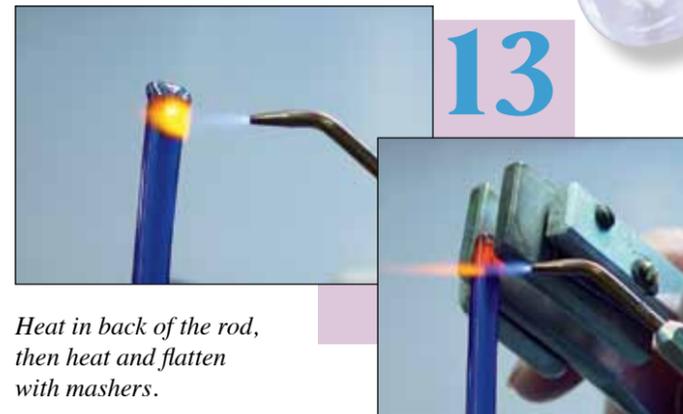
Notice the size of flame used on the little torch.

12

Using tweezers, bend back the top of rod.



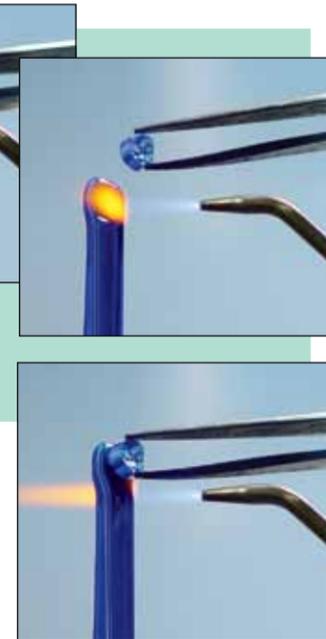
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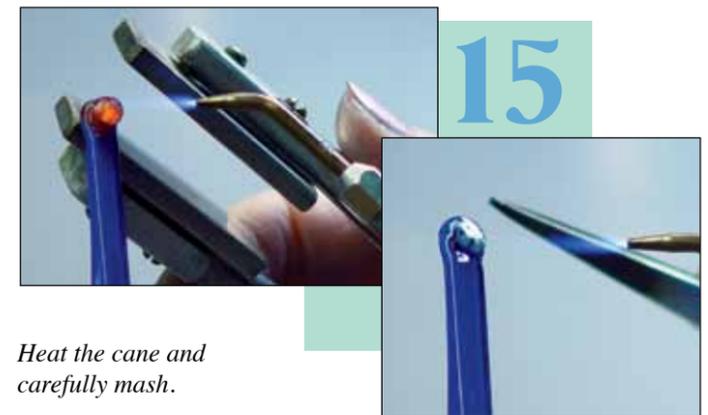
Heat in back of the rod, then heat and flatten with mashers.

14

Select a cane, heat the petal in preparation for applying it to the cane, and stick the cane to the petal rod.

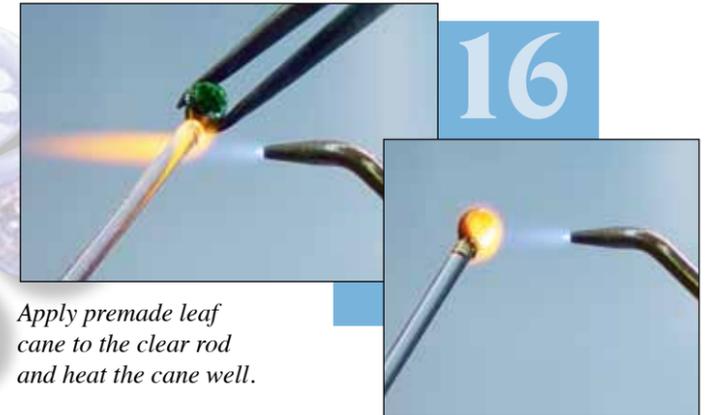


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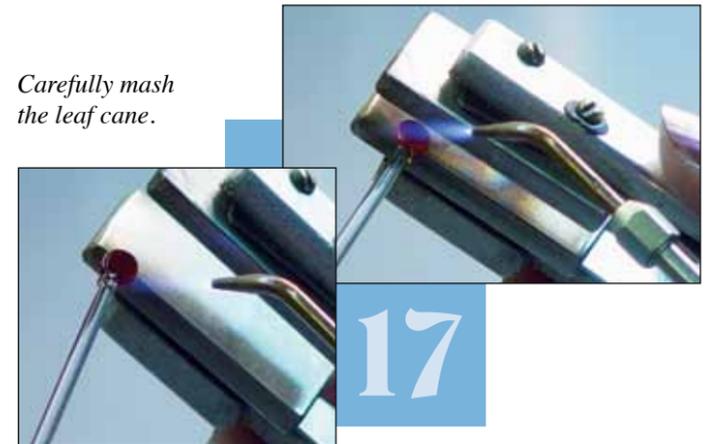
Heat the cane and carefully mash.

16



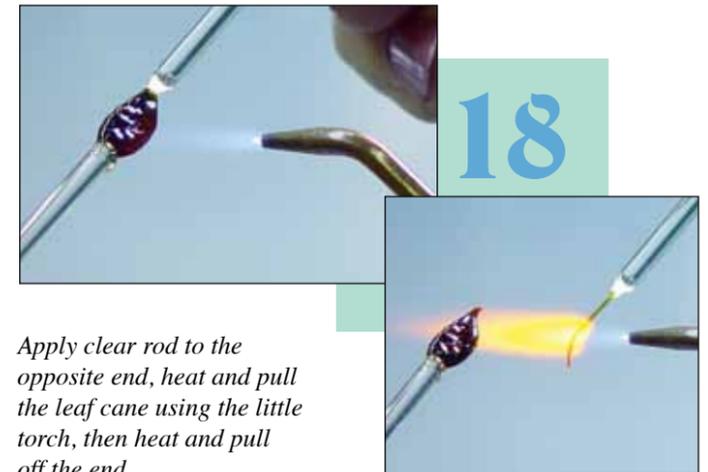
Apply premade leaf cane to the clear rod and heat the cane well.

17



Carefully mash the leaf cane.

18



Apply clear rod to the opposite end, heat and pull the leaf cane using the little torch, then heat and pull off the end.



Pull the color toward that back of the cane to shape the back and pinch the top of the cane to prepare for pulling.



Attach the leaf canes to the back of the flower and heat the entire back of the flower.

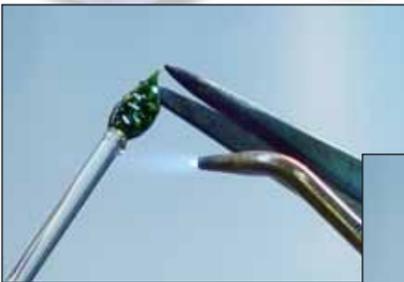
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Detach the clear rod from the top of the cane and heat the top.



28

Heat the top of the flower to burn off chill marks or debris and you're done.



19

Heat the clear and the base of the leaf and pull to a point.



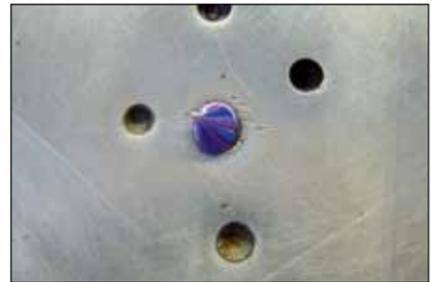
21

Detach the clear rod, leaving some clear on top of the stamen cane.



25

As an optional method, use a steel plate with holes when attaching the petals to the stamen.



20

Attach stamen cane to the clear rod, heat the top of the cane, and add clear to the top of the cane.



22

Heat the clear at the top of the cane and flatten to expand the stamen cane.



23

Reattach clear rod to the top of the stamen cane and, using the little torch, pull back of stamen cane to a point.



26

Attach the petals upside down to the stamen one at a time on a heated hot plate.



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Debbie Tarsitano's studio is a collage of ideas in progress or waiting to happen. There you will see a table with an oil painting, a sketch pad with an unfinished drawing, frameworked elements, and an assortment of experimental designs. Around the studio there are cubbies of found objects for later study and scraps of paper taped to the walls with notes for new work, all waiting for her designs, which are like puzzles that fit together over time.



Debbie's work is always evolving, one inspiration leading to another. Early on, her designs focused on peaceful, idyllic themes that addressed a sentimental side of life. Today her work is changing to include portraits and pâte de verre sculpture. Her latest themes are based on the universal desire for hope and solace. Debbie is fascinated by the possibilities of mixed media and creates new visions, ignoring the boundaries set for glass in the past.