

Flame worked Wedding Cake Toppers

Elegant Addition to the Market

(ITHACA, NY)—One thing Margaret Neher knows is flame-worked glass. In fact, she's so well known for it that Carol Duvall's top-rated HGTV television show featured Neher's work early last year. (NOTE: The show re-ran on January 20, 2006.)

"I was asked to make a special cake ornament for the wedding of a friend's daughter. I did some research, and discovered that no one was making intricate glass floral bouquets for cakes. I decided to develop a collection of designs, keepsakes which will truly be treasured as heirlooms beyond the wedding," states Neher.

Neher has always been fascinated with the art found in nature and devotes her talent to capturing nature's beauty. Drawn to lampwork in 1991, Neher soon devoted herself exclusively to this centuries old tradition in which glass rods and tubing are melted over a 3000-degree flame, and then hand worked into detailed sculptural forms. No molds are used, and no two pieces are identical. Neher has been a finalist six times (2001-2006) for the NICHE award and won the award in 2004.

Her intricate floral designs take time to make since each one is technically challenging, and she works with a wide range of orchids and other flower designs. The full process takes several days to complete. The handcrafted artistry makes a special gift and the perfect touch for the wedding cake. Each bouquet will be signed and numbered, and include a certificate of authenticity that records the names of the couple and the date of their wedding.

Wedding cake ornaments aren't Neher's only creations. Neher's work is shown in many prominent shops and galleries, and is owned by collectors throughout the world. She makes her home in Ithaca, N.Y. Her website (www.margaretheher.com) contains a list of galleries that display and take orders for Neher.

Artist Statement:

I'm fascinated by the endless variety of shapes and colors found in nature, and in orchids in particular. At the same time, I find myself frustrated by their ephemeral nature; how rare and fleeting they are. I think this is why I've always been drawn to realism in my work; to the challenge of working to capture a complex, ever-changing living thing in an unchanging form. Lampworked glass is particularly suited to this. The fluidity of the process allows the piece to keep evolving; each time I reproduce a given flower it becomes more realistic as my understanding of it grows more fully. Through repetition certain parts of the form become comfortable and familiar, allowing me to see something new, some part more accurately with each rendition. Each piece, then, is more than a copy; it represents a moment in my "relationship" with that flower.



Margaret Neher's famous flame-worked orchids adorn wedding cakes.