

R|A|M

Dynamic Duos: Collaborative Glass Artists from RAM's Collection

October 12, 2022 – February 11, 2023

Historically, certain traditions of art history have tended to most value artworks made by a single person. What does it mean when a finished work is comprised of the talents of more than one artist? Even a popular artist such as Rembrandt van Rijn has works attributed to a “studio”—a designation that means, in essence, that Rembrandt was not solely responsible for the final piece. Comprised of pieces from RAM's collection, this exhibition investigates artistic practices and the particular challenges and rewards of working collaboratively while raising questions about how such working processes break down assumptions about historical models that privilege a single artist. The exhibition significantly celebrates the innovation and perseverance of artists who were making a name for a material that was sometimes marginalized and treated as less significant in the scope of contemporary art.

The artist teams whose works are featured—Benjamin Edols and Kathy Elliott, Margie Jervis and Susie Krasnican, and Joey Kirkpatrick and Flora Mace—have each had significant careers in contemporary glass. While they are not the only artistic duos working in the field that RAM collects, they stand out as they are represented by multiple works.

While delighted to highlight artwork incorporating glass at any time, RAM is incredibly proud to do so in 2022, which has been designated the International Year of Glass by the United Nations to celebrate the heritage and importance of the material in all facets of life.

On Collaboration

While creative collaborators are not uncommon, they are, arguably, not what most people think of when they think of an artist or artists. Is that because a collaboration somehow challenges the modern idea of an artistic genius—with its emphasis on solitary production? With these inquiries that have answers rooted in more of a social consciousness than a personal one, it seems more fruitful to pose questions to be considered rather than try to offer answers.

With collaborative work, it is interesting to reflect how labor is divided. How is a piece planned, designed, and executed? Is it a step-by-step process or more organic? If collaborators are romantic partners, how does this impact what they produce? If collaborators do not live in the same area, how do they physically manage to work on a piece? How is authorship defined for things (artworks, consumer products, etc.) that have multiple people contributing?

Unsurprisingly, the artists whose works are included in *Dynamic Duos*, each have their own approach to creating work as noted on the pages that follow.

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Biographies and statements from featured artists

Benjamin Edols and Kathy Elliott

Edols: b. Sydney, Australia, 1967 –

Elliott: b. Sydney, Australia, 1964 –

We work with glass for many reasons. For Ben it is a strong attraction to the process of working in the Venetian style of glassblowing. I am inspired by what is possible in terms of carving and decorating the forms and working with the light to generate a breathtaking effect.

—Kathy Elliott

Education

Edols: BA Sydney College of Arts, Australia

1992 Postgraduate diploma Canberra School of Art, Australia

Elliott: 1992 BA Canberra School of Art, Australia

Select Solo Exhibitions

(Edols and Elliott have participated in numerous group exhibitions)

2016 Sabbia Gallery, Sydney, Australia

2012 Beaver Galleries, Canberra, Australia

2008 Masterworks Gallery, Newton, Australia

Select Public Collections

Museum of Art and Design, New York

Racine Art Museum, Wisconsin

Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England

This married artistic duo—Benjamin Edols and Kathy Elliott—have been working together since 1993 when they had their first exhibition of collaborative work at the de Vera in San Francisco, California. When they make their works, Edols blows their glass creations while Elliott focuses on her cutting and grinding techniques. Throughout their career they have received many honors and awards, including three Australian council grants and a 1993 Fellowship at the Creative Glass Centre of America, Bloomington, Indiana. Today, the duo lives and works in the Northern beaches of Sydney, Australia.

<https://edollselliott.com/bio.html>

https://youtube.com/watch?v=_VvTNJc8MVg

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Margie Jervis and Susie Krasnican

Jervis: b. Washington, D.C. 1956–

Krasnican: b. Alliance, Ohio 1954–

We have been working together since the fall of 1977. There are no divisions of responsibilities or skills; we share equally all aspects of making our work.

— Margie Jervis and Susie Krasnican

Education

Jervis: 1978 BFA Rhode Island School of Design, Providence

Krasnican: 1978 BFA Cleveland Institute of Art, Ohio

Select Public Collections

Corning Museum of Glass, New York

Racine Art Museum, Wisconsin

Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio

In 1977, Margie Jervis and Susie Krasnican met at the Pilchuck Glass School in Washington. For the next seven years, the two collaborated to create a multitude of glass sculptures. After their partnership ended, Krasnican maintained their shared studio and pursued a solo career in glass art, focusing on self-identity and women's role in society. Meanwhile, Jervis went on to study drafting for design and technical theater. Today, she is the scenic director at Creative Cauldron—a not-for-profit organization for performance and visual art—in Falls Church, Virginia.

<https://americanart.si.edu/artist/margie-jervis-5815>

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Joey Kirkpatrick and Flora Mace

Kirkpatrick: b. Des Moines, Iowa 1952–

Mace: b. Hampton, New Hampshire 1949–

Among the few glass artists who co-sign their work, Joey Kirkpatrick and Flora Mace play to their individual strengths. Kirkpatrick conceptualizes ideas and assists Mace who translates the two-dimensional concepts into three-dimensional forms.

Education

Kirkpatrick: 1979 Pilchuck Glass School, Washington

1978–79 Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa (graduate work in glass)

1975 BFA University of Iowa, Iowa City

Mace: 1976 MFA University of Illinois, Champaign

1975 University of Utah, Salt Lake City (graduate work in glass)

1972 BS Plymouth State College, New Hampshire

Select Solo Exhibitions

(Kirkpatrick and Mace have participated in numerous group exhibitions)

2017 Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia

2015–16 Museum of Glass, Tacoma, Washington

2015 Museum of Northwest Art, La Conner, Washington

Select Public Collections

Corning Museum of Glass, New York

The Detroit Institute of Art, Michigan

Racine Art Museum, Wisconsin

Artists Joey Kirkpatrick and Flora Mace have been working together since 1979 when they met at Pilchuck Glass School in Washington. Since then, Kirkpatrick and Mace have created a diverse body of work that includes blown vessels with applied imagery, sculpture fabricated with wood, and pieces that combine glass with other materials. They have explored a variety of themes ranging from the metaphoric content of human relationships to nature to the appropriation of materials to support a visual idea. Kirkpatrick and Mace have each taught for over a decade at Pilchuck Glass School and were recently recognized in 2019 for their outstanding achievement in the field of contemporary glass art by the Art Alliance for Contemporary Glass.

<http://kirkpatrick-mace.com>

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=Bh6beSf3eVs>