

W&M

ARTS AND CULTURE

'A Riot of Color'

Muscarella Showcases Tiffany Works for *Art of Glass 2*

~ MELISSA V. PINARD

This year the Muscarella Museum of Art joins other premier arts organizations in the Hampton Roads, Va., region — the Chrysler Museum of Art, the Contemporary Art Center of Virginia and the Virginia Arts Festival — to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the groundbreaking *Art of Glass* exhibition.

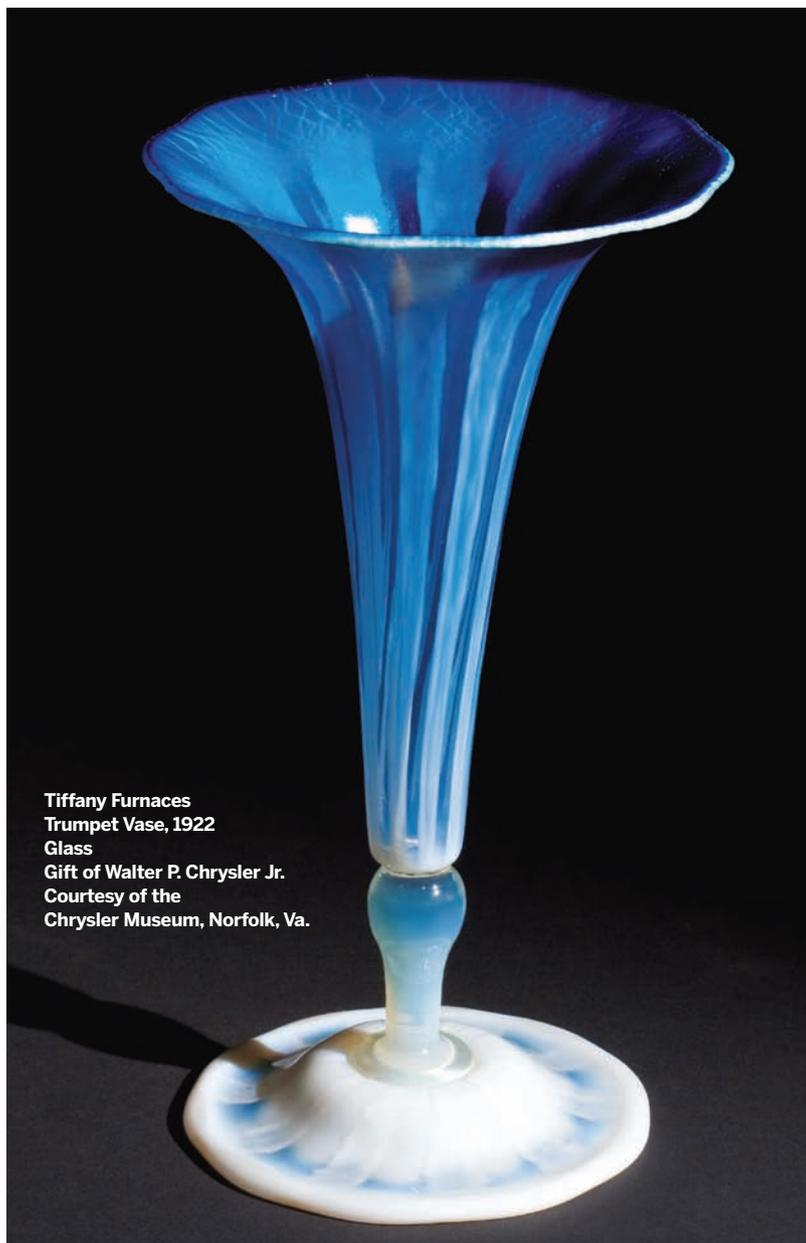
This special new exhibition, *Art of Glass 2*, features the work of some of the world's finest glass artists. While most of the participating institutions will display contemporary glass, the Muscarella will be the sole venue devoted entirely to the stunning Art Nouveau glass of Louis Comfort Tiffany from the early 20th century. *Tiffany Glass: "A Riot of Color"* runs from April 18–July 12 at the Muscarella.

In 1913, Tiffany threw an Egyptian-themed party in New York at his Madison Avenue studio. A *New York Times* journalist described the event as a feast “held in a riot of color.” Although this description refers to the elaborate costumes and entertainment, it is just as applicable to Tiffany's iridescent glass — a feast for the eyes.

The “Riot of Color” exhibition at the Muscarella showcases highlights from the career of Tiffany, whose extraordinary interior designs made him the first word in taste and sophistication in Gilded Age New York. Stained-glass windows, glass-tiled fireplaces and blown-glass light fixtures were mainstays of Tiffany interiors.

Admiring the rich textures and luminous coloration of medieval stained glass and dissatisfied with contemporary techniques, Tiffany developed an innovative, patented blown glass, called “favrite” — meaning handcrafted — characterized by shimmering colors and rich tones.

The exhibition at the Muscarella will include an array of brilliant, jewel-like glass lamps, glass tiles, blown glass and a stained-glass window that together will illustrate the styles, themes and techniques



Tiffany Furnaces
Trumpet Vase, 1922
Glass
Gift of Walter P. Chrysler Jr.
Courtesy of the
Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Va.

with which the Tiffany studios experimented during the height of the Art Nouveau period.

It just so happens that one of William and Mary's own, Gary Baker '76, is the former curator of glass at the Chrysler Museum and served as an advisor for the first *Art of Glass* in 1999. Read his story on the next page.

For more information about this exhibition or the Muscarella in general, please call 757.221.2700 or visit www.wm.edu/muscarella. For additional information on *Art of Glass 2*, visit www.artofglass2.com.

Former Curator Gary E. Baker '76 Appreciates the Art of Glass

Is glass a decorative or a fine art? The debate goes on, but it doesn't concern Gary Baker '76, former curator of glass at the Chrysler Museum of Art in Norfolk, Va. — which features, as he says, “one of the most significant glass collections in the Western Hemisphere.”

After working at the Chrysler for 25 years (1982-2007), Baker now consults as a certified appraiser and occasionally lectures on glass. He gave several talks as part of *Art of Glass 2* this past spring, including “Courthouse Galleries: ARCHWAYS: Tiffany and Other Stained Glass Windows of Olde Towne” in Portsmouth, Va.

“Years ago I thought it made sense that I look for Tiffany windows in the immediate area,” he says. “I led tours focusing on stained-glass windows in Virginia to call attention to these treasures in the hopes that they would be preserved.”

Baker served as an advisor for the first *Art of Glass* in 1999. “The overall concept was more of a brainchild of the citizens of Norfolk and people on the board of the Chrysler and the Contemporary Art Center of Virginia,” he says.

“*Art of Glass* originally was designed to create regional unity,” says Baker. “The idea was to make people more aware of the Chrysler collection and the amazing things going on with contemporary glass internationally.”

While a student at the College, Baker majored in fine arts and history. He clearly recalls the day in the mid-1970s when Walter P. Chrysler Jr. and his wife, Jean, came to

campus to judge a student art show. Jean Outland Chrysler '42 graduated from the Norfolk division of William and Mary (now Old Dominion University). Walter met her when he was stationed in Norfolk.

“I didn't meet Walter Chrysler that day, but as fate would have it, I met him when I came to the Chrysler Museum in the 1980s,” Baker says. “Chrysler had a desk in my office, where he opened his mail when he was in town.”

Chrysler had a deep admiration for the work of Louis C. Tiffany, whom he met when he was young and the collection at the museum reflects that. According to Baker, Tiffany worked a revolution in glass, raising it to the level of art. Most American glass prior to Tiffany was used for tableware. “What he did was off the charts in originality,” says Baker.

After graduating from the College, Baker began his museum career serving as the curator of a historic house museum in his hometown of Wheeling, W.Va. He went on to receive a master's in 1982 from the University of Delaware, where he was a Winterthur Fellow in Early American Culture, before joining the Chrysler as assistant curator of glass that same year.

During his tenure at the Chrysler, Baker was responsible for the addition of numerous objects to the museum's collection. His glass purchases ranged from Renaissance Venetian to major contemporary sculptures, and included significant English cameo and Tiffany glasses, and a Frank Lloyd Wright window.

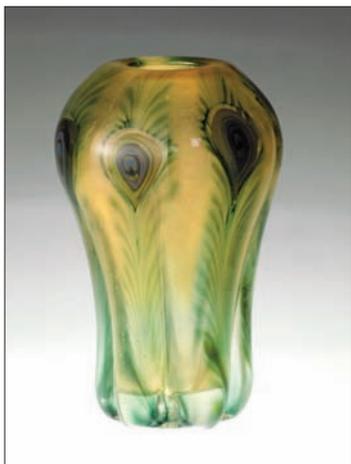


Gary E. Baker '76 is part of a William and Mary family. His father, Everett Baker '46, and sister Nila Baker '78 also attended the College.

According to Baker, glass has become an increasingly popular form of art over the past 50 years, due in part to the advent of the studio art glass movement in 1961. As far as glass artists are concerned, there are several with household name recognition. Tiffany was the star at the turn of the 20th century, and Dale Chihuly, as Baker says, is the “the rock star of the glass art world today.”

In the 1980s and '90s, Dale Chihuly recruited the great glass blower Lino Tagliapietra to execute his designs. Tagliapietra has found his own voice and is the featured artist at the Chrysler in *Art of Glass 2* — a collaborative event that Baker hopes will bring even greater public appreciation of the beauty and art of glass-making.

—Melissa V. Pinard



These three Tiffany pieces can be viewed at the Muscarelle Museum of Art until July 12.

Left: Tiffany Furnaces, Paperweight Vase, ca. 1919, Glass, Gift of Walter P. Chrysler Jr. Courtesy of the Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Va.

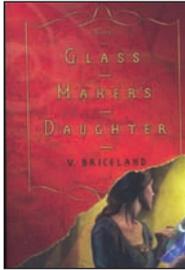
Center: Tiffany Studios, Russian Library Lamp. Courtesy of the Neustadt Collection of Tiffany Glass, New York, N.Y.

Right: Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company, Bud Vase for Peacock Feathers, ca. 1900, Glass, Gift of Walter P. Chrysler Jr. Courtesy of the Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Va.

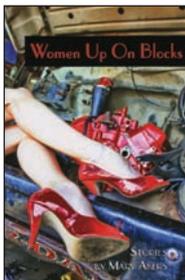
[BOOKNOTES]

FICTION

Vance Briceland '85 has written a fantasy novel for young adults titled *The Glass Maker's Daughter* (Flux, 2009). Set in the medieval city of Cassaforte, the novel tells the story of a 16-year-old girl, Risa Divetri, as she awaits the consultation of the gods to determine her future. When the choice remains undecided, Risa is forced to go on a journey that will change her life, and those of the citizens of Cassaforte, forever. Briceland is also the author of *You are SO Cursed!* (Smooch, 2004).

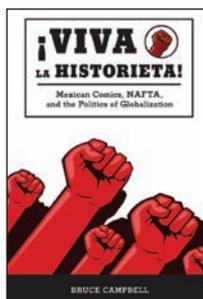


Mary Akers '87 has written a collection of short stories titled *Women Up On Blocks* (Press 53, 2009). Revolting against the established norms of female behavior, Akers' characters must come to grips with the cost of being defined by social roles: as mothers, daughters, lovers and wives. "The plight of the women in these stories speaks to me," Akers says, "about who I might have been, about the lives I might have lived but for chance, or fate, or love." Akers' work has appeared in a number of journals including the *Bellevue Literary Review*, *The Fiddlehead* and *Primavera*.



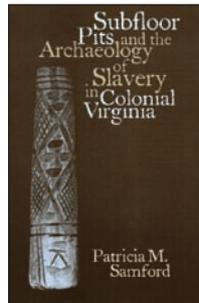
NONFICTION

Explore the history of Mexican comics in **Bruce Campbell's '87** new book *¡Viva la historieta!: Mexican Comics, NAFTA, and the Politics of Globalization* (University Press of Mississippi, 2009). In this critical examination, Campbell explores the role of Mexican comic books in relation to

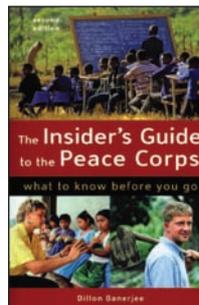


Mexico's economic globalization. Specifically, Campbell focuses on a graphic narrative made shortly after the creation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994. Featuring 20 black-and-white illustrations, *¡Viva la historieta!* is among a handful of scholarly works devoted to Mexican comics and the only one to focus on the post-NAFTA era.

Delve into colonial Virginia's history with **Patricia M. Samford's '79** *Subfloor Pits and the Archaeology of Slavery in Colonial Virginia* (The University of Alabama Press, 2009). In this historical and anthropological account, Samford explores the residences of enslaved Africans during Virginia's colonial era. Areas known as subfloor pits were often located underneath Virginia's slave quarters. Drawing on excavations of 103 such pits, Samford details their use as storage spaces and even West African-style shrines. Laurie A. Wilkie of the University of California calls it "an outstanding example of contextual archaeology."

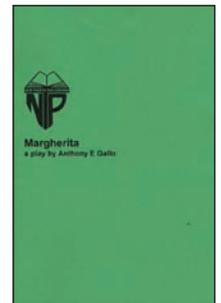


For those interested in joining the Peace Corps, **Dillon Banerjee's '90** new book *The Insider's Guide to the Peace Corps* (Ten Speed Press, 2009) may provide valuable insight. Throughout *The Insider's Guide*, Banerjee pulls from his own experience and that of hundreds of other volunteers to portray the life of a Peace Corps member. Banerjee provides answers to over 70 frequently asked questions as well as inside advice on packing, training, safety, housing and more. Appendices include a "Vegetarian Questionnaire" and "Joining the Peace Corps as a Couple."



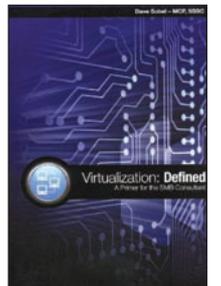
PLAYS

Playwright and economist **Anthony E. Gallo '61** has written a play titled *Margherita* (New Theatre Publications, 2009). Set against an Italian landscape, the events of the play occur over a three-day span in 1939. As a woman named Margherita prepares to leave Italy, she is suddenly accosted by a masked stranger. This stranger turns out to be none other than her former lover, the infamous Benito Mussolini. Out of their conversational discord comes reminders of what each of them remembers, and what each of them abhors. Gallo's plays have been performed in Washington and New York.



REFERENCE

In *Virtualization: Defined, A Primer for the SMB Consultant* (Evolve Technologies, 2009), **Dave Sobel '97** presents a useful resource for SMB consultants on virtualization, or the abstraction of computer resources. Throughout *Virtualization: Defined* Sobel offers pages of advice and guidance for those seeking to implement virtual technology. Among the topics discussed are the different types of virtualization, designing a virtual environment, and offering virtual solutions to customers.



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