



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Toledo Museum of Art to Celebrate 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Studio Glass Movement**

TOLEDO, OHIO— The American Studio Glass Movement that emerged from two experimental glass workshops at the Toledo Museum of Art (TMA) in 1962 has transformed the art world by making glass a popular and respected artistic medium.

The Museum will celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this historic moment with an array of activities, which include a major glass exhibition and hosting the 2012 Glass Art Society Conference.

The Museum will also be reinstalling and reinterpreting its glass collection at the Glass Pavilion® in anticipation of the upcoming anniversary.

#### **HISTORY OF THE WORKSHOPS**

The Toledo Museum of Art director in 1962, Otto Wittmann, invited Harvey Littleton, a ceramics instructor and faculty member at the University of Wisconsin, to present a workshop to explore hot-blown glassworking techniques outside the factory setting.

Littleton, whose father was a scientist at Corning Glass, had been interested in exploring the artistic properties of glass as far back as 1947. During a 1957 trip to Italy he was intrigued by small glass furnaces operated by local glassblowers, and he subsequently led a panel discussion on the possibilities in glass as an artistic medium in 1959. He agreed to lead the first glass workshop in March 1962 in what was previously a garage on the TMA grounds. Toledo proved to be the perfect location as Wittmann's support, combined with artist interest and the expertise available from the local glass industry, provided the institutional backing to jump-start the movement.

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## GLASS 50<sup>th</sup>/ADD ONE

The first attempts to construct and use a prototype “studio” pot furnace to melt glass batch (the raw materials that become molten glass when heated at elevated temperatures) failed until local glass technician Dominick Labino and glassblower Harvey Leafgreen arrived on the scene. The pair offered valuable advice that helped make the workshop a success. Labino, then vice-president and director of research at Johns-Manville Fiber Glass, helped with furnace construction and provided low-melting glass marbles that served as a workable batch. Leafgreen, a retired glassblower from Libbey Glass, demonstrated how to blow glass to the seven workshop participants.

The first workshop turned out to be so encouraging that another was held in June 1962.

### **50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY ACTIVITIES PLANNED**

In commemoration of the first glass workshops, the Museum will host various activities that celebrate both the history and future of glass.

From March 22–31, three artists in residence will work in Toledo to construct the low-tech furnace based on Dominick Labino’s original plans, and to develop projects that will highlight the contributions of the Studio Glass Movement. This project, which is part of the Museum’s Guest Artist Pavilion Project (GAPP) and co-sponsored by the Robert Minkoff Foundation, will present opportunities for artists and audiences to reconnect with the origins of studio glass and to explore contemporary works made with the tools these pioneers used.

*Color Ignited: Glass 1962–2012* will be the inaugural exhibition in the new Frederic and Mary Wolfe Gallery of Contemporary Art. The show opens on June 13 during the international conference of the Glass Art Society (GAS) and runs through Sept. 9. The Wolfe Gallery space was the home of the Museum’s glass collection until 2003, when construction began on the Glass Pavilion.

“This is a full-circle moment for the Toledo Museum of Art as our former glass gallery has been remodeled to display contemporary art. What better way to inaugurate the space than by displaying the work of the leading studio glass artists of our time?” noted TMA Director Brian Kennedy.

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## GLASS 50<sup>th</sup>/ADD TWO

The exhibition highlights the role of color—from the conceptual to the political to the metaphoric—in the art of those who choose glass as their medium. Artists include Harvey Littleton, Marvin Lipofsky, Dominick Labino, Dale Chihuly, Dan Daily, Judith Schaechter, Ginny Ruffner, Dan Flavin, Nora Ligarano and Marshall Reese, Fritz Driesbach and Klaus Moje. The show will feature nearly 100 objects from public and private collections. A companion catalogue will be published. The exhibition is co-curated by Jutta-Annette Page, curator of glass and decorative arts at the Toledo Museum of Art, and Peter Morrin, director emeritus of the Speed Art Museum in Louisville, Ky. Admission is free.

The Museum will also be a host of the annual Glass Art Society conference on June 13–June 16, 2012 in Toledo. An estimated 1,500 to 2,000 people are expected to attend the conference, which will feature a Day of Glass, artist demonstrations, lectures and other activities at venues across the Museum campus and the region.

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**Note:** For images or further information, contact Kelly Fritz Garrow, director of communications, at 419-255-8000, ext. 7408, or [kgarrow@toledomuseum.org](mailto:kgarrow@toledomuseum.org).

The Toledo Museum of Art is a nonprofit arts institution funded through individual donations, foundation grants, corporate sponsorships, and investments. The Ohio Arts Council helps fund programs at the Toledo Museum of Art through a sustainable grant program that encourages economic growth, educational excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans.

Admission to the Museum is free. The Museum is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Friday, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, Noon to 6 p.m.; closed Mondays and major holidays. Friday evening hours are made possible by Fifth Third Bank.

The Museum is located at 2445 Monroe Street at Scottwood Avenue, just west of the downtown business district and one block off I-75 with exit designations posted. For general information, visitors can call 419-255-8000 or 800-644-6862, or visit [www.toledomuseum.org](http://www.toledomuseum.org).