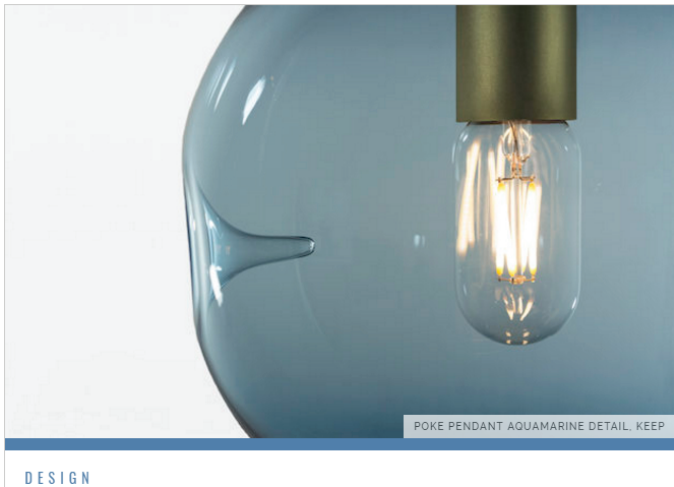




DESIGN

Lighting the Way: Glassblowers and the Marriage of Glass and Light

By ANNETTE ROSE-SHAPIRO | March 24, 2017

Glassblowing requires a steady hand, a sharp eye, a tolerance for heat, a fascination with fire, and the ability to work with light. For many glassblowers, going from tabletop to lighting is a natural extension of their work. Often it starts with a client seeing a vase or bowl and asking if a lighting component could be added; some glass artists see the possibilities and pursue it on their own. "Seeing how light interacted with my glass vases gave me the desire to create lamps and manipulate the light myself," says Rhode Island-based glass artist Tracy Glover.

Nick Leonoff, whose studio is in Brooklyn, creates pieces that balance opacity and translucence, contrasting matte and shiny surfaces, lightness and darkness. "I think of my lights as a suspended sculpture with a lighting element," he says.

Architects, interior designers, and private clients requesting custom work have the advantage of the glassblower's distinct creative viewpoint. Adam Holtzinger of the Brooklyn-based KEEP just completed a 180-piece globe chandelier for Gotham Market at The Ashland in Brooklyn through Jeffrey Beers International. "With hand-blown glass you perceive an artistry that nothing machine-made or factory-made in the glass world can match artistically," says architect Jeffrey Beers, founder and CEO of the firm. "For this chandelier, each globe is uniquely different by default. There are certain qualities that Adam, as master blower, can bring into different pieces: some are more intense than others, decorative aspects are drawn out in others. All the work is all purposeful in a passionate, motivated way."

Bill Couig of Furthur Design in New York, recently created a cluster chandelier for the home of Will Guidara, co-owner of restaurant Eleven Madison Park, and his wife, Christina Tosi, chef and owner of Momofuku Milk Bar, for their renovated Chelsea penthouse. "Most of my contacts have come from doing trade shows, which have lead to both private and commercial clients," says Couig. "I've made the lighting for developers Two Trees' Mercedes House on 54th Street, and a few projects for AvroKo Hospitality Group's 1 Hotel Central Park." Couig goes on to say that the Internet has made design much more accessible, and he often receives direct inquiries from private clients as well.

Glover also receives orders for her work through her website as well as design shows, but some glass artists find clients in other ways. Interior designer Mariem Horchani, of Campion Platt's design firm in New York, happened to find glassblower Moshe Bursuker through friends. "When we come to Moshe with a design concept, he provides creative input which really enhances the design," Horchani says. "We worked on a twelve-foot-long pendant with a cascade of gray tinted glass fixtures for a residence in Bethesda recently. Besides his obvious talent as a glass artist, he understands the technical as well as creative aspects of lighting design." Andi Kovel, co-owner with Justin Parker of ESQUE Studio in Portland, Oregon, says "Justin and I met at UrbanGlass, where we taught and worked as artists-for-hire for fine artists and designers." By the time they moved to Portland and opened their own studio, they were well established with a clientele that recognized their ability to creating high-end custom lighting. "Lighting is such an integral part of every space and is challenging to do well," says Holtzinger. "Making lighting enables me to keep my craft alive, making objects that others can use every day." And

