

THE CLAY & GLASS
EARTH • FIRE • LIGHT



In Concert

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Susan Surette, *Mount Brome: Summer*, 2016, Ceramic, glazes, wood. Collection of the Artist. Photo courtesy of the Artist.

In Concert

Sharing a studio space for a short or long term can offer artists financial and professional advantages. It may also prompt collaboration, technical support, brainstorming ideas, or simply offer good company. *In Concert* presents the work of artists who share studio spaces full time or occasionally. Some are friends or family members, others are life partners, while others are employed and work as part of a team. All are passionate about our media of choice: clay and glass. Like musicians, some are soloists while others prefer to play in duet or as an ensemble — and some do both. *In Concert* showcases individual practices and highlights collaborative opportunities.

In the category of soloist, we find the Surettes who work independently in a shared family studio in Bringham, Quebec. For this exhibition, Susan presents a mural inspired by the landscape of her beloved Eastern Townships which invokes historical Iznik and Safavid tiles, 18th century Delftware, and the geometric work of Portuguese painter and mosaicist Eduardo Nery. After studying the topographical maps of the area, Susan designed two tiles and their mirrored version. She then created a mural by rotating their position to make a pattern that she says is a “contemporary interpretation of these past practices. The floral patterns and palaeontological and geological configurations arise from the various rotational strategies.”¹ *Mount Brome: Summer* (2016) is a celebration of colours and landforms. She writes, “here I have worked, ambled, hiked, swum, canoed, skated and skied and through this panel of ceramic tiles I celebrate this nourishing environment.”

Daughter Akycha presents *Between Dusk and Dawn* (2018-2020), a series of five figurative murals that comments on mass produced, idealized porcelain figurines commercialized



Akycha Surette, *Between Dusk and Dawn (Series)*, 2018-2020, Ceramic, glazes. Collection of the Artist. Photo courtesy of the Artist.

by manufactures like Royal Doulton and Lladro. She explores also the strange and marvelous state that we call the grotesque in a way that poses questions about “transgression and liminality.” Akycha’s dismembered figurines are in various poses, some with a wing, or a bird skull as a head. She places them on a map-like ground decorated with dragonflies and gear wheels linked by a threaded line. Akycha writes that, “the figures exist in a liminal space between the human-dominated, human-made world and the rest of the biosphere. They represent insinuation, confrontation, negotiation and adaptation.” Acts of transgression often push an issue’s transitional boundaries and start a process that will move on and bring often necessary changes.

Susan’s husband, Richard offers the series *Global Perspectives: Time for a Change* (2020), an installation of five unique ceramic busts mounted on stands of found materials. Overtly satirical, these busts are saucy comments on the longstanding art historical tradi-

tion of celebrating and immortalizing self-absorbed and inept classical Greece and Rome and subsequently Europe and America leaders. Richard says that “In a crumbling world, it is possible to build beautiful things that incorporate new beginnings.” Gallery visitors are invited to write their ideas for social change on pieces of paper before dropping them in a sixth head. At the end of the exhibition, the comments will be read and tabulated. The installation offers an occasion for visitors to engage with and comment on the politics of our times.

The Marcotte-McKenzie family is comprised of husband and wife Maureen and David and their daughter Annie are each authors of distinct ceramic practices in Wake field (Quebec). Maureen Marcotte contributes splendid examples of her research in surface decorations. Inspired by quilts, batik textiles, Persian carpets, and Fair Isle knitting patterns, as well as Turkish Iznik ceramics, and the British Arts and Crafts movement, her surface treatments celebrate floral and geometric patterns combined with



Richard Surette, *Global Perspectives: Time for a Change I-V*, 2020, Ceramic, glazes, mixed media. Collection of the Artist. Photo courtesy of the Artist.



freely applied motifs. Maureen's *Leaves and Herringbone Bowl* (2020) is a strong example of her blend of geometry with forms found in nature. Using simple functional forms, Maureen is inspired by Pysanky (Ukrainian Easter egg painting) on dry porcelain greenware built in layers using wax and slips.

Her husband, David McKenzie approaches ceramics like a painter who works on a ground of clay instead of canvas. David writes, "The painting and the form demand respect from each other, influencing each other, telling

a story together." Influences like Surrealism, mythology, folk arts, and film making, lead to work that are an "invitation to journey with the artist to look behind and beyond the surface of representation." Works, such as *Into the West* (2020), present a narrative scene where houses and landscape are juxtaposed with female nude bathers allowing visitors to bring in their own interpretation, their own mythology, and even their own stories.

David and Maureen's daughter Annie McKenzie makes porcelain jewellery using wax resist methods taught by her mother and sgraffito techniques learned from her father. Annie studied to be a biologist and forest conservationist and her love of the natural world is a key theme in her jewellery design, as we can witness in her earrings *Northern Lights* (2020) and *Blue Vines* (2020). In the former, the golden Aurora Borealis is depicted above a cold landscape of blue, black and white lines while in the latter, the leaves of the vine fill the space of the half-moon earrings.



OPPOSITE PAGE TOP: Maureen Marcotte, *Leaves and Herringbone Bowl*, 2020, Porcelain, glazes. Collection of the Artist. Photo courtesy of the Artist.

OPPOSITE PAGE BOTTOM: Annie McKenzie, *Northern Lights*, Earrings, 2020, Porcelain, glazes, sterling silver. Collection of the Artist. Photo courtesy of the Artist.

ABOVE: David McKenzie, *Into the West*, 2020, Porcelain, glazes. Collection of the Artist. Photo courtesy of the Artist.



ABOVE: Thomas Aitken, *Tower of Many Colours*, 2018, Porcelain, glazes. Collection of the Artist. Photo courtesy of the Artist.

OPPOSITE PAGE TOP: Kate Hyde, *Punchinello and the Paint Pot*, 2013, Porcelain, glaze, under-glaze. Collection of the Artist. Photo courtesy of the Artist.

BOTTOM: Thomas Aitken & Kate Hyde, *Punchinello and All the World's a Stage*, 2020, Porcelain, glaze, under-glaze. Collection of the Artist. Photo courtesy of the Artist.

The exhibition *In Concert* also includes duets. These are artists who work collaboratively while maintaining concomitant solo practices. The couples we present are also life partners who share a passion for the medium.

Thomas Aitken is known for solid-colour functional wares in classic forms that showcase his technical mastery of wheel thrown and handbuilt methods. Stacked bowls become a *Tower of Many Colours* (2018). A piece of discarded textile with holes punched out of it is pressed into clay to create the circles for a textured plate, *Tread the Board: The Floor* (2017).

Thomas's partner, Kate Hyde focusses on handbuilt sculptures and surface decoration. Her figurative porcelain sculptures reference scenes and characters from the 17th century Commedia Dell'Arte. She presents two works with Punchinello, *Punchinello and the Paint Pot* (2013) and *Punchinello: Good Show* (2013). She adds that "these Punchinello sculptures are also inspired by Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo's drawings for *Il divertimento per li ragazzi*, which tell of the life of Pulcincello, a character from the Commedia dell arte theatre. The Punchinello character can be seen as mischievous, comic or sad and therein captures an essence of humanity."

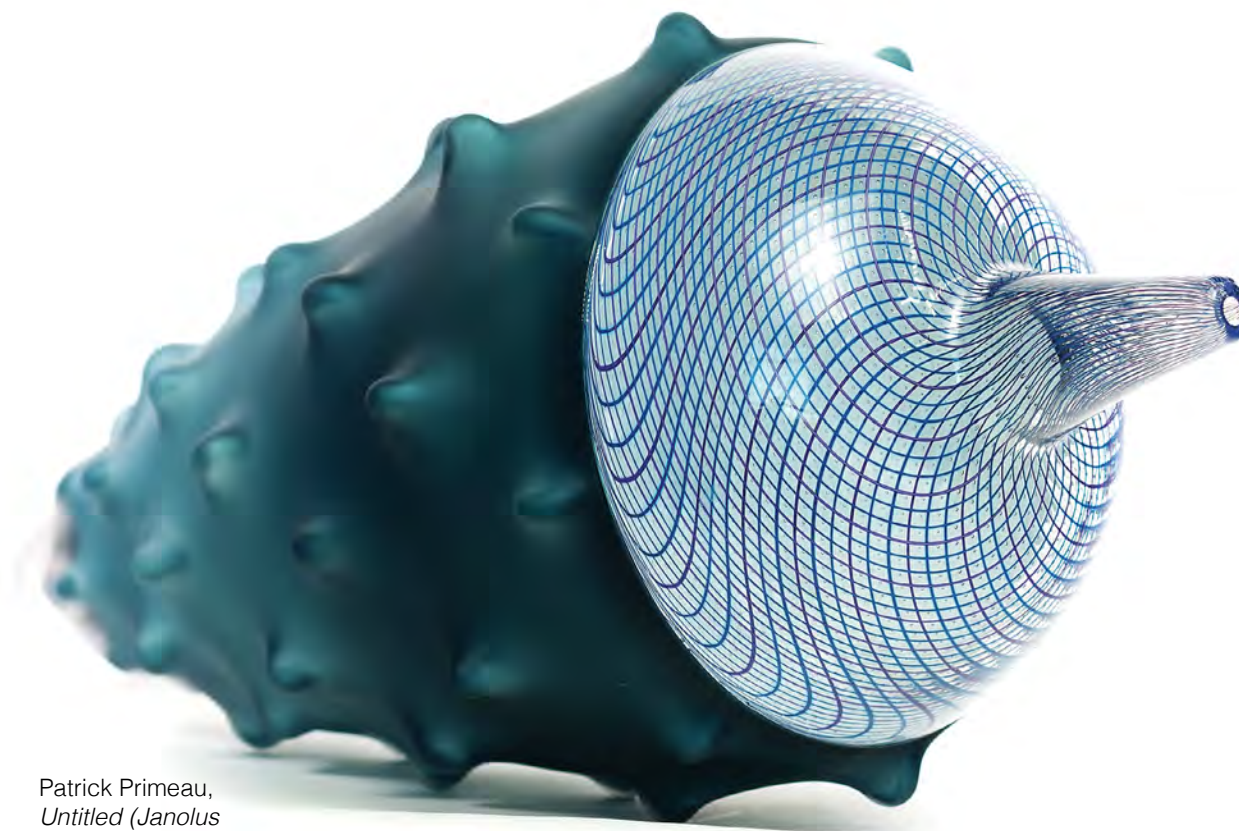


In a duet, this married couple who works and lives in Warsaw (Ontario), offers us Thomas' functional wares beautifully decorated by Kate. Again, here, the *Commedia Dell'Arte* has found its way onto the surface of a cup and saucer, while a platter and a teapot decorations are inspired by *All The World's A Stage* of William Shakespeare. The titles refer to the first line of the monologue written by the famous English writer on the seven stages of life.





Caroline Ouellette, *Cabinet of Curiosity (Naomi's Story)*, detail, 2014, Kiln casted glass elements, wooden frame. Collection of the Artist. Photo courtesy of the Artist.



Patrick Primeau, *Untitled (Janolus Series)*, 2020, Blown glass. Collection of the Artist. Photo courtesy of the Artist.

Catherine Ouellette and Patrick Primeau operate Welmo Glass Studio, in Ste-Julie, Québec. From her personal practice, Caroline presents *Cabinet of Curiosity (Naomi's story)* (2014). Cabinets of curiosities appeared in the late 16th century and quickly became popular for displaying oddities and objects from diverse cultures (often stolen or exchanged) gathered by explorers and colonists. Ouellette's contemporary version displays a collection of mundane objects in kiln cast glass: a tooth, a pill bottle, a baby shoe and so on. Visitors are invited to select objects and place them in the frame provided to create their own collection.

Ouellette and Primeau have created a series of blown glass vases titled *Regard/Glance*. The first of the series was created for a professional demonstration in Murano, Italy, the world capital for glass blowing. They write, "we decided to employ the classical technique of *Incalmo* while including an unexpected element. We selected an image of an old lady as a wink to the tradition of glass making on the island. From the very fuzzy powder image on the *marver*²sifted through a silk screen to a very defined one on the piece, we surprised the audience with a work that is glancing back at them." For *In Concert*, they are presenting the initial piece,



Caroline Ouellette
& Patrick Primeau,
Regard/Glance (man),
2020, Blown glass,
powder printing.
Collection of the Artist.
Photo courtesy of the
Artist.



Karina Guevin, *Magnolia*,
2014, Moretti. Collection of
the Artist. Photo courtesy of
the Artist.

Regard/Glance (woman) (2018) and a new one, *Regard/Glance (man)* (2020). The shape of these two pieces is not without recalling the cylindrical and round shapes of Primeau's own work such as *Untitled (Janolus Series)* (2020) and *Untitled* (2020) also presented here.

Similarly, the couple formed by Karina Guévin and Cédic Ginart, from Ange-Gardien (Quebec), created *Reliquaries, Into the*

Glacier (2014), a series of five elegant and ornate urns filled with flower petals, glass fish and other creatures. They claim that their union is one where "a glass artist for whom the words passion, colours and movements define the essence of her vision and a scientific glassmaker for whom the words technique, function and precision represent his universe." Reliquaries are containers that hold and protect bones, pieces of clothing or objects belonging



Cédric Ginart & Karina Guevin, *Reliquaries: Into the Glacier*, 2014, Borosilicate glass. Collection of the Artist. Photo courtesy of the Artist.

to saints. They are important components of religious practices in many cultures. However, here, I see an ecological concern, one for our environment where species (flora and fauna) are threatened to extinction with the effects of climate change.

Nature is also evident in Karina's *Magnolia* (2014). A string of carefully flame-worked Moretti glass petals sits on a blown glass vase

lighter in colour fitted with a delicate stopper crafted to complete the flower. Magnolias are traditionally attributes of longevity, perseverance, femininity as well as nobility.

Cédric's *Distilloscope* (2014) highlights his scientific interests. The alembic glass and bronze form is presented like a telescope on an oak and bronze tripod. Telescopes allow us to extend our vision into the universe, however



Cédric Ginart & Karina Guevin, *Reliquaries: Into the Glacier*, detail, 2014, Borosilicate glass. Collection of the Artist. Photo courtesy of the Artist.



Cédric Ginart, *Distilloscope*, 2014, Borosilicate glass, copper, bronze, oak. Collection of the Artist. Photo courtesy of the Artist.



Laura Donefer & Jeff Mack, *Fuchsia Classico Moderno Amphora and Grey Classico Moderno Amphora*, 2017/19, Blown and hot-worked glass. Collection of the Artist. Photo by Leslie Patron.

this is not the case, inside there are no mirrors or lenses. Here, the idea of a telescope is subverted into an object of which the inner components can be seen through the transparent tube. The idea of seeing is at the core of this work but not as we typically understand it; this forces us to engage differently with the object. What we see inside the *Distilloscope* is an alembic like those used in the production of spirits. Would

the artist want to draw attention to the effect of alcohols on perception and vision? The work brings together his scientific and artistic interest.

Friends Laura Donefer (Ontario) and Jeff Mack (United States) shared a studio while participating in a residency at the Corning Museum of Glass, and during that time created the series *Classico Moderno*, a collection of ewers and

amphorae, that are classically inspired, blown with a “Mackian precision” and decorated with “Doneferian abandon.” James Wood writes that “exuberant Laura Donefer moves beyond flame-working to an alchemical collaboration with her polar opposite, the glassblowing virtuoso Jeff Mack, to achieve classical vessel forms that shimmer with vitality.”³ The traditional form blown by Mack takes a contemporary treatment with Donefer’s surface work where “she sweeps them up in a rich vortex of flame and deep encrustation that results in something almost decadent.”⁴

Finally, playing as an ensemble, Soffi Studio presents a large installation, *Flora/Orba* (2020) created in their studio by the husband and wife design duos Kris Gene and Eva Milinkovic, and Robert O’Dell and Amy Raganit. The installation looks like a blooming field of flowers in whites, yellows, pale greens and golds. They say that “with the theme in mind of *Scale Through Multiples*, these designs are wall mounted, unique sculptures which incorporate designs from our Studio Line.”

The installation *Flora/Orba* combined two design from their collection. Floral designs are created using single or multiple glass petals crowned with a round centrepiece. The orbs

are organic shapes in the same colours. Some are translucent, while others are opaque. Some have a metallic finish. The whole reminds me of fireworks bursting in the sky where the pyrotechnic devices exploded in a cacophonous colourful display, often like the crescendo of a symphony in a grand theatre.

In Concert brings together a diverse group of artists who share studio space daily or on special occasions. Some work independently, others collaboratively. The variety of approaches to ceramic and glass art within that context highlights that the surroundings does not always affect the outcome for artists focusing on their own production. While, in some cases, the collaboration is a combination of each artist’s approach, in other instances the work does not necessarily include the expertise of the artists involved. However as demonstrated here it does sometimes open the door to new and exciting creative approaches and artistic pursuits.

These artists produce a symphony of works that delight and fascinate, intrigue, and invite to contemplation.

Denis Longchamps
Executive Director and Curator
Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery



Soffi Studio, *Flora/Orba*,
2020, Blown glass.
Collection of the Artist.

¹ All artists’ quotes are from their artistic statements.

² A flat slab (as of metal, stone, wood) on which a gather of glass is rolled, shaped, and cooled (Meriam Webster online).

³ James Wood, “Into the Vortex,” *Glass Quarterly* (#130, Spring 2013).

⁴ Wood.

BIOGRAPHIES



Thomas Aitken started his ceramic studies at Red Deer College in Alberta and went on to obtain a BFA from the

Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. He received his MFA from the University of Wales, Cardiff, UK. He set up a studio specializing in tableware and accessories now located in the village of Warsaw, near Peterborough, Ontario. Aitken has participated in numerous exhibitions in Canada and Europe. His work is held in public collections including The Gardiner Museum, The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and the Government of Ontario Art Collection.



Kate Hyde received her BA Honors in Textiles from Middlesex Polytechnic, London, U.K., and her Master's degree in Ceramics

at the University of Wales Institute Cardiff, Wales, U.K. In 1997 she moved to Toronto, Canada, where she set up a studio with her husband, potter Thomas Aitken. They now work

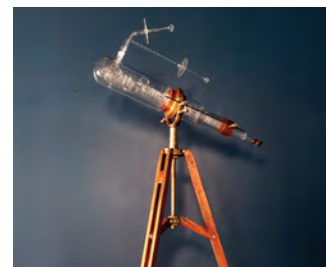
from their studios in Warsaw, Ontario, Canada. Kate has received a number of awards and grants, including the Winifred Shantz Award for Ceramics, 2005. She has work in many public and private international collections and has exhibited her work in Scandinavia, Australia, U.K, Canada and U.S.A.



Karina Guévin is a French Canadian glass artist. Her playful flame-work sculptures inspired by popular legend, stories and happily ever

after tales have been recognized with a Francois-Houdé Award (2010) and grants from the Canadian and Québec Council for the Arts, SODEC, and a Gilles-Verville grant in visual arts. Guévin is regularly invited to teach in many studios including the Studio of the Corning Museum of Glass, Penland School of Craft, Pilchuck Glass School, and the Pittsburgh Glass Center. Her work is found in private and public collections and has been exhibited in North America, Europe, and Asia.

Cédric Ginart received a traditional education in scientific glassblowing at the Lycée Dorian, France from which he graduated in 1995.



One year later he moved to Québec, Canada. He is currently the in-house glassblower for the University of

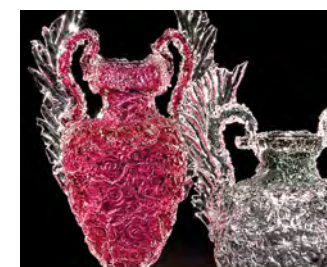
Montreal while pursuing a widely recognized artistic career. Most of his artistic works are made in collaboration with his partner Karina Guévin and, together they are travelling the world to teach and exhibit their work.



Jeff Mack is an artist, educator and museum professional who has been working with glass in various contexts for over 25 years.

His artwork is rooted in personal expression through craft and has touched on many aspects of the material ranging from intimate vessels and sculpture to large scale public artworks. He has keen interest in historic glass-making techniques and has devoted much of his study and work in glass to this topic. He has taught extensively, demonstrated internationally, and his work can be found in galleries and collections throughout the world.

Laura Donefer is an award-winning artist celebrated for her innovative and colourful glass and flame work. Donefer has taught workshops and given lectures worldwide, including Japan, the United States, China, New Zealand and



Australia. Her work is in public and private collections such as the Corning Museum of Glass, the Museum of Glass in Tacoma,

the Museum of Art and Design in Manhattan and the Museum of Fine Art in Montreal. Laura has been honoured with many awards, among them Lifetime Achievement Awards from the Glass Art Association of Canada, as well as Craft Ontario.



Maureen Marcotte received a BA in Visual Arts and a BEd from the University of Ottawa, and she has been working as a studio

potter since 1976.

David McKenzie studied in chemistry and architecture before he began working with



clay in Ottawa in 1974. In 1979, the couple moved to the Wakefield area in the Gatineau Hills where they established their studio together. In 1990, they built a house and studio and moved into the village of Wakefield. From

2001 to 2013, they operated Galerie McKenzie Marcotte where they curated and mounted over 60 exhibitions of painting, sculpture, glass and ceramics while always displaying a strong array of their own work. In recent years, Maureen and David have completed major commissions for the Prime Minister of Canada (commemorative plates which were his official gift to 69 heads of state attending the Francophone Summit in Quebec City in 2008) and for the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada in 2009 and 2014.



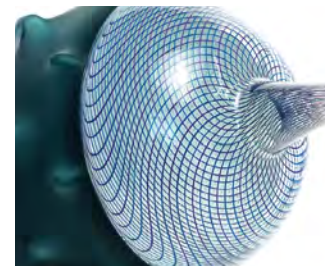
Annie McKenzie makes unique nature-inspired jewellery using porcelain and sterling silver in Wakefield, Quebec. She learned

her ceramic skills from her parents Maureen Marcotte and David McKenzie. From an early age, she assisted her mother in the surface decoration of her work. She also apprenticed with her father to learn the art of sgraffito, where she carves away clay and inlays colours to create her designs. McKenzie then uses silversmithing techniques to create the silver fastenings, using sustainably sourced recycled sterling silver. A biologist and forest conservationist by training, she has always had a deep love for nature.

Caroline Ouellette has been working with glass since 1996. In 2002, she graduated from Espace Verre, Montreal's glass school. In 2004, she established, along with her partner Patrick



Primeau, Welmo glass studio in Ste-Julie, Quebec. Her work can be found in many private and public collections such as Montreal Fine Arts Museum and Quebec National Fine Art Museum. Ouellette graduated in 2014 with her PhD in Philosophy (specialised in glass art) from the University of South Australia in Adelaide, Australia.



Patrick Primeau has been working with glass since 1997. He graduated from Espace Verre where he taught glass blowing from 2005-

2019. In 2004, Patrick and his wife Caroline Ouellette, opened Welmo glass studio. Patrick's blown and sculpted vessels can be found in many private and public collections such as Montreal Fine Arts Museum and Quebec National Fine Arts Museum. He has travelled North America, Europe, and Australia to work with world-renowned artists and designers to realize their visions in glass.

Susan Surette is a ceramist, art historian, author and teacher. Her doctoral and post-doctoral research into Canadian ceramic wall murals was inspired by the low relief landscape murals she has produced since 1994 within Studio Surette. She has co-edited *Sloppy Craft: Post-*



Intersections in Critical Studies and Practice, upcoming 2021. Susan Surette's ceramic works have been exhibited and sold through major juried national and international craft shows and galleries and are found in national and international personal, corporate, and public collections



Richard Surette has created functional and sculptural ceramics since 1975. Self-taught and inspired by the Leach ideal of beautiful, functional, and affordable pottery for all, Surette's commitment to clay and determination were rewarded when he participated in the 1977 Canadian Craft Show and Sale. He has since gone on to show his one-off and small series works in major national and international juried craft exhibitions and gallery shows. During this time, Surette expanded his material exploration to include wood and metal which he regularly integrates into his ceramic works. Surette's works are found in private, corporate, and public national and international collections.

Akycha Surette is a ceramic sculptor, mixed media artist and art historian with an MA

disciplinarity and the Crafts, 2015, Canadian Journal of Art History, Special Edition on Crafts, 2018/19 and Craft and Heritage:



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For 15 years, by way of our internationally acclaimed decorative glass firm, **Tsunami Glassworks**, we have delivered the world's best interior designers and architects unique, luxurious, contemporary glass sculpture and décor. Taking our extensive experience in metal and glass design and fabrication, **Soffi Studio** was born in 2020 to provide our clientele with spectacular, bespoke artwork and design solutions. Our dedicated design and fabrication team works with interior designers and art consultants from around the world; creating sculpture and décor for commercial, hospitality and residential projects. Located in Windsor, Ontario where all designs and products are proudly Canadian, Soffi is the husband and wife design duo Kris Gene & Eva Milinkovic, Robert O'Dell and Amy Raganit.

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Front Cover: Laura Donefer & Jeff Mack, *Fuchsia Classico Moderno Amphora* and *Grey Classico Moderno Amphora*, 2017/19, Blown and hot-worked glass. Collection of the Artist. Photo by Leslie Patron.
Back Cover: Laura Donefer & Jeff Mack, *Orange Classico Moderno Ewer*, 2017/19, Blown and hot-worked glass. Collection of the Artist. Photo by Leslie Patron.