

VESSEL GALLERY

LONDON



Baldwin & Guggisberg (Wales -)

The Return of History

'The Return of History' is a unique artwork by the American and Swiss artists, Philip Baldwin and Monica Guggisberg.

Free blown and carved glass with metal.

In the best sense of the word, not the current pejorative one, globalisation has been going on for thousands of years, from Greece to Rome, back to Crete, Phoenicia, across the Arabian sea to India, and on to China and back again, without even mentioning Polynesia. Archaeological research continues to push the story to unimagined places and unknown historical timelines.

In the artist's own words;

“There is a wonderful story about journalism. A famous professor at New York's Columbia Journalism School opened his freshman class seminar one sunny day in September and began laying out the programme for the year. The windows were open, and suddenly a young man jumped into the room through an open window, raced to the professor's desk, scooped up all his papers and leapt back out the window. The professor stood up, pointed at the class, and said, 'Write it down. Describe everything you saw. You have five minutes.' At the end of the five minutes he had each student come up and read what she had written. No two accounts were the same. Each student saw it through his own eyes. As we all do.”

Artist description:

Baldwin (1947, New York) and Guggisberg (1955, Bern) have been a collaborative team for over forty years. They share an instinctive appreciation for the subtle blending of art and design, functionality and abstract expression, combined with a love of material – especially glass.

The list of museums and collections which have acquired their works is long and impressive. Individual showings, as well as participation in group shows, have given them opportunities to present their works at leading galleries and in major museums in Europe, Japan and the United States and their works rank among the best to be found in the international glass art scene. Working freelance, they have also designed successful products for international glass manufacturers since 1985. Their clients have included renowned firms like Rosenthal, Steuben, Corning and Venini.

Over time their work has developed its own distinctive signature, based in Italian cold-working (battuto) combined with the Swedish overlay process for layering colours. They have been pioneers in adapting these techniques and in creating a distinct expression of their own. Colour, light, texture, pattern, and shape together reveal an undercurrent of meaning and value, adhering to the simplest of forms and clear lines.

Over the years they have become more sculptural in focus, while seeking to imbue their work with a deep connection to archetypal forms and shapes, and striving for the highest level of craftsmanship. They address eternal symbols of human culture and history, while embracing contemporary evolution in form and meaning.

In recent years large installations and major exhibitions in public spaces, such as Canterbury Cathedral, UK in (2018) and more recently The Glasmuseum Ebeltoft in Denmark (2020-2021) increasingly reflect their concerns for the shared world of our times, highlighting some of the challenges while continuing to express their love for beauty in form and object.

They now live and work in rural Wales.