

VESSEL GALLERY

LONDON



Ann Wåhlström (Sweden 1957 -)

Stone XIV

Handblown & sculpted glass

'Stone XIV' is a unique glass artwork by the Swedish artist, Ann Wåhlström.

In Ann's own words:

'In this series of objects I have used the classic techniques of canes and murrinis but worked with a more organic approach to create the loose patterns in the glass that I am after. I start my design with water colour sketches and the result of the patterns in my glass objects are a bit "floating" which I really like. I make the pieces together with very skilled glass blowers, in this case in Seattle and Tacoma USA, and enjoy the collaboration very much! The pieces grow in the hands of the glass blower and the colours and patterns follow the glass as more and more air, heat and gravity makes their marks. I only know what will happen to a certain level! My colours are often strong and the shapes classic. The inspiration comes from the sea world as often as traditional textiles and patterns in nature'.

Artist description:

Swedish artist and designer Ann Wåhlström has a background as both a glassblower and a designer. She studied glassblowing at the Glass School in Orrefors and in the United States, where she initially came in contact with studio glass at the Pilchuck School. Combining the traditional training in Sweden and the experimental approach to glass in the US gave her the best of two worlds! Wåhlström then went on to attend the Konstfack School of Art and Design in Stockholm and Rhode Island School of design in Providence, United States.

During her early years, Ann Wåhlström created her designs on the blowpipe and her first solo exhibition was in 1985 at Gallery Nilsson/New Glass in New York, where she was "discovered" by Kosta Boda.

This was the start of a 20-year collaboration with the Swedish glassworks group designing several series for their production collections and artworks for exhibitions.

In her career, Wåhlström has designed wares - including glass, ceramics, metals and textiles - for many international companies, such as Ikea and brands from Cappellini to Boda Nova; Wåhlström's work is as varied in material as it is colour.

Wåhlström has taught at Pilchuck Glass School in the USA and at the Beckman's School of Design in Stockholm, Sweden. She has won the Excellent Swedish Design Award on several occasions, Her work can be found in many major museums including: the permanent collections of the V&A, the Corning Museum of Glass (New York), Ebeltoft Glasmuseum (Denmark), The Montreal Museum of Decorative Arts (Canada), the Art Gallery of Western Australia (Australia), Småland, Växjö, Sweden National museum and the Museum of Glass (USA).

Wåhlström is based in Stockholm where she combines artistic work in glass with freelance design. Since 2005 she has created her unique objects in collaboration with glassblowers in Seattle (BMI Studio) and Tacoma (Museum of Glass), USA.

Her strong aesthetic ties together her wide use of graphic lines and sweeping arcs whether applied to the flat surface of textiles or the fluid forms of glass. Inspiration for Wåhlström comes from many sources; nature, ancient architecture and children's book illustration, she cites Moomin creator Tove Jansson as a huge influence.

In Ann's own words;

"My ideas are first formed on paper and when the collaboration with the glassblowers and craftsmen takes place it all comes alive and the energy is fantastic!"

Artist portrait by Jonas Ingerstedt.