

VESSEL GALLERY

LONDON



Cathryn Shilling (United Kingdom 1957 -)

Only Hope Remains II

'Only Hope Remains II' is a unique sculpture by the British artist, Cathryn Shilling.

The phrase 'to open Pandora's box' has become synonymous with human downfall, the point of no return, where inexplicable troubles are unleashed. However, its origins are rooted within Ancient Greek mythology, where instead of a box, it was an entirely different receptacle that was employed to contain all evils.

In the artist's own words;

"The story of Pandora was first written about by the Ancient Greek poet Hesiod who was active between 750 and 650 BC, about the same time as Homer. In his version, Pandora comes with a type of jar, or Pithos in Ancient Greek. This would have been a tall ceramic storage vessel, up to about 3 foot tall, with a lid. These were used to store oil or wine. So not a box, or Pyxis in Ancient Greek. The idea of the box is actually due to a mistranslation by Erasmus in the 1600's.

So according to Hesiod, the Titan Prometheus stole fire from the gods of Mount Olympus and gave it as a gift to humans. This so angered Zeus, the king of the gods that he decided to punish men by giving them the gift of evil to compensate for the improvement in their lives that fire brought. Zeus ordered that the first woman be moulded from the earth to create a 'beautiful evil' whose deadly descendants would torment the race of men. She was called Pandora, or All Gift, and with her came a jar which contained 'countless plagues' gifted to men by all the gods of Olympus. Prometheus was subjected to a hideous punishment, but he managed to warn his brother Epithemius not to accept any gifts from Zeus.

However, Epithemius didn't listen and accepted the gift of Pandora anyway.

Men had been living carefree lives until Pandora lifted the lid of the jar and released all evils upon them. But to me the most depressing part of the story is that the jar had also contained 'Hope' but this was left inside, caught under the lip of the jar."

These artworks were featured in the exhibition [Not Black or White](#) at SoShiro Gallery London.

The artist can also create pieces to commission, please contact the gallery for further information.

Artist description:

Cathryn Shilling began her arts career as a graphic designer but went on to study glass after moving to Connecticut with her family. On returning to the UK she studied kiln formed glass at Kensington and Chelsea College and blown glass with Peter Layton at the London Glassblowing Workshop. She set up her studio in London in 2007 from where she has gone on to create a huge body and variety of work.

Shilling experiments with colour and technique to produce beautiful one off sculptures. Her innovative pieces push the glass beyond our usual comfort zones. With some sculptures, glass rods are woven together like fabric, mimicking the flexibility and movement of cloth. The apparent frailty of the glass is balanced by the strong dynamic forms, differing levels of light picking out layers of colour. With other works, bubbles are trapped in swathes of watery hues. Her colour palette and choice of forms are very much informed by the various natural states in which water is found: icebergs, waterfalls and whirlpools for example.

Shilling's work has been collected and widely exhibited internationally including: Aesthetica International Art Prize, York Gallery, York | Op Art Glass at the Imagine Museum, St Petersburg, Florida | From Many, One, Culture Object, New York | Ireland Glass Biennale 2019 at Dublin Castle | The 3rd Session of China Hejian Craft Glass Design & Creation Exhibition and Competition, Ming Shangde Glass Museum, Cangzhou City, Hebei Province, China 2019 | TACTILE at Glazenhuis, Lommel, Belgium | New Acquisitions 2017 at Glasmuseum Lette, Coesfeld, Germany | Peter Bremers & Cathryn Shilling: A Two Person Exhibition at Schiepers Gallery in Belgium | The CGS Jubileum 20th Anniversary Exhibition at Etienne Gallery, Oisterwijk, Netherlands | The Taos Art Glass Invitational New Mexico, USA | BODYTALK at the Glasmuseet, Ebletoft, Denmark | East-West Artists Exhibitions in Kyoto, Japan and London.

She has exhibited at the British Glass Biennale in 2010, 2012, 2015, 2017, 2019 and in 2017 her collaboration with Anthony Scala won the Craft & Design Award. She has twice exhibited as a finalist in the Emerge Juried Kiln-glass Exhibition at Bullseye Projects, Portland, Oregon, USA. Shilling has twice been nominated for the SUWA Garasuno-Sato Glass Prize and several times for the Arts & Crafts Design Award.

2024 Selected as one of 60 artworks for the Toyama International Glass Exhibition.

2023 Following two evaluation processes, an honourable mention at the Cheongju International Craft Competition for 'Metamorphosis Series', with selected works also shown at the September - October Cheongju Craft Biennale.

2021 Shortlisted for the Aesthetica Art Prize for the artwork 'Metamorphosis I'

2015 Placed No 4 in the Glassation list of 'The Most Game-Changing Female Glass Artists'

2015 Number 25 in the Graphic Design Hub's list of 'The 30 Most Amazing Glass Artists Alive Today'

2013 Won the International Warm Glass Artists Prize

2009 Winner of the V&A's 'Inspired By' award for glass