

Zen Glass Studio

Venetian Glassblowing: 12 Week Course

Week 1-3: Introduction to Glassblowing

- This course is an introduction to the fundamental techniques of glassblowing. Students will learn to gather, shape and blow hot glass. Through technical exercises, practice and exploration students will learn to form glass using heat, gravity, centrifugal force and tools to consistently repeat a series of specific forms. Selected forms will range from functional to non-functional vessels as blown or solid worked objects. Students will also be introduced to the proper use of the equipment and safety procedures in the hot glass studio.

Week 4-6: Intermediate Glassblowing

- This course builds on the skills learned in Introduction to Glassblowing by expanding on more complex techniques through exploration and practice time. Students will build their repertoire of glass forms so that consistency, intention and design principles are evident. The development of problem solving techniques, personal style and expression will be facilitated through group and individual critiques. Students will also create more intricate forms by incorporating the transparent, translucent and opaque properties of colored glass. Finishing, grinding, texturing and decorating techniques will be examined and strengthened as the course progresses.

Week 7-8: Color Applications for Glass

- Color Applications builds on the skills and techniques explored in Introductory and Intermediate Glassblowing. In this course, students will learn to manipulate color and decoration on the interior and exterior surfaces of blown objects, along with blending and mixing within layers of solid glass. The techniques explored will promote understanding of the physical, optical, and chemical properties of colored glass as well as facilitate the development of personal style and expression. Fundamental principles of color theory and design will be integrated through projects including use of drawing books, journals, critique, and studio work.

Week 9: Cold Working Techniques

- An introduction to the reductive sculpting and surface design of glass, students will further process the objects they make in the hot studio using both hand-grinding tools and power tools. Cold working processes used will include grinding and polishing; attaching pieces of glass-to-glass and other materials; altering the shape and texture of glass; and creating surface design, texture and patterning.

Week 10-12: Designing for Production Glass

- This course will combine hot glassblowing techniques with designing for purpose and personal expression. Through a series of technical exercises, students will develop the skills to make consistently, the three basic shapes that are the building blocks for all glass forms. Based on student proficiency, each will design and execute a production item, (e.g. pint glass, small bowl, vase, paperweight), that incorporates both function and aesthetic principles. Color and surface decoration will be further explored in the development of personal style. Group and individual critiques will be used to facilitate development of technique, personal style and expression. Students will work individually as well as in teams, as this is an important element in making a production item quickly and efficiently.

Classes are held twice a week for three hours per session. All tools and materials will be provided by the instructor, though, students are responsible to bring their own color as needed.

This program also offers apprenticeship opportunities concurrently with Zen Glass professionals.

With Zen Glass Studio being a working studio, we ask for students to wear appropriate attire; long shorts or pants, close toed shoes and natural fiber materials. Safety glasses and kevlar sleeves will be provided by the instructor.