



January 16, 2018

Media Contact: Tess McShane
206-382-1305 Ext. 102
tess@glassart.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Glass Art Society Announces 2018 Award Recipients

January 15, 2018--The Glass Art Society (GAS) is pleased to announce the selection of its 2018 award recipients. These awards honor and acknowledge individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the development of the glass arts worldwide.

The Awards will be received at the Opening Ceremonies of the 47th Annual Glass Art Society Conference, // *Percorso di Vetro The Glass Path*, in Murano, Italy on Thursday, May 17.

Lifetime Achievement Award for:

Exceptional Artistic Achievement and Contributions to the Studio Glass Field

Livio Seguso was born in 1930 in Murano, where he still works. Seguso began his life-long affair with glass from a very early age, fascinated by the inexhaustible appeal of this wonderful medium.

After having achieved an in-depth knowledge of the traditional glassmaking techniques, and stimulated by his strong artistic sensitivity, this artist turned to plastic forms, and his research led him to explore with avid interest and personal the world of the of the great masters of contemporary sculpture. In those years, glass was not used as a medium of mere depiction, but it was in itself the very object of the artwork. Seguso's mastery of his medium is such that it allows him to express himself completely without being hampered by the limits of craftsmanship. The artist fully reveals the infinite potentialities of this mysterious material in an endless variation of spaces and thicknesses, always aiming at an absolute purity of forms.

Livio Seguso reached his full artistic maturity in the late 1970's, when he totally abandoned the pathway of the Murano glassmaking heritage, however noble, and began to focus on clear crystal glass, changeable and ambiguous in its transparency, and yet the perfect medium for the artist's uncontaminated imaginative vision. In recent years, his artistic research overstepped the confines of the medium used, experimenting with other materials like steel, rock, marble, and granite, and, more recently, wood.

Exceptional Technical Achievement and Contributions to the Studio Glass Field (Posthumously)

Pino Signoretto was born in 1944 in a small town near Venice and began working at a chandelier glassworks in 1954. In 1959 he learned from the great masters Alfredo Barbini, Livio Seguso, Ermanno Nason and Angelo Seguso. In 1960, at the age of 16, he became a master glassmaker. In 1978 he opened his own studio in Murano.

He went to Aumori in Japan by invitation in 1985, thus beginning a long series of trips to Japan. On his second visit he gave a demonstration in the presence of the imperial family. He has a permanent exhibition at the Museum of Venetian Art in Otaru, Japan. Throughout the years, Signoretto collaborated with artists and architects around the world including: Dali, Vedova, Licata, Kruff, Dal Pezzo, Vitali, Pomodoro, Willson, Koons, Kummer, Vercryse, Quinn, Chihuly and more. He also taught at several glass schools in the United States and worldwide and was a beloved mentor to countless glass artists, young and old. He was known for experimenting and encouraging students to push the boundaries.

Maestro Pino Signoretto died suddenly in Murano, Italy on December 30, 2017 at the age of 73. He knew he had been chosen for this award prior to his death. The glass community mourns his passing, but is eternally grateful for the art and legacy he leaves behind.

Visionary Award

Benjamin Moore was born in Olympia Washington in 1952. Moore received his BFA from California College of the Arts and his MFA from Rhode Island School of Design. He is a recipient of an NEA grant, American Craft Council Fellow, and a 2006 Libensky Award. Moore's work is in numerous museum and private collections throughout the world. He has worked as a designer at the Venini Factory, Murano-Venice, Italy; J&L Lobmeyr, Vienna, Austria; and Fostoria Glass Company, Moundsville, WV. For more than 30 years, Moore has been affiliated with Pilchuck Glass School as its Interim Executive Director, Artistic Director, Faculty, and currently a member of the Board of Trustees.

In the summer of 1978, Moore invited Muranese glass master Checcho Ungaro from Venini to Pilchuck Glass School. The following year, Ungaro declined and sent his brother-in-law Lino Tagliapietra instead. This began a wonderful relationship between Muranese and American artists. Moore's insight and vision into inviting these masters—and his love of Venetian glass and his understanding of techniques—helped raise American studio glassmaking to a new level.

Moore lives and works in Seattle, Washington and is the owner of Benjamin Moore, Inc. (BMI), where he and his wife Debora Moore produce their work. Over the years BMI has worked with and assisted many of the finest artists working in blown glass.

Honorary Lifetime Membership Award for Outstanding Service to Glass Art Society

Durk Valkema was born in 1951 and comes from a well-known family of glass artists in the Netherlands. He attended the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam and worked with Stanislav Libenský at the Academy of Applied Arts in Prague. Valkema works with hot and cold glass to analyze the architectonic principles of form and to develop kinetic plays of shadow and light.

Valkema served on the GAS Board of Directors from 1999-2003 and in 2002 was the Chair of the first European GAS conference in Amsterdam producing it, in full partnership with a host organization he helped to create.

Since the 1970s, Valkema has gained a strong reputation as a furnace builder pioneering energy efficient solutions. Through his broad technical and practical knowledge, in combination with aesthetic insight, Valkema acts as a sounding board in the development of competitive and technically innovative design for both art glass and product design. He currently designs and executes his own sculptural work and engineers glass systems and equipment for studio artists in Europe and the United States.

###