

Editorial COMMENTARY

by Tom Starland, Editor and Publisher

Had Enough of Summer?

Well, the lazy days of Summer, if you saw any of them, which I know I didn't, will soon be over as children will be heading back to school and colleges and universities will be coming back alive. But, the heat of Summer is going to stick around a few more months, and if we're lucky here in the Carolinas we won't have to deal with any hurricanes that want to come visit this year - knock on a storm shutter or in many cases a sheet of plywood.

Of course throughout Western North Carolina, "The Summer of Glass in WNC," will still be going on. Don't miss it. Coinciding with an exhibition at the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, NC, of works by multi-media artist Dale Chihuly's monumental glass sculptures - the community is celebrating both the historical and contemporary context of glass and its talented artists in Western North Carolina.

The *Chihuly at Biltmore* exhibition will be at the estate through Oct. 7, 2018. The exhibit will be on display in the Winter Garden of Biltmore House and the Estate's stunning gardens. For the first time, Biltmore will also host an evening experience in the gardens offering views of the sculptures after dark each Thursday through Sunday night. Alongside the Chihuly exhibition, the Asheville and regional glass community offers its own community-wide celebration of glass through special local exhibitions, tours, workshops and events.

For further info about all that is being offered during the "Summer of Glass" visit (www.exploreasheville.com/summer-of-glass/).

People are excited about these events. When we posted a notice about it on our *Carolina Arts* Facebook page we got over 8,000 views and a lot of chatter by friends

making plans to go.

Now, it's one thing to see the Chihuly installation, but it's truly amazing to see how raw molten glass is turned into works of art. Visiting an active working glass studio is really a treat.

Now North Carolina is definitely top dog when it comes to art glass in the Carolinas, but I've spent many an hour watching the "Cowboys" work their magic at One Eared Cow Glass in Columbia, SC. When you're in the Pee Dee area, visit Conway Glass in Conway, SC. You can also watch them work their magic.

You won't see anything like the Chihuly installation at Biltmore, but One Eared Cow Glass has presented some pretty amazing installations at the SC State Fair and the Zoo in Columbia and Conway Glass has provided works to Brookgreen Gardens near Pawleys Island, SC. Many people and myself, who lost out on the creative gene, will see that these are fantastic wonders, especially when you think these things started out as sand.

Believe it or not, glass is made from liquid sand. You can make glass by heating ordinary sand (which is mostly made of silicon dioxide) until it melts and turns into a liquid. You won't find that happening on your local beach: sand melts at the incredibly high temperature of 1700°C (3090°F).

It's also more complicated than just getting some sand off your local beach and heating it up and - Voilà - you've got a work of art glass. Like all things in the creative process - it takes special equipment, special materials, and a lot of skill to make a true work of art. Which also makes it a special thing to own a true work of art glass. Knowing the process makes owning a work of art glass - extra special. And, knowing that process also makes you understand the cost of a work of art.

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