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Chicago
IN GLASS

JUDYCHICAGO

LewAllenContemporary

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from top: Chicago painting *Sappho in Glass*
Castings in progress at the Lhotsky foundry, Czech Republic
Inspecting cold work with Zdenek Lhotsky,
owner of the Lhotsky foundry
Color palette demonstrating the range of
glass painting colors, created by Chicago with Ruth Dobbins

JudyChicago

CHICAGO IN GLASS

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Will travel in 2007 to Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery – Waterloo, Ontario, Canada
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THE VOICE IN THE VEINS

DAVID REVERE McFADDEN *Chief Curator, Museum of Arts & Design, New York*

Chicago in Glass is the premiere showing of a new body of work in glass by Judy Chicago. Chicago is not unfamiliar with the material, having used glass in several major works from earlier periods in her career as elements in mixed media projects. Included in the present exhibition are several works documenting this history.

Chicago in Glass, however, is a coherent body of work made exclusively of glass (along with related drawings), both cast and fused. Many of the works in the exhibition focus on the corporeal and symbolic role of the human hand. This suite of works, like all of Chicago's thematic explorations, is highly focused, carefully edited, and painstakingly crafted. And, in keeping with the artist's philosophy, the works function simultaneously on multiple levels.

For Chicago, the hand serves as a universally regarded communication device capable of conveying strong emotions and deeply held convictions through simple and stylized gestures; being made of glass, these three-dimensional and two-dimensional depictions of hands are transparent or translucent, and interact with every changing nuance of light. As "see-through" extensions of the body, these hands serve as metaphors for spiritual and bodily states of being and meaning, and as a reference point for the artist's profound engagement with materials and process, an engagement that has shaped her philosophy, behavior, and creative output over the years. Now, after nearly four decades of work with ceramics, paint, performance, fiber, fireworks, wood, paper, and metal, Chicago has arrived at a body of works realized in cast, carved, painted, and etched glass that reveal the voice embedded in her own hands in a compellingly direct and uncompromising manner.

The concept of a unified body of work, often realized by a collaborative team assembled by the artist, that examines a specific theme or constellation of ideas has been important to Chicago since her earliest years. This artistic stance was undoubtedly influenced by the artist's involvement in performance art in the late 1960s and early '70s—her own version of a *Gesamtkunstwerk* or total work of art involving sight, sound, movement and, in the case of fireworks, smell. Chicago's rigorous investiga-

tions into her chosen themes have always been paralleled in her working procedures and in her unrelenting quest for knowledge of specific techniques to transform materials. A quest for perfection in every detail and on every surface propels the artist to become fully conversant with her materials and with the technical knowledge needed to work with them. Art historian Jenni Sorkin has noted that the artist's dedication to understanding the technical and physical background to the materials is something that has given Chicago's approach its distinctive personality; many early works conceived by the artist were not achievable with a standard technical expertise. For some early paintings and some performance works the artist determined to fulfill apprenticeships with an automobile body painting shop and with a fireworks specialist.¹ In preparation for work on her magnum opus, *The Dinner Party* (1974-1979), she sought out practitioners of china painting from whom she could learn. The result was a work of art dependent upon "ladies' hobby" crafts—quilting, embroidery, appliqué and, of course, china painting—and their associated technical expertise.

It is this patient and persevering need for "know how" that aligned her work early on with what has become a new generation of artists that have embraced materials and process, and are today working in knitting, lace making, embroidery, assemblage, silversmithing and blacksmithing, and glassblowing. Chicago has become an early role model for this new generation as one of the first female artists in the second half of the twentieth century to transgress the accepted boundaries and hierarchies that separated art, craft, and design. Equally significant is Chicago's collaborative stance, in which the talents of others to help her achieve a perfection in execution that matches the level of artistic vision are both acknowledged and embraced. Chicago gracefully and seamlessly subverts the romantic notion of the artist

working in splendid and tortured isolation by asserting that art has a social and moral purpose and that art making can assert the integrity and value of collaboration and community.

Glass became a central feature of Chicago's *Holocaust Project: From Darkness into Light* (1985-1993), a powerful suite comprising woven tapestry, painting, photographic imaging, silk-screening, and glass. Each element in the suite reinforced the profound message of human beings' extraordinary potential for evil, both actively and passively. At the same time, the denouement of this horrific saga revolves around Chicago's largest work in glass from the suite, *Rainbow Shabbat* (1992).² Both stained glass and the triptych format for *Rainbow Shabbat* (a focal point of the present exhibition) were consciously chosen by Chicago because of their traditional and historical Christian associations³ that the artist subversively and effectively transforms into a tribute to universal understanding, a "vision of a different world," that uses the Shabbat service as "an international sharing across race, gender, class, and species."⁴

In *Rainbow Shabbat* glass performs another function unique to the medium and achievable to the same degree by no other medium—the transmission of pure light. And with light comes a purity of color that can be ineffable and deeply spiritual. For over two thousand years it has been the transparency of glass and the purity of the colors the medium allows that has given glass its primary position in art, craft, and design. As long ago as dynastic Egypt an opaque glass paste often substituted for gemstones in jewelry and the decorative arts. With the discovery of a purer glass recipe during the Roman Empire, a more transparent and brilliantly colored glass appeared on the scene. It was in the Middle Ages that glass assumed its role as a sister art to painting in the great cathedrals of Europe. Biblical narratives, religious figures, and motifs inspired by both flora and fauna proliferated in churches. Beyond the narrative and pictorial importance of the medium, it was the radiance of light—a symbol of the divine spirit—that animated the compositions. Chicago tapped into the magic of light and color in this work as a way of reinforcing her message. For Chicago, "light is life."⁵

In 1974 Chicago had created a Prismacolor drawing titled *Female Rejection Drawing #3: Peeling Back*, as part of her "Rejection Quintet," with a stylized vaginal/floral image that became virtually

a signature motif for the artist. If a vaginal image can be said to be seminal in a female artist's work, *Peeling Back* certainly qualifies. In 2000, two and a half decades later, Chicago revisited the image in a carved, laminated, and painted glass version of *Peeling Back* that allowed an eerie light to suffuse the imagery and give the motif a more powerful physical (and emotional) presence. The work, included in this exhibition, was created in collaboration with glass artist Vicki Leon,⁶ and was followed by four other works in glass, including *Arcanum in Shades of Gray* (2000), a four-panel work etched and painted with enamels for an exhibition on female bodybuilding at The New Museum, New York (also included in the present exhibition).

The human hand, the most quotidian and yet most remarkable extension of our bodies, is the leitmotif of the new body of work highlighted in "Chicago in Glass." How Chicago arrived at the concept of focusing on the hand deserves exploration as a logical continuation of ideas that she explored from her earliest days. It is not accidental that the earliest work by the artist illustrated in Edward Lucie-Smith's monograph⁷ is made with finger paints. In this quickly executed work by a six-year old, scores of individual finger prints and strokes make up the textured surface. A quarter of a century later, in 1971, Chicago was accorded a solo exhibition at Jack Glenn Gallery in Chicago. Her announcement for the exhibition once again focuses attention on her hands; in this instance covered by boxing gloves, reminding us that hands are power, literally and figuratively. Hands reappear in many guises in Chicago's work over the years: holding a gun (*Gunsmoke*, 1971); removing a bloody tampon (*Red Flag*, 1971); taped and bound (*Ablutions*, 1972); and then recede in prominence for a time as Chicago's vaginal imagery takes center stage.

In "Birth Project," (1981-1985) hands make their comeback as powerful instruments of content. In *Creation of the World* (1981) from this suite, hands play a key role as the links between the inner world of the womb and the external world of birth. Hands support and nurture, hands link and comfort, hands pull and insist, hands resist and cling. In *Birth Tear/Tear* (1985) the birth mothers' hands grasp her thighs, holding them open for the completion of the act. The hands of the emerging infants grasp and even claw their progenitor's flesh; as innocent as any newborn, they are still capable of producing great pain.

It is in the suite of works titled “Powerplay” (1982-1986), a powerful indictment of violence (particularly violence by men toward women), that hands become primary players in the spotlight of most canvases. In the images of *Rainbow Man Triptych* (1984), the protagonist in the narrative of “love, dread, longing, loathing, desire, and terror”⁸ that the artist weaves in this suite, his seduction is conducted entirely with his hands. The hands entice, the hands welcome, and they hypnotize. In *Driving the World to Destruction* (1985), the focal point of the composition is a steering wheel that has mutated out of the body of the earth, and which is being grasped with an ecstatic fury by the male figure. The culmination of the idea of the hand as implement of power and mirror of the soul is found in *In the Shadow of the Handgun* (1983), in which the pointed index finger explodes with gore; an inanimate gun has morphed into a deathly extension of the living body.

The analysis of hands in Chicago’s work could be pursued much further, but her focus on the human hand, I believe, links her work with many ancient, even archetypal, concepts of the hand as sign and as symbol. Included in the exhibition are a series of drawings that accompany the works in glass, depictions of hands and gesture that are ripe for interpretation. The simplicity of the gestures is what gives these works their narrative power—the viewer is asked to engage with the meanings of these gestures on an intimate and direct level. They evoke the mysterious clarity and poetic presence of the spray-painted hands found in the 17,000 year old caves of Lascaux in France. These hands are capable of physically manipulating the environment for good or bad, but they are also capable of making art and thus speaking to the core of the human experience.

Hand gestures are a parallel language system, not only for historical Native Americans, but from seventeenth century Italy and eighteenth century France to present day American Sign-Language, for many thousands of individuals. Baseball players plan their actions with a silent language of hands, and we revert to hand traffic signals when the lighting systems in cars or on street corners fail. We ward off the evil eye by making a gesture with our hands, and we applaud when pleased with a performance. The upraised fist has been a symbol of resistance for centuries, and the open extended palm a symbol of welcome and nurture.

In directing our attention to the choreography of the hand, Chicago offers clues into the meaning of what we say silently with our hands.

The first in the series of cast glass hands are *Damaged Arm* and *Disfigured Hand*, both from 2005. The deterioration and dismemberment depicted in these two works grew out of a constellation of accident and intention. In 2003 Chicago was a resident artist at the Pilchuck School of Glass outside Seattle, Washington. There she was able to experiment for the first time with casting of molten gaffer’s lead crystal glass. The three-dimensional hands that she made with the standard pot glass survived in the mold, but they were irreparably damaged in transit. Chicago wanted to salvage the pieces, however, and transformed the existing damages into planned accidents by further erosion of the surfaces through etching and by adding colored glass paints to the surface. What began as two more standardized gestures became three-dimensional versions of the hand-gun she depicted in her 1983 *In the Shadow of the Handgun*, but with the difference that these glass hands appeared to be more victim than implement of violence.

Working with master glass artisans Ruth and Norm Dobbins of Santa Fe, New Mexico, Chicago began a series of fused glass panels depicting close-ups of hands in various postures. Importantly, these are all disembodied hands, thus removing them from the specifics of time and place and transforming them into universal and timeless symbols. The exploration of the hand was both artistic and, to some degree, medical. Beginning with hands depicted entirely from the outside, with their covering of tactile and sensitive skin in works such as studies in 2003 and 2004 for *Handout/Handsoff*, she began her catalogue of gestured conversations. An image repeated in other studies and in a final version in 2006, *Handout/Handsoff* reveals the ambiguous layering of meaning embedded in any gesture: is the closed hand about to present something of value to the open-handed recipient, or is something requested being denied and hidden? Is the open hand a sign of welcome and connection, and is the closed fist a threat of violence?

The series continues with x-ray examinations of the inner musculature and bone structure of the hands, those physical systems that permit gestures to be created. In *Musclehand* (2006)

and, even more strikingly, a study in 2003 for *Flayed Arm*, the skin has been peeled away to expose the raw and throbbing sinews and muscle. We have moved into the flesh of the matter in a literal sense; the translucency of the glass and the brilliance of the glass paint colors combine to create a memorable, if somewhat unsettling, series of images. The expose of the interior gesture continues in the series of works titled *Bony Hand* (2004, 2006), in which the skeletal structure is laid bare. We are literally looking through ourselves and into ourselves at the same precise moment; Chicago reminds us that dualism is a myth—body and soul are inseparable.

After traveling to Prague, where she collaborated with a workshop able to cast her hands in a lead-free glass, a medium more amenable to etching, sandblasting, and glass painting, she was able to cast nine three-dimensional works, all completed in 2006. The surfaces of the hands have been modeled by eroding the surface using extremely fine abrasive particles expelled at great velocity with air. The matte surfaces thus produced are painted with glass paints and repeatedly fired to create a surface that on close examination resembles watercolors.

Revealed Palm suggests a signboard image for a palm reader; the upright palm is entirely open and held in a relaxed and natural position. Rather than lines that define the character behind the palm we are shown flesh and ligaments. While intriguing and engaging, the work also evokes the “touch/don’t touch” feelings that arise with depictions of crucifixion.

A work comprising two hands, titled *Hands of Choice*, is made up of two virtually identical hands in identical poses. It is the manner of their display that differentiates their meanings—a hand extended toward the viewer encourages closeness, while the identical hand shown upright becomes a sign of caution. At another reading the extended palm is one of careless disregard, while the upright palm conveys a friendly greeting. The reading of meaning is truly in the mind of the viewer.

Two clenched fists are included in this body of work. *Flaming Fist* uses this gesture to evoke a heroic atmosphere. The fist may imply a sacrificial offering or the last defiant gesture of someone consumed by the flame. Likewise, *Grand Snake Arm*, with its tightly encircling band of gilded serpent flesh, can be read as a triumphant paean to human strength and endurance, or as the

struggle to break free from natural and supernatural forces that dictate our behaviors.

Judy Chicago achieves in this important and timely body of work a telling resume of her belief in the power of the human body to communicate the power of the human spirit. She uses glass in these works because it is the only material that exists in the realm of the tangible and the intangible at the same time. True to her overall philosophy and her practice of art making, she has taken on “a simple idea—to see how materials can transform an idea.”⁹ Chicago’s simple idea has evolved into a corps de ballet of gestures that encapsulate and reveal the ambiguous and contradictory nature of our species. At the same time, the artist pays homage to her passion for knowledge of materials and process, a passion that has informed her art from the outset, by using the image of the hand. Judy Chicago has depended on her hands as her most important tools all of her life. Her art is the direct result of her conviction that the making of art is both physical and spiritual. In her china painting, in her work with textile techniques, her spray painting, her drawing, and in her work with glass, she uses hands to reveal her own voice in the veins, and to speak words that can never be written on paper.

ENDNOTES

¹ Jenni Sorkin, “Minimal/Liminal: Judy Chicago and Minimalism,” in *Judy Chicago Minimalism, 1965-1973*, LewAllen Contemporary, Santa Fe, September 10–October 5, 2004, page 2.

² Executed with stained glass fabricator Bob Gomez and glass painter Dorothy Maddy.

³ This point was noted by Edward Lucie-Smith, *Judy Chicago: An American Vision* (New York: Watson-Guption Publications, 2000): 134.

⁴ Quote from the artist in Lucie-Smith, *ibid.*: 168-169.

⁵ Conversation between author and artist, Belen, New Mexico, August 2006.

⁶ Leon developed a technique of laminating and sandblasting mirrored and colored glass, which was then painted with enamels or acrylics. The lamination process made it impossible to paint and fire the glass with glass paints to achieve the subtle shades and gradations of color desired by the artist. It is the latter technique of multiply-fired glass painting, combined with etching and sandblasting, used to produce Chicago’s current body of work.

⁷ *Op. cit.*

⁸ Quote from the artist in Lucie-Smith, *op.cit.*, p. 101.

⁹ Conversation between author and artist, Belen, New Mexico, August, 2006

ABOUT THE PROCESS



Norm Dobbins carving cast glass

Chicago with Ruth Dobbins spray painting *Sappho in Glass*

Chicago in her glass painting studio

This exhibition is in part the result of a 3½ year collaboration between artist Judy Chicago and the team of Ruth and Norm Dobbins. In addition, several works are included that were created prior to the beginning of that collaboration, when Chicago was first becoming interested in glass as a potential medium for the expression of her ideas. Over the course of her forty-year career, Chicago has worked in a variety of materials, each chosen for their expressive potential. In glass, she has found her highest challenge. With glass, she has been able to explore issues that have been fundamental to her oeuvre; the combination of strength and fragility, the possibility of seeing through the surface to what lies within; questions about both vulnerability and mortality. In early 2003, Judy Chicago met the Dobbins and their collaboration began at the same time that she was becoming Artist-in-Residence at the renowned Pilchuck Glass School, established by Dale Chihuly outside of Seattle.

Chicago designed several images which Norm Dobbins etched onto glass, then sent to Pilchuck for Chicago to paint and fire. Their first discovery was that by successively firing glass paints onto etched surfaces, the glass was strengthened because it went through the annealing process again, a process that involves the relieving of stress in glass when going through its cooling phase. However, applying these paints to cast pieces was an altogether different problem, one that would require three years to resolve.

In the meantime, Chicago and Ruth Dobbins began to experiment with fusing different colors of glass, then carving and painting the images with glass paints. When they began, they had no idea if it was even possible to re-fire carved glass. Even more difficult was the challenge of casting, then carving, painting and successfully re-firing carved, cast pieces. In fact, they are still in the middle of solving some of these problems.

Chicago also began working in the Czech Republic with the Lhotsky glass foundry, established by famous glass innovators Stanislav Libensky and Jaroslava Brychtova. Today, their tradition is continued by such accomplished glass artists as Howard Ben Tre and Karen LaMonte. Like Chicago, these artists are working in a scale that cannot be accommodated by any American glass casting facility.

The unique quality of the works created by Chicago in collaboration with the Dobbins resides not only in the amazing technical feats they achieved but, more importantly, in their use of the medium of glass for the highest form of artistic expression.



Peeling Back, 2000,
Etching and acrylic paint on
laminated and mirrored
glass. Chromatic erosion by
Vicki Leon, San Diego, CA.,
29"h x 29"w x 4½"d installed



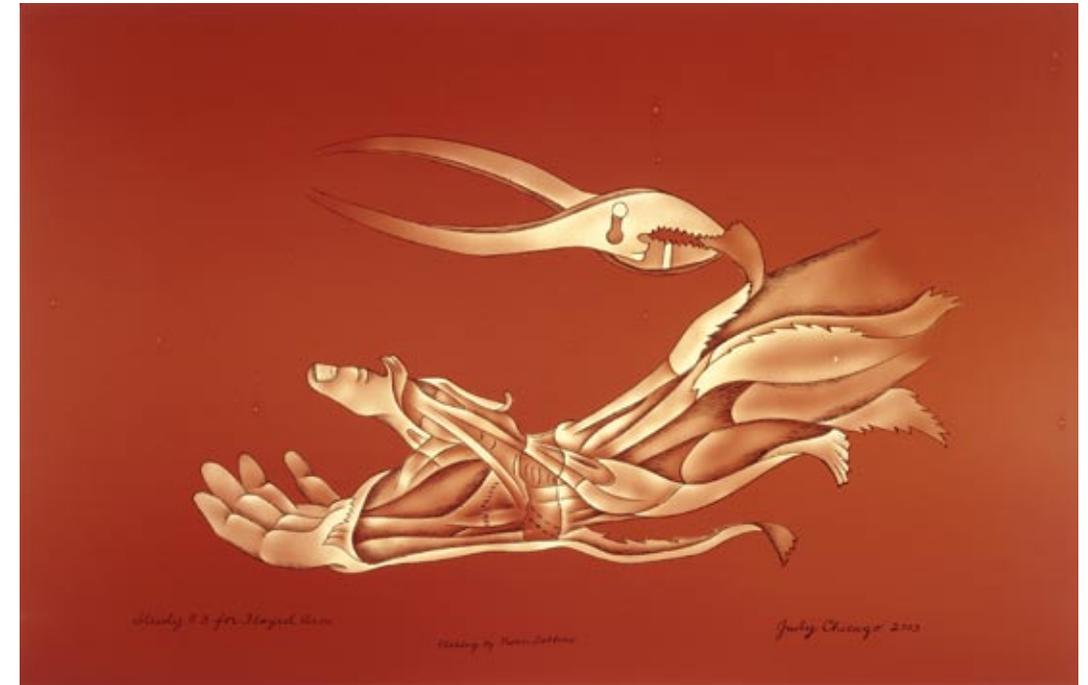
Arcanum in Shades of Gray, 2000,
Etching and enamel paint
on glass. Chromatic erosion
by Vicki Leon, San Diego, CA.
29 1/4" h x 19 5/8" w each,
36" h x 32" w x 50" d installed



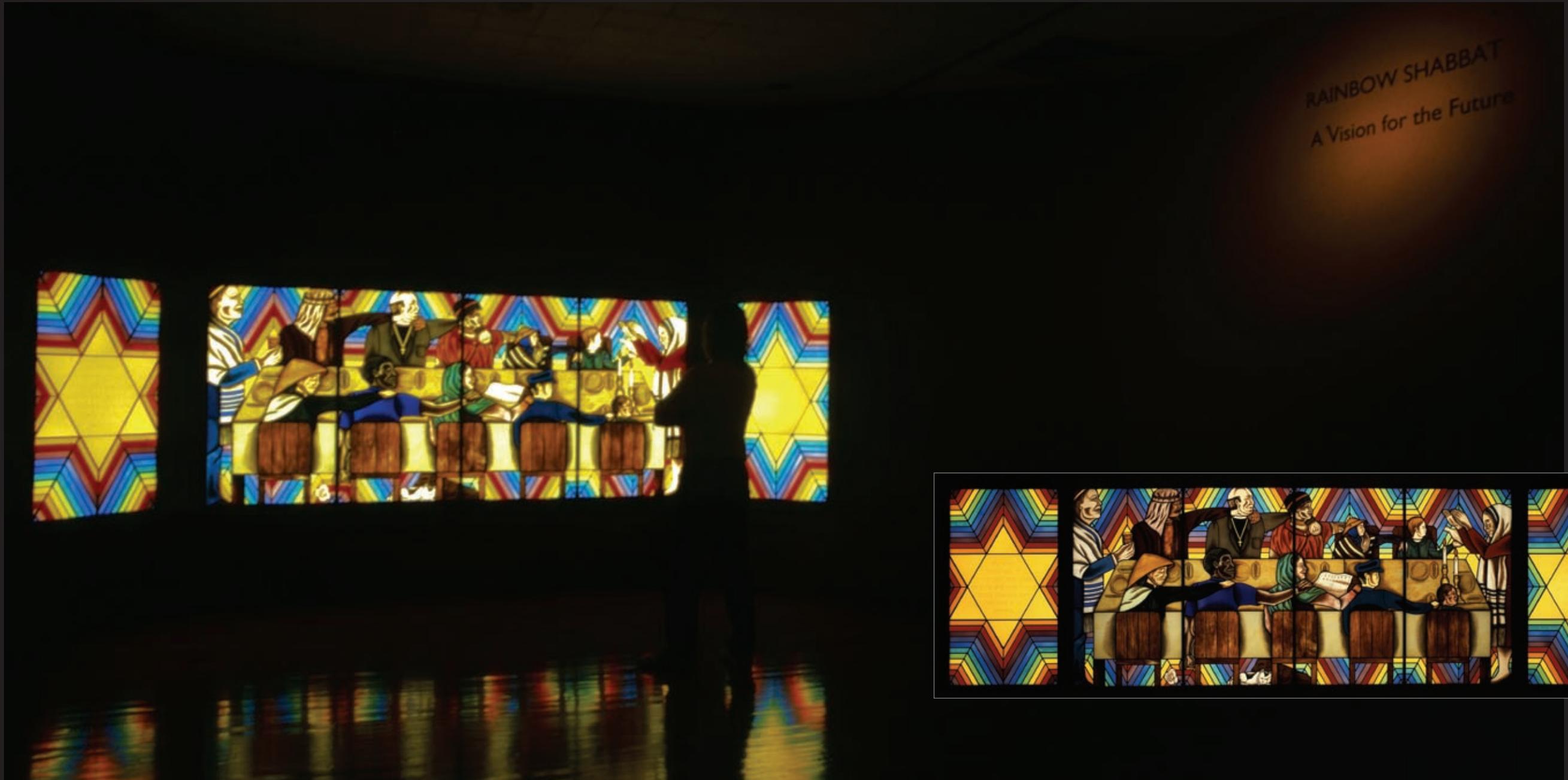
Sappho in Glass, 2006,
Etching and glass paint on
clear glass. Multi-stage
carving by Dobbins Studio,
24" h x 25 1/4" w x 8" d installed



Through the Flower in Glass,
2006, Etching and glass paint
on clear glass. Multi-stage
carving by Dobbins Studio,
26"h x 27"w x 8"d installed



Study #3 for Flayed Arm, 2003,
Etching, silver stain, and pen
work on flashed glass. Low-relief
carving by Dobbins Studio,
15"h x 22"w x 5"d installed



Rainbow Shabbat from the *Holocaust Project*, 1992
Stained glass fabricated by Bob Gomez. Hand painted
by Dorothy Maddy from Judy Chicago's cartoon,
4'6"h x 16'w installed



top: *Bony Reach #1*, 2005.
Etching, glass paint, and pen work on fused glass.
Kiln work and multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio,
12 1/2"h x 19 1/2"w x 7"d installed

bottom: *Large Fused Bony Hand*, 2006,
Etching, glass paint, and pen work on fused glass.
Kiln work and multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio,
19"h x 27"w x 8"d installed



Study for Temporal Connection, 2005,
Etching and glass paint on clear glass.
Multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio
12 1/2"h x 17"w x 6 3/4"d installed (inset)



Large Fused Musclehand, 2006,
Etching and glass paint on fused glass. Kiln work
and multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio,
19"h x 26½"w x 8"d installed



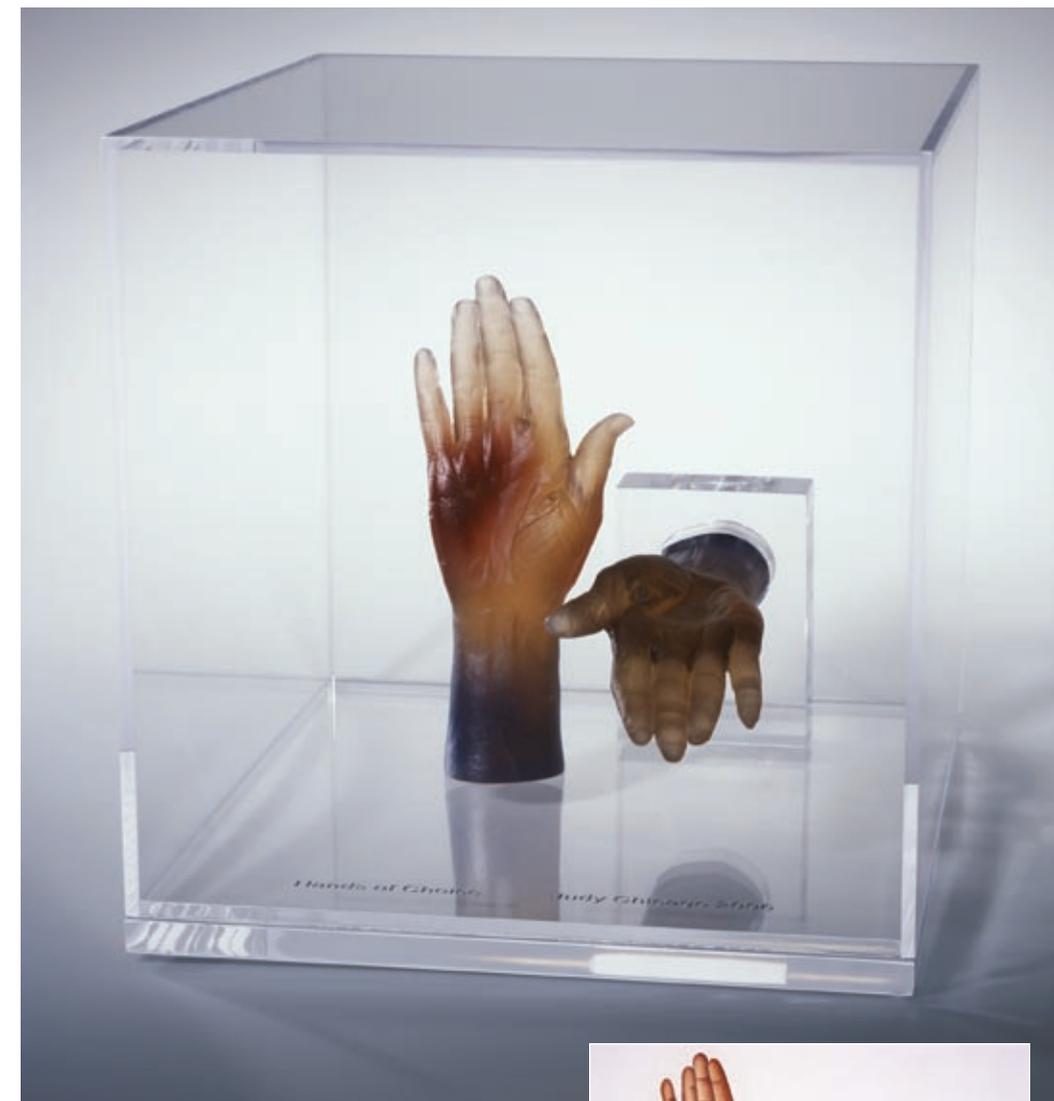
Double Clear Handout/Handsoff, 2006,
Etching and glass paint on clear glass.
Multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio,
21"h x 30"w x 12"d installed



left: *Disfigured Hand*, 2005
Etching and glass paint on cast glass.
Multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio,
12"h x 14"w x 11"d installed



right: *Damaged Arm*, 2005
Etching and glass paint on cast glass.
Multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio,
22"h x 14"w x 13"d installed



Hands of Choice, 2006,
Glass paint on cast glass,
14"h x 14"w x 16"d installed

inset: *Study for Hands of Choice*,
2006, Watercolor on paper,
15" x 18" installed





Snake Arm, 2006,
Etching, cold work, and gold leaf
on cast glass. Multi-stage carving
and gold leaf by Dobbins Studio,
15"h x 12"w x 11"d installed

inset: Study for Snake Arm,
2006, Watercolor on paper;
18" x 15" installed



Flaming Fist, 2006,
Etching and glass paint
on cast glass. Multi-stage
carving by Dobbins Studio,
15"h x 12"w x 11"d installed

inset: Study for Flaming Fist,
2006, Watercolor on paper;
18" x 15" installed



Pissed Off, 2006
Prismacolor on black Arches,
29" x 37" installed



top: Claws That Won't Let Go, 2004,
Prismacolor on black Arches,
18" x 22" installed

middle: Bloody Discharge, 2004,
Prismacolor on black Arches,
18" x 22" installed

bottom: Bony Hand I, 2004,
Prismacolor on black Arches,
18" x 22" installed

BIOGRAPHY

Judy Chicago is an acclaimed figure in contemporary art, well known for the convention-shattering content of her art in such monumental works as *The Dinner Party*, the *Birth Project*, *Powerplay*, the *Holocaust Project*, and *Resolutions: A Stitch in Time*. Combined with her acute sense of social and political content, her fluency with diverse media has distinguished her career. For more than forty years, she has created fine art in an unusually wide range of media including painting, drawing, printmaking, china-painting, ceramics, needlework and tapestry—and, more recently, glass.

Chicago's technical versatility and creative inventiveness, together with her longstanding commitment to creating art in the service of social change, have led to her being hailed—by art critic and historian Edward Lucie-Smith, among others—not only as a founder of the Feminist Art movement but as a forerunner among today's Post-Modern artists. The opening in March 2007 of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum of Art marks a key chapter in Chicago's career as it includes space specifically designed for the permanent installation of her foundational work, *The Dinner Party*. Not only a milestone for the artist, the opening of this permanent housing for *The Dinner Party* represents a major step in the institutionalization of Feminist Art as an ongoing contemporary art movement.

Chicago pioneered Feminist Art and art education in the early 1970s through unique programs for women at California State University-Fresno and later the California Institute of the Arts. As artistic director of Through the Flower, a nonprofit corporation she co-founded in 1978, Chicago remains a strong supporter of the movement today. Chicago created *The Dinner Party*, a monumental, mixed media tribute to the cultural achievements of women in history, with assistance from hundreds of volunteers in the late 1970s. She next brought her critical feminist gaze to images of birth and creation in the *Birth Project*, from 1980 to 1985, and to an examination of the gender construct of masculinity in *Powerplay*, from 1982 to 1987.

An earlier period in Chicago's career involved the making of Minimalist work between 1965 and 1973. LewAllen Contemporary presented the first major retrospective of her Minimalist oeuvre in 2004; and recent museum exhibitions—the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art and the Centre Pompidou in Paris—have recognized Chicago's significant contributions to the direction and focus of Minimalism and, in particular, the sub-genre known as the Finish Fetish movement.

The artist's long concern with issues of power and powerlessness, and a growing interest in her Jewish heritage, led to another major body of work, the *Holocaust Project: From Darkness Into Light*, created between 1985 and 1993 in collaboration with her husband, photographer Donald Woodman. The *Holocaust Project* premiered in 1993 and then traveled for ten years. In the late 1990s, Chicago collaborated with skilled needleworkers on *Resolutions: A Stitch in Time*, a reinterpretation of traditional adages and proverbs in needlework combined with painting and sculpture. The project premiered in 2000, and it too traveled to multiple venues.

Chicago has been accorded her place in all of the standard art survey texts, most recently in revised editions of *Janson's History of Art* (2007) and H.W. and Anthony F. Janson's *A Basic History of Western Art* (2006), both published by Pearson Prentice Hall. With these editions, one of the most influential authorities within the art community acknowledges Chicago's importance both to the Feminist Art movement and to Post-Modernism. As already noted, Edward Lucie-Smith made a similar appraisal in *Judy Chicago: An American Vision* (Watson-Guptill, 2000), the first comprehensive monograph on Chicago's body of work.

In February 2007, Harmony Books will release *Becoming Judy Chicago*, a new, critical biography by Gail Levin, Professor of Art History, American Studies, and Women Studies at Baruch College CUNY and Professor of 20th Century American Art at the Graduate Center of CUNY.

Ten published books written by Judy Chicago have brought her art and ideas to readers around the world; and in February 2007, Merrell Publishers will release her latest book, a new and definitive text on her most famous work, *The Dinner Party: From Creation to Preservation*.

Chicago is the recipient of numerous grants, awards and honorary degrees from prestigious colleges and universities. Her work has been seen in numerous exhibitions, both nationally and internationally, and is in many distinguished collections including those of the British Museum, the Brooklyn Museum, the Getty Trust, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts, Santa Fe, the National Gallery, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. A major retrospective of her career was presented at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in 2002-2003.

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST



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Any demanding technical process requires expert assistance and glass is no exception. In fact, I would say that glass requires a significant level of collaboration as no single person can possibly master (or mistress) the many aspects of glass production, particularly if one aspires to use glass for personal expression rather than for its inherent decorative qualities. In my own glass journey, I have been fortunate to have been aided by a succession of capable and talented people beginning with Bob Gomez and Flo Perkins who worked with me when I first started exploring stained glass in the early nineties. And then Flo helped me again a decade later when I wanted to go to Pilchuck to begin the experiments that eventually led to this exhibition. In the intervening years, I worked with Vicki Leon, who introduced me to glass etching, a technique that reaches its maximum potential in the hands of Norm Dobbins, who was able to translate my images with great fidelity to their intentions. Equally excellent is his wife Ruth, who has been my partner in the development of the glass painting methodology used in the work, an approach to glass painting to which I was first introduced when I apprenticed myself to china-painters in the early 1970's in preparation for creating *The Dinner Party*, my symbolic history of women in Western Civilization which will soon be permanently housed in the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum. It was from the china-painters that I discovered the possibility of multiple-fired painting on glass, a technique that Ruth and I spent many months perfecting. Ruth also worked out the fusing methods we employed along with the firing schedules, which was no easy feat. Along the way, we received contributions of glass from the Spectrum and Uroboros companies, which we greatly appreciated. Also, the work in this show greatly benefited from the incredible abilities of Bill Weaver and Kelly Johnson, both of whom have aided me in innumerable ways. Although my husband, Donald Woodman is primarily a photographer, he is also exceedingly clever. In addition to doing all the photography for the catalog, he stepped into the breach of my limited mechanical abilities to figure out all sorts of systems to ensure the completion of this body of work. Of course, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge Bob Gardner, Ken Marvel and the staff of LewAllen Contemporary. Every artist should be lucky enough to have such a supportive gallery. Lastly, I and all my collaborators want to express our appreciation to David McFadden for his insightful and meaningful catalog essay.

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

CHICAGO IN GLASS



1. *Rainbow Shabbat* from the *Holocaust Project*, 1992, Stained glass fabricated by Bob Gomez. Hand painted by Dorothy Maddy from Judy Chicago's cartoon, 4'-6"h x 16'w installed
2. *Arcanum in Shades of Gray*, 2000, Etching and enamel paint on glass. Chromatic erosion by Vicki Leon, San Diego, CA. 29¼"h x 19¾"w each, 36"h x 32"w x 50"d installed
3. *Peeling Back*, 2000, Etching and acrylic paint on laminated and mirrored glass. Chromatic erosion by Vicki Leon, San Diego, CA., 29"h x 29"w x 4½"d installed
4. *Sappho in Glass*, 2006, Etching and glass paint on clear glass. Multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 24"h x 25¼"w x 8"d installed
5. *Through the Flower in Glass*, 2006, Etching and glass paint on clear glass. Multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 26"h x 27"w x 8"d installed
6. *Fused Study #1 for Musclehand*, 2004, Etching, glass paint, and pen work on fused glass. Kiln work and multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 7"h x 12"w x 4"d installed
7. *Musclehand #1*, 2006, Etching, glass paint, and pen work on fused glass. Kiln work and multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 12½"h x 19"w x 6"d installed
8. *Fused Study #1 for Bony Hand*, 2004, Etching and glass paint on fused glass. Kiln work and multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 7"h x 12"w x 4"d installed
9. *Fused Study #2 for Bony Hand*, 2004, Etching and glass paint on fused glass. Kiln work and multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 7"h x 12"w x 4"d installed
10. *Fused Study #3 for Handout/Handsoff*, 2003, Etching and glass paint on fused glass. Kiln work and multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 7"h x 10½"w x 4"d installed
11. *Fused Study #4 for Handout/Handsoff*, 2004, Etching and glass paint on fused glass. Kiln work and multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 7"h x 9¾"w x 4"d installed
12. *Study #2 for Handout/Handsoff*, 2003/2006, Etching and glass paint on plate glass. Multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 13"h x 25¼"w x 7"d installed
13. *Fused Small Handout/Handsoff*, 2006, Etching and glass paint on fused glass. Kiln work and multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 7"h x 12"w x 4"d installed
14. *Bony Reach #1*, 2005, Etching, glass paint, and pen work on fused glass. Kiln work and multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 12½"h x 19½"w x 7"d installed
15. *Bony Reach #2*, 2005, Etching, glass paint, and pen work on fused glass. Kiln work and multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 12½"h x 19"w x 6"d installed
16. *Study #3 for Flayed Arm*, 2003, Etching, silver stain, and pen work on flashed glass. Low-relief carving by Dobbins Studio, 15"h x 22"w x 5"d installed
17. *Study for Temporal Connection*, 2005, Etching and glass paint on clear glass. Multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 12½"h x 17"w x 6¾"d installed
18. *Temporal Connection #1*, 2006, Etching and glass paint on clear glass. Multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 15"h x 23"w x 7"d installed
19. *Large Fused Temporal Connection*, 2006, Etching and glass paint on fused glass. Kiln work and multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 19"h x 26½"w x 8"d installed
20. *Large Fused Musclehand*, 2006, Etching and glass paint on fused glass. Kiln work and multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 19"h x 26½"w x 8"d installed
21. *Large Fused Bony Hand*, 2006, Etching, glass paint, and pen work on fused glass. Kiln work and multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 19"h x 27"w x 8"d installed
22. *Large Fused Handout/Handsoff*, 2006, Etching and glass paint on fused glass. Kiln work and multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 19"h x 27"w x 8"d installed
23. *Double Clear Handout/Handsoff*, 2006, Etching and glass paint on clear glass. Multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 21"h x 30"w x 12"d installed
24. *Revealed Palm*, 2006, Etching and glass paint on cast glass. Multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 9"h x 17"w x 11"d installed
25. *Hands of Choice*, 2006, Glass paint on cast glass, 14"h x 14"w x 16"d installed
26. *Flaming Fist*, 2006, Etching and glass paint on cast glass. Multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 15"h x 12"w x 11"d installed
27. *Snake Arm*, 2006, Etching, cold work, and gold leaf on cast glass. Multi-stage carving and gold leaf by Dobbins Studio, 15"h x 12"w x 11"d installed
28. *Grand Snake Arm*, 2006, Etching, cold work, and gold leaf on cast glass. Multi-stage carving and gold leaf by Dobbins Studio, 24"h x 24"w x 21"d installed
29. *Exposed Arm*, 2006, Etching, cold work, and glass paint on cast glass, 12"h x 25"w x 14"d installed
30. *Bony Palm*, 2006, Etching and glass paint on cast glass. Multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 12"h x 25"w x 14"d installed
31. *Twinned Veins*, 2006, Cold work and glass paint on cast glass, 15"h x 20"w x 14"d installed
32. *Disfigured Hand*, 2005, Etching and glass paint on cast glass. Multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 12"h x 14"w x 11"d installed
33. *Damaged Arm*, 2005, Etching and glass paint on cast glass. Multi-stage carving by Dobbins Studio, 22"h x 14"w x 13"d installed
34. *Study for Bony Palm*, 2006, Watercolor on paper, 15" x 18" installed
35. *Study #2 for Bony Palm*, 2006, Watercolor on paper, 15" x 18" installed
36. *Study for Exposed Arm*, 2006, Watercolor on paper, 15" x 18" installed
37. *Study for Flaming Fist*, 2006, Watercolor on paper, 18" x 15" installed
38. *Study for Hands of Choice*, 2006, Watercolor on paper, 15" x 18" installed
39. *Study for Revealed Palm*, 2006, Watercolor on paper, 18" x 15" installed
40. *Study for Snake Arm*, 2006, Watercolor on paper, 18" x 15" installed
41. *Study for Twinned Veins*, 2006, Watercolor on paper, 15" x 18" installed
42. *Bleeding Palms*, 2004, Prismacolor on black Arches, 18" x 22" installed
43. *Bloody Discharge*, 2004, Prismacolor on black Arches, 18" x 22" installed
44. *Bony Hand I*, 2004, Prismacolor on black Arches, 18" x 22" installed
45. *Bony Hand 2*, 2004, Prismacolor on black Arches, 18" x 22" installed
46. *Claws That Won't Let Go*, 2004, Prismacolor on black Arches, 18" x 22" installed
47. *Hand on Fire*, 2004, Prismacolor on black Arches, 18" x 22" installed
48. *In Your Hand*, 2004, Prismacolor on black Arches, 18" x 22" installed
49. *Missed Opportunity*, 2004, Prismacolor on black Arches, 18" x 22" installed
50. *Missing Palms*, 2004, Prismacolor on black Arches, 18" x 22" installed
51. *Severing the Diseased Digit*, 2004, Prismacolor on black Arches, 18" x 22" installed
52. *Temporal Connection*, 2004, Prismacolor on black Arches, 18" x 22" installed
53. *There Was a Hole Where the Flesh Used To Be*, 2004, Prismacolor on black Arches, 18" x 22" installed
54. *Pissed Off*, 2006, Prismacolor on black Arches, 29" x 37" installed
55. *Burning Palms*, 2004, Prismacolor on black Arches, 29" x 37" installed
56. *Peeled Hands*, 2004, Prismacolor on black Arches, 29" x 37" installed
57. *Why Keep Trying*, 2004, Prismacolor on black Arches, 29" x 37" installed

DRAWINGS