

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

KATHY BARNARD, SGAA PRESIDENT



PHOTO: HOLLIS OFFICER

**“A pessimist is one who makes difficulties of his opportunities and an optimist is one who makes opportunities of his difficulties.”**

— President Harry S. Truman

The domestic art glass manufacturing industry has faced a multitude of environmental challenges from their local environmental agencies and the EPA since the beginning of 2016, and will likely continue to do so for the next few years. This is not the first time our industry has needed to adapt and make changes, and it likely will not be the last.

The environmental issues facing our glass manufacturers deals with heavy metal emissions and air quality surrounding glass factories. Moss has been studied, dirt has been sampled, blood has been tested, and air monitors continue to take daily readings around many of our glass manufacturers facilities. Production has been affected at several factories since February of 2016, and much investment still lies on the horizon for factories to adjust to potential new regulations in their specific regions.

There has always been a desire for science (no matter the branch) to be simpler than it can ever hope to be. For X to cause Y. Black vs. White. However, simplistic answers are rare in science and the environmental cogs which make our world turn are not so easily understood. There are so many moving parts to how air truly works and how chemicals end up in our air, that there is simply no way to boil it all down into “x causes y.”

Not even the environmental agencies involved have the answers. Historic sources of contamination both natural and man-made are still being researched, and current air trends are still being analyzed. As a result, and much to the frustration of our manufacturers, the benchmarks that they are trying to meet continue to shift and change every week, sometimes every day. New regulations remain unsettled. Additionally, each manufacturer faces an entirely different set of challenges as the local environmental agencies all respond differently to those facilities. Given some of the litigation that still remains in this issue, it has been imperative that our professional organizations rise above the social media outbursts and political news stories, diplomatically remaining quiet. Anything said or published runs the risk of being misconstrued in a legal setting, further harming our manufacturers efforts. Given adequate time

to run its course, data, science, and technology will do the work. Air doesn't care about borders and it will take years, perhaps decades, to properly source how the air in all of our communities is contaminated and how it needs to be addressed.

We stand with our manufacturers, our neighbors and our communities in wanting the cleanest air. Not just from ourselves, but from everyone equally.

As passionate, lifetime users of these products, we're thrilled with the efforts all of our art glass makers undertake in the efforts of clean manufacturing. For many years now, European glass-makers Bendheim and Lamberts have had to adhere to very strict environmental restrictions and guidelines to produce sheet glass for artists and architects globally. As you will see in the articles throughout this issue, art glass manufacturing has complicated economics and we are so lucky to have so much beautiful product at our fingertips.

The most constructive way to show our support and to assist our factories and manufacturers in moving forward is to continue to create our artwork and to continue educating ourselves and our clients and customers. Some of the most amazing consequences of challenge are the experiments which result in accidents and in new products; the required resourcefulness that leads to a new technique; a material sourcing difficulty that takes you down a new road to a gem you never knew was there. As professional artists, we should see today's circumstances as an opportunity to embrace new challenges and forge ahead with the same passion as our manufacturers!

**“If someone offers you an amazing opportunity and you're not sure you can do it, say yes—then learn how to do it later.”**

—Richard Branson

I am optimistic that our domestic manufacturers have the tools to conquer what remains of the environmental challenges. But more than that, I am convinced they have the passion to do so, because I see it reflected in all of us when I look around at what we are already creating.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Barnard". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kathy Barnard  
Kathy Barnard Studio ■