

## Dear Educator,

Thank you for booking a tour with the Museum of Glass. We look forward to your visit!

We're sending you this curriculum to help enhance the museum visit for you and your students. These activities have been carefully prepared to go with the exhibit you will visit. You can use them as pre-visit materials or post-visit, but we strongly encourage that you spend some time with the packet before your visit. We've found that students understand and learn so much more if they are prepared before they come.

Along with this packet, we have extensive curriculum and interactive activities on our website about glassblowing and working with hot glass as an art form. Please visit [www.museumofglass.org](http://www.museumofglass.org) and click "**Learn**" on our home page. From there, visit the **Virtual Hot Shop**, where your students will get a chance to experience glassblowing by creating a *macchia*. Participants walk through the process step-by-step until they get a finished work of art! Along the way they can also choose to learn more about glass. You and your students can even watch the Hot Shop Live, by clicking "**Watch**" on our home page and selecting the "**Live Web Streaming of the Hot Shop**" link.

We sincerely hope you enjoy these materials and your visit to the Museum of Glass.

***William Morris: Myth, Object and the Animal***  
***– A Mid-Career Survey***

June 4 - December 31, 2005

**EALRs and GLEs**

The GLEs cover from grade 3 – 10 unless otherwise noted.

**Arts:**

1. The student understands and applies arts knowledge and skills.
  - 1.1 Understand arts concepts and vocabulary.
  - 1.2 Develop arts skills and techniques.
  - 1.3 Understand and apply arts styles from various artists, cultures and times.
  - 1.4 Apply audience skills in a variety of arts settings and performances.
2. The student demonstrates thinking skills using artistic processes.
  - 2.1 Apply a creative process in the arts.
  - 2.2 Apply a performance process in the arts.
3. The student communicates through the arts
  - 3.1 Use the arts to express and present ideas and feelings.
  - 3.2 Use the arts to communicate for a specific purpose.
4. The student makes connections within and across the arts to other disciplines, life, cultures, and work.
  - 4.2 Demonstrate and analyze the connections among the arts and other content areas.
  - 4.4 Understand that the arts shape and reflect culture and history.

**Writing:**

1. The student writes clearly and effectively
  - 1.1 Develop concept and design. Develop a topic or theme; organize written thoughts with a clear beginning, middle, and end; use transitional sentences and phrases to connect related ideas; write coherently and effectively.
  - 1.2 Use style appropriate to the audience and purpose.
  - 1.3 Apply writing conventions.
2. The student writes in a variety of forms for different audiences and purposes
  - 2.2 Write for different purposes, such as telling stories, presenting analytical responses to literature, persuading, conveying technical information, completing a team project, and explaining concepts and procedures.

**Communication:**

1. The student uses listening and observation skills to gain understanding.
  - 1.1 Focus attention.
  - 1.2 Listen and observe to gain and interpret information.
  - 1.3 Check for understanding by asking questions and paraphrasing.

2. The student communicates ideas clearly and effectively.
  - 2.1 Communicate clearly to a range of audiences for different purposes.
  - 2.2 Develop content and ideas. Develop a topic or theme; organize thoughts around a clear beginning, middle and end; use transitional sentences and phrases to connect related ideas; and speak coherently and compellingly.
  - 2.3 Use effective delivery. Adjust speaking strategies for a variety of audiences and purposes by varying tone, pitch, and pace of speech to create effect and aid communication.
  - 2.4 Use effective language and style. Use language that is grammatically correct, precise, engaging, and well suited to topic, audience, and purpose.
  - 2.5 Effectively use action, sound, and/or images to support presentations.
  
3. The student uses communication strategies and skills to work effectively with others.
  - 3.1 Use language to interact effectively and responsibly with others.
  - 3.2 Work cooperatively as a member of a group.

**Reading GLEs:**

1. The student understands and uses different skills and strategies to read.
 

Component 1.2	Use vocabulary (word meaning) strategies to comprehend text. 1.2.1, 1.2.2
Component 1.3	Build vocabulary through wide reading. 1.3.1, 1.3.2
  
2. The student understands the meaning of what is read.
 

Component 2.1	Demonstrate evidence of reading comprehension. 2.1.6
Component 2.2	Understand and apply knowledge of text components to comprehend text. 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 2.2.4,
Component 2.3	Expand comprehension by analyzing, interpreting, and synthesizing information and ideas in literary and informational text. 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.4
Component 2.4	Think critically and analyze author's use of language, style, purpose, and perspective in informational and literary text. 2.4.1, 2.4.2, 2.4.5
  
3. The student reads different materials for a variety of purposes.
 

Component 3.1	Read to learn new information. 3.1.1
Component 3.2	Read to perform a task. 3.2.2
Component 3.4	Read for literary/narrative experience in a variety of genres. 3.4.3, 3.4.4

## Introduction

William Morris (American, born 1957) is one of the most prominent artists to emerge from the Studio Glass movement. Throughout his career, he has evolved glass into a distinctive sculptural and metaphorical medium. This exhibition commemorates Morris's undeniable contribution to contemporary art and traces nearly twenty years of his prolific production, from his early, simple rock arrangements of the late 1980s to the animals and artifacts that figure dominantly in his works of the 1990s, and culminating in his most recent achievements in large-scale installation.

Morris's art can be read as an examination of our complex place in the natural world. Inspired by such themes as myth and archeology and drawing on a synthesis of diverse histories, times, and cultures, Morris constructs an elaborate visual vocabulary, one evocative of vanished civilizations and the symbolic systems, such as visual media, metaphor, and allegory, we have used to comment on our existence and our relationship to a mysterious and dichotomous world—one both nourishing and humbling.

Morris's compelling sculptures clearly demonstrate his technical innovations and mastery of the inherent properties of glass. They also offer evidence of the extent to which this temperamental material can be transformed in accomplished hands. In his long career, Morris has fashioned virtually every shape and form imaginable—each a result of meticulous teamwork and the artist's consummate, near magical, handling of a glassblower's pipe.

Paralleling his intuitive investigations in shaping glass into remarkably detailed forms, Morris has pursued a particular interest in redefining luminosity. He achieves this by favoring opacity, texture, and color—imbued with organic and primordial suggestions—over the cold, polished, and gleaming treatment of glass that is so well established in our expectations. In Morris's work, light swells from within and around, and the pieces take on a range of appearances, such as bone, tusk, stoneware, woven baskets, and wood. His bold and sensual sculptures, sometimes sober and earthen, at other times richly saturated in color, possess a solidity rarely seen with this fragile material.

Born in Carmel, California, Morris was first beguiled by the mysteries hidden in the hills above his childhood home, finding his initial assurances in expeditions and explorations of the land. Today, as many artists of his generation are busy exploring the changing relationship between humans and evolving technologies, Morris gives us a refreshingly contemporary voice on an eternal subject as he poses questions about our mythical and ritualistic expressions through an imaginative and poetic enterprise. His art taps into our collective memory.

**William Morris****Born: 1957, Carmel, California****Resides: Stanwood, Washington**

Seattle-based art critic Matthew Kangas has aptly dubbed William Morris's work "paleoglass." Morris, who grew up in a family of medical doctors and nurses, sees bones as symbols of the cycle of life and therefore life-affirming. As a child he picked up Native American arrowheads and pot shards in the hills around Carmel. As an adult he is a rugged outdoorsman who hunts big game with a bow. Of his imaginative artifacts, Morris says that he makes things that he would like to find in an archaeological dig.

His career in glassblowing began when, at age 20, he went to work as a truck driver for the Pilchuck Glass School in Washington State. So great were his energy, ability, and enthusiasm for the medium that he not only learned how to blow glass, but soon became an instructor at the school, and then principal gaffer (head glassblower) for artist Dale Chihuly. Under Chihuly's direction, Morris physically made most of the blown glass produced by Chihuly in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In the mid-80's he struck out on his own with Chihuly's blessing, and in a very different direction. Chihuly's imagery had been of the sea; Morris chose the earth and forest.

Morris began with vessel forms – at first adorned with abstract images and then with colored drawings evoking Native American petroglyphs and European cave paintings.

In the late 1980s he went to Italy to study solid work with Venetian masters and soon was producing sculptures that incorporated glass bones and a host of primitive images. Large-scale installation pieces followed: *Garnering* (1990) a 25-foot long work was created for the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery. Its elements have since been dispersed. The installations he created for the American Craft Museum in 1993 and 1997 have not since been shown on the East Coast and they have never been shown together. *Art of Glass* will bring them both to Hampton Roads, and will incorporate additional work.

**Process**

William Morris, one of America's greatest virtuoso glassblowers, is known for his astonishing and ravishingly beautiful glass artifact groups. He produces these with his own hands "hot-at-the-furnace" without the use of molds –pinching, tugging, and nudging the glass into richly colored sculpture.

A unique aspect of Morris' work is his treatment of surface texture, achieved by various techniques such as sprinkling powdered glass and minerals onto a blown surface, etching, and acid washing to achieve "ancient" and textural diversity.

Because of the surface textures of the pieces, some viewers may assume that Morris' work is cast or molded. In fact, each piece begins as molten, blown glass at the end of a blowpipe, which is then meticulously shaped freehand into complex forms before surface designs and textures are added.

William Morris has the uncanny ability to manipulate blown glass into something it really isn't by creating the optical equivalence of bone, wood, stone and leather.

### **Quotes from William Morris**

In a feature in Art & Antiques Magazine Morris quotes Thomas Moore to explain the affect of his work. "The soul requires more than ideas and ruminations. It needs objects to ally itself with." All I do is create objects from ordinary life, explained Morris. "The real myth is that nature subjects itself upon us every day, whether we know it or not."

## **Lesson One: Exploring Ancient Cultures**

### **Objective:**

Students will learn and explore ancient cultures represented in William Morris's works, such as Egypt, Africa, and Iran.

### **Materials:**

Library and Internet access, paint, markers, paper, cardboard, clay, construction paper, props, CD/Tape player, beads, string, scrap cloth, plaster, costumes, masks, glue, and additional time in the classroom and at home.

### **Lesson:**

**Part One** - During this lesson, students will research cultural traditions, submit a formal paper, and develop a visual presentation of their choice of a painting/drawing, an original dance, or theatrical performance.

Begin with a brainstorming session about different cultures to explore. Make sure each student chooses one to study (or have them work in small groups). Brainstorm and discuss aspects they might wish to explore and how those themes can develop that into a visual project. This is a wonderful opportunity for the class to invite parents, relatives, and community leaders of varying cultures to come to the classroom and discuss their knowledge and traditions.

After students have chosen a culture to study, and have decided on guidelines for things to learn, have each student (or group) write a paper discussing the culture and anything they find particularly interesting. Make sure a part of this report discusses the art of that culture.

After the paper is written, each student (or group) will then plan a visual presentation. This can be a theatre piece, a dance, or a visual art work. As the students (or groups) prepare their visual presentation, the class can split into designated art arenas, to allow for maximum use of materials, time, and development of the various projects. For example, allow the students that are creating a dance to work together to provide a supportive environment. This also offers the students an opportunity to help one another and the teacher the ability to monitor progress.

### **Extended Learning:**

While researching their topics, students will need to keep in mind:

- How these "ancient cultures" have progressed over time. Specifically:
  - They should examine, which traditions have remained unchanged and which ones haven't and why.

- How have these cultures influenced the American culture and cultures around the world?
- Students may explore stereotypes and seek an answer to why they arose and how the stereotypes can change.
- Students will need to define the term ancient culture and inspect what that term means, and which cultures it encompasses.
- What forms of artwork did the ancient cultures produce, why and how?
- In researching their topics, students should explore and examine the role of these cultures in the year 2005.

This lesson provides each student the opportunity to explore ancient cultures beyond the classroom, to visit local museums, to attend performances, and contact community leaders. The teacher should encourage all of the students to ask their parents and relatives about their family history, although this lesson focuses on ancient cultures, it provides the opportunity for each student to learn about their ancestors and cultural backgrounds.

## **Lesson Two: Animals and Mythology**

**Objective:** Throughout history, human beings have told stories – myths – to share history or sometimes to teach a moral lesson. Animals are often prevalent characters in these stories. With this lesson, students will explore the legends, folklore, and mythology of animals and create their own story, accompanied with an artistic piece, such as a painting, sculpture, dance, and/or theatrical performance.

### ***Materials:***

Library and Internet access, clay, costumes, paint, paper, stage, CD/Tape player, and additional time at school and at home.

### **Lesson:**

William Morris's work is highly influenced by mythology and animals such as the raven, fox, and jackal. Morris has researched cultures and myths from around the world and now the students will do the same.

Begin by having students read 5 myths or folktales involving animal characters (see attached bibliography for suggestions). They may choose different animals, or several stories about the same animal. Likewise cultures; have students choose myths from different cultures. Discuss some of the human characteristics these animals portray in the tales. Talk about why the authors of these tales used animals instead of people (could be cultural beliefs, wanting to make a moral or criticism easier to take, etc.).

Have each student choose a message or moral and an animal (or several) as a central character, then write an original tale. Although this is already a work of art, have each student create an artistic piece to visually express their myth in visual art, dance, music or drama. Spend an afternoon enjoying presentations of each work of art and hearing about the tales.

**Extended Learning:**

- Myths and folklore contain morals, values, and warnings within the story. Students will need to develop a theme and message for their myths.
- Writing workshops are essential to the lesson; teachers will need to provide appropriate classroom time to allow the students to develop their stories.
- Have a professional storyteller come to the classroom to perform and help guide the students in writing narratives and learning how to convey their message.
- To ensure that students gain a diverse understanding on myths, students should research animal mythologies from Ancient Greece, Egypt, China, Ireland, Scotland, Africa, the Middle East, and those of the Native Americans.
- In developing the visual aspect to their myths, students will need to explore how the various cultures represented the animals in artwork, from cave paintings, dances, masks, statues, and totem poles.

This lesson provides the opportunity for students to explore outside of the classroom, by attending storytelling performances, local museums, and zoos to examine the movement, grace, and attitudes of various animals.

### **Lesson Three: The Healing Power of Art**

**Objective:**

William Morris's gleans inspiration for his art from life and death, which he captures in his series of *Burial Urns*, *Canopic Jars*, and the *Cinerary Urns* motivated by the events of September 11, 2001. Morris utilizes his artwork as a healing process, as a symbolic memorial, and as a tool to allow viewing his works to react and delve into their emotions. Students will create an original piece to express their emotions.

**Materials:**

Poster board, construction paper, markers, paint, glue, disposable cameras, cardboard, scrap fabric, pen and paper.

**Lesson:**

This is an intimate lesson. Teachers will need to draw students together as a supportive group, and the classroom environment needs to be safe, friendly, and non-judgmental to ensure students can express their emotions and art freely. It is a

good idea to allow the class to have an open discussion about tragedy or trying times before the projects begin. This may be a sensitive discussion that will need careful monitoring to avoid anyone's feelings being hurt.

Students should have a notebook and/or journal to record their responses or sketch ideas for their art. The teacher should collect them every other week to review what students have been recording. Allow the students freedom to create a project of their choice. Some may choose to write a poem or story; others may draw and or sculpt a piece, while other students may write a song and wish to perform it for the class.

**Extended Learning:**

Teachers need to allow students time to contemplate their feelings and how they want to express their emotions artistically. The class could work outside or take time for reflection in the classroom. Teachers may want to provide soothing music.

Students should keep the following in mind when developing their projects:

- The students need to remember that this is a chance at healing and expressing their emotions through a creative outlet.
- Students should research how other artists have expressed emotions in their artwork and how they dealt with the healing process.
- Teachers may want to encourage students to discuss this project with their family and invite the school counselor to the classroom to create an open dialogue.

Teachers should encourage students to continue writing in their notebooks and/or journals after completing the lesson.

## More on Mythology

A great deal has been written about mythology and how it relates to human culture. One of the best-known authors on mythology is Joseph Campbell. Campbell is an American writer on mythology and comparative religion who gained fame with such works as *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (1948), an examination of the archetype of the hero, and the multi-volume *Historical Atlas of World Mythology* (1989), of which only the sections on the early stages of human culture were completed. Campbell's theories were made popular with a Public Broadcasting System series of television interviews with Bill Moyers. The PBS interviews were also published as a book, which became a bestseller.

**"Read myths. They teach you that you can turn inward, and you begin to get the message of the symbols. Read other people's myths, not those of your own religion, because you tend to interpret your own religion in terms of facts - but if you read the other ones, you begin to get the message. Myth helps you to put your mind in touch with this experience of being alive. Myth tells you what the experience is."** (from *The Power of Myth*)

In the mid-40s, Campbell turned his attention to explicating the great myths of the world's religions in terms of Jungian concept of the collective unconscious. He also popularized the key discoveries and the psychology of Jung. Campbell argued that world's mythologies, ritual practices, folk traditions, and major religions share certain symbolic themes, motifs, and patterns of behavior. His theories influenced a wide range of writers around the world.

*The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, which is often cited as Campbell's best book, was published in 1948. It has sold nearly one million copies in various editions. Campbell juxtaposed myths from Native Americans, ancient Greeks, Hindus, Buddhists, Mayans, Norse and Arthurian legends, and the Bible to elucidate the hero's path of adventure through rites of passage to final transfiguration. In *Myths to Live By* (1972) he suggested that new myths would replace old ones, perhaps drawing symbols from modern technology. "I like to think of the year 1492 as marking the end - or at least the beginning of the end - of the authority of the old mythological systems by which the lives of men had been supported and inspired from time out of mind. Shortly after Columbus's epochal voyage, Magellan circumnavigated the globe. Shortly before, Vasco da Gama had sailed around Africa to India. The earth was beginning to be systematically explored, and the old, symbolic, mythological geographies discredited." Campbell often used skillfully down-to-earth examples when he clarified the influence of myths on modern day thinking. In the essay 'The Impact of Science on Myth' (1961) from *Myths to Live By*, he depicts a discussion he heard at a lunch counter. A young boy tells his mother that his friend Jimmy wrote a paper on the evolution of man, but the teacher said he was wrong: Adam and Eve were our first parents. And the boy's mother confirms this fundamentalist claim. "What a mother for a twentieth-century child!" Campbell wrote.

Joseph Campbell was born in New York City. He was a reader of American Indian folklore as a child and revived his interest in the subject while working on a master's degree. Before attending Columbia University, he traveled in Europe. In 1927 Campbell received his M.A. in English and comparative literature. He then returned to Europe for postgraduate study in Arthurian romances at the Universities of Paris and Munich. During his stay he discovered that many themes in Arthurian legend resembled the basic motifs in American Indian folklore. The idea inspired Campbell in his unending study of such authors Thomas Mann and James Joyce. He was also caught up in the theories of Jung.

Back in the United States Campbell retired for five years to Woodstock, New York, and Carmel, California, where he put together his guiding thesis that perceived myths as "the pictorial vocabulary of communication from the source zones of our energies to the rational consciousness." In 1934 Campbell began teaching at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York, where he remained for thirty-eight years. In 1985 he received the National Arts Club medal for honor for literature and was elected in 1987 to the American Academy of Arts and Letters. The popular PBS television program *The Power of Myth* was made in 1985 and 1986 mostly at the ranch of Campbell's friend, the film director George Lucas. Campbell's concept of the hero's journey was one of the sources for *Star Wars* film trilogy by Lucas. Campbell died at age of eighty-three on October 31, 1987, at his home in Honolulu, Hawaii, after a brief illness.

**"Freud has suggested that all moments of anxiety reproduce the painful feelings of the first separation from the mother - the tightening of the breath, congestion of the blood, etc., of the crisis of the birth. Conversely, all moments of separation and new birth produce anxiety. Whether it be the king's child about to be taken from the felicity of her established dual-unity with Danny King, or God's daughter Eve, now ripe to depart from the idyll of the Garden, or again, the supremely concentrated Future Buddha breaking past the last horizons of the created world, the same archetypal images are activated, symbolizing danger, reassurance, trial, passage, and the strange holiness of the mysteries of birth"** (from *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*)

**“Myth is the secret opening through which the inexhaustible energies of the cosmos pour into the human manifestation” -Joseph Campbell**

This myth is shared by many northwest coast nations, and is one version of a tale Morris refers to in his work “Raven with Skull” (1998).

**RAVEN STEALS THE LIGHT**

There was a time many years ago when the earth was covered in darkness. An inky pitch blanketed the world making it very difficult for anyone to hunt or fish or gather berries for food. An old man lived along the banks of a stream with his daughter who may have been very beautiful or possibly quite homely. This didn't matter to the old man however because after all it was dark and who could tell.

The reason why the world was dark had to do with the old man who had a box that contained a box that held many other boxes. In the very last box was all the light in the universe and this was a treasure he selfishly kept to himself.

The mischievous Raven existed at that time because he always had. He was none too happy about the state of the world for he blundered about in the dark bumping into everything. His interfering nature peaked one day when he stumbled by the old man's hut and overheard him muttering about his boxes. He instantly decided to steal the light but first had to find a way to get inside the hut.

Each day the young girl would go to the stream to fetch water so the Raven transformed himself into a tiny hemlock needle and floated into the girl's bucket. Working a bit of his “trickster” magic, he made the girl thirsty and as she took a drink he slipped down her throat. Once down in her warm insides he changed again; this time into a small human being and took a very long nap.

The girl did not know what was happening to her and didn't tell her father. One day the Raven emerged as a little boy child. If anyone could have seen him in the dark, they would have noticed that he was a peculiar looking child with a long beaklike nose, a few feathers here and there, and the unmistakably shining eyes of the Raven.

Both father and daughter were delighted with their new addition and played with him for hours on end. As the child explored his new surroundings he soon determined that the light must be kept in the big box in the corner. When he first tried to open the box, his grandfather scolded him profusely which in turn started a crying and squawking fit the likes of which the old man had never seen. As grandfathers have done since the beginning of time he caved in and gave the child the biggest box to play with. This brought peace to the hut for a brief time but it

wasn't long until the child pulled his scam again, and again, and again until finally only one box remained.

After much coaxing and wailing the old man at last agreed to let the child play with the light for only a moment. As he tossed the ball of light the child transformed into the Raven and snatching the light in his beak, flew through the smoke hole and up into the sky.

The world was instantly changed forever. Mountains sprang into the bright sky and reflections danced on the rivers and oceans. Far away, the Eagle was awakened and launched skyward – his target now clearly in sight.

Raven was so caught up in all the excitement of the newly revealed world that he nearly didn't see the Eagle bearing down on him. Swerving sharply to escape the outstretched talons, he dropped nearly half of the ball of light which fell to the earth. Shattering into one large and many small pieces on the rocky ground the bits of light bounced back up into the heavens where they remain to this day as the moon and the stars.

The Eagle pursued Raven beyond the rim of the world and exhausted by the long chase, Raven let go of what light still remained. Floating gracefully above the clouds, the sun as we now know it started up over the mountains to the east.

The first rays of the morning sun brought light through the smoke hole of the old man's house. He was weeping in sorrow over his great loss and looking up, saw his daughter for the first time. She was very beautiful and smiling, he began to feel a little better.

## Image Credits

### Transparency One



William Morris (American, born 1957)  
*Mazorca*, 2004  
Blown glass installation  
Approx. 12 x 12 x 4 feet  
Collection of the artist  
Photo by Rob Vinnedge

### Transparency Two



William Morris (American, born 1957)  
*Cache* (detail), 1993  
Glass, metal and wood  
5 x 6 x 36 ft.  
Collection of George R. Stroemple  
Photo by Rob Vinnedge

### Transparency Three



William Morris (American, born 1957)  
*Raven with Skull*, 1998  
Blown and sculpted glass, steel stand  
18 x 18 x 18 inches  
Collection of the artist

## **Resources**

Billman, Blaine. (2003). Stories from Alaska and the Northwest Coast-“Raven Steals the Light”. Retrieved July 24, 2005, from Northwest Art. <<http://www.northwest-art.com/NorthwestArt/WebPages/StoriesRavenStealstheLight.htm>>

Kaupunginkirjasto, Kuusankosken. (1999). Joseph Campbell (1904-1987). Retrieved July 24, 2005, from Pegasos. <<http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/campb.htm>>

## **Museum of Glass Educational Curriculum is supported in part by generous donations from:**

**Pierce County Arts and Cultural Services Division**

**The Florence B. Kilworth Foundation**

**The William W. Kilworth Foundation**

**The Greater Tacoma Community Foundation**

**The Baker Foundation**

**The Dan & Pat Nelson Family Foundation**

**Rainier Pacific Foundation**

**U.S. Bancorp**

**The Gary E. Milgard Family Foundation**

and

