

GEORGE BILLIS GALLERY

TOLAND SAND

MAY 15 - JUNE 9, 2018

George Billis Gallery is pleased to announce Toland Sand and his new sculptures at the New York location. This exhibition will run from May 15 - June 9, 2018. The opening reception will be held at the George Billis Gallery located at 525 West 26th Street between 10th and 11th avenues on Thursday, May 24th from 6 - 8 pm. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 - 6pm.

"I think of myself as an artist who is enthusiastic about architecture, color, and light. As a curious guy with a degree in philosophy, I had no idea where this journey would take me when a friend of mine gave me his stained glass business in 1977. And so it's been an incredible exploration of all the qualities that make up glass as a medium. I've grown up artistically with what is called the modern glass movement. I've been inspired by my peers as well as by artists such as Isamu Noguchi, David Smith, Henry Moore, and Mark Rothko. I inhabit the symbolic, the cosmic, and the mystery. I love that images can come and go, are made bold, and then disappear; are reflective and then not. The energetic and mystical side comes from the teachings of my spiritual Master, Sant Kirpal Singh, by whose instructions I meditate every day in my personal effort to connect to and be receptive to the vibration of the mysteries.

Calligraphy has always been attractive to me. Eastern ideograms. Greek letters. Arabic writing. So keeping those in mind I feel free to create my own symbols that at once have meaning in their elegance as graphics and at once maintaining the sense that language and lettering can lead one into other consciousnesses and cultures; other ways of seeing things and their interconnectedness, that can be startling and fascinating. Two years in Taiwan as a child and five years in Athens, Greece as a teenager gave me the sense of otherness and the exploration thereof. How can one not be affected by marble ruins and hints of what life once was, by Greek lettering, the very language that allowed democracy to come to be, bringing with it a certain freedom; the very freedom that has allowed me to express my artistic vision for the past 35 years? Rice paper, gold and silver leaf, acrylic paints. Traditional and novel decorating avenues. These are the things that inspire me to keep up the exploration of what can be done in and with glass.

The mainstay of my work is optical crystal, leaded and non-leaded, as well as dichroic coated glass, tinted adhesive, and acrylic paints. Everything is hand worked and shaped by hand. Then comes a process to bring out the brilliance of glass, with grinding in ever finer stages until polish is achieved. I look for balance, harmony, and symmetry, with an accent of deconstructed form. Each piece takes more or less six weeks to complete, starting with a drawing using large white paper ripped from a roll, pencil, ruler, and compass, in the traditional three views. It's exciting for me to see how the finished piece measures up to my concept, that begins with inspiration and an idea and ends up as a complex construction made more complex by reflection, refraction, and the dance of light and color in a three dimensional setting.

I've lived and worked on four acres in very rural New Hampshire, a place of full seasons and rolling hills, in a studio I built in 1984. It does seem a bit contradictory to be creating contemporary sculpture in such a place, but in reality the sculptures are a reflection of my inner space and what grabs my attention. I could be doing them anywhere. Actually, I don't question exactly where they come from. It's the mystery. So I leave it at that and am grateful for this fantastic journey I've been on in my quest to make a living doing something I love. My wife Debbe is my partner in business and in life".

The George Billis Gallery marks its 22nd year in the Chelsea Art District and opened a second gallery in the burgeoning gallery district of Culver City in Los Angeles. For more information please contact the Gallery via e-mail at gALLERY@georgebillis.com



Helios Revealed, glass, 9x9x8"



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