

HELLER

GALLERY

PRESS RELEASE

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TOOTS ZYNSKY | *Red List*

March 6 – April 11, 2020

Opening reception: Thursday, March 5, 6-8pm



SHORT-CRESTED COQUETTE, 2020 (Southwest Mexico), filet-de-verre, 8 1/2 x 24 1/4 x 9 7/8 in.

New York -- Heller Gallery is pleased to present *Red List*, our third solo exhibition of new work by American artist **Toots Zynsky**. Fourteen pieces will be included in the exhibition, which takes its name from the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List of Threatened Species.

With a studio glass practice spanning four decades, Zynsky has established an international reputation for making exquisite, sensually undulating and richly colored sculptural vessels made of fused glass threads. Her work has long been driven by explorations of composition and color, and with this most recent body of work ever deeper examinations of the complex and extraordinary coloration of globally endangered birds from the *Red List*. Zynsky says that 'researching the evolution of birds' coloration is intriguing. It's truly phenomenal.' And further that 'watching forest fires spreading over millions of acres in the United States, Brazil and Australia over just the past year, has been a stunning reminder of the fragility of our ecosystems and the increasing losses to our biodiversity.' Her *Red List* works speak beautifully and eloquently of her advocacy and are an urgent call to action.

Toots Zynsky's role as a participant, and eventual protagonist, of the world studio glass movement, shaped her artistic evolution. When she received her BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1973, Zynsky was one of the only women in a group of pioneering artists studying with Dale Chihuly, who made studio glass a worldwide phenomenon. In conjunction with Chihuly, she participated in the founding and early development of Pilchuck Glass School in Washington State. Later she served as Assistant Director and Head of the Hot Shop at the New York Experimental Glass Workshop in New York City (now UrbanGlass). Curator and art historian **Tina Oldknow** said that 'Zynsky has made a life's work of studying and manipulating colored glass through the vehicle of her distinctive, undulating forms.'

Zynsky's work is held in the permanent collections of more than 80 international institutions in Asia, Australia, the United States, Canada and Mexico, including the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Cooper-Hewitt in New York City; the Musée des Arts Décoratifs du Louvre in Paris, the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, Australia's National Gallery of Victoria, and the Yokohama Museum of Art, Japan. She is the recipient of numerous prestigious honors and awards including the 2016 Corning Specialty Glass Residency, the 2015 Smithsonian Visionary Award, the 2013 Women's Center of Rhode Island Annual Women of Excellence Award and the 2006 Rhode Island Pell Award for Excellence in the Arts.

Heller Gallery plays a seminal role in promoting glass as a medium for contemporary sculpture and design. It has been a valuable resource for artists, museums, and collectors worldwide since 1973. The gallery represents a prestigious roster of international artists and designers, whose practice incorporates glass as a creative medium. Numerous artworks have entered preeminent public collections as a direct result of Heller Gallery's exhibitions and advocacy. New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art and Museum of Modern Art have acquired works from the gallery as has The Corning Museum of Glass, The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and numerous museums worldwide, including Victoria & Albert Museum, Musée des Arts Décoratifs de Louvre, and Hokkaido Museum, among others.

A reception for the artist will take place at Heller Gallery, on Thursday, March 5, 2020 from 6-8pm.



BALD EAGLE, 2020 (North America), filet-de-verre, 15 7/8 x 34 x 11 in.