

glass

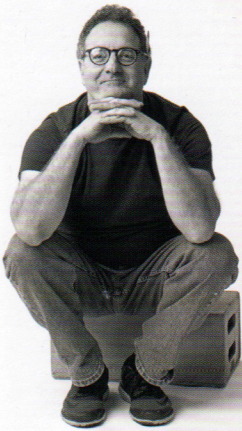
The UrbanGlass Art Quarterly

Former MIT Glass Printers
Launch a Startup

Master Arranger Donald Lipski
Works Hot

An Untrained Artist Bridges
a Raw Racial Divide

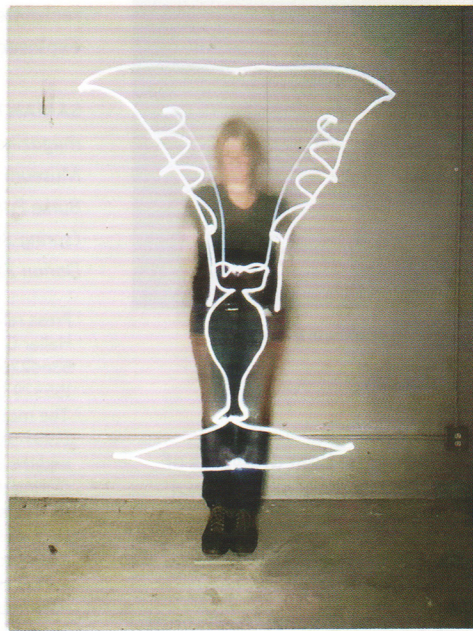
COVER
Mary Van Cline: Portraits



US \$13 | Canada \$14
Display until September 30, 2019



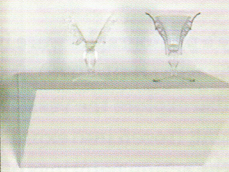
No 155. Summer 2019



LEFT **Kim Harty, *Plate 25*, 2019.** Direct digital print on aluminum Dibond. H 40, W 30, D ½ in.

RIGHT **Kim Harty and Brooke Breckner, *Plate 25, Small Goblet with Frilly Handle*, 2019.** Blown glass and 3D printed plastic. H 4 ½ inches.

COURTESY: HELLER GALLERY, NEW YORK



Kim Harty

"MEMORIA TECHNICA: OLD VENETIAN GLASS"
HELLER GALLERY
NEW YORK
APRIL 4–MAY 11, 2019

Kim Harty's work exists in a liminal space between craft and performance. The artist and educator has dedicated her practice to breaking the boundaries of glass as a material for art-making, primarily through ephemeral experimentations into its expansive possibilities. Specifically, she "is interested in undoing traditional methods of making and investigating how materials can confound their expected function."

From 2008 to 2013, Harty was part of various performance collaboratives, including *Three-Headed* (2008-10, Rika Hawes and Charlotte Potter), *Cirque De Verre* (2008-10, Rika Hawes and Charlotte Potter), and *The Glass Theater* (2013, Charlotte Potter) with whom she helped pioneer glass as a performance medium. The groups broke free from the pedagogical and didactic nature of the demonstration and allowed the performativity and choreography inherent to glassblowing,

combined with increased experimentation and a sense of spectacle, to inform the work. As a result, movement and the body are essential elements of Harty's relationship to her chosen medium, and in her current exhibition at Heller Gallery.

In "Memoria Technica: Old Venetian Glass," these relationships are combined with the artist's academic investigations into glass and art history. The exhibition stemmed from Harty's 2013 Pilchuck Emerging Artist residency, during which she created slow-exposure light drawings, reproducing 72 historical glass vessels illustrated in *Old Venetian Glass* (London: Spring Books, 1960). This catalogue documents the Venetian glass collection of Vojtěch Lanna (1836-1909), who was an instrumental player in the foundation of the Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague and donated 1,106 pieces of glass to the museum. Responding to the anthropomorphic vocabulary used to describe the various aspects of a vessel—lip, neck, waist, foot—Harty created the light drawings to the scale of her own body, using it as a framework over which to superimpose the vessels' forms.

reviews

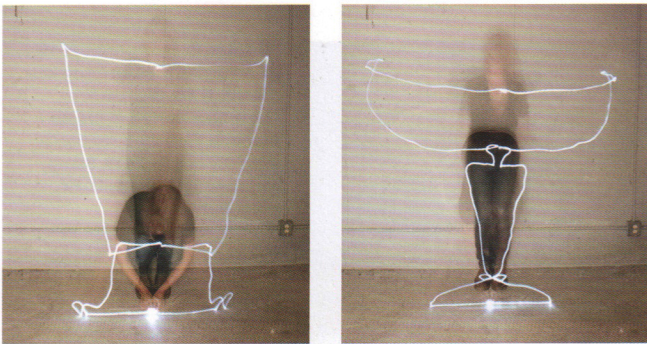


Plate 10 and Plate 14, 2019. Direct digital prints on aluminum Dibond.
H 40, W 30, D ½ in. (each print).

COURTESY: HELLER GALLERY, NEW YORK

Harty's photographs were inspired by the light drawings of Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), featured in *Life* magazine in 1950, which also explore the vessel in part. The exuberance and energy of the light, frozen into expressionistic vessels by the camera, also recalls the action paintings of Jackson Pollock (1912-1956), particularly as captured in 1950 by photographer Hans Namuth (1915-1990), who instructed Pollock to paint on glass so Namuth could film from below as Pollock engaged his full body in the drip method of painting he pioneered.

The show at Heller Gallery pairs a "key" of all 72 images, composed as a single tiled print, alongside five enlarged photographs chosen by the artist. These photographs (all depicting goblets of various forms) are paired with two glass vessels vertically bisected to create an "elevation" view. (The vignettes are reminiscent of Chicago Imagist Roger Brown's [1941-1997] *Virtual Still Lives* from the 1990s, in which he combined paintings with three-dimensional ceramic vessels.) Of the two, one goblet is blown glass and the other is a 3D printed version derived from the slow-exposure light drawings themselves rather than the book's original photographs. The inherent relationship between light and glass, most notable in architecture, is relevant to every discussion and artistic choice about glass and cannot be overlooked. As a result, viewing the vessels in this bisected way draws attention to the lines of the vessel and the visual relationship to the lines of light in the photographs.

The self-referential nature of the work exists as a visual game of telephone during which the artist first looks at images of historic Venetian glass, then creates the light drawings from memory in pure darkness using a flashlight, subsequently blows a glass version, and then uses her own image to render a 3D printed example. The final 3D printed goblet thus becomes the translation of that first object. The process is referenced in the exhibition's titular "memoria technica," a mnemonic device used to aid memory. While the handmade blown-glass vessels showcase Harty's virtuosic mastery of her medium, the 3D printed vessel is fuzzy and imperfect, rendering physical the haziness and sometimes untrustworthy reality of memory. The end result is an exhibition that poetically

combines material investigations with ideas of movement, memory, technology, and form, all through the lens of glass history, a medium explored by Harty in increasingly experimental ways.

SAMANTHA DE TILLIO is a curator, art historian, writer, and regular magazine contributor based in Brooklyn. She is assistant curator at the Museum of Arts and Design, where she is curating the 2019 iteration of the Burke Prize (October 2019) and a midcareer survey of work by Beth Lipman (spring 2020). Her personal research is focused on the life and work of artist Dorian Zachai (1932-2015).

¹ Press release for Kim Harty's "Memoria Technica: Old Venetian Glass" at Heller Gallery (March 15, 2019), <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/53ed226be4b0afa10367c5b0/t/5c9d01c6ee6eb0182085e6b3/1553793478799/KIM+HARTY+with+image++2019+.pdf>.

² The most notable earlier glass performance groups include The B Team (1991-98, Zesty Meyers, Evan Snyderman, Jeff Zimmerman [joined 1994]) and the Burnt Asphalt Family (2007-ongoing, Erica Rosenfeld, Jessica Julius). During the 1960s and 70s, glass was used as a performance medium by non-glass artists such as Anthea Lockwood in exploration of glass's properties such as sound, reflection, and ephemerality.

³ Koenigsmarková, Helena. *Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague*. London: Scala Arts & Heritage Publishers, Ltd., 2017. https://issuu.com/accpublishinggroup/docs/museum_of_decorative_arts_prague

⁴ Page, Andrew. "Kim Harty's photographic and sculptural homage to historic Venetian glassmaking at Heller," *Hot Sheet* (April 4, 2019): <https://urbanglass.org/glass/detail/exhibition-kim-hartys-light-drawings-pay-homage-to-historic-venetian-glassmaking>.