

## **MARK ZIRPEL**

### **Bio**

Mark Zirpel received his BFA in drawing and printmaking from the University of Alaska and an MFA in printmaking from the San Francisco Art Institute. He worked for several years as the Print Shop Coordinator at Pilchuck Glass School, where he was introduced to glass as a sculptural medium. Mark Zirpel is currently a 3D4M Professor at the University of Washington; his work has been featured at the Museum of Glass in Tacoma, and is represented in collections nationwide.

### **Statement**

Often playing on the convergence between art and science, Mark Zirpel's sculptures harness the powers of the natural world as a means of understanding the universe and our place and purpose within it. His fascinating contraptions compel us to become participant in his quest for knowledge, deepening our understanding of the physical relationship between humans and the universe at large.

Inquiry and experiment guide Zirpel's work. He says of his method, "my studio discipline is heavy on problem solving, failures, improvising, lateral thinking, persistence, focused effort, rigorous work ethic, and faith in the activity as its own justification and reward". This process of inquiry not only forms his method, but the message of the art itself. He says, "Sculpture is a merging of form and meaning, an organization of matter into a meaningful construct". With each installation, Zirpel carefully considers not only how the viewer will interact with the piece but also how the environment that surrounds it will impact the overall intended message.