TRAVER GALLERY

SEAN ALBERT

Bio

Sean Albert (Tukwila) received a 2009 GAP to help offset the costs of polishing a large glass sculpture. Recent progress in his work includes developing a technique to suspend colored threads of glass in a solid mass of clear glass, and hand pulling molten glass into 40-foot long strands that are later broken into many three-inch long pieces. His work often attempts to use glass to capture and manipulate light, freeze time or movement, like a three-dimensional snap shot of what the material was like when it was liquid.

Statement

The first part of my process is to hand-pull the 10,000 to 12,000 individual pieces of “cane” used to fabricate the sculpture. Canes are round rods of clear glass with a small thread of colored glass running through the center of each, and are made using a furnace of 2000° F molten glass. This process involves hand pulling the molten glass into 40 ft. long strands, which are later broken up into smaller pieces. These smaller pieces of cane, roughly 3 inches long and slightly thinner than a pencil, are placed/arranged in a ceramic mold. The mold holding the thousands of pieces of cane is fired and the glass is “formed” in an electric kiln or oven for about a week. During the firing process the kiln reaches a maximum temperature of 1400° F. A large part of the firing process is used to anneal (cool to room temp. slowly and evenly) to prevent cracking. After the hot forming process, the now solid block of glass is brought to a high polish using various cold working processes similar to polishing marble, and results in a mirror like surface allowing the viewer to see the interior composition.