

THERMAN STATOM

Bio

Therman Statom - sculptor, glass artist, and painter - is most notably known as a pioneer of the contemporary glass movement for his life-size glass ladders, chairs, tables, constructed box-like paintings, and small scale houses; all created through the technique of gluing glass plate together. Sandblasted surfaces become a canvas for spontaneous vibrant colors and line work, which take nuances from Abstract Expressionism and concepts of Minimalism, while simultaneously incorporating a twist by using blown-glass elements and found objects.

Born in Winter Haven, Florida in 1953, Statom spent his adolescence growing up in Washington, D.C. His interest in the arts grew from a fondness of painting and he began to investigate ceramics at RISD. However, after an experimental glass blowing session with Dale Chihuly, he was soon hooked on the spontaneity of glass blowing and its limitless possibilities. Statom went on to pursue studies at Pilchuck Glass School during its inaugural year, completing a BFA in 1974 from RISD, and later studied at the Pratt Institute of Art & Design.

Throughout his career, public artworks have been permanently installed at prominent locations including the Los Angeles Public Library, Corning, Inc. Headquarters, the Mayo Clinic, San Jose Ice Center, the Toledo Museum of Art, and the Jepson Center for the Arts in the Telfair Museum, Savannah as well as several hospitals across the country.

His artwork appears in numerous exhibitions annually, including solo and group shows around the nation and internationally. Over the span of his career, he has completed over thirty large, site-specific installations. Most notably in recent years, his 2009 solo exhibition "Stories of the New World," at the Orlando Museum of Art, which spanned over 5,000 square feet, has been his largest installation to date. Exploring themes related to Juan Ponce de Leon's 1513 search for the fabled Fountain of Youth as a point of departure, the installation referenced historic and contemporary themes of hope, discovery, ambition, and destiny. Visitors traversed the gallery space consisting of a mirrored maze, panoramic glass wall mural, a room-size structure built entirely of glass, and video projections. In conjunction with the exhibit, Statom partnered with the educational department of the OMA and the Zora Neale Hurston National Museum of Eatonville to work with over eighty young students to create a work of art titled, "Glass House", which was a large, walk-through structure built from glass boxes designed by the children. The piece was later displayed at the annual summer community festival.

Much of the latter half of Statom's career has been focused on the importance of educational programming within the arts. He has taken a deep interest in employing workshops as a catalyst for social change and in affect, positively impacting a community. Working directly with the artist himself, adults and children alike share a combined experience of exploring art making via a hands-on experience. Inhibitions and limitations are left by the wayside, and the practice or

act of “doing” becomes a journey of self-discovery, creating an opportunity for the participant to go to a new place within themselves.

“I believe art can be understood both conceptually and intuitively. I think there is a need for the general public to come to an understanding that to appreciate art and creativity they must trust his or her self; that extensive education is not a prerequisite for understanding art. Much of what I do is seeded in what is more of an intuitive process; a large portion of my work is exploring these processes within people and their environments.

The fact is, I believe that creativity is a part of all aspects of what people do; my studio and educational efforts via workshops and the support of outside programming, general educational and cultural institutions, are a reflection of this belief.

I feel that art is tool for empowerment and education. It’s also a viable tool to investigate positive change and engage a culture through the use of exploration.”