

DUVEEN'S FRAMES

original models? Donaldson was a dealer in furniture and objets d'art as well as paintings, and Hodgkins must have owned antique frames – indeed, in 1925 he sold one such to Duveen for the high price of £600.³⁴ Did these dealers also use reproductions of these frame patterns on the paintings they sold? This would seem likely, because Duveen's phenomenal success was built on adopting and developing the methods of his rivals.³⁵

³⁴ DBR, box 466 [reel 321], cable from the Paris office to the New York office, 20th October 1925. Another frame was purchased from him the following year for £300; DBR, box 111 [reel 37], Paris stock books, p.67, purchased from Hodgkins '1 old Regence carved and gilt wood frame'. Duveen's name was often linked with Hodgkins's. In 1911 there was even an unfounded rumour that Duveen 'had gone into partnership with Hodgkins in Paris'; DBR, box 281 [reel 136], letter from Mrs Henry Oppenheim to Joseph Duveen, 12th September 1911.

³⁵ The 'Sulley model' seems to be an adaptation of a frame carved by Lebrun for A.J. Sulley in the 1910s. DBR, box 293 [reel 94], cable from the Paris office to the New York office, 20th October 1925: 'Frame [a]round *Sulley Van Dyck [Earl of Kinnoull in Armour]* is not old. Simply copy made by Lebrun before war. It is not as good as one we had made, as it has very high ornament at top which we reduced in Bache's frame [for *Robert Rich, 2nd Earl of Warwick*]; otherwise you would not be able to place picture on account of extra height'.

Although the policy we have outlined had its formulaic side, it was not adhered to rigidly and there are cases where the preferred types of frame were found not to work.³⁶ Furthermore, when framing Italian paintings of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Duveen adopted an entirely different approach, depending exclusively on the services of one remarkable Italian craftsman, which will be the subject of a separate article.

³⁶ Following a request for advice on a suitable frame for a recently purchased Gainsborough landscape from the collection of Lord d'Abernon, a member of the Paris office (probably Edward Fowles) warned that the painting must be put 'in a simple Carlo Maratti Frame, nothing else would suit it. It is a very difficult picture to frame, owing to its very sketchy state and apparent emptiness at the top. A Louis XV Frame would not suit it at all, it would only exaggerate its unfinishedness'; DBR, box 244 [reel 99], cable from the Paris office to the London office, 13th June 1929. A simple Maratta frame was also preferred over the standard Régence model in the case of Hoppner's *Lady Waldegrave*; see DBR, box 254 [reel 109], cable from the London office to the Paris office, December 1926: 'we are quite aware that our small Regence frames would be much too heavy if cut for this small picture [. . .] We have discovered here a narrow Carlo Muratti [*sic*] frame which with a little alteration would suit the picture, but we know that Sir Joseph would much prefer a Regence Frame for it if you can find one'.

Recent acquisitions of glass sculpture at the Glasmuseum Hentrich, Düsseldorf

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THE GLASMUSEUM HENTRICH has its origin in a museum of decorative arts founded in 1896. It gained its current importance and size through various purchases and donations, most notably through the patronage of the Düsseldorf architect Helmut Hentrich (1905–2001), who donated his extensive glass

collection to the museum. Today, the Glasmuseum forms part of a foundation, the Stiftung Museum Kunst Palast, which evolved from the former art museum of the city of Düsseldorf. The Glasmuseum presents an overview of the history of glass from its beginnings until today. Islamic glass from the Middle



44. *A & O*, by Günter Thorm. 1991. Sheet glass, reinforcement bars and magnets, 178 by 131 by 45.3 cm. (Photograph courtesy of Horst Kolberg; Glasmuseum Hentrich, Düsseldorf; Gl mkp 2008–5).



45. *99–08*, by Michael Behrens. 2008. Colourless glass, kiln-cast, *pâte-de-verre* overlay, fused, formed, cut and polished, 21.5 by 87 by 29 cm. (Photograph courtesy of Paul Niessen; Glasmuseum Hentrich, Düsseldorf; Gl mkp 2008–12).



46. *Trafo*, by Wilken Skurk. 2007. Cast glass and patinated bronze, 115 by 65 by 50 cm. (Photograph courtesy of Lukas Spörl; Glasmuseum Hentrich, Düsseldorf; Gl mkp 2008–40).



47. *Waiting VII*, by Heike Brachlow. 2008. Yellow glass, kiln-cast, cut, sand-blasted and polished, 68.5 by 18 cm. (Photograph courtesy of Lothar Milatz; Glasmuseum Hentrich, Düsseldorf; Gl mkp 2008–293).

Ages and French Art Nouveau are the collection's particular strengths, but there are extraordinary highlights from almost every other major glassmaking period and region.

In 2008, acquisitions focused on contemporary glass. Over the past four decades glass art has been dominated by studio glass, i.e. by artists who specialise entirely in glass, forming a milieu of its own, which continues to exist independently from the main art scene. Glass art originated in the decorative arts, and artists continue to struggle with this association: other than bronze or marble, glass still seems to require vindication to be accepted as an artistic material.

But change is afoot. The number of individuals who consider themselves less as glass artists than as artists who work with glass is growing. While the first might tend to start from the glass material and to look for an idea for which they can use it, the latter start with the idea and come to choose glass if and when it suits their project.

Günter Thorn (b.1954) is a prime example. His conceptual work *A & O* (Fig.44) is easy to describe: sheets of glass and rods of metal support each other by the force of magnets in a precarious balance. His themes are balance and fragility, outline and space, and the invisible, both in the form of matter – the transparent glass – and of energy – the magnets. The choice and treatment of the materials has been reduced to express these phenomena as clearly as possible. Thorn chose the title in reference to the Greek alphabet, alpha and omega, beginning and end, to indicate that he saw his idea fully materialised in the resulting work. Thorn was raised in the Rhineland, studied art in Düsseldorf and today lives and works in a small town in the Westerwald region (east of Bonn). For more than twenty years he has also been assisting the Zero-artist Otto Piene with his projects.

Wilken Skurk (b.1956) is another sculptor who combines glass with other materials, in his case, bronze. Again, the balance

between materials plays a significant role. In his work *Trafo* (Fig.46), the balance seems tipped: the top, bronze with a concrete-like patina, rests heavily on the transparent and thus deceptively weightless-looking base, distantly resembling a natural rock-and-ice formation. Skurk's sculptures are cast in moulds and, except for the bronze patina, there is no treatment of the objects after their casting and assembly. The moulds are made from *objets trouvés*, for example, styrofoam casings from bathroom appliances. Thus, consumerism and Western habits intrude into the work without leaving easily recognisable traces. Neither these shapes nor the title ('*Trafo*' is German slang for an electrical transformer) are meant to lead the beholder in a certain direction, leaving ample room for interpretation and analogies. Skurk was trained as a goldsmith in Quedlinburg, East Germany. After the reunification of Germany he moved to Berlin, where he studied art at Humboldt University and at the University of Art (HdK); he now lives and works in Berlin.

Michael Behrens (b.1973) and Heike Brachlow (b.1970) both specialise in glass as their artistic material. After training as an industrial mechanic in Neuss (near Düsseldorf), Behrens studied art in Maastricht in the Netherlands, and today lives and works in Düsseldorf. His works are created by fusing chunks of glass that are coated in a *pâte-de-verre* technique with coloured glass, thus producing an effect of a floating network of patterns (Fig.45). His theme is the sea world, the colours of submarine life and the scattering of light through waves.

Heike Brachlow, born in Munich, learned glass blowing in Rotorua, New Zealand. She studied art in Wolverhampton and at the Royal College of Art in London. In her current work, she explores kinetic art (Fig.47). Glass in motion is always a little unnerving, and Brachlow uses it in an ambivalent way: beautiful and well proportioned on the one hand, a leap of faith on the other.