

COLOR VISION

A GALLERY OWNER PUTS HER ARTISTS FIRST

WRITTEN BY ISABEL STOLTZMAN PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN VALLS

Lani McGregor uses the analogy of an iceberg to describe Bullseye Gallery. “We may resemble other galleries on the street, but it’s what’s underneath the surface that makes us different.” Tucked in Portland’s hip Pearl District, the gallery has supported international masters and emerging artists from Mexico City to Venice, giving expression to their visions through colored glass, since its inception in 1995. But for McGregor and her husband, Dan Schwoerer, a fascination with glass began long before that. In 1974, Schwoerer founded the Bullseye Glass Company, which would later become the foundation for the gallery’s reputation for excellence in contemporary glass.

One of the glass company’s key accomplishments was developing the world’s first line of colored glass, designed to melt together in a kiln. Bullseye produces thousands of different colors in small batches and sends them around the world to artists who create 2-D and 3-D works that run the gamut, from abstract and minimalist to vibrant and expressive—and that is what McGregor finds so exciting. “The very nature of glass sits right on the edge of art and architecture,” she says. “Imagine using sheet glass instead of paint. The translucent quality plays with the light and gives a depth that no other medium can claim. Why put art on a wall when the wall can be the art? Glass as an art form needs to be considered in a broader context. We’re not helping people decorate with glass, but rather to live with glass.”

McGregor is particularly proud of her company’s association with Klaus Moje, whose work was done with glass made at Bullseye and exhibited at the Portland Art Museum. In addition to working with individual artists, Bullseye Gallery supports art-school projects by developing new materials and unique technologies meant to inspire. McGregor points out that the gallery is just a reflection of its factory across the river, which allows an international community of artists to work on the leading edge of contemporary glass. “My gallery is the window into that scene. So, you could say, I do windows,” she laughs. *bullseyegallery.com; 503.227.0222*

LANI MCGREGOR GALLERY DIRECTOR

