

Personal mark



Katja Schetting uses special glasses from Desag and "Duran" from Schott-Rohrglas in her artistic work. This gives her creations a personal mark.

Ute Hoffmann, Mainz

The colours and shapes of her glass objects exude a zest for life. A happy atmosphere can be detected in Katja Schetting's studio in Bonn. Dancers, birds and small figurines which she calls "stage characters" have become the artist's mode of expression, and she likes telling something about herself in her work.

Following her education as a glass and porcelain painter Katja Schetting has been studying free art. Her interest in glass was influenced by a Jugendstil house with impressive windows, in which she lived for a few years, and by a film about the American studio glass movement which fascinated her. The glass technical college at Rheinbach was not far from where she lived and this also fitted in with her plans.

She went freelance very early, first with glass vessels. She refined vases and dishes with strong geometric patterns in a variety of techniques. Her exam piece was based on "Figure sculpture in glass" and led to the development of her



Katja Schetting

1963	Born in Saarbrücken
1982	Abitur/summer school at Pavel Molnar (glass blowing)
1982–1985	State Glass High School, Rheinbach
1986–1989	Academy for Handicraft Design, Aachen
1989	Design work for Rosenthal
1990	Master's Degree as glass painter
1991	Pilchuck Glass School, Seattle, USA
1993	Assisting at Jack Ink, Austria
since 1985	Working freelance. Participating at numerous national and international exhibitions and competitions
since 1996	International design consultancy within the framework of the Protrade project of the Society for Technical Cooperation (GTZ)

Awards

1987	Stipend by the Foundation for Promotion of Skills
1989	First prize in the Mathildenhöhe competition "Youth Designing Glass"
1992	First prize in the design competition "Young Handicraft NRW", Aachen

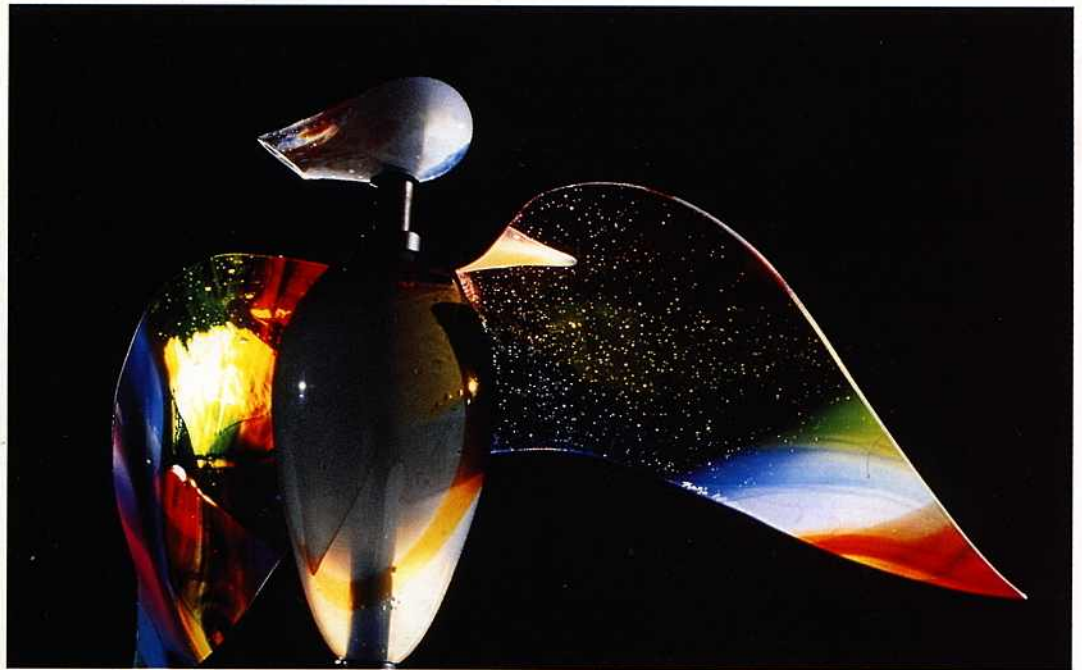


sculptures. Objects and compositions are made from various glasses, occasionally complemented by other materials. Katja Schetting works a lot with flat glasses such as antique glass and "Colorescent" from Desag in Grünenplan. She combines these with "Duran" tubing or rod which give small figurines their "backbone". She is always making interesting pieces of glass which then lie on her shelves ready to inspire new work and new developments. Furnace blown items, which she sometimes produces in quantity, also wait to be put to use. She keeps in constant touch with her work materials in order to be able to put spontaneous ideas into practice without delay.

For larger work she uses metal for stabilisation as well as rubber parts to make the figures mobile. This mobility is very important, because she does not want anything to be static and final – there is always room for alternatives. Her dancers can bend and turn; her stage characters can be changed in such a way that new "staging" is possible.

Smaller parts are joined with UV adhesive, large ones mechanically with screws and rubber. The glass parts are cut, polished at the edges. From time to time they are shaped, for example bent in a fusing furnace over negative moulds in plaster or metal so that they attain the required shape, such as the wings of a bird. Sometimes Katja Schetting also uses flashed glass which she sandblasts, engraves or – rarely – paints. She has got away from glass painting, because she finds the colours too dull. She prefers the transparency of coloured glass, particularly because she can create new nuances by overlapping different glasses. She appreciates the lively structure of Desag glasses and the wide colour range. Colours are the central element of her creativity. She takes her time when selecting them, holds them up to the light, compares different shades and then makes up her mind about shades and nuances.

Her ideas mostly occur to her when she is quite relaxed and not concentrating on them. Often an individual piece of glass is her inspiration, or maybe an object produced earlier develops into a new impulse. The artist then makes one or more sketches, but working the glass is always inspired by her spontaneity. "My works are quite personal, and then it is easy to



recognise me", she says, "it is important for me to tell something about myself". For this reason she invites collectors and other interested parties into her workshop two or three times a year. Her work is mostly sold in galleries, but she also reaches her collectors at exhibitions all over Europe.

After her glass painting period the stage characters were Katja Schetting's first sculptures, made from straight flat glasses, arranged as on a stage and fitted to "Duran" tubing and rod, the stability of which was required for this purpose. Then she developed the dancers whose arms were in a bent lens shape and looked like wings, and this led to the birds. Her objects are 20 to 190 cm high and mounted on a metal foot. Rusty iron appears to her to be

particularly suitable with glass. Glass and water is also a combination she finds fascinating and which she intends to work with creatively.

In addition to her unique objects Katja Schetting also makes mobile series, lively shapes made from glass segments and bent wire. Like all her other work these encourage the viewer to play with creatively: "Glass is not so delicate after all, if only it is handled with respect" ■

