

THE CORNING MUSEUM OF GLASS ANNOUNCES SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH IN GLASS

THE RAKOW GRANT

Since 1986, the Corning Museum of Glass has awarded annually the *Rakow Grant for Glass Research* in support of scholarly research in the history of glass and glassmaking. The grant is made possible through the generosity of the late Dr. and Mrs. Leonard S. Rakow, who were Fellows, friends, and benefactors of the Museum. Glass research may include fields of archaeology and anthropology, art history, conservation, and the history of science and technology, and priority is given to projects that focus on historically understudied or underrepresented time periods, geographic areas, cultures, or otherwise lesser-known fields of glass history. The application cycle closes around February 1 every year. More information can be found on the Corning Museum of Glass website at: <https://info.cmog.org/opportunities-for-scholars/rakow-grant>.

For 2024, four specialists were awarded Rakow Grants in support of their glass research.

Laure Dussubieux

From Local Production to Global Trade: Investigating the Provenance and Circulation of Indian Glass Beads in Ancient Times

The grant funding will be used to carry out isotope analysis (Sr, Nd, Pb) on glass from two Indian sites, Arikamedu and Kaushambi, to determine whether it was produced locally. Although archaeological evidence seems to indicate that glass was worked into objects at both sites, it is not clear whether the glass itself was manufactured locally or acquired elsewhere. This project will compare the isotopic signatures of glass objects from Arikamedu and Kaushambi with the signatures of sand samples collected at and around both sites. A match would likely indicate local production, as usually a glass workshop would obtain sand from a nearby source. This study will contribute to a better understanding of the Indian glass industry that produced a vast amount of beads for the Indian Ocean trade.

Anzhelika Kolesnychenko

Core-Formed Glass Vessels from the Northern Black Sea Region

The project proposes the development and publication of a comprehensive study on core-formed vessels from the Northern Black Sea region. To date, around 600 such

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vessels are known, while previously less than 100 were included in generalized works. Formalized morphological and stylistic analysis will be combined with a “narrow” chronology of types based on finds in dated contexts. Compositional analysis will clarify the ways in which vessels were brought to the region. A catalogue of North Pontic vessels will complement the Mediterranean corpus of finds and clarify the typological and technological history of core-formed glassware.

Qin-Qin Lü

New Insights of Central Asian Plant Ash Glass: A Sr-Nd Isotopic Investigation of Glass from Ken-Bulun, Kyrgyzstan

The history of glass was linked to trade and cultural exchange on the Silk Roads. However, studies on Central Asian plant ash glass have been relatively limited. Particularly, although Sr-Nd isotopes are recognized as useful tracers for glass provenance, few isotopic analyses have been conducted for glass from the eastern Silk Roads. This project proposes chemical and Sr-Nd isotope analyses for glass chunks and vessel fragments from Ken-Bulun, an important medieval site in the Chuy Valley at the crossroads of trade routes. As the first scientific investigation for glass from Kyrgyzstan, this study will reveal the situation of glass trade and production in the Chuy Valley and advance our understanding of technological and cultural developments associated with Central Asian plant ash glass.

Maria Martinez, Jose Luis Punzo Diaz, and Emiliano Ricardo Melgar Tísoc

P’urhépecha Sovereignty: Resilience and Continuity in Obsidian Lapidary Art

Highly polished obsidian tablets made by lapidarians of the P’urhépecha (Tarascan) Empire, Mexico, represent resilience and technological continuity in obsidian lapidary art after colonization. However, these tablets appear to be hybrids of pre-Columbian mirrors that emerge within the traditional manufacturing repertoire. The introduction of glass beads in New Spain may have influenced the manufacture of these new luxury items. Within the frameworks of ethnohistory, techno-morphological (chaîne opératoire) analyses, and raw material provenance studies, this project will contextualize lapidary art and these tablets to better understand when and how the adoption and use of glass beads occurred in the P’urhépecha Empire.

DAVID WHITEHOUSE RESEARCH RESIDENCY FOR SCHOLARS

The David Whitehouse Research Residency for Scholars is open to scholars whose research in glass and glass-related topics will benefit from onsite, in-person engagement with the Museum’s resources, particularly the extensive holdings of the Rakow Research Library. The residency is named for the former executive director of the Corning Museum of Glass, David Whitehouse—a highly regarded scholar who worked to build the resources of the Rakow Library and was a major supporter of scholars researching glass. This residency creates opportunities to advance glass knowledge or make progress on a developing project. Residencies may be up to three weeks in duration and are based on site at the Corning Museum of Glass in Corning, New York. Applications for the following year are accepted until around August 31. Further information about the Whitehouse Residency for Scholars is available at: <https://info.cmog.org/opportunities-for-scholars/whitehouse-scholar-residency>.

The Museum awarded two Whitehouse Scholar Residencies in 2024.

Birgit Maixner

Exploring the Phenomenon of Viking Period Middle Eastern Mosaic Glass Beads

The project takes its starting point in various types of Middle Eastern glass mosaic beads of the eighth to tenth century CE, which are known from Viking Age Scandinavia. In contrast to the dating of the beads in Scandinavia, the cultural-historical context in the Near East in which these bead types were produced has received little attention, and little is known about the more proximate geographical origins of these bead types within the Near East. The comparison with Islamic mosaic glass vessels and architectural glass decorations is intended to close this gap.

Joe Stadolnik

Subtle Arts: Genres of English Alchemy 1300–1520

The residency will support a book project constituting a literary history of alchemy in medieval England. Alchemy needs a literary history because its texts proposed peculiar ways of writing and reading specially suited to the secretive discipline. “Books open other books,” went the alchemical saying, and medieval aspirants took that to heart as they borrowed, copied, and wrote new ones with an unusual enthusiasm. This project also tracks how alchemy was not so hermetic in practice, with connections to other craft practices—like bronzework, ink-making, and glazing. The project also follows alchemy’s textual circulation as it was reshaped into new literary forms moving in manuscript, in the dynamically multilingual textual culture of medieval England.