

Gossamer Glass Studios presents a techniques sheet #3

Making a simple murrini cane.

Murrini or mosaic cane is one of the oldest techniques in glass. Due to its malleability while hot, a design can be made by layering different colors of glass so as to create a design as simple as a star or as complex as a face or butterfly. The layered colored glass is precisely heated and stretched like taffy to the desired size without distorting the design. In this tip sheet I will show you how a simple murrini is made.



1- A gather of red glass is dipped onto the end of a punty and pressed into a 6 pointed star optic mold.



An assortment of Optic molds



2- After the red star has cooled a bit, it is dipped into the molten clear glass to case it and make the form cylindrical



3- After the first two layers cool down the piece is dipped into a different color of glass and then stamped into a larger optic mold.



4- This is then dipped into clear for the final time. In order to make square cane the whole works is squeezed into a square on the marver table



5- The squared up multi color layered mass is then heated just the right amount. This makes for an even pull.

6- The cane is stretched vertically at first using gravity to help stretch the big end down to the smaller one.



7- The cane is then layered out horizontal on a wooden ladder and cut into shorter sections before annealing in the kiln. Annealing relieves stress in the glass making it cut cleaner into sections later.

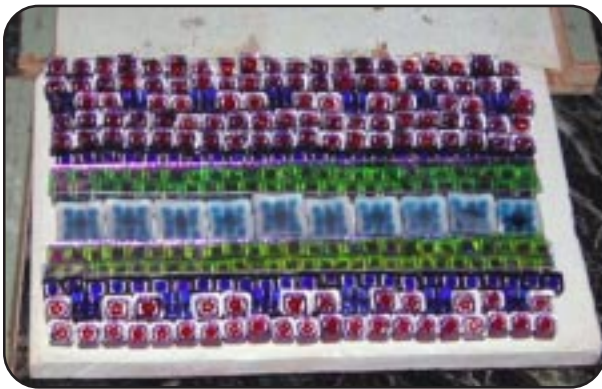




8- The cane is cut into sections called murrini. Cane can also be pulled and recombined in a second heat fuse and pull, making a composite cane. This allows for greater detail to be achieved.



9- Many different murrini and zanfirico cane can be combined into a collage. This lay-up will be heated and fused before being blown into its final form.



10- The murrini can be square, round and different sizes. As long as most of the cane are the same height they can work well together. Dichroic glass can also be used in the lay-ups.



11- The layout can be as complex as one can dream up. Many layouts take up to two hours to complete, not counting making and cutting all the murrini into chips. Every piece of cane has to have the same coefficient of expansion or there is a risk of breakage.

12- Once the cane is pulled, the right ones are cut up, the layouts are made up then the real fun can begin, blowing life and form into a collection of chips of glass that come together to be one form and spirit unto their own.



Finished Murrini Vessels

For information on art glass from Gossamer Glass studios, visit us on the web at: www.gossamerglass.com
 Other tip sheets include #1 Zanfirico Cane, #2 Cane roll-up, #3 Murrini Cane & lay-up, #4 Making a cane goblet. More sheets to follow.