

Transitional Glass

The Art of Debbie Tarsitano



Sandwich Glass Museum
August 1–November 3, 2013

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Debbie in her studio in the 1970's



Debbie Tarsitano
TRANSITIONAL GLASS

Since my childhood, I have always created art. As a small child, my parents, Kathryn and Delmo kindled my life-long interest in painting and sculpture by taking me on Sunday visits to New York art museums. As a ten year old, I saw my first glass paperweight, which attracted me and created a desire in me to learn more about this intriguing art form, the intimate world of encased glass. In the mid-70's, while studying art at Hofstra University, my father and I set up a primitive torch on a card table in our garage. Through trial and error we succeeded in encasing frameworked floral designs in molten glass creating our first simple paperweights. By the time I graduated with a degree in Fine Art from Hofstra I was already working full time as a glass artist.

In 1978, at 23, I was invited to participate in a major paperweight exhibition -- "Flowers Which Clothe The Meadows" -- at the Corning Museum of Glass. This exhibition exposed me to high museum standards that I have upheld ever since, and it launched my artistic career. Shortly after, I began collaborating with Roland (Max) Erlacher, a master glass engraver at Steuben, and transitioned to encased framework designs that framed and complemented painterly engravings on the clear crystal.

In 1989 I created "The Outstretched Hand of Liberty" a single work consisting of eight engraved pictorial sculptures commemorating my grandmother's arrival in the United States from her native Italy. This work honored her and all other Ellis Island arrivals' memories of the Statue of Liberty. Then, after an emotionally moving visit to the Ann Frank house in Amsterdam, I designed my first true portrait in glass and commissioned Max Erlacher to engrave Ann Frank's portrait onto an encased crystal design representing the gingham colors of her diary.

By the early nineties, I transformed the shape of my work from round to a wide variety of sculptural forms. These sculptures used milifiori canes and frameworked designs expressing contemporary themes, human profiles and designs inspired by the DNA double helix. Surface treatments transformed the exteriors of my sculptures with engraving, framework and oil painted canvas. Experiments mixing oil painted canvas and glass led directly to radical new combinations of oil paintings on canvas with framework elements, such as "Where We Come From" and "Into the Void."

In 2010 I increased the size of glass designs incorporated in my oil paintings and gave the glass a more painterly appearance. To accomplish this I mastered the ancient glass casting technique of Pate de Verre, which let me cast larger subjects for mounting on wooden boards covered with my oil painting on canvas. This transformation has now freed all my designs from their crystal confines. I would like to thank everyone at the Sandwich Glass Museum for giving me the opportunity to show my work, for that I am truly grateful.

Debbie Tarsitano

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Delmo Tarsitano Salamander on Debbie Tarsitano Blue Dahlia, 3 ¼ inches



80 Flower Collage, 4 ¼ inches





Victorian Hand Held Bouquet, 4 ¼ inches



Valentine, 3 ¼ inches



Red Dahlia Collage, 4 inches



Red Dahlia, (close up)



Lacey Bouquet, 3 ½ inches



Lacey Dahlia, (close up)



Madam XY, 4 inches



The Snake Charmer, 4 1/2 inches



Paradise Lost, 4 ½ inches



Paisley Snakes, 3 ¼ inches



Grandmother Josephina Tarsitano Ellis Island Photograph



The Outstretched Hand of Liberty, Each Plaque 4 inches, base 11 x 42 inches



Passing the Flame of liberty, The Outstretched Hand of Liberty, 4 inches



Education, The Outstretched Hand of Liberty, 4 inches



Ann Frank, Portrait in Glass 5 inches



The Witness to the Battle, Each Plaque 4 inches



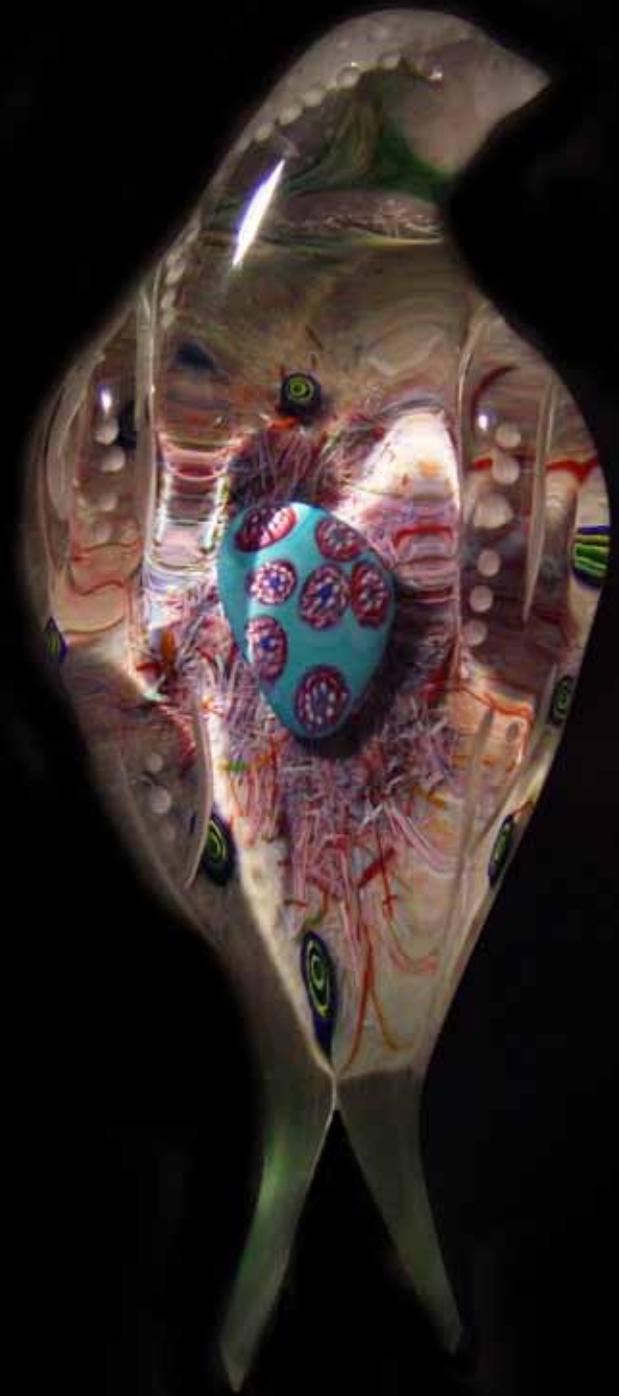
Blood Droplet, 4 ¾ inches



Lateral Drip, 7 inches



Sapphire Bird, 9 inches



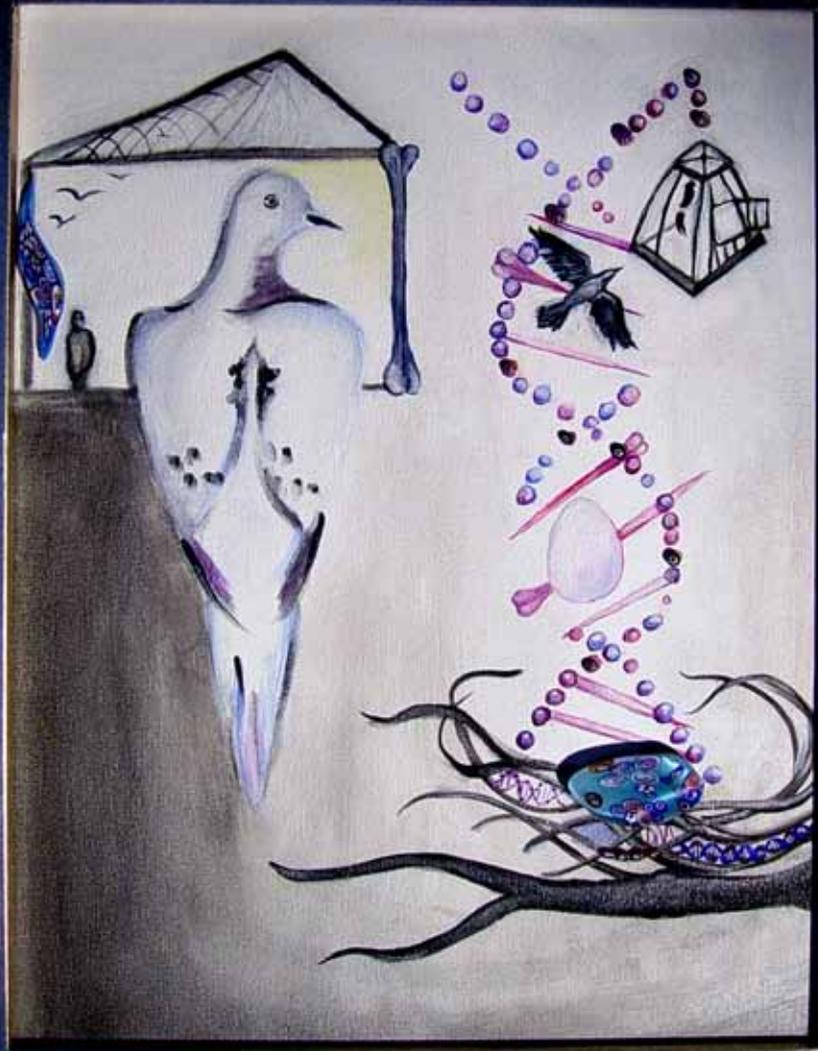
Barn Swallow, 6 x 3 inches



Urban Intersection, Glass 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 4 inches, Painting 6x8 inches



Together Apart, 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 3 $\frac{3}{4}$, Sculpture two, 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches



Escape, 10 x 12 inches



Mysterious Woman, 24 x 24 inches



The Cloud of all Knowing, 24 x 48 inches



The Cloud of all Knowing, (Close up)



Wabi Sabi Bird, 4 x 7 inches



Frozen With Snow, 12 x 7 inches



Study for the Taste of Spring, 11 x 11 inches



To Taste of Spring, 8 x 10 inches



Fall DNA Leaf, 4 x 3 ½ inches



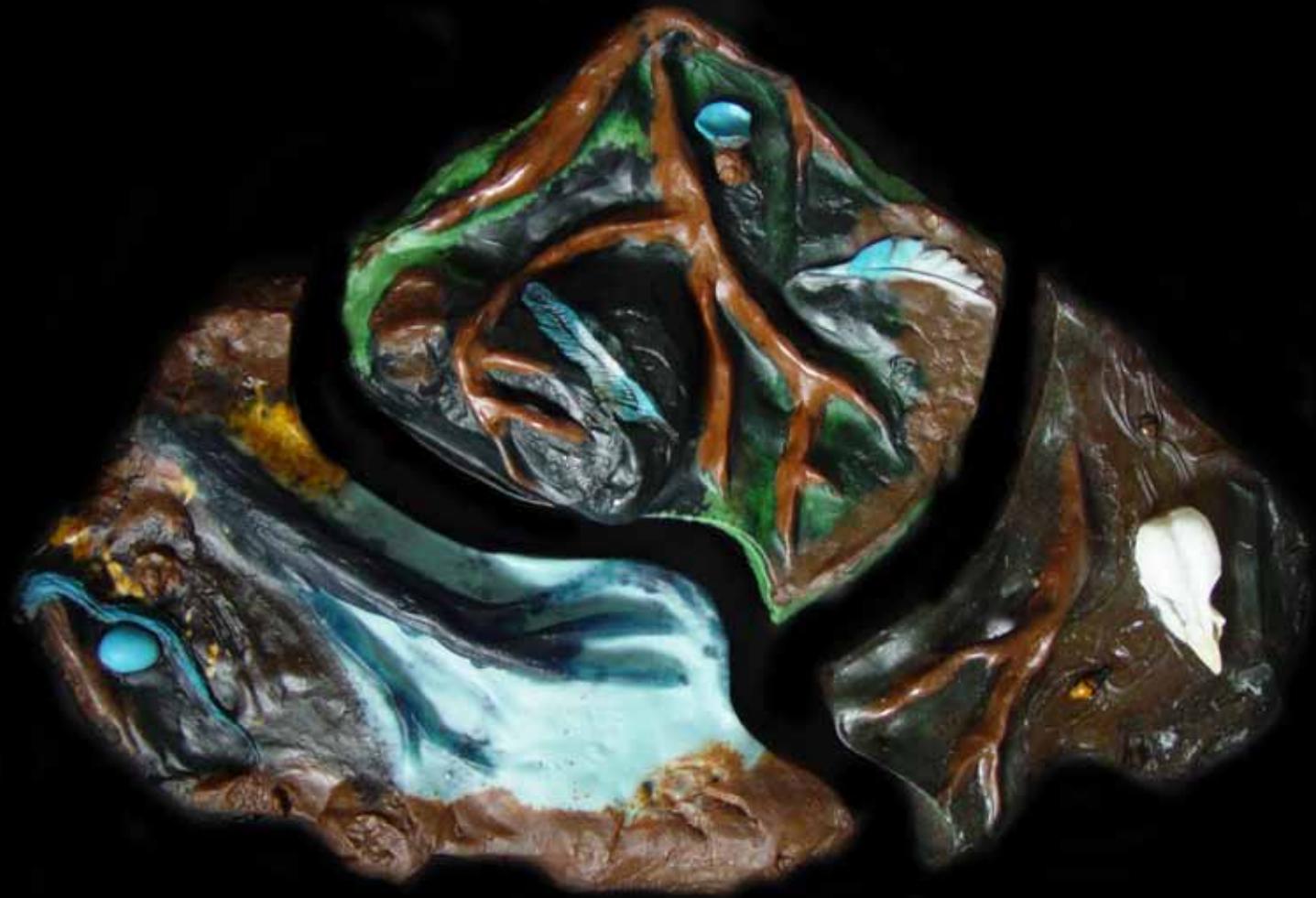
What I Learned on the Forest Floor, 8 x 11 inches



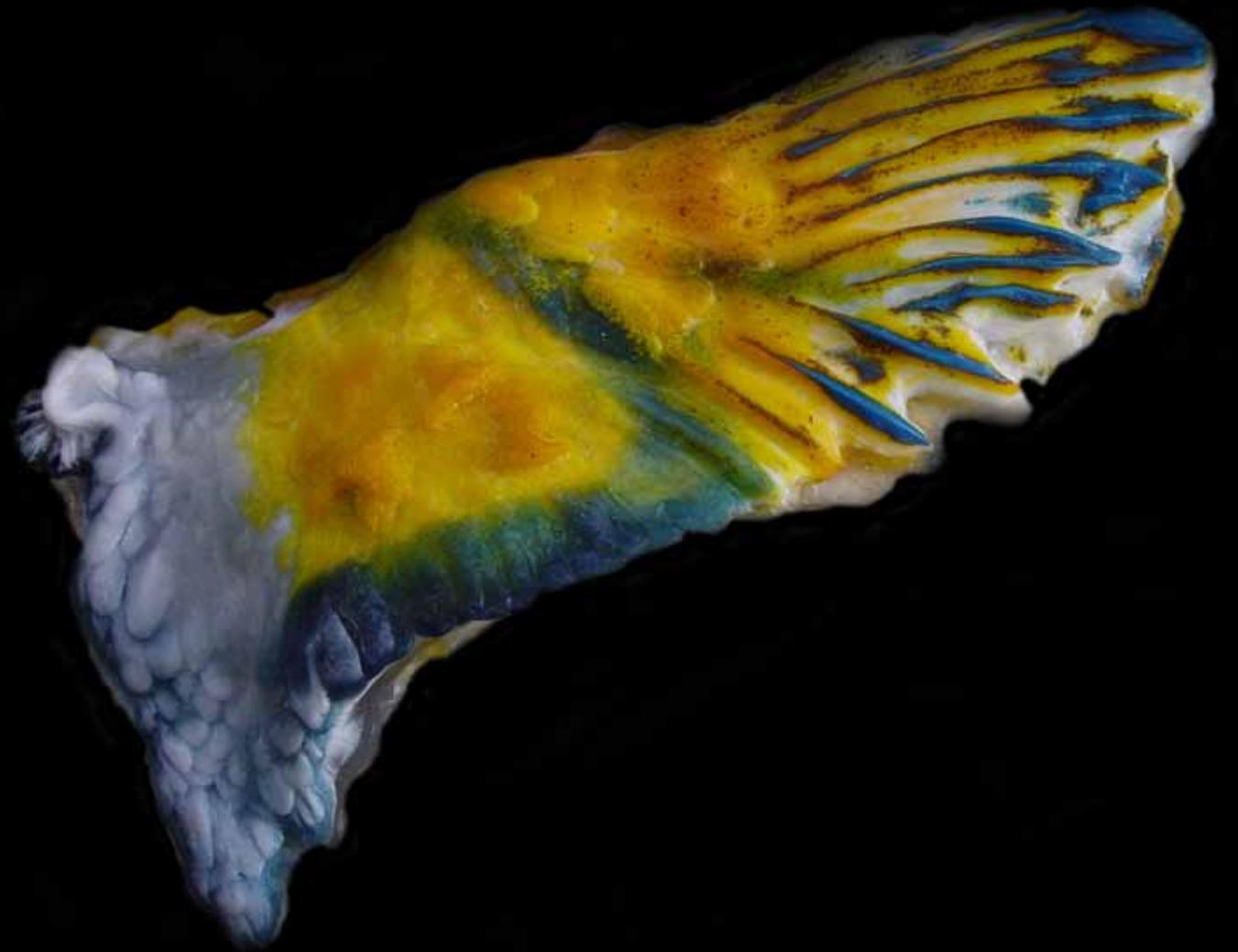
Anticipation of Spring, 24 x 24 inches



Sketch of Wing, 10 x 12 inches



Life Cycle Puzzle, 23 x 13 inches



Through the Storm 9 x 24 inches



Sandwich Glass Museum

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