

Elizabeth and Frank Creech of Brevard, N.C. reprise this brief segment from their presentation, *Glass—Miracle Born of Fire*, at the Carder-Steuben Symposium last September at the CMOG. It illustrates Carder's mastery of ancient glassmaking techniques (in addition to classical forms) and articulates his profound belief in the timeless value of art and beauty in nurturing the human condition.

Photos are courtesy of the Corning Museum of Glass and the British Museum.

The first image, from the British Museum, is the magnificent **Portland Vase**, probably made during the 1st century A.D. It is made of dark cobalt glass cased with opaque white glass, the cameo carving absolutely breathtaking. Frederick Carder was just a teenage kid when he first saw John Northwood's copy of this masterpiece. You are now viewing virtually the same image that was Frederick Carder's epiphany! He was so thoroughly enthralled by what he beheld that he resolved to make glassmaking his career, pursuing that fiery art with unswerving dedication for the next eight decades!



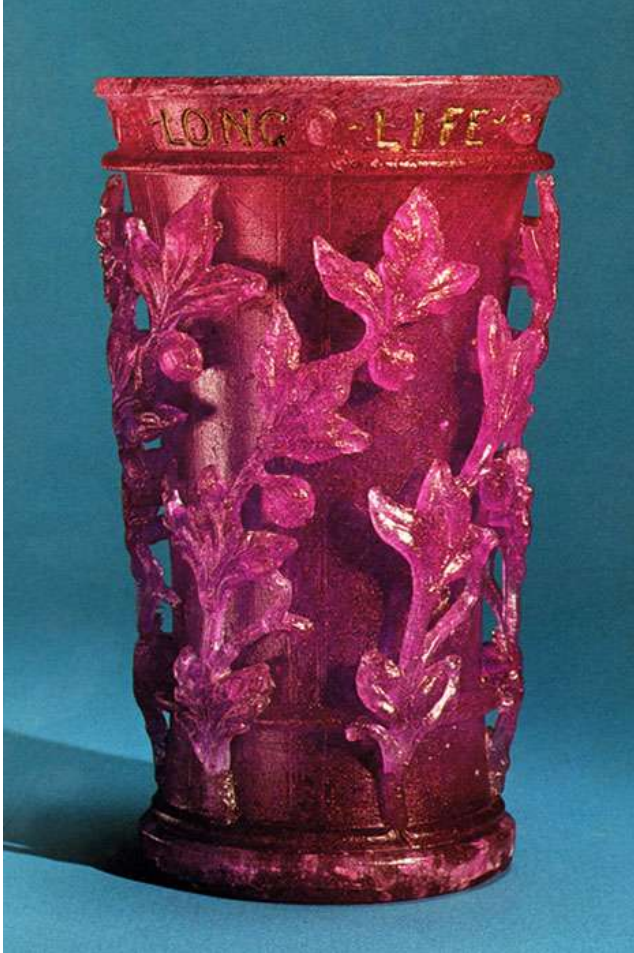
Cameo carving is one of the most difficult techniques in glassmaking. It was characteristic of Frederick Carder that he relished challenges. Here from the CMOG is an unfinished cameo plaque that he carved, as a very young man, during his early years at Stevens and Williams working under the great John Northwood. Mr. Carder's fascination with relief decoration continued throughout his glassmaking career.



Next, from the British Museum, is a piece from the late Roman Empire—the **Lycurgus Cup**. It depicts the strangling of the Thracian King Lycurgus by a vengeful Dionysos, whom he had mocked. The cup is dichroic glass, appearing pea green in reflected light and magenta in transmitted light. The technique is diatreta, with the carved decoration standing proud from the ground, and being supported only by concealed struts or “bridges.” The making of this cup required a very thick blank, an incredible amount of delicate grinding—and infinite patience. The metal mounts are not original to the cup.



Diatreta is one of the most astonishingly intricate techniques in glassmaking. It should not surprise us that Frederick Carder produced a series of diatreta work as his final contribution to creating masterpieces in glass. Rather than by grinding, though, Mr. Carder fabricated his diatreta pieces using the *cire perdue*, or lost wax casting process. Here from the CMOG is one of the last and finest creations of Mr. Carder, made by him in 1955 in his studio, when he was about 92 years old.



It is no accident that the title of his early unfinished cameo plaque is *Immortality of the Arts*, or that the inscription on his late diatreta vase reads, “**Life is short—Art is long.**” These two objects symbolize the first and final great challenges accepted by Frederick Carder, to conquer and harness the fiery inferno and bring forth beautiful things of glass.

We can imagine no one else who strove so diligently, for so long, so unswervingly, through so many heartbreaks and so much adversity and who produced so great a body of work—as our very own Frederick Carder. He cried out to the world that art is of lasting value, and that beauty is worthy of pursuit. This was his credo and this is his legacy to us. Like the ancients who preceded him, Mr. Carder advanced the ascendancy of mankind.