

# Glassblower finds freedom through work

## 'Show me and I can do it,' Stolp tells profs

Story and Photo  
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Of the Emerald

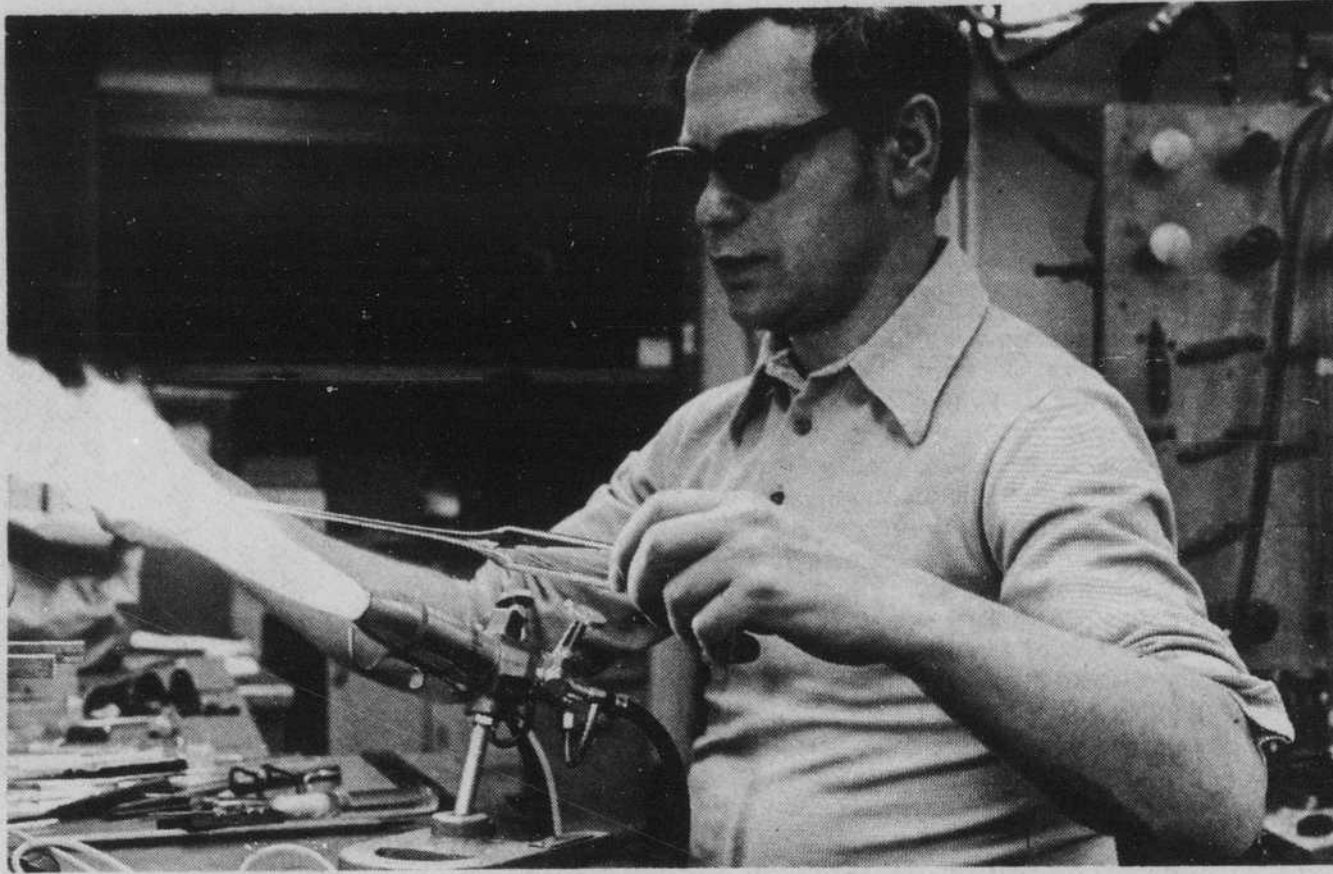
"After you get to know the glass it becomes a friend and it won't hurt you, even if it's broken," says Siegfried Stolp, the new glass blower hired by the Science Services Department at the University.

Stolp, a 44-year-old German immigrant to the United States, has 15 years experience as a glass blower. Last September he answered an advertisement placed by the University in Glass Blowers Society magazine. He began work Jan. 16.

Stolp's job is to supply science classes at the University with handmade glass apparatus for experiments. The equipment he makes is specifically suited for the experiments and is not available through supply houses.

Sitting at his workbench, Stolp puts on a pair of heavy duty sunglasses and ignites his 10-inch long cannon-like torch. He adjusts gold knobs near its base that control the mix of hydrogen and oxygen. A pointed blue flame bursts out a foot or more.

Today his work is stacked to his right. A pile of calibrated glass tubes rests with a note from a chemistry professor; "Please Fix." Each tube has a ragged tip that Stolp will soften by rotating it



Siegfried Stolp was hired by the University Science Services department in January to supply science classes with handmade glass apparatus for experiments.

in the blue flame. Then he'll roll the tip on an asbestos mat and the tube will be ready for more experiments.

Other days Stolp works from diagrams provided by science professors. On a bench near the door of Stolp's workshop stands a pair of glass spheres neatly connected by a short glass tube. (To a layman, it's a glass barbell.) More tubes hang like arms from the top sphere. (To a scientist it's the perfect piece for an experiment.) A week ago the structure was just felt pen on scratch paper, until Stolp began work on it.

Objects that demonstrate the rigid exactitude of science aren't the only ones that fill the work-

shop. A glass pipe sits on short curly legs on top of Stolp's file cabinet. He explains the pipe as something he did to "show off" for a group of students who toured the workshop recently.

Ten years ago he made 25 of the pipes that have a potbelly bowl and a long stem with a lip for easy gripping by the smoker's teeth. The pipes were for his "mother-in-law in Florida who said she could sell them if I made them. I think she has a lot of them left in her house," grins Stolp.

In mid-February Stolp was worried about his value to the University. "I was new and wanted to prove my skill, but no one came in. I just cleaned up and sat around,"

he moans.

Last week the science services department sent out a notice that told the science departments the new glass blower was ready to work.

"Now professors just come in and say, 'Can you do this' and show me what they want. I say, 'Yes, show me and I can do it.'" says Stolp with a smile that cracks his entire face.

The glass blower happily accepts work. He says, "It's no good to sit here, — I want to work with the glass. I'm not a faculty member who drops everything when the bell rings. In glass blowing you can't leave a hot piece (of glass). You know I will work until

the job is done. I'm free to do my job.

Stolp has a good reason to appreciate his freedom.

He grew up in Berlin, East Germany, where he attended Humboldt University as a science student from 1953 to 1956. According to Stolp, students were forced "Communist doctrine."

"You were forced to express yourself in front of people with stuff you didn't believe." Stolp compares the feeling of political indoctrination to being "told to call a green apple red."

After three years "I couldn't stand it anymore. I simply got on a subway for Frankfurt (West Germany). If the police didn't see you, you made it. There were not enough to check everyone."

Safely in Frankfurt, Stolp got a job at a pharmaceutical company as a lab technician. Six years later he decided to leave Germany and "see the world" before he got too old.

He landed in New York City in 1962 and promptly applied for a security clearance so he could join the U.S. Air Force. While waiting for a response from the Air Force, Stolp got a job at Fisher Science Company, where he learned the basics of glass blowing.

"At Fisher I found the work I'd like to do for the rest of my life."

The Air Force approved Stolp's application (18 months after he applied) but he turned down the offer.

In 1966 he left Fisher Science Company and began work at the State University of New York at Stony Brook as an assistant glass blower in the science department. While working there he applied to the University.

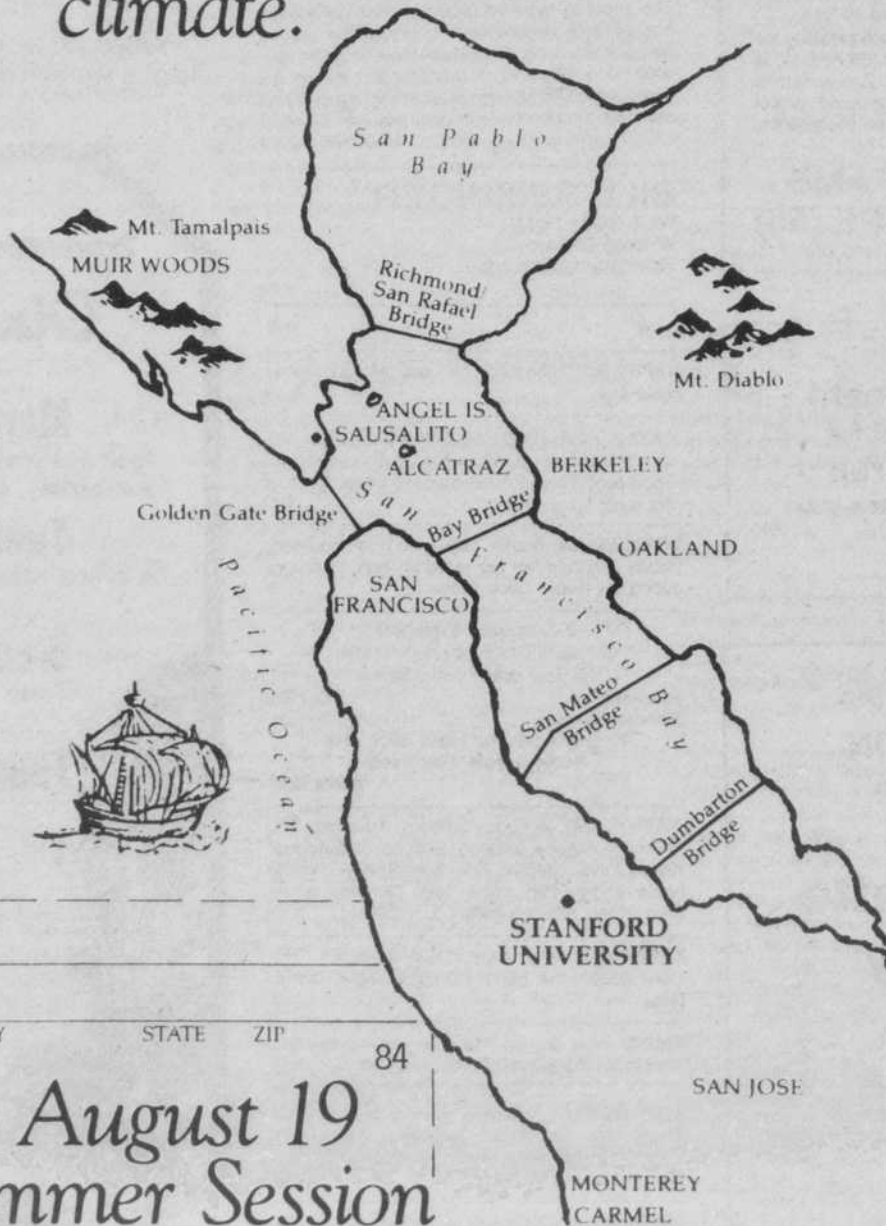
Stolp, who heard Eugene was a "beautiful place with nice people" from a colleague in New York, is eagerly awaiting the arrival of his wife and two daughters. They will join him in Eugene after selling their home in Rocky Point, New York, on Long Island.

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## Freemesser prints shown in Carmel

Photographs by the late Bernard "Bernie" Freemesser will be exhibited at the Friends of Photography gallery in Carmel, Calif. through April 23.

Freemesser, a professor of fine arts at the University, died Dec. 18 at the age of 51. He was held in high regard in the professional field of photography.

The memorial exhibit will include color and black and white contact prints made by 8 by 10 negatives.

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