

Mother, Crone; and even the aquatic world of *Coral Crossroads* with its chromatic tension between the reds, oranges and yellows of corals and the deep blues of the ocean.

Wagner's palette is mostly warm and remains vibrant even when cool. In this exhibit, she seems particularly drawn to the energy of the complementary duo of blue and orange.

"Kandinsky is a big influence on me," Wagner said. "The whole understanding of the spiritual dimension of art, in particular his idea of colors being like piano keys, each note speaking to a different part of the personality or the spirit. The spiritual dimension of art is what draws me."

Environmentally conscious and aware of the toxicity of pigment binders, Wagner has devised ways of painting that minimize adverse impact on the environment which she described in an article published this month in *American Artist*. As intended, Wagner's work resonates at many levels. Her rich textures invite close scrutiny, and her overall compositions call for the viewer to step back to gain perspective.

Also at a gallery in DIVA, **Olga Volchkova's** *Glass & Inspirations* is on exhibit through Mon. Dec. 31. Though she started working with glass only three years ago, Volchkova, a professional icon-painter and restorer, is already proving herself a most promising emerging artist in the art of glass-casting and the lost-wax process.

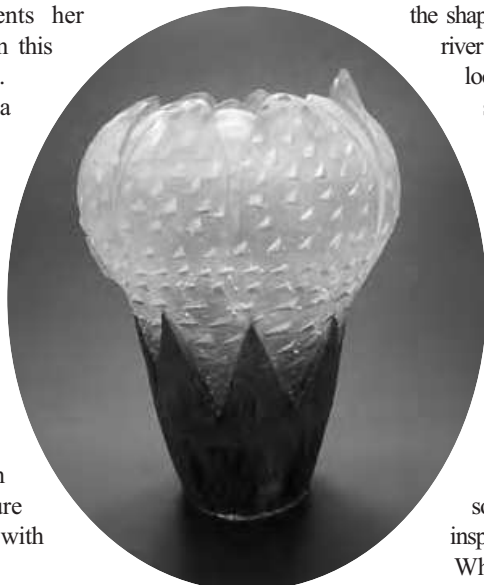
This show documents her notable beginnings in this demanding technique.

Born in Tver, a Russian city by the Volga, Volchkova was trained in music, chemistry, icon painting and painting restoration in her native country. She left Russia in 1996. After settling in Eugene in 2000, she took UO classes in ceramics and figure sculpture, the latter with Matthew Buckner.

"When you understand the human shape," Volchkova said, "you see everything in a different way. It's a resource for me even when I do abstract art."

Reading books about glass fusing led Volchkova to taking a cast-glass workshop at Pilchuck Glass School with Susan Holland in 2001. Hooked, she acquired the necessary equipment for a home studio and worked on her own until the following summer, when she returned to Pilchuck for a class with Tessa Clegg, a renowned British cast-glass artist. Two of Volchkova's pieces were selected for Pilchuck's live fundraising auctions that very year, a distinction received only by a handful of emerging artists.

Casting glass using the lost-wax technique is a labor-intensive process. After preparatory sketches, the artist creates the piece in clay, plaster or wax. A series of negative and positive molds are then made from that initial piece, from a plaster to a wax to a refractory-mold that will go in the kiln and receive the melting glass. Firing may last from one day to two weeks, depending on the thickness of the piece. The process ends with grinding and polishing.



Before Meiji,
kiln-cast glass in
lost-wax technique
by Olga Volchkova

Volchkova's earlier pieces from the years 2001-2002 consist of single-unit forms, usually flower-shaped vases carved with floral motifs, such as *Flower #1*, whose icy tulip petals appear to emerge from a still-frosted earth in early spring, the crocus-like *Yellow Vase*, or the more complex *Bouquet* of dark green inflorescences over deep amber leaves and stems. *Trio* is shaped out of three pale petals enclosing a purple pistil. White translucent petals crowning dark snake-skinned sepals make *Before Meiji* a particularly lovely piece. *Jazz* seems to belong to the sea, half-plant, half-creature, moving to the rhythm of the current.

Clegg's conceptual influence makes itself felt in Volchkova's later works from 2003-2004. Each piece pairs two forms contrasting in size, shape, color, texture and degree of opacity. Clegg's interlocking forms are precise, geometric, highly polished and controlled, but Volchkova's remain organic, if equally sculptural and minimalist.

The *Bottles* from the *Autumn Series* evoke exotic island fruit and tempt our imagination into creating matching flora and fauna. *Skipping Stone #1*, a black pock-marked pebble with a white blossom rising from a depression is particularly successful, as is #3, an elegant gray-green stone standing upright and blooming white like a species of sea-cactus.

"The key to anything in art is observation,"

Volchkova noted. "I think a lot about the shape of found objects like river pebbles. The more I look, the more I understand the shape, how it's so balanced. It's the same with colors. I'm taking a lot of my images and inspirations from my surroundings: shapes, colors, sounds..." Volchkova's photographs of reflections on water, lichen on stone, pebbles, rocks, sand and clouds reveal some of her sources of inspiration.

While her two latest pieces, *Wizard Island* and *Autumn Essence*, retain texture and organic characteristics in their accent element, they also stand out for the marked abstraction, simplification of form and high polish of their main body.

"Glass," Volchkova explained, "looks like a frozen liquid. I wanted to keep the idea of a liquid poured into a vessel in the end-result." Volchkova's 2004 works also indicate a further degree of refinement in technical skills.

Volchkova's previous three-dimensional work, done in clay, was wide-ranging. It included folksy and whimsical pieces with a lovely attention to detail, as well as works that relied on sober minimalism, elegance of form, classic figurative sculpture and strongly-textured organic forms. In shifting her focus to the more demanding lost-wax technique and glass medium, Volchkova has raised the bar higher for herself. Many sculptors are happy to limit themselves to a preliminary sculpture in clay or wax and to let a specialist do the rest. Volchkova decided to do the entire process herself. That she mastered so much in so short a time is remarkable and her exhibit deserves careful viewing.

EW

PLEASANT HILL POTTERY

OUR TOWN POTTERY

MARY BRIGGS POTTERY

CERAMIC HOLIDAY SALE & TOUR

3 STUDIOS

Join us at our 4th annual studio sale & tour.
Unique, "one of a kind" gifts. Refreshments.

MARY HINDMAN STUDIO
featuring the sculptural and functional work of Mary Hindman
GUEST ARTISTS: Jeani Holder and Michael Baines and their hand-painted earthenware pots of OURTOWN Pottery.
Hours: Friday, December 3rd - 4pm to 8pm
Saturday, December 4th - 10 am to 6pm
Sunday, December 5th - 12pm to 4pm
3182 BEECH PLACE - EUGENE - (541)484-5950

MARY BRIGGS POTTERY
featuring the French Country style pottery of Mary Briggs.
HOURS: Saturday, December 4th from 10am to 6pm
1170 WEST BROADWAY, EUGENE - (541) 338-8794

PLEASANT HILL POTTERY
featuring the wood fired Porcelain and Stoneware pottery of Tom Robr and the decorative terracotta pottery of Katbryn Finnerty.
HOURS: 10 am to 5pm
Saturday & Sunday, December 4th & 5th
85426 RIDGEWAY RD - PLEASANT HILL - (541)744-0609
ONLY 4 miles south east of Eugene. Take I 5 to hwy 58, go 4 miles, left on Ridgeway just past 1 mile marker on left-hand side.

Jerry Williams' **quarterly** WINTER 2005 FREE

NOW AVAILABLE

Costume Design Kabuki/Bacchaie, Kugeaku by Alexandra Bonds

**Alder Gallery, Karin Clarke Gallery, White Lotus Gallery
Sattva Galleries, Pieces of Eight Gallery, DIVA Art Center,
Maude Kerns Art Center, Emerald Art Center, Libraries,
UO Bookstore, The Glennwood, 41 Hotels & Restaurants**