

Press Release



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Contact:

Lisa A. Batitto, Public Relations Manager, Newark Museum
Phone: 973-596-6638, e-mail: lbatitto@newarkmuseum.org

49 washington street
newark, nj 07102-3176

newarkmuseum.org
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Newark Museum Exhibition Celebrates Sparkling Gift of Steuben Glass *Unexpected Color: A Journey Through Glass* Opens May 1, 2019

Newark, NJ – A sparkling, colorful gift of Steuben glass from The Thomas N. Armstrong III Collection will be on display in an upcoming exhibition at the Newark Museum. *Unexpected Color: A Journey Through Glass*, opening on May 1, 2019, showcases more than 130 works in glass designed by Frederick Carder for the famed Steuben Glass Works from 1903 to 1933 and used in a variety of settings by the collector.

The exhibition presents a jewel box of shimmering glass, organized by Carder's colors that he created and patented. Carder was fascinated with ancient glass colors and forms; and he worked to recreate the iridescent colors of excavated ancient Greek and Roman glass. He also designed new shapes inspired by Chinese and Venetian glass as well as shapes influenced by Art Nouveau and Art Deco styles, modern at the time. Carder kept detailed notebooks of his color formulas and glass types, revealing the glassblowing chemistry and techniques used to create the variety of functional and decorative glassware in the exhibition, including vases, bowls, candlesticks and stemware. The exhibition will include interactive tablets to connect Carder's formulas and shapes with the colors and forms on display. Audio recordings of Carder interviews will also heighten the story of the experimentation behind the creation of this colorful glass.

"Carder's work for Steuben is particularly appropriate for Newark's collection," said Amy Simon Hopwood, the Museum's Associate Curator of Decorative Arts. "It combines experimentation, historic influences, and modern design in ways that reflect early 20th-century America. Carder's glass designs for Steuben used handcraft techniques on a large production scale, so that Steuben Glass Works could offer their customers a consistent product that was both handmade and beautiful. Carder's approach to glass echoed the design and collection ideals of John Cotton Dana, the visionary founder of the Newark Museum."

Armstrong was a prominent figure in the museum world, in particular as Director of The Whitney Museum of American Art, Armstrong died in 2011 at the age of 78. This year, his widow Whitney donated his glass collection to the Newark Museum, just 10 miles from Summit, where he grew up. The collection includes approximately 190 glass bowls, vases, platters, compotes, candlesticks, plates, stemware, lamps, and ornamental objects as well as archival materials, representing the range of Carder's experimental vision and Armstrong's connoisseurship and love of this glass.

"Tom had a great eye ... He was especially passionate about Carder Steuben glass, those pieces with distinctive colors and naturalistic forms," said Stephen Milne, the Carder expert who helped build the Armstrong collection, and who is the Guest Curator and Exhibition Design Advisor for the exhibition. "Tom enjoyed placing these to maximum effect alongside his art collection in his NYC apartment and Fishers Island home. It was in that country

home that Tom's artistic talents were fully realized. Here Tom Armstrong melded his love of art, architecture, and landscape together seamlessly into his singular vision.”

For further information, visit www.newarkmuseum.org.

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Captions:

Gold Aurene vase with applied prunts & threading, c. 1913, Steuben Glass Works
The Thomas N. Armstrong III Collection, Gift of the Thomas N. Armstrong III Family, 2018 2018.20.67

Gold Aurene vase with pulled handles, “Aurene 2766,” c. 1910 Steuben Glass Works
The Thomas N. Armstrong III Collection, Gift of the Thomas N. Armstrong III Family, 2018 2018.20.74