



~Brian Kerkvliet's Artist Statement~

My life has shifted significantly in recent years as I strive for better harmony and alignment with my surrounding environment. By continual contemplation and research, transformation is occurring both in the way that I create my work and how my lifestyle is structured. Evolving awareness encourages me to juggle energy between artistic pursuits, family life, and farming projects. As things become more complex in our society, I find pleasure in the simple necessities of life: a beautiful row of vegetables, a flush of fall mushrooms, a warm loaf of bread, a hot nutritious meal, and the clucking of chickens in the afternoon sun.

Glass is just one expression of my fascination with the natural world. Including various patterns, symbols and references to micro or macro forms in nature. Be it literally or figuratively represented it brings me into the fold of creation. I draw additional inspiration from glass masters of ancient Egypt, Rome, and classical Venetian times. As they pushed boundaries of their medium, I too find joy in new technical and esthetic achievements.

As a glass artist I realize the significant carbon foot print of my profession. With this in mind I took a year to redesign and build a new furnace from the bottom up. I developed a hybrid furnace that recuperates exhaust heat into the combustion air, reducing my previous energy consumption by 70%. The internal furnace temperature is 2150°F, continuously for months. The flue exhaust is 250°F, recuperating 1900°F of hot air. Next project is to capture residual heat from around the doors and flue into a hot water system that will heat the floor of the studio and our greenhouse during the winter months, thus providing food. I try to calculate and offset the carbon foot print of each piece I create, by planting trees and building intensive hot compost piles that sequester carbon into the soil here on the farm. By creating nutrient rich organic soil, we can supply food to local markets, thus further reducing the need for transportation fuel. This spring I planted close to 300 trees on our land, 50 were fruit and nut trees, which will provide a food forest for years to come.

For the past several years my family and I have been relearning old ways of sustainable living infused with new ideas, resulting in one of the most exciting and fulfilling chapters of my life. Everyday I learn something new or discover the next thing I want to explore. What next? ... wood gasifier? methane digester? hive of bees? steam turbine?... always aspiring to tie glass related alternative combustion technology to farm by products.

I love creating one of a kind functional pieces of beauty that are responsibly made and have enduring value, strangely rare in this day and age of mass production. Each piece is personally signed and dated, guaranteed to include the costs of their carbon offset. I hope that you enjoy and appreciate the effort given to create these one of a kind pieces in as sustainable a way as possible.

Brian Kerkvliet ~*~ Inspiration Farm