



# GLASS UTOPIA

Federica Biasi | Peter Bowles | Mel Douglas | Gala Fernandez | Liam Fleming  
Elizabeth Kelly | Jenni Kemarre Martiniello | Federico Peri  
Tom Skeeahan | Stories of Italy | Zanellato/Bortotto | Matteo Zorzenoni

Curated by  
Annalisa Rosso and Francesco Mainardi (aka Mr.Lawrence)

Craft ACT Craft + Design Centre  
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Design Tasmania  
6 March – 5 April 2020



**craft + design centre**

Craft ACT: Craft + Design Centre is supported by the ACT Government, the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy – an initiative of the Australian State and Territory Governments, and the Australia Council for the Arts – the Australian Government’s arts funding and advisory body.

CRAFT ACT CRAFT + DESIGN CENTRE

Tues–Fri 10am–5pm

Saturdays 12–4pm

Level 1, North Building, 180 London

Circuit,

Canberra ACT Australia

+61 2 6262 9333

[www.craftact.org.au](http://www.craftact.org.au)

Glass Utopia is curated by Annalisa Rosso and Francesco Mainardi of Mr.Lawrence, Milan, Italy. It was a signature exhibition for the 2019 DESIGN Canberra festival made possible with the generous support of Craft ACT: Craft + Design Centre, Ausglass and Design Tasmania.



Supported by:



Cover: *Glass Utopia 2019, Italian Ambassadors Residence*  
Photo: Anthony Basheer



Federica Biasi

*Oleum Vase, 2019*

Blown glass

*Photo: Matteo Imbriani*

# Foreword

RACHAEL COGHLAN

Craft ACT is one of the longest continuous-running visual arts membership organisations in Australia. Since 1971, we have been sustaining the practice of craft locally, nationally and internationally and our vision is to embed contemporary craft, making and design at the centre of everyday life in Australia's capital, a global city of design.

In 2014, we launched our successful outreach program, the DESIGN Canberra festival, which every November promotes experimentation, collaboration and innovation. The Glass Utopia exhibition curated by Annalisa Rosso and Francesco Mainardi (Mr. Lawrence, Milan) is one part of the curated festival program which this year engaged 114,7000 people to over 200 events and attracted national and international media coverage.

This significant exhibition which brings together traditional and contemporary craft practice in a modern design context, premiered in Canberra at the official residence of the Italian Ambassador to Australia.

Featuring six Australian artists and six Italian artists, it stimulates a visual dialogue between the objects,

designers and glassmaking traditions in both countries.

Perhaps not surprisingly, we have received interest in touring the exhibition to Italy, to Milan Design Week and Venice Glass Week. For Craft ACT, a small, not-for-profit membership organisation, this is a momentous opportunity to celebrate the global context for Australian contemporary craft and design and, through that, promote creative industries generally.

I thank the curators Annalisa and Francesco for their expertise, energy and friendship, the dedicated Craft ACT staff who brought this ambitious multi-venue exhibition to life in a very short timeframe, the Italian Ambassador to Australia Francesca Tardioli and her supportive team especially Giorgio Daviddi, and our valued exhibition partners AusGlass (the national body for the promotion of contemporary glass art in Australia) and Design Tasmania for making this project possible.

*Rachael Coghlan  
CEO, Craft ACT: Craft + Design Centre  
Artistic Director, DESIGN Canberra*



The Glass Utopia exhibition premiered in Canberra at the official residence of the Italian Ambassador to Australia.

Pictured (from left) Anna Fryer, Giorgio Daviddi, Rachael Coghlan, Francesca Tardioli (Ambassador of Italy to Australia), Kate Nixon, Meagan Jones, Madisyn Zabel.

*Photo: 5 Foot Photography*

# Glass Utopia

CATALOGUE ESSAY: ANNALISA ROSSO

The first time I went to Canberra, I was invited as a speaker by the Design Canberra Festival at the Symposium dedicated to the Italian architect Enrico Taglietti, and I visited the Italian Embassy. This 1967 building is representative of the great job of this pioneer of Australian modernism. Yet the element that truly touched me, was the major chandelier installed by Taglietti for the Italian Ambassador's Residence and made by a traditional Murano factory - so perfectly reflecting the thousand-year old tradition of Venetian glass blowing to build in my mind a spontaneous bridge between Italy, where I come from, and Australia.

My work as a writer and curator and my Milanese studio Mr.Lawrence are focused on contemporary design, so now is my natural setting. Considering the magnificent past of the Venetian glass blowing between XIV and XX century, it is interesting to reflect on the recent feared collapse or this

craft. In my opinion from around the mid '80s, after the last masterpieces by Ettore Sottsass, with the lack of economic and creative interest from brands and factories, and an increasing shortage of craftsmen, Venetian glass seemed lost. It is a sad, and it is a familiar story worldwide. Is traditional craft realistically still sustainable? Or it is necessary to create protected reserves to avoid extinction?

While professionals were absorbed by theoretical speculation, in the last five years a new generation of glassmakers and designers spontaneously revitalized the Murano glass blowing industry (Murano is the Venetian island designated to glass production since 1291). A new sensibility - regarding taste and willingness to experiment – has revived the situation, naturally and undoubtedly. This recent interest is demonstrated by the Venice Glass Week now in its third edition, by an institution as Le Stanze del Vetro that in the last decade has dedicated

research and exhibitions to the art of glassmaking in the 20th and 21st centuries. And - last but not least - by a new international market interested in contemporary glass design.

Starting from the chandelier by Enrico Taglietti - from my point of view, a first bridge between Murano glass and Canberra - I went on to consider if a link does somehow still exist, after half a century. Again thanks to Design Canberra Festival, I was invited to explore contemporary Australian art glass, and with enthusiasm I discovered a number of common elements between the two countries: inspiration, technique, aesthetic, research.

Together with my partner Francesco Mainardi, we selected twenty-four pieces made by six Italian designers (in collaboration with Murano factories) and six Australian designers: Elizabeth Kelly, Federico Peri, Gala Fernandez, Jenni Kemarre Martiniello, Liam

Fleming, Matteo Zorzenoni, Mel Douglas, Peter Bowles, Stories of Italy, Tom Skeeahan, Federica Biasi, Zanellato/Bortotto. We decided to keep the same idea of a community, not dividing the countries during the exhibitions of their work during the Design Canberra Festival, in order to activate a dialogue, and not a contraposition.

We would like to suggest an independent lecture from the public, inviting visitors to discover spontaneously the common elements existing between all these pieces. A realized Utopia, a glass Renaissance that is blossoming internationally - to demonstrate not only how the resilience of beauty is now stronger than ever, but also that creativity has no borders.

*Annalisa Rosso*  
*Design writer and independent curator*  
*Co-founder of Mr.Lawrence*



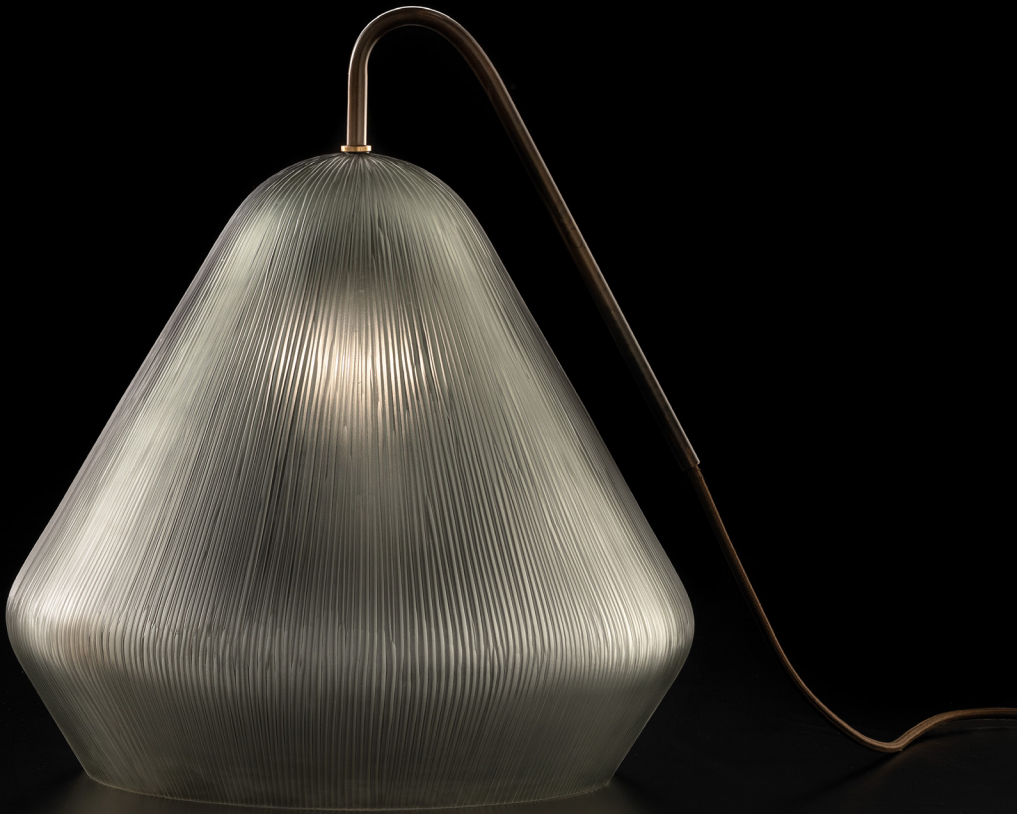
Liam Fleming  
*Push Pot*, 2019  
Blown glass  
*Photo: Courtesy of the artist*





Zanellato/Bortotto  
*Perla*, 2019  
Blown glass  
*Photo: Courtesy of the artist*

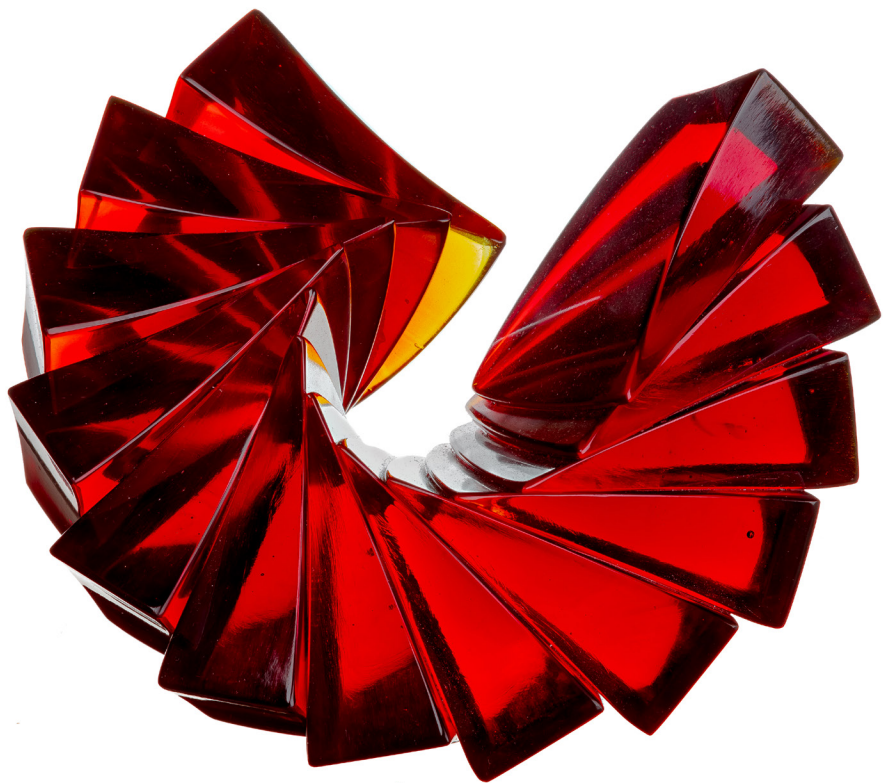




Federico Peri  
*CALICI Lamps*, 2019  
Blown glass, metal, cable  
*Photo: Courtesy of the artist*



Matteo Zorzenoni  
*Interlinia*, 2019  
Blown and carved glass  
Photo: Nason Moretti



Elizabeth Kelly  
*Red Whorl*, 2019  
Assembled cast glass  
Photo: Courtesy of the artist





Jenni Kemasre Martiniello  
*Medium Bulrushes Eel Trap*, 2018  
Hot blown glass with cane  
*Photo: Courtesy of the artist*



Gala Fernandez  
*Organic Geometry*, 2019  
Blown glass, metal  
*Photo: Courtesy of the artist*





Peter Bowles  
*Murini Quadrants*, 2019  
Blown glass with murrine  
*Photo: Courtesy of the artist*



Tom Skeehan  
*So Light 1/1 Pink*, 2018  
blown glass, cable  
Photo: Anisa Sabet



Stories of Italy  
*Bastum White*, 2019  
Blown glass, cable  
*Photo: Courtesy of the artist*





Mel Douglas  
*Bind*, 2019  
Blown, coldworked and  
engraved glass  
*Photo: Courtesy of the artist*



**GLASS  
UTOPIA**

Federica Bassi | Peter Blomert | Mei Chingui | Gaila Fernandez  
Liam Fleming | Elizabeth Kelly | Janis Kenawa Martineau  
Federico Pini | Tom Swadlow | Oliver of Ray | Matteo Zuccheroni  
Anastasia Zlotnik

*Glass Utopia 2019 at Craft ACT.  
Photo: 5 Foot Photography*

## Biographies



**Mr.Lawrence** is a Design and Brand Consultancy founded in 2018 by Annalisa Rosso, design writer, content consultant and independent curator, currently editor-in-chief of Icon Design magazine (Mondadori); and Francesco Mainardi (aka theBrandist), brand strategist and creative director, currently professor of Design Management at Istituto Marangoni.

## Federica Biasi

Federica Biasi, born in 1989, graduated with honours from European Institute of Design in 2011. From 2011 to 2013 she worked with design agencies based in Milan. In 2014 she moved to Amsterdam to observe and understand nordic design and emerging trends, focusing on the aesthetic beauty and the formal simplicity which has inspired her personal style.

In January 2018 Federica was nominated by the master Andrea Branzi and awarded in Paris during MAISON&OBJET as one of 6 Italian Rising Talent.

Biasi has designed for companies including; Gallotti&Radice, CC-tapis, Mingardo, Potocco, Nason Moretti, My home Collection, Mingardo, Fratelli Guzzini and Manerba.



*Photo: Andrea Olivo*



## Peter Bowles

Peter Bowles received an MA from Curtin University, and has lectured and taught at numerous institutions throughout the world including the Alberta College of Art and Design, Canada, The China Academy of Art, Hangzhou, China and BGC Glass Studio, Bangkok, Thailand.

He is a quiet maker and a passionate teacher whose work spans studio production, exhibition work, public art and a somewhat more private sculptural practice. He has garnered an international reputation for his technical mastery and inventive approach to the craft of object making and consultancy for brands such as Mingardo, Fratelli Guzzini, Manerba.



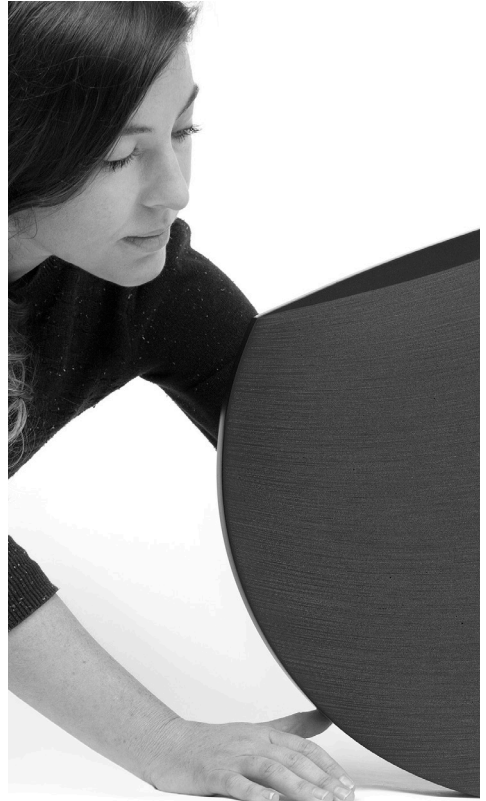
*Photo: Courtesy of the artist*

## Mel Douglas

Douglas has worked as an independent studio artist since graduating from the Canberra School of Art, Australian National University in 2000. Since 2008 she has been a sessional lecturer and is currently a PhD Candidate in the Glass Workshop at the ANU. Both public and private collections have acquired her work including the Ebeltoft Museum of Glass, Denmark, National Gallery of Australia, Australia and the Corning Museum of Glass, New York.

She has received several major awards including the Ranamok Glass Prize, the International Young Glass Award, the Tom Malone Prize and her work was acquired by the National Gallery of Australia in 2019.

Mel Douglas has been a Craft ACT: Craft + Design Centre Accredited Professional Member since 2019.



*Photo: Courtesy of the artist*

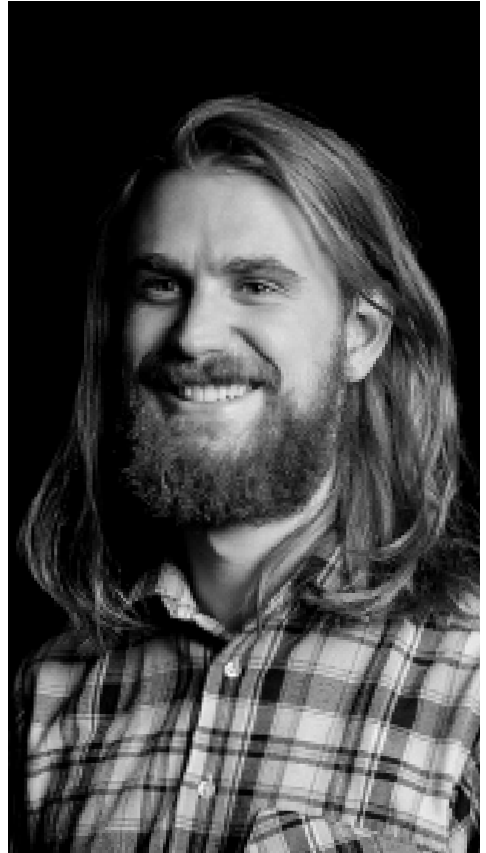
## Gala Fernandez

Gala Fernandez is a designer based in Italy. Fernandez has exhibited her work in several galleries and museums across the globe and has also taught and lectured at numerous international institutions.



## Liam Fleming

Liam Fleming started blowing glass at the age of 16, undertaking work experience in a private studio in Adelaide. Completing his studies at the University of South Australia in 2011, he was accepted as an associate at the JamFactory in 2012. Fleming has been the Production Manager in the JamFactory glass studio since 2015. Fleming has collaborated with many other makers most notably furniture designer/maker Jon Goulder in 2017. The Congruent side table was exhibited in Milan during the Milan design week and in London during the London design week. Fleming also exhibited in Berlin during the Australia Now with the assistance of the JamFactory and Canberra glassworks.

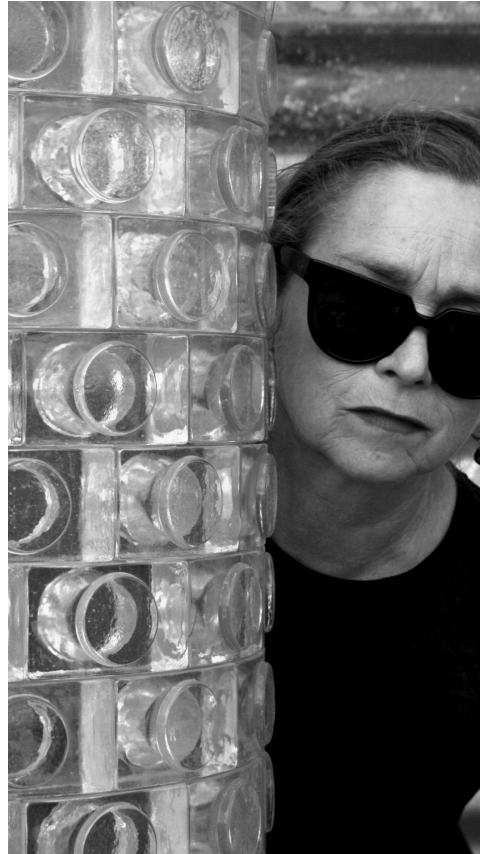


*Photo: JamFactory*

## Elizabeth Kelly

Elizabeth Kelly started her craft in 1985 training as a production glassblower, moving into applied design and material investigation through education and working in the field. She furthered this inquiry by undertaking a post-tertiary degree in conceptual art. This led to a thematic approach in her art practice and has ultimately resulted in research-driven work. Kelly is a specialist in colour chemistry and industrial moulding processes for glass and other materials that Kelly applies to sculpture, objects and architectural commissions. For the last 16 years, she has worked from an independent studio that consolidates her commitment to the canon of sculpture.

Elizabeth Kelly has been a Craft ACT: Craft + Design Centre Accredited Professional Member since 2003.



*Photo: Courtesy of the artist*

## Jenni Kemarre Martiniello

Jenni Kemarre Martiniello is a contemporary urban based Aboriginal (Arrernte) glass artist. In her practice, Martiniello aims to produce a body of traditionally inspired works that pay tribute to traditional weavers, and provide recognition for ancient cultural practices through the contemporary medium of glass.

In her current artistic practice Jenni concentrates on the incredibly beautiful forms of traditional woven eel traps, fish traps, fish scoops, dillibags and coiled and open weave baskets by Kurna, Ngarrinjerri, Gunditjmara, Arrernte and NE Arnhem Land weavers.

Jenni Kemarre Martiniello has been a Craft ACT: Craft + Design Centre Accredited Professional Member since 2017.



*Photo: Adam McGrath*

## Federico Peri

Federico Peri is an interior and product design studio based in Milan, Italy.

The studio's design process is driven by a consistent philosophical approach by which the studio creates concepts that are intimately connected to their function and individual context.



*Photo: Stefan Gifthaler*

## Tom Skeeihan

Tom Skeeihan is an industrial designer based in Canberra, Australia. Tom is the founder of SKEEHAN studio which specialises in commercial furniture and edition objects for the home. A noted young designer Tom Skeeihan exhibits at design fairs across Australia and in New York, Singapore and Milan (Italy).

Tom Skeeihan has been a Craft ACT: Craft + Design Centre Accredited Professional Member since 2006.



*Photo: Adam McGrath*



## Stories of Italy

Stories of Italy is a brand based in Milan that realises self-handling pieces connected with traditional Italian craft. They blend design, craft and art to capture the essence of iconic Italian tradition which are often related to precise aesthetic rules. They enjoy playing with these rules, experimenting with materials and with their artisans' skills.



*Photo: Courtesy of the artist*

## Zanellato/Bortotto

Giorgia Zanellato and Daniele Bortotto founded Zanellato/Bortotto Studio in Treviso, Italy, in 2013.

Their first collaborative work, *Acqua Alta*, was dedicated to the city of Venice and presented at the Salone Satellite in Milan in 2013; it marked the beginning of their long-term research project on the relationship between places and the passage of time.

Their work has been shown in galleries and institutions including MAXXI, Rome; Triennale Design Museum, Milan; and Somerset House and The Aram Gallery in London.

In 2015, they were named Young Talent of the Year by *Elle Decor Italia*, were awarded the NYCxDESIGN prize by Interior Design in 2016, and won the Red Dot Design Award in 2017.



*Photo: Mauro Tittotto*

## Matteo Zorzenoni

Matteo Zorzenoni was born in Treviso, Italy. He is now considered one of the most promising Italian designers, and focuses his research on the continuous study of material and on the discovery of their unexpected potentials. This incessant exploration of material elements allows him to create products with a non-conventional soul, such as drinking cups made of cement, structures in glass, and tables in liquid metal.

His projects have been selected for some of the most important museums and exhibitions such as the Maxi in Rome, the Triennale in Milan, London Design Festival, The Biennale di Architettura di Venezia and the Centre Pompidou.



*Photo: Courtesy of the artist*

## List of works



1 Federica Biasi  
*Oleum Vase*, 2019  
Blown glass  
NFS



7 Jenni Kemarre Martiniello  
*Medium Bulrushes Eel Trap*, 2018  
Hot blown glass with cane  
\$8600



2 Federica Biasi  
*Oleum Vase*, 2019  
Blown glass  
NFS



8 Jenni Kemarre Martiniello  
*Shell Weave Dillbag*, 2018  
Hot blown glass with cane  
\$3800



3 Stories of Italy  
*Bastum White*, 2019  
Blown glass, cable  
\$1629



9 Zanellato/Bortotto  
*Sombrero*, 2019  
Blown glass  
\$8020



4 Stories of Italy  
*Untitled*, 2019  
Blown glass  
\$600



10 Zanellato/Bortotto  
*Perla*, 2019  
Blown glass  
\$6767



5 Federico Peri  
*CALICI Low Lamp*, 2019  
Blown glass, metal, cable  
\$2600



11 Peter Bowles  
*Murini Quadrants*, 2019  
Blown glass with murrine  
\$6400



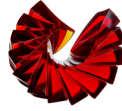
6 Federico Peri  
*CALICI Large Lamp*, 2019  
Blown glass, metal, cable  
\$3200



12 Tom Skeeahan  
*So Light 1/1 Pink*, 2018  
blown glass, cable  
\$14740



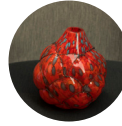
13 Tom Skeeahan  
*HARU Light*, 2019  
Blown glass, cable  
\$16500



19 Elizabeth Kelly  
*Red Whorl*, 2019  
Assembled case glass  
\$8000



14 Matteo Zorzenoni  
*Interlinia*, 2019  
Blown and carved glass  
\$3010



20 Gala Fernandez  
*Organic Geometry*, 2019  
blown glass, metal  
\$1130



15 Matteo Zorzenoni  
*Interlinia*, 2019  
Blown and carved glass  
\$2005



21 Gala Fernandez  
*Organic Geometry*, 2019  
blown glass, metal  
\$1630



16 Liam Fleming  
*Push Pot*, 2019  
Blown glass  
\$800



22 Mel Douglas  
*Bind*, 2019  
Blown, coldworked and  
engraved glass  
\$5000



17 Liam Fleming  
*Push Pot*, 2019  
Blown glass  
\$800



23 Mel Douglas  
*Tether*, 2019  
Blown, coldworked and  
engraved glass  
\$5000



18 Elizabeth Kelly  
*Red Sequentia*, 2010  
Assembled cast glass  
\$7700



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