

**Title:** *Vase*

**Artist:** Nicholas Lutz

**Date:** 19th century (1869-1888)

**Size:** 5 3/8 in. high, 2 in. base diameter; 2 1/4 in. mouth diameter; 4 in. handle-to-handle

**Medium:** Threaded Glass

**Acquisition #:** 78.1.120

**Additional works in the collection by the artist?**

Yes: No: X



**Contextual Information**

Glassblowing has existed for approximately 3500 years. The ways in which pieces are made, as well as their uses, have changed throughout the years, but the basic technique still remains. Glass is shaped by the glassblower at temperatures of 870 to 1040 °C. The most popular objects made from blown glass are flower vases, drinking glasses and tableware. Nicholas Lutz made objects like these at the many factories in which he worked. Recently, a large selection of glass paperweights were attributed to Lutz. It is likely that Lutz's inspiration for these paperweights came from his time in France, as the paperweight tradition began there in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**Media Description**

Nicholas Lutz applied a technique called **caneworking** to his glasswork. This technique is used to add intricate patterns and stripes to other blown glass objects. Cane refers to the rods of colored glass that are used; the rods may simply hold a single color or they may contain a complex pattern with multiple colors. The glass blower takes these rods and applies them to the blown glass object. Figure 2 shows the way rods of colored glass (also called canes) are picked up from a hot ceramic tray where they are heated. The vessel, with the desired pattern, must then be shaped out of the hot glass.

**Artist's Biography**

Nicholas Lutz, born February 21, 1835, was a glassmaker who trained in the Cristallerie de Saint-Louis (Saint Louis Glasshouse) of Lorraine, France. In 1860, Lutz moved to America and began working in glass companies such as that of Christian Dorflinger, the New England Glass Company, the Boston & Sandwich Glass Co., the Mt. Washington Glass Works and finally in the Union Glass Co. He was well known for his elaborate paperweights (Figure 1) as well as his decanter stoppers and striped glass.



Figure 1: Paperweights by Nicholas Lutz

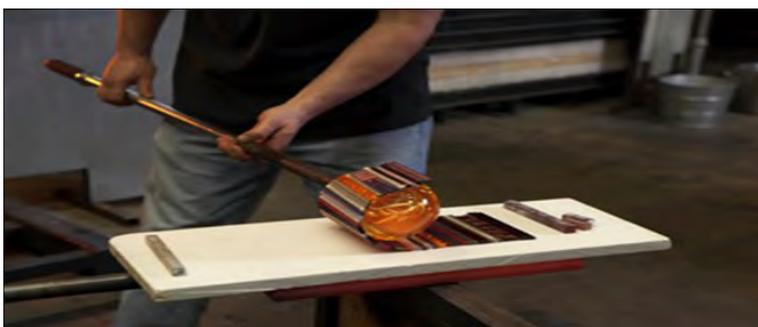


Figure 2: David Patchen, an American glass artist, picking up cane on a bubble of molten glass

**References**

- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caneworking>
- <http://www.collectorsweekly.com/articles/paperweights-by-nicholas-lutz/>
- The Grove Encyclopedia of Decorative Arts*, Volume 1 by Gordon Campbell; Oxford University Press US, 2006

## COLORED BOTTLES!

### Activity Lesson Plan: K-5

**Session Activity:** Nicholas Lutz used rods of color called canes to construct this glass vase. Lutz's finished products could have been functional pieces or decorative pieces, often both. Students will create functional but aesthetic pieces of art work from plastic bottles and colored pipe cleaners, analogous materials to those used by Nicholas Lutz and other glass artists.

#### Objectives:

- Students will have a better understanding of the different kinds of decorative arts and their uses.
- Students will take functional objects and treat them creatively and aesthetically.

**Materials:** colored pipe cleaners, glue (Mod-Podge), plastic bottles

#### Vocabulary:

Cane – a rod of colored glass used to create patterns on glass objects

Murrine – A colored pattern that is revealed when a cross-section is cut from a cane (see Figure 3)

#### Activity Procedure:

1. Discuss different types of glass objects students use every day in their homes. For example, they may use salt and pepper shakers, vases, or drinking glasses.
2. Show students Figure 2 and point out the part in which the artist rolls the ball of glass across the rods of color. Explain that this is extremely dangerous because the artist is working with a hot glass ball and hot glass canes on a hot plate. Show students Figure 3.
3. Allow students to choose the colored pipe cleaners with which they wish to decorate their bottles. They can twist them to create multi-colored rods or use single colors.
4. Students will glue their pipe cleaners to their bottles in a vertical fashion to mimic that of Lutz's glass vase. The student may also cross the pipe cleaners to create more elaborate designs and patterns.



Sunshine State Standards (K-5)

Visual Arts: Skills and Techniques

Standard 1: The student understands and applies media, techniques, and processes.

Sunshine State Standards (6-12)

Visual Arts: Aesthetic and Critical Analysis

Standard 1: The student assesses, evaluates, and responds to the characteristics of works of art.



Figure 3: Murrine pattern

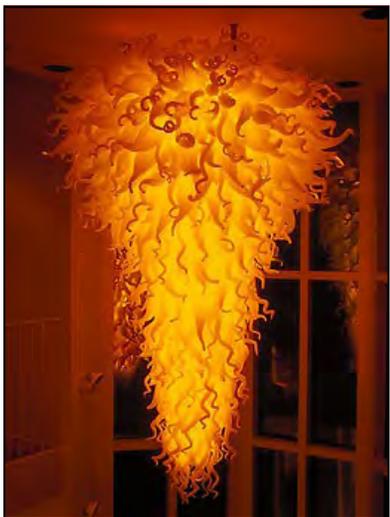


Figure 4: Dale Chihuly, Chandelier, glass

## MODERN GLASS ART

### Lesson Plan: 6-12

**Session Activity:** Originally, the majority of glass art was done on a small scale. Primarily, glass artists created decorative bottles or vases. Today more artists have ventured into the production of elaborate and large glass pieces. One such artist is Dale Chihuly. This activity will explore the development of glass art, and the way large-scale glass installations are made, as well as their impact on an audience.

**Objectives:** Students will discuss glass art, its origins and its impact.

Students will create PowerPoint presentations of Dale Chihuly's installations.

**Activity:** Have students look at some of Dale Chihuly's works. Visit <http://www.chihuly.com> for more images. Students will then discuss the way works are made, like the one by Nicholas Lutz. Have students discuss the glass art movement and the way it has changed the modern conception of glass art from smaller decorative arts to large scale installations (For more on the glass art movement, visit <http://web.archive.org/web/20080112004034/http://www.cmog.org/index.asp?pageid=1276>). Have students break into groups and research Dale Chihuly's glass installations in order to make PowerPoint presentations for the class.

#### Discussion/Research Prompts:

1. What are the most common glass objects we see and use?
2. How has glass art changed since Nicholas Lutz's time?
3. Discuss the differences among the kinds of glass works, such as decorative glass, studio glass and glass art.
4. Discuss Venice as a glass-art center, and Venetian glass's influence on the glass art movement.
5. Discuss the aesthetic qualities of Dale Chihuly's works. How has he expanded glass work design such as that by Nicholas Lutz.
6. How does Dale Chihuly create these glass works? Discuss the workings of a glass studio.
7. Discuss the intentions of glass artists in their works, and the way that influenced the works themselves as well as the audience response.

For a time-lapse video of a Dale Chihuly installation, visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AuDU7tAZ67g>