

Phillippa Martin Glass Artist

Artistic promess and savoir-faire

# BLUEBIRD CHANDELIER

Shared Perspectives

VERRE L'ESSENTIEL & LUCIEN GAU

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## **ARTISTIC PROMESS**

In my " Bluebird Chandelier " piece I see the link between earth and heaven. I make a parallel between the upward impulse and an opening of the mind.

I see the chandelier as a protective tree welcoming its occupants with kindness. I create a feeling of elevation: birds flutter within the chandelier, rise and fly off, enhancing this link in motion.

The improbable blue of the birds, clad in flowers instead of feathers are like messages. My almost childlike "fauve" style expresses joy and innocence, creating a contrast with the symmetry of the traditional chandelier.

Bronze and glass are two venerable materials processed in the fire that I represent with the candles.

## **SAVOIR FAIRE**

### **Hot glass work:**

Two master glassmakers work together to produce the glass blob and shape the glass.

Venetian technique of "Millefiori"

The floral motifs and the threads on the birds' bodies are prepared in advance using the Bohemian crystal technique to exploit the vocabulary of design characteristics of Eastern Europe.

Each flower is made using the "Millefiori" technique which consists in building up a number of layers of glass of varying colors.



MAISON LUCIEN GAU  
*depuis 1860*



VERRE L'ESSENTIEL  
MAÎTRES VERRIERS

## Colour Matters

I made this choice of the Millefiori technique to emphasise the rich variety of the colors that lead to a random but controlled kaleidoscope.

The colors are obtained from metal and rare earth oxides incorporated into the mass of glass which then fuse at over 1400 °.

The glassmaker starts off with a RED OCHRE color that will be the core of the future flower, and the assistant adds the color SNOW-WHITE which will be the exterior of the future floral motif.

The glassmaker has now a colored parison - described as "solid" because it is not yet not blown – measuring about 12 cm long and 8 cm wide.

The artist then extracts several blobs of clear glass to create a hot parison that is stretched out in a filigree thread of glass 5 to 10 meters long.

The cane is then cut off and divided up into 'millefiori' which will be incorporated later during the hot process onto the blue core of the bird's body.

The glass flowers are then reincorporated on their flat vertical surfaces, filigranes are pulled in pure colored glass and are incorporated horizontally.

For video resources if you wish to discover the technique called "cane" or "filigree" you can visit You tube: "Lino Tagliapietra" - Cane or "Filigrana & Zanfirico".

## **The bird designs**

The birds are all handcrafted in molten glass at a temperature of 1150 ° using a solid glass blob. They are individually sculpted, and worked with pliers and other glassmaker tools. The body of the bird is then slowly annealed for 24 hours.

## **The colors blue, red ochre and gold**

The choice of cobalt blue with red ochre highlights which adorn the bird's plumage challenges the imagination; it refers to the permanence of beauty which is supposed to inspire Mankind. The Blue Bird becomes part of the collective unconscious like a creature from contemporary mythology .

## **The candles with gold leaf**

The candle's stem is a tube made from a transparent parison which reproduces the appearance of a wax candle, to which the glassmaker adds 5 or 6 white powder layers to sheath the glass.

The glassmaker applies the gold leaf to the molten candles ,directly onto the white powder. By heating the gold leaf it cracks and harmonize.

The candle flame is made by a series of additions made by the assistant.

Gold leaf is applied to the first 'gather' of glass; then a second gather of transparent glass is taken which is laid over the gold leaf so it is now inside the flame. In this way, the light is imbued with warm and precious shades, reminiscent of the ancient use of wax candles. The finish produces a restrained lighting, controlled and disseminated by the transparent element of the flame.

The glass candles add new life to classic lighting, making reference to the symbolic value of fire which is both the source of the light for historic chandeliers, and also the basic element needed to transform the materials which are used to make glass and bronze.

## **Cold finishing**

To remove de pontil mark in the lower belly of the bird it is wheel-polished.

## **Assembly and crimping of the chandelier's glass elements**

The birds are drilled with a diamond drill head.

The birds and candles are adapted to the tubes of the chandelier by crimp fitting on a threaded ring.