

Debra Ruzinsky
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RESUME

SUMMARY

Director, operations leader, and community builder, dedicated to fostering rich arts and cultural experiences. Strong communicator and consensus builder, conversant with a diverse population, accomplished at building healthy, productive, and respectful workplace culture. A skilled problem solver, able to react in the moment to evolving challenges. A glass artist and educator with an ongoing kiln-forming practice.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Appalachian Center for Craft, Smithville, TN
Craft Center Director, January, 2017 – present

Administrative head of a craft center with 87,000 square feet of working studios, classrooms, and exhibition spaces devoted to teaching fine craft in wood, metals, glass, clay, and fibers. Management of 15 member full time staff as well as 6 Artist in Residence part time staff. Provide support for full time faculty, BFA degree programs students and 2 year certificate students of Tennessee Tech University, as well as for outreach, workshop, high school intensive programs, and art teacher training opportunities, coordinating with workshop artists, exhibiting artists, planning long range vision and handling daily challenges. Problem solver, engaged in recruitment, marketing and public speaking, to make the ACC mission and vision visible to a growing audience.

Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Upper Marlboro, Maryland
Supervisor, Exhibit Design and Fabrication Studio, June 2009 – December 2016

Public face of the studio, serving facilities and political leadership throughout Prince Georges County, MD. Solid record of creating positive outcomes in demanding circumstances. Supervision of a staff of 7 creative practitioners who produce exhibits, graphics, and public art for the largest land-owner in the state of Maryland. Supporting the operational, programmatic, and promotional needs of community centers, parks, schools, sports facilities, performance spaces, historic properties, art centers, nature centers and gardens. Management of process and product, hiring, review, evaluation, and mentoring of staff, troubleshooting issues with workplace culture, personnel, equipment, and budget.

Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY
Visiting Assistant Professor, Glass Art Program, June 2008 – June 2009

Teaching art theory, studio practice, sculpture, casting and mold-making techniques to undergraduate major students, and teaching elective courses to non-majors. Course planning, mentoring of graduate student instructors, ensuring safe management of studios, allocation of resources for the overall operation of the program. Arrangement of visiting artist program (12 artists and visiting critics brought in to teach workshops, as well as meet with and mentor students.

Adjunct Instructor and TA of elective courses, September 2006-June 2008

Instructor of sophomore and junior level glass casting courses, elective courses, RIT, Rochester, NY, while enrolled in the graduate program.

BRC Imagination Arts, Burbank, California

Manager, Graphics, Empire State Building Project, March 2006 – August 2006

Lead concept design, production and management of all exhibit graphic designs for an immersive and historic exhibit experience within the Empire State building in NYC.

Walt Disney Imagineering, Glendale, California

Senior Graphic Designer, Specialty Designer for Architecture, March 1995 – March 2006

Design, documentation, detailing, and management from schematic phase through installation. Lead graphic designer for the Twilight Zone Tower of Terror at Disney Studios, Paris, as well as for the same attraction at Disney's California Adventure Park. Lead graphic designer for the redesign of Space Mountain, Disneyland, for Disneyland's 50th birthday celebration (2005.) Lead environmental graphic designer for Playhouse Disney live show at California Adventure Park. Lead graphic designer for Aladdin attraction, Disney Studios, Paris. Lead specialty glass designer park-wide for Tokyo DisneySea, specifying and employing traditional as well as contemporary glass fabrication techniques in a wide variety of styles. Lead graphic designer on Tokyo DisneySea, a theme park in Tokyo. Designer of themed museum style exhibits for Harambe Village at Disney's Animal Kingdom.

Cinnabar, Hollywood, CA

Graphics Department Manager, Project Lead, 1992 -1995, May 1987-March 1988

Design and production of original artwork for commercial advertising print collateral, signage, CNC machining, and specialty prop graphics. Production of signage/graphics, props, and models for film, commercials, music videos, television, trade shows, and retail store interior work. Work seen in commercials for such companies as Carl's Jr., McDonald's, Discover, Toyota, Clairol, Budweiser; in films such as "Groundhog Day," "Blown Away," music videos including Michael Jackson's "Smooth Criminal," store interiors for Mattel, Guess? Clothing. Vacuforming, mold-making, casting, sculpting, model building.

L A Works, Los Angeles, California

Volunteer Coordinator and Project Lead (unpaid), for multiple projects, 1995-1997

Community engagement through arts volunteer activities. Lead artist on multiple mural projects for the beautification of schools with limited funding for maintenance and improvements. Coordinating teams of unskilled volunteers.

Ruzinsky Glass, Inglewood, CA

Founder and Creative Director January 1988-January 1993

Design, development, and production of line of handmade, sandblasted, and painted glass picture frames, mirrors, and furniture, as well as one-offs and custom work. Directing production manager and crew. Developing budgets and cost control systems. Designing and producing trade show displays and promotional literature to exhibit and sell the line at shows nationwide. Work shown and sold at such locations as The Smithsonian, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Neiman Marcus, Bullocks, I. Magnin, By Design, Z Gallerie, Macy's, Hammacher-Schlemmer, Geary's. Custom signage and display fixtures for the Carrerra y Carrerra Fine Jewelry Boutique in San Francisco.

SELECTED LECTURES, RESIDENCIES, EXHIBITIONS, & WORKSHOP INSTRUCTION

CHROMA: A Contemporary Survey of American Glass. Curated by Meredith Edmondson and Jennifer Crescillo, at Fort Houston, Nashville, TN, April, 2019

Appalachian Center for Craft, Workshop Instructor, Found and Lost: A workshop in mold-making, the lost wax process, and the fundamentals of glass casting. August, 2018

2017 Minkoff Symposium on Glass Pedagogy, Urban Glass, Brooklyn, NY

Invited panelist, representing The Appalachian Center for Craft Glass program in a panel discussion titled "Hardcore Craft," with Daniel Clayman and Michael Hernandez.

Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois

Visiting Lecturer, Jiyoung Lee's Professional Practices for Craft major students, October, 2017

The Glass Heap Challenge at the Glass Factory Museum, Boda Glasbruk, Sweden

Invited artist, October 7-17, 2015. Exhibition of works: October 17- November 8, 2015

Portions: New works in kiln-cast glass and mixed media, at Visarts, Rockville, MD

Solo show in the Common Grounds Gallery from September 14 to October 20, 2012

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond , VA, Visiting Lecturer, Artist talk for the Craft and

Materials Studies Graduate program, and individual meetings with students, March 22, 2010

Seto City Museum Artist in Residence Exhibition as part of the Seto International Ceramic Glass Art

Exchange Program 2008-2009 Invited Artist in Residence, July 1-August 5, 2008, Seto, Japan

Washington Glass School, Mt. Rainier, MD

Lecturer, What Came Before: the early days of studio glass worldwide, October 5, 2013

Workshop Instructor, Found and Lost: A workshop in two parts, November, 2013

Workshop Instructor, Introduction to Lost Wax Casting, November 2015, 2013, 2009

Reflections in Glass, Exhibition at the Ethel Sergeant Clark Smith Gallery at the Wayne Art Center in

Wayne, PA, October, 2009-January, 2010

BIGG: Breakthrough Ideas in Global Glass, Hawk Galleries, Columbus, OH

juried by Tina Oldknow, Lino Tagliapietra, and Tom Hawk, July to October, 2009

UrbanGlass MFA Exhibition 2009, Robert Lehman Gallery at Urban Glass, Brooklyn, New York in

January-March 2009

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Serving the Glass Art Society Board of Directors since September, 2018

Volunteer for multiple conferences, writer for GASNews from 2008 until 2016

Serving the DeKalb County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors since January, 2018

EDUCATION

Rochester Institute of Technology, MFA, School of American Craft, Glass
with Robin Cass and Michael Rogers

Rhode Island School of Design, Special Studies in Glass with Bruce Chao

University of California at Los Angeles, BA, Design with Richard Marquis and Therman Statom

The Studio at Corning, workshop with Shin-Ichi and Kimiaki Higuchi, The Penland School of Craft
workshop with David Reekie, UrbanGlass workshop with Dan Clayman, The Pittsburgh Glass Center
workshop with Anna Boothe, Washington Glass School workshop with Joseph Cavalieri, The
Pilchuck Glass School workshop with Flora Mace and Joey Kirkpatrick