



Transcript for:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH PAUL STANKARD

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Interview conducted May 20, 2016
at The Henry Ford
Dearborn, Michigan, USA

Interviewers:

Charles Sable, Curator of Decorative Arts, The Henry Ford
Catherine Tucek, Curator of School and Public Learning, The Henry Ford
Bradley M. Egen, Director, motionpossible

An Interview with: Paul Stankard
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Interviewed by: Charles Sable, Curator of Decorative Arts, The Henry Ford,
Catherine Tuczek, Curator of School and Public Learning and Bradley M.
Egen, Director.

Director: Bradley M. Egen
Executive Producer: Brian James Egen

Total Run Time: 1 hour, 3 Minutes, 40 Seconds

Time	Comment
00:00:00	Graphic
00:00:10	CHARLES SABLE Very good, well let's get started.
00:00:12	PAUL STANKARD Okay.
Chapter title	Early Memories
00:00:13	CHARLES SABLE Paul can you tell us about the story of your earliest memory of, of, that relates to glass?
00:00:18	PAUL STANKARD No.
00:00:20	CHARLES SABLE No. (Laughter) You know the story I'm talking about, right? (Laughter) And how does that relate to what you do today?
00:00:29	PAUL STANKARD When I was um, thirteen or fourteen the, I lived in North Attleborough, and the little boroughs, Attleborough Falls close by had a, a Fourth of July bonfire.
00:00:46	PAUL STANKARD And this was a big event, and they stacked railroad ties (laughter) to about I don't know, from a, from a child's perspective, fifty feet? (Laughter)
00:00:58	PAUL STANKARD

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

	<p>And they, and, and there was a carnival, and there was one, my dad took, took us to the carnival, and there was, and he gave us fifty cents to play with the games.</p>
00:01:12	<p>PAUL STANKARD And there was um, uh, a game that had fish; they had uh, plastic rows in a, in a what was like a fish bowl filled with water.</p>
00:01:26	<p>PAUL STANKARD And it was so beautiful! Here's this red rose, uh, ya' know, magnified and shimmering, and oh, I was so taken by this.</p>
00:01:38	<p>PAUL STANKARD And I spent my fifty cents trying to win the, the, the rose.</p>
00:01:46	<p>PAUL STANKARD I didn't win it on the first fifty cents so I ran back to pop- I call my dad pop.</p>
00:01:51	<p>PAUL STANKARD I said, "Pop, can I have more money?" "I'm trying to win Mom uh, a rose in uh, in uh, a bowl.</p>
00:02:00	<p>PAUL STANKARD So he gave me more money, and I'm assuming he gave me fifty cents more, and um, after repeated attempts, I won the, I won the rose and the uh, in the bowl, and it was so beautiful, and my mom kept it on her bureau for, until she died.</p>
00:02:19	<p>PAUL STANKARD That was kind of sweet.</p>
00:02:20	<p>PAUL STANKARD So of course uh, I ya' know um, I think of, I think of these ins- these moments, and they're kind of related to when I became a uh, a young adult and, and seeing similar things in glass.</p>
00:02:39	<p>PAUL STANKARD And I'm thinkin', "dear God, could there be a relationship?" In ya' know, the native flowers.</p>
00:02:46	<p>PAUL STANKARD</p>

	So um, yeah, it was a nice memory.
Chapter title	Botanicals
00:02:50	CHARLES SABLE Can you talk more about botanicals, your early childhood, and how you saw nature in Massachusetts?"
00:02:59	PAUL STANKARD Well you know, I was, I was curious about wildflow-uh, about nature, and wildflowers, I was especially keen on uh, uh, I remember risking my life, not really, but getting wet trying to uh, uh, pull water lilies out of the pond.
00:03:19	PAUL STANKARD And when I brought home the water lilies, my mother went, "Oh Paul, that's a mud hole! You shouldn't be playing at the mud hole!" We actually, they called it the mud hole.
00:03:29	PAUL STANKARD So water lilies were uh, a real prize.
00:03:34	PAUL STANKARD I can remember uh, oh this is kind of cute, um, I can remember coming home with uh, pink Lady's Slippers.
00:03:44	PAUL STANKARD And I brought `em, and I was so proud that I had been riding my bike through the woods, along the woods and I stopped to see the pink Lady Slippers, and I picked three or four of them, and um, I drove `em home, I gave `em to my mom.
00:03:57	PAUL STANKARD I said, "Mom! I have some beautiful flowers for you."
00:04:01	PAUL STANKARD She went, "oh Paul, they're not pink Lady Slippers, they're orchids, and you're not supposed them." I went, "oh."
00:04:10	PAUL STANKARD

	<p>(Laughter) I thought, "oh, what did I do?" She said, "well that's ok, I mean, we can't they're picked, but don't pick the pink Lady Slippers anymore." I said ok.</p>
00:04:21	<p>PAUL STANKARD And that was an interesting uh, experience for me to kind of process because it had never occurred to me that native flowers could be rare.</p>
00:04:32	<p>PAUL STANKARD And uh, so, and the pink Lady Slipper showed up in my work uh, what, fifty years later uh, in glass.</p>
Chapter title	<p>Tools, Technology, Inspiration</p>
00:04:52	<p>PAUL STANKARD I had been making giftware, the little animals, and, and that got to be tedious. I, I, I'd come home from doing scientific glass, a lot of it would be production glass. Not production in industry, but you know, similar things.</p>
00:05:10	<p>PAUL STANKARD And so I, I started to make the animals as a way to earn extra money, but also it was, it was enjoyable for me. It was, I was you know, challenged by it.</p>
00:05:23	<p>PAUL STANKARD But six months of um, melting and sculpting out little glass animals got pretty bo- got boring.</p>
00:05:31	<p>PAUL STANKARD And I thought ya' know, I said to my wife Pat who is the real hero in this story, "Pat, I wanna' make paperweights, and I'm tired of the animals."</p>
00:05:41	<p>PAUL STANKARD And she said, "ok, I, ya' know, I think that'd be wonderful."</p>
00:05:45	<p>PAUL STANKARD So this was um, six months, we moved into the house, and I worked in the utility room.</p>
00:05:52	<p>PAUL STANKARD And then I had through the um, through the glass uh, giftware, we were able to save \$300 dollars.</p>

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

00:06:02	PAUL STANKARD I mean, that was, I worked hard to, the holiday rush came along, so we had about \$300 dollars, and I said, "ya' know Pat, um, I know you needed a washing machine," (laughter) because she was taking the clothes to the laundromat, oh ho!
00:06:20	PAUL STANKARD But I said if I could, I really wanna' make paperweights and I need some equipment and this and that, so she said, "ya' know, I can continue with the uh, laundromat routine, and take the money and buy the tools that you need for the, for the making paper weights.
00:06:37	PAUL STANKARD And it was simple tools, I mean, ya' know?
00:06:40	PAUL STANKARD So I started uh, experimenting with paperweights and it was all new, I was, I was a scientific glassblower.
00:06:48	PAUL STANKARD And this might sound a little inside baseball, but I was a scientific glassblower who had mastered my skills using borosilicate glass.
00:06:59	PAUL STANKARD And so to paperweight making was done with soda lime glass.
00:07:05	PAUL STANKARD So I had to find uh, soda lime glass materials, and it was just hard to find, and to teach myself how to work soda lime glass.
00:07:15	PAUL STANKARD So that, and, and it was exciting because I was um, it was new, ya' know, and I was tense. Tense in a good way, ya' know? (Laughter)
00:07:26	PAUL STANKARD

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

	<p>And I was like, I had all my attention focused on trying to uh, learn how to framwork the soda lime glass and then encapsulate a flower.</p>
00:07:37	<p>PAUL STANKARD The first paperweights were like animals, I did a uh, I remember doing a, a Pegasus. Different uh, different uh, animals.</p>
00:07:47	<p>PAUL STANKARD And then I, I, I made a um, a flower, a daisy.</p>
00:07:53	<p>PAUL STANKARD And the next day when I took it out of the oven, it really touched me because the animals, they were imaginary and the scale was, ya' know, there were little miniature representations of the animal.</p>
00:08:06	<p>PAUL STANKARD But when I did the little daisy, it looked like it could be a daisy, and that excited me.</p>
00:08:14	<p>PAUL STANKARD So I stopped making the animals and then I um, put a stem on, put a bud in there, and then two daisies, and I just, I just discovered um, I loved being innovative and I loved discovering new ways to interpret the flowers, and the daisy was my first effort.</p>
00:08:39	<p>PAUL STANKARD And I tell my students, because I've taught at Salem Community College for quite a while.</p>
00:08:44	<p>PAUL STANKARD I say, "ya know, really you have to solve one technical problem after the other."</p>
00:08:50	<p>PAUL STANKARD And, and pay attention, and, and follow ya' know, and, and just follow what is interesting to you.</p>
00:09:01	<p>PAUL STANKARD And I'd like to think that that daisy caught my attention, and I invented a botan—, a vocabulary to interpret nature in glass, and it's, it's personal.</p>
00:09:18	<p>PAUL STANKARD</p>

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

	And what's interesting is, I'm, I'm interested in uh, what I care about is giving my glass designs organic credibility.
00:09:34	PAUL STANKARD Now, they're not real, they're my interpretation of a, of a flower or plant, often times they're referential, but people say, "oh, is that a real flower?" (Laughter)
00:09:47	PAUL STANKARD I say "well no, because it was just disintegrate with a t- t- twenty three hundred degree temperature!" (Laughter)
00:09:55	PAUL STANKARD So I think that that curiosity, I tapped into my authentic interest I think, you know.
00:10:02	PAUL STANKARD That's what, ya' know, it's been a struggle ya' know, I'm sitting here, I appreciate having this opportunity to share my career with you um, and with your audience as a um, senior artist, a mature artist, how do I say that?
00:10:21	PAUL STANKARD As a, as an established artist.
Chapter title	Struggles Transitioning to Studio Glass
00:10:23	PAUL STANKARD And when I look back over the struggles, I've kinda' edited them, I edited them out, so now I have my golden memories.
00:10:32	PAUL STANKARD But it was a struggle ya' know, and there was a lot of times the money was, there was difficulty with ya' know, earning money.
00:10:40	PAUL STANKARD Um, y' know, all the usual struggles associated with establishing yourself as a uh, studio artist.
00:10:50	CATHARINE TUCZEK Can you tell us a little bit more about obstacles that you faced?

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

00:10:55	PAUL STANKARD Um, yeah, one of the things that um, I don't wanna' get into it too deeply, because it's probably I've overcome it, but uh, I had uh, I had uh, serious anxiety problems.
00:11:07	PAUL STANKARD And I had to seek uh, I don't know if this is uh, you can edit it out if you don't think it's worth it, but I um, I had a nervous breakdown and had to seek uh, counseling, which helped me a great deal.
00:11:20	PAUL STANKARD And uh, the thing that fascinate, the thing that um, when I look at my, my career as a scientific glassblower, I wanted to master my craft, I wanted to do well.
00:11:32	PAUL STANKARD But when I, when I felt that I was uh, stymied in that job, I'd quit and go get another job.
00:11:42	PAUL STANKARD But when I became uh, self-employed as a studio glass artist focused on paperweights, when I became stymied, I just took a nap. (Laughter)
00:12:01	PAUL STANKARD Ya' know, I just, I stayed with it, and I went back to the paperweights, I didn't run, I didn't fin- I didn't try and find a new job.
00:12:09	PAUL STANKARD I didn't take myself out of uh, of a situation that I felt was causing tension.
00:12:15	PAUL STANKARD So it's interesting how um, how I uh, with, with my early days working in, in my studio which was a utility room, I found myself uh, excited and stimulated by the creative side.
00:12:34	PAUL STANKARD I wanted to be on the creative side.
00:12:37	PAUL STANKARD

	And when I was working in industry, I knew that um, that's where I belonged.
00:12:44	PAUL STANKARD And how do you know that, I'm, I'm not sure. I just would be excited to see things that were uh, were about beauty and uh, decorative and whatever.
Chapter title	Schooling & Overcoming Dyslexia
00:12:57	CHARLES SABLE Can you talk a little bit more about your schooling?
00:13:00	PAUL STANKARD School was a challenge for me, I mean um, ya' know, I um, I know it's, I know it can be fashionable for people to talk about their being dyslexic and ADD, and all of the above.
00:13:15	PAUL STANKARD And I, I experienced uh, a difficult time in school with learning disabilities.
00:13:22	PAUL STANKARD If uh, if I was not- if I didn't have learning disabilities and, and got straight A's, I'd be just as well off! (Laughter)
00:13:33	PAUL STANKARD Probably bet, (laughter) I don't want to say it, to be successful, you've got to be screwed up!
00:13:37	PAUL STANKARD I don't want to say to be successful you have to be dyslexic or ADD is, is a challenge. Success isn't predicated on difficulties.
00:13:49	PAUL STANKARD Success is predicated on uh, having a passion for what you do and persevering.
00:13:56	PAUL STANKARD And the thing that's interesting for me as a dyslexic uh, I didn't know I wasn't stupid.
00:14:04	PAUL STANKARD I was failed the grades and I was put in with a group of people who were in the slow class and uh, thank god I was creative because I used to

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

	daydream all day and that was you know, that got me through the day. (laughter)
00:14:21	PAUL STANKARD That was just you know, my dad was a chemist; my mom and dad were both educated people, and so they were keen on their children uh, getting uh, a good education.
00:14:35	PAUL STANKARD Growing up in North Attleboro the second oldest of nine the uh, it was important to be a good Catholic.
00:14:44	PAUL STANKARD And be, next would be to educate yourself and be a good student in school in that order.
00:14:50	PAUL STANKARD So, so I faked being a good Catholic (laughter) so you can scratch that.
00:14:57	PAUL STANKARD But um, I had a teacher in High School, my, my dad was transferred from Massachusetts to New Jersey and I was enrolled in uh, uh Pitman High School as a Sophomore.
00:15:12	PAUL STANKARD And I was with uh, I was put in a group, I think they called it the general category, it had four levels or something.
00:15:20	PAUL STANKARD And so uh, Mrs. Reed, bless her heart, used to read out loud to us, it was so sweet.
00:15:30	PAUL STANKARD And that was the first exposure that I had to books, she would read the books.
00:15:39	PAUL STANKARD And uh, she didn't read it every day, but most days. And what was so interesting about Mrs. Reed's English class, I had Mrs. Reed in the same group of people, we were grouped together, and we were Sophomore, Junior, Senior, and Mrs. Reed for English.

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

00:15:57	PAUL STANKARD One of the books that really entertained me was <i>Silas Marner</i> ; <i>Silas Marner</i> by George Elliot.
00:16:06	PAUL STANKARD It was a struggle, and, and I think that as a Dyslexic, your- I- you don't give up. You don't know that you're just overcoming obstacles.
00:16:21	PAUL STANKARD ADD, you know you're, you know, I'm, I'm talking to you and I'm thinking about something else and you know, it's just...
00:16:30	PAUL STANKARD And, and you can har- and what I did when I left industry to focus on the paperweight, the diff- the tight parameters of my aesthetic allowed me to focus.
00:16:44	PAUL STANKARD And I think being dyslexic, you had to focus on the written word, and you had to focus on the numbers so that they would be correct.
00:16:56	PAUL STANKARD And I think that uh, an, an, and the, and the, and the dys- ADD, you learn to just focus.
00:17:09	PAUL STANKARD And that focus really allowed me to bring a whole new level of detail to my work, which was kind of interesting.
00:17:20	CHARLES SABLE Can you expand upon that with your work and take us a couple steps further?
00:17:24	CHARLES SABLE Some of the things I know you've talked about with your work in terms of focusing on detail.
Chapter Title	Moving From Industry to Art
00:17:28	PAUL STANKARD Well ya' know uh, when I left industry to uh, to do it full time to my floral paperweights, because I had been doing `em part time for three years.

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

00:17:40	PAUL STANKARD So from the, from the giftware to floral paperweights over three years I made uh, wonderful progress.
00:17:49	PAUL STANKARD And I would go to the antique shops and show `em my work and they would buy `em for twenty dollars, twenty-five dollars.
00:17:56	PAUL STANKARD And they were very, very uh, supportive, "oh, that's wonderful!"
00:18:01	PAUL STANKARD And um, I'd like to tell the story that when I was in industry, I was a master at scientific glassblowing.
00:18:09	PAUL STANKARD Elaborate, complicated equipment, and I would work hard for days to, to build apparatus to meet the uh, PhD chemist requirements.
00:18:22	PAUL STANKARD And I'd bring it there with a lot of pride and they'd say, "oh Paul, thanks so much!" "Great job, thanks a lot!"
00:18:30	PAUL STANKARD And then, in my spare time I would make a little bird, or a horse, or an elephant, and I would bring that to people and they'd go, "oh Paul, you're an artist! Wow, that's great!" (Laughter)
00:18:43	PAUL STANKARD And I'd, I got a lot more mileage out of the little gift, the little animal than I got out of this elaborate scientific glass instrument! (Laughter)
00:18:56	PAUL STANKARD And that, that, that response, it was very upbeat; it was wonderfully satisfying for me.
Chapter title	Maturing & Coming to Terms with Dyslexia
00:19:05	CHARLES SABLE Can you talk also about how you matured as a paperweight artist?

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

00:19:08	PAUL STANKARD Ok, yeah, thank you.
00:19:10	PAUL STANKARD Charles, you're doin' a good job, keep me on track.
00:19:12	CHARLES SABLE I'm, you go for it. (under Paul)
00:19:13	PAUL STANKARD Ok (laughter)
00:19:16	CHARLES SABLE Because that's a fascinating story of...
00:19:18	PAUL STANKARD Well, I left, I left industry to devote full time to the paperweights, and um, I enj...
00:19:27	PAUL STANKARD In my ut- in the utility room, I could I- I had the radio, and I could listen to Phil Donahue had a daily talk show program, and it was on at 9 o'clock in the morning.
00:19:38	PAUL STANKARD I listened to Phil Donahue interview Bruce Jenner the Olympic decathlon.
00:19:45	PAUL STANKARD And he was talkin' about as a child how poor, what a poor student he was because he was dyslexic.
00:19:52	PAUL STANKARD And he was talkin' about his inability to read well; how he focused all of his energy into sports to compensate for his lack of success in academics.
00:20:04	PAUL STANKARD And he's talking about dyslexia in a very personal way and I'm thinkin', "my god, this guy's talkin' about me!"
00:20:12	PAUL STANKARD And uh, I was startled, and I can remember running in the, you know, the utility room was here and pat's in the house.
00:20:20	PAUL STANKARD I said, "Pat, Pat, hey, I'm not stupid!"

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

00:20:24	PAUL STANKARD She says, "I know you're not stupid!"
00:20:26	PAUL STANKARD I said, "well, I've listened to Bruce Jenner talkin' about dyslexia!"
00:20:34	PAUL STANKARD And that was the first time that I heard that.
00:20:36	PAUL STANKARD I, I, my, my sis- my sister, Margaret, talked she was in Special Ed, and she mentioned it but it went over my head.
00:20:44	PAUL STANKARD She said, ya' know, I- she asked me to read something, I, I, let me go back and say I was visiting Mom, my sister was home from college, and the newspaper was on the table, kitchen table.
00:20:59	PAUL STANKARD And I started stumbling over the headlines.
00:21:02	PAUL STANKARD And Margaret said, "Paul, read this paragraph."
00:21:08	PAUL STANKARD Now, I'm twenty, 26 or 27, so I'm reading the paragraph and havin' a hard time with it, and our mother says, "oh, Paul was always a poor reader."
00:21:18	PAUL STANKARD And then Margaret says, "well Paul, you may be dyslexic," which surprised me. I didn't, I had never heard that word before.
00:21:26	PAUL STANKARD So that was then, and then- in '72 with Bruce Jenner, it pulled it all together.
00:21:33	PAUL STANKARD And you know what was such a blessing? When I understood that there was a reason for my inability to read well, and there was a reason for my uh, confusing numbers.
00:21:50	PAUL STANKARD

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

	Uh, I gave it a little bit more thought and um, and r- and really related to Mrs. Reed reading out loud.
00:22:01	PAUL STANKARD Well, a few weeks later, I got in the mail; The Franklin Mint which was a, a marketing company with metal and ya' know, giftware, mementos.
00:22:12	PAUL STANKARD They offered 100 of the greatest books ever written o- on a cassette.
00:22:20	PAUL STANKARD It was, it was abridged.
00:22:23	PAUL STANKARD And over the course of a few years, I listened to these classics, and I loved it.
00:22:30	PAUL STANKARD And I thought, "Wow, ya' know?"
00:22:33	PAUL STANKARD So that was um, the platform that I stood on as I continued to listen to books on tape.
00:22:42	PAUL STANKARD Now I'm downloading on my iPhone, prior to that it was a cassette or a CD, and ya' know, technology has really changed.
00:22:52	PAUL STANKARD But hi- another blessing that occurred early in my career, I'm listening to WHYY on public radio, and they were talking about excellence in the arts.
00:23:08	PAUL STANKARD And the professors who I believe the Professor was Temple University, she was talking about excellence, and she said if you wanna' do excellent work, you have to know what excellence is.
00:23:20	PAUL STANKARD And you have to know what excellence is in the, in painting, in sculpture, in writing, in poetry, in architecture.
00:23:28	PAUL STANKARD

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	And I thought, "my god, that made sense to me!" Ya' know, I could feel it!
00:23:35	PAUL STANKARD So Pat and I with the kids in tow would go to museum shows and seek out, go to galleries, and seek out works on, of art and uh, and it was about self-directed learning.
00:23:51	PAUL STANKARD And um, hopefully the end of this year you'll have a book that I've authored.
00:23:57	PAUL STANKARD Title is <i>Studio Craft as Career, a Guide to Achieving Excellence in Art-making</i> .
00:24:04	PAUL STANKARD And I, I overview fifty artists who are makers, uh, craftspeople.
00:24:12	PAUL STANKARD And then I talk, that's, it's just one section, and another section is my journey that um, that is all about self-directed learning.
00:24:23	PAUL STANKARD Because artistic maturity is uh, essential. I mean, you don't have to go to art school, you don't have to graduate from High School!
00:24:33	PAUL STANKARD But it's essential that you know what good is, and most professional people are competing with the past.
00:24:42	PAUL STANKARD And so when I started making paperweights, I took er- my, my Pat and I, the children in the backseat, we went up to the Corning glass museum, and I saw the antique French paperweights.
00:24:53	PAUL STANKARD Went to Wheaton Village which it was a Wheaton Village now, it's Wheaton Arts.
00:25:02	PAUL STANKARD

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

	<p>So we really enjoyed learn- famil- I enjoyed familiarizing myself with uh, with what was being done.</p>
00:25:12	<p>PAUL STANKARD I wanted to do good work, and I felt that if I was gonna' be successful as a studio artist, I'd have to do excellent work.</p>
00:25:23	<p>PAUL STANKARD It really is about excellence for me, an, and originality. I had to make it personal.</p>
00:25:29	<p>PAUL STANKARD And by um, so by making- one way that I made it personal was I referenced the native flowers of my youth.</p>
00:25:38	<p>PAUL STANKARD But it was about um, pulling in contemporary experiences into my work.</p>
Chapter title	<p>Artistic Inspirations</p>
00:25:45	<p>PAUL STANKARD I would go to museums, this is a sweet story um, I was in New York City delivering my work to a dealer, and I went over to the uh, Whitney Museum.</p>
00:26:00	<p>PAUL STANKARD And the Whitney Museum had a show of Morris Graves.</p>
00:26:04	<p>PAUL STANKARD It was a retrospective, Morris Graves was a, I believe, Seattle, Washington painter. He does flowers and birds.</p>
00:26:14	<p>PAUL STANKARD And I, I was so touched by the spiritual dimension, the ethereal dimension of his flowers.</p>
00:26:25	<p>PAUL STANKARD I was more than touched, I was inspired by this painter, painter's interpretation of flowers.</p>
00:26:32	<p>PAUL STANKARD</p>

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

	<p>And uh, I wanted to not only interpret nature in glass uh, making it personal, but I wanted to make it poetic.</p>
00:26:44	<p>PAUL STANKARD And I wanted my work to, there was a spiritual dimension to my work, because I believe significant objects has that aura, that ethereal aura that floats above it.</p>
00:26:59	<p>PAUL STANKARD And, and people that are, wow, it's hard to explain what that is.</p>
00:27:05	<p>PAUL STANKARD But I uh, so I was developing my flowers as botanical portraits.</p>
00:27:13	<p>PAUL STANKARD And as I uh, as I educated myself to um, to literature, to painting, to art, I started to bring in symbols that I incorporated into my flowers.</p>
00:27:30	<p>PAUL STANKARD And in the late '70s, one of the symbols was um, human forms.</p>
00:27:38	<p>PAUL STANKARD It started out as an anthropomorphic root.</p>
00:27:41	<p>PAUL STANKARD I was at um, I was at uh, in the library and I looked up flowers and there was a book on medieval herbals.</p>
00:27:48	<p>PAUL STANKARD And I opened up the medieval boo- I opened up the book and here are these um, human forms suggesting, referencing roots.</p>
00:27:58	<p>PAUL STANKARD And then there were woodcuttings, and then there were uh, stamens uh, human forms were coming out of the flower s- re, referencing stamens.</p>
00:28:10	<p>PAUL STANKARD So I um, I liked the idea of, of uh, from botanical portraits to floral designs that I incorporated</p>

	symbols into the designs led to a wide ar- array of different approaches.
00:28:32	Catherine Tucek I wanted to ask um, when you were learning both to be a scientific glassblower and also when you learned um, to do your art.
00:28:42	PAUL STANKARD Yes.
Chapter title	Influences & Maturity
00:28:43	Catherine Tucek What did you have to learn about how- the science of how glass works and how did you learn that, did you...
00:28:49	PAUL STANKARD Yeah.
00:28:50	Catherine Tucek Take classes or did you...
00:28:51	PAUL STANKARD I, I went to um, I graduated from Salem Community College, it was a two-year program. I ended up with a scientific glassblowing diploma.
00:29:00	PAUL STANKARD And they would, they, it was flow- it was uh, they had courses, foundation courses, and then lab. We, they call, they called it lab
00:29:09	PAUL STANKARD where every day for three hours I would practice, I would uh, work on my techniques and practice making uh, laboratory equipment.
00:29:22	PAUL STANKARD This is kind of a funny story, yeah I loved it, I loved it!
00:29:26	PAUL STANKARD All of a sudden ya' know, I'm working with my hands, I'm making in the flow- fires.
00:29:33	PAUL STANKARD Exciting, controlled risk, you learn not to burn yourself real quick, (laughter) but I loved it.

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

00:29:40	PAUL STANKARD And so um, the end of the first year I got uh, the instructor. He said, "Paul, you have to go to the director's office, he wants to talk to you."
00:29:52	PAUL STANKARD Ok, I had no idea what that was about.
00:29:57	PAUL STANKARD Went to the director's office, "Paul Stankard, you failed your scientific glass course and you failed algebra."
00:30:08	PAUL STANKARD "I think you should leave Salem and join the army." (laughter)
00:30:11	PAUL STANKARD I'm thinkin', "I don't wanna' join the army, I wanna' be a glassblower!"
00:30:14	PAUL STANKARD I was determined, I was a quiet kid I didn't ya' know, I...
00:30:18	PAUL STANKARD "Well, ok, we'll put you on probation."
00:30:22	PAUL STANKARD I got a summer job, I worked forty hours a week, sometimes overtime, and went back the following September and I was good.
00:30:33	PAUL STANKARD I knew that that full time experienced honed my skills, and I knew that I could do it.
00:30:39	PAUL STANKARD So I had to go to night school for Algebra (laughter) and uh, knew that uh, this is what I wanted.
00:30:49	PAUL STANKARD Cuz' I was you know, I wasn't academic, learning a trade was important, so I, I worked hard to master that craft.
00:31:01	PAUL STANKARD And then when I left industry, I would ask, I would meet other artists at Wheaton Arts, glass people.

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

00:31:09	PAUL STANKARD And I would meet Mark Peiser, Jon Kuhn, different people who, who had graduated from my school.
00:31:17	PAUL STANKARD So I would ask artists to recommend books, and Mark Peiser recommended a very sweet book, <i>The Nature and Art of Workmanship</i> , by David Pye.
00:31:26	PAUL STANKARD David Pye was an English woodworker.
00:31:29	PAUL STANKARD And it really was fascinating because it, it, it addressed the workmanship of certainty versus the workmanship of spontaneity.
00:31:38	PAUL STANKARD And in the book which was, ya' know, it expanded my, my reference.
00:31:45	PAUL STANKARD And that's when I started to look at my process and, and divide what was certain and protect the quality of that work versus what would complement my designs with a certain spontaneity.
00:32:04	PAUL STANKARD Ya' know, and I just kept on going uh, another wonderful book was <i>The Story of Art</i> by um...
00:32:11	CHARLES SABLE Ernst Gombrich.
00:32:12	PAUL STANKARD He was knighted. (Laughter) It was a beautiful book; I understand why he was knighted.
00:32:19	PAUL STANKARD I met an artist who, who recommended Gombrich, and Gombrich wrote a number of books.
00:32:23	PAUL STANKARD So it's like, I loved learning about art.
00:32:28	PAUL STANKARD I, I realized the more exposure I had to these wonderful ideas that in fact I could translate 'em into my floral paperweights.

00:32:38	PAUL STANKARD And I wasn't interested in making great large scale sculpture or any-...
Chapter title	Poetry
00:32:43	PAUL STANKARD I believe that, like Walt Whitman, who I'm a wonderful um, fan of his work, Walt Whitman said to um, his, his, (<i>indiscernible</i>) is about celebrating the ordinary as extraordinary.
00:33:00	PAUL STANKARD And I can- and people would say, "you're making paperweights?" (Laughter) "Paperweights?"
00:33:07	PAUL STANKARD And I, and I used to think, "well, you know, well, you know?"
00:33:12	PAUL STANKARD But as I matured, I realized that a paperweight could be a work of art as extraordinary as anything else, and it was my job to make it that.
00:33:24	PAUL STANKARD So it's, it's very complicated, I mean, it's a journey.
00:33:28	PAUL STANKARD Um, it was difficult but I, I did, I did I think that being dyslexic and, and trying to do well um, stayed with me.
00:33:41	PAUL STANKARD And then when technology came along, and uh, audibles, text, ya' know, uh, books on tape, I had access to all this information.
00:33:52	PAUL STANKARD There's a wonderful sentence in <i>Song of Myself</i> by Walt Whitman, the narrowest hinge of my hand puts to scorn all machinery.
00:34:03	PAUL STANKARD I loved workin' with my hands, and I read that in the mid '80s.
00:34:09	PAUL STANKARD

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

	I thought, "wow!" In the mid '80s, I hit this invisible wall that I didn't feel like I was making artistic progress, I just felt stymied.
00:34:19	PAUL STANKARD And you know, an artist knows when the work's not evolving. Eh, I, ya' know, nothing's happening.
00:34:26	PAUL STANKARD But I, I started writing poetry, and I started reading poetry.
00:34:31	PAUL STANKARD If I, trust me, if I'm gonna' write poetry, let's go find out, let's go experience great poems! (Laughter)
00:34:40	PAUL STANKARD So I, I, I read somewhere that Walt Whitman was America's greatest literary genius.
00:34:48	PAUL STANKARD So I started reading poe- uh, Whitman's poetry.
00:34:50	PAUL STANKARD I got in uh, I started reading an, an Anthology, and was exposed to a lot of poems. And Whitman's poems touched me.
00:34:59	PAUL STANKARD And after reading Whitman's poetry, I, it, it really, it really allowed me to have more creative freedom.
00:35:10	PAUL STANKARD I was experimenting with a honeybee and um, I wanted it incorporated into the flowering plants, and I wanted it to symbolize uh, pollenating.
00:35:23	PAUL STANKARD I think of my flowers as a lifecycle of nature, er, growth, maturity, decay.
00:35:33	PAUL STANKARD And um, I read in one of Whitman's poems, "the hairy wild bee hankers and murmurs up and down". The hairy, wild bee?

00:35:45	PAUL STANKARD So I went outside, it was in the summertime, and I got a bee off of a dandelion.
00:35:50	PAUL STANKARD And I'm lookin' at it thinking, "my god, it's hairy!" (Laughter)
00:35:55	PAUL STANKARD So I started experimenting to, to put the, the little hairs on the back of the bee.
00:36:02	PAUL STANKARD So it's ya' know, I mean, you pull it from, it comes, it comes to you in so many different ways.
Chapter title	Mistakes & Creativity
00:36:09	CATHARINE TUCZEK Do you ever make mistakes when you're working, or do you break a piece like, how do you deal with that?
00:36:13	PAUL STANKARD I make mistakes all the time, all the time. Failures.
00:36:18	PAUL STANKARD When I started out, I was destroying about twenty, twenty-five percent of my work because I was just interested in prese- having my best work represent me.
00:36:28	PAUL STANKARD Was very, very I could make more work than I could sell.
00:36:32	PAUL STANKARD So I edited down, I just selected the best and then put aside the, put aside the others.
00:36:40	PAUL STANKARD And, and another thing that was interesting, I wanted the work, I wanted to build on the French paperweight tradition.
00:36:52	PAUL STANKARD And then, once I started to advance my interpretation of nature with, with in the paperweights format, I repackaged my colored

	glass flowers and developed what I call the botanical series.
00:37:06	PAUL STANKARD In the botanical series, I thought, and I, I th- I believe is a continuation, it advances the antique French paperweight tradition.
00:37:17	PAUL STANKARD And the botanicals, they allowed me to bring more visual information into the work.
00:37:23	PAUL STANKARD I was caught up in the spirit of the studio glass movement, but I was committed to interpreting nature in glass in a way that hadn't been, hadn't been done before.
Chapter Title	Joining the Studio Glass Movement
00:37:35	CHARLES SABLE When did you first become aware of others uh, in the studio glass movement?
00:37:40	CHARLES SABLE The first, the beginning, uh, um...
00:37:42	PAUL STANKARD Well, I knew about the studio- eh, eh, that's a good question, thank you.
00:37:46	PAUL STANKARD When I was in Salem, when I was in the glass program at Salem, um, it was, I was in the glass program from '90 uh, 1991 to 1993.
00:37:57	PAUL STANKARD And the framework, the scientific glassblowers were connected.
00:38:03	PAUL STANKARD They were, they were organized in a way that they knew other scientific glassblowers.
00:38:09	PAUL STANKARD

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

	And what's not mentioned too often is Littleton's workshop, when Littleton put the workshop together in 1962, there was a f- a scientific, a flameworker in that group, and he was demonstrating flameworking.
00:38:24	PAUL STANKARD So the word, the word came, the word got around the scientific glass- flameworking community, lampworkers they call themselves, that there's this guy named Littleton who wants to teach glassblowing at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.
00:38:41	PAUL STANKARD And I'm goin', "wow, that is fascinating."
00:38:45	PAUL STANKARD And so I knew about the scientif- I knew about the Littleton's interest in teaching a Master's course in glassblowing at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.
Dina	Please see two typos in transcript below
00:38:59	PAUL STANKARD And it wasn't until um, I think it was '76 or '77 at the Bergstrom Mahler Museum museum at Neenah, Wisconsin that I met Harvey Littleton.
00:39:09	PAUL STANKARD And I met Dominic Labino, and uh, uh a number of other uh, people.
00:39:15	PAUL STANKARD Around '72, when I left industry to '76, my work was improving.
00:39:23	PAUL STANKARD The work was attracting more attention, and the Bergstrom Modern Museum, which interestingly enough has a world-class paperweight collection.
00:39:33	PAUL STANKARD But they also are inter- they were also interested in contemporary glass.
00:39:39	PAUL STANKARD

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

	<p>So they had an exhibition of contemporary glass and included me as a paperweight maker into the exhibit.</p>
00:39:48	<p>PAUL STANKARD So they asked me to go out and speak, and I was on a panel, and I, and, and Littleton was there with uh, his wife and Dominic Labino, and...</p>
00:39:58	<p>PAUL STANKARD And they looked like they were havin' a hell of a lot more fun than I was having as a paperweight maker. (Laughter) I'm thinkin', "wow!"</p>
00:40:05	<p>PAUL STANKARD And they were, they were ya' know, they were, they were energized, not that I wasn't.</p>
00:40:11	<p>PAUL STANKARD But it wasn't about the market for them, it was about the opportunity to express an idea.</p>
00:40:20	<p>PAUL STANKARD And, and so I was interested in expressing an idea about native flow- my, my love of sharing my interest in native flowers.</p>
00:40:29	<p>PAUL STANKARD So I connected, and I remember having Harvey Littleton looking at my work and saying, "that's pretty good, kid." (Laughter) Or something like that, he was very complimentary.</p>
00:40:38	<p>PAUL STANKARD And tuh-</p>
00:40:40	<p>PAUL STANKARD So I early on knew about studio glass but it was very, there was very little going on.</p>
00:40:45	<p>PAUL STANKARD I mean, there were c- a couple of universities and they were networking among themselves, and...</p>
00:40:50	<p>PAUL STANKARD</p>

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

	<p>But it wasn't until like, uh, in the, in the '72, '73, '74 that a couple of galleries uh, established um, uh, galleries focused on contemporary glass.</p>
00:41:04	<p>PAUL STANKARD And they um, were became um, they became a gathering point for the artists, especially if they're having surveys.</p>
00:41:14	<p>PAUL STANKARD And one of the interesting things was I uh, Habitat Gallery here in um, Michigan, Dearborn Michigan had a uh, they called it a, I don't know, they may have called it "The Great Paperweight Exhibit".</p>
00:41:28	<p>PAUL STANKARD And they invited Littleton, and Labino, and all the contemporary glass people to make paperweights to be in this paperweight show, because in the early '70s, there was a lot of vessels.</p>
00:41:41	<p>PAUL STANKARD And all of a sudden you know, it, "eh, it wouldn't make a paperweight." (laughter)</p>
00:41:46	<p>PAUL STANKARD So they were making paperweights, they were a little spontaneous.</p>
00:41:50	<p>PAUL STANKARD And it, and so they were in this exhibit and there's a critic from New York City, Paul Hollister, he flew in and reviewed the show for a magazine and talked about Stankard doing traditional work along with all the other contemporary work.</p>
00:42:05	<p>PAUL STANKARD And um, so I met, I met Ritter, Kuhn, I met uh, I met a lot of people, and I had a lot in common with 'em.</p>
00:42:13	<p>PAUL STANKARD Interestingly enough, as a flameworker, as a lampworker, I had to name myself a flameworker at that moment.</p>
00:42:21	<p>PAUL STANKARD</p>

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

	Um, as a lampworker, I was a curiosity.
00:42:26	PAUL STANKARD And it was small scale and detail, so I uh, I shared my knowledge of flameworking and listened to their stories of blowing glass and became part of, I felt comfortable with `em.
00:42:40	PAUL STANKARD What do you think Kate, am I talking too much?
00:42:42	Catherine Tuczek No! (Laughter)
00:42:43	PAUL STANKARD Ok! (Laughter)
Chapter title	Art Market
00:42:45	CHARLES SABLE Can you tell me about the, the, the development of the art market? You've eluded to it ever so slightly, can you continue with that?
00:42:49	PAUL STANKARD Yeah, I mean um, I had been uh, in '72, left industry, worked with paperweight dealers.
00:42:57	PAUL STANKARD And, and these people were good people, they were selling antique French paperweights for serious money.
00:43:04	PAUL STANKARD And, and I worked hard to attract, capture the attention of the antique French paperweight collectors to purchase my work.
00:43:14	PAUL STANKARD And, and they, and I was, and they were very supportive.
00:43:19	PAUL STANKARD But um, it was, it was, I was por- my paperweights were put into a display case with ya' know, fifty other paperweights. (Laughter)
00:43:30	PAUL STANKARD And when I, when Habitat had that show, it was a whole new approach to marketing.

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

00:43:39	PAUL STANKARD Here, I was marketed, I was presented as an artist, and this is his work.
00:43:45	PAUL STANKARD And, and, and I noticed the galleries were more about promoting the artist and less about the work as a result of the creative efforts of the artist.
00:44:00	PAUL STANKARD And it wasn't about a color, or this, or that.
00:44:05	PAUL STANKARD So I, I realized that um, it was, I was attracted more to the gallery uh, marketing approach.
00:44:15	PAUL STANKARD And so I, so I, I had a very successful show at he-uh, Habitat, Ferd Hampson sold, I had five pieces in the show, he sold all five.
00:44:25	PAUL STANKARD See, he said, "Paul, would you like to have a paperweight show next year?" And I said, "sure!"
00:44:32	PAUL STANKARD My brother lived in Dearborn, Michigan, so that was the reason I left New Jersey to come to, because I hadn't seen my brother, John, in, in a couple years and I'm thinin', "I don't know anything about Habitat Gallery, Dearborn."
00:44:45	PAUL STANKARD But John lives in Michigan, Dearborn, so I'll go do the show and visit John!
00:44:51	PAUL STANKARD So anyway, my brother lived in Dearborn, so that was the ya' know, I don't wanna' hurt (indiscernible) feelings, but that was the magnet.
00:44:58	PAUL STANKARD I did the show the following year, we sold out. It was amazing.
00:45:03	PAUL STANKARD I was so happy, I met so many nice people that were curious about my work.

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

00:45:08	PAUL STANKARD And then Doug Heller, the following year, Doug Heller calls me up and says, "Paul, would you like to have a show at the Heller Gallery in New York?"
00:45:17	PAUL STANKARD And I knew who the Heller Gallery was.
00:45:20	PAUL STANKARD And I said uh, "huh, that would be great!"
00:45:23	PAUL STANKARD So Doug showed my work, and the gallery's beautiful; on pedestals, we had flowers. We sold out.
00:45:32	PAUL STANKARD I'm thinkin', "wow!"
00:45:34	PAUL STANKARD So it was, and you know, and I was still a starving artist because there wasn't a lot of money to be made, but still, ya' know, it was, we were moving in the right direction.
00:45:46	PAUL STANKARD And what was interesting about the galleries, it was a challenge, artistic challenge, because you really had to come up with new designs. You couldn't have five of the same thing, ya' know?
00:45:58	PAUL STANKARD And so that was a wonderful, I enjoyed that challenge of working in th- with a theme, medicinal herbs, ya' know, edible plants. Things like that and um, uh, berries.
00:46:13	PAUL STANKARD I was in two worlds. I worked with the paperweight dealers, sent them work, but I also uh, showed at galleries.
00:46:23	PAUL STANKARD And the paperweight dealers, I, I kept the two separate which was uh, you know, I had five kids.
00:46:31	PAUL STANKARD

	You know, I mean, it wasn't about the money as much as the work, but we need money to live, ya' know?
00:46:42	CHARLES SABLE How was your relationship with galleries changed over time?
00:46:45	PAUL STANKARD <i>They're all a bunch of shits! (laughter)</i>
00:46:48	PAUL STANKARD <i>I dare you to leave that in. (laughter)</i>
00:46:51	BRADLEY EGEN <i>I'm leaving that.</i>
00:46:52	PAUL STANKARD <i>No, don't ta- (laughter)</i>
00:46:54	PAUL STANKARD No, I um, I, I, ya' know, my relationship with the galleries today is uh, I'm at a wonderful spot, I'm in, I'm in a wonderful place with my relationship with the galleries at age 73. (laughter)
00:47:10	PAUL STANKARD I work with a few de- galleries, I enjoy, I enjoy the success, my work is experiencing, but I am not trying to prove anything.
Chapter title	Current Work
00:47:22	PAUL STANKARD I'm not, I don't necessarily wanna' do a show, I send, I, I, I work, my work rate now, I make these spherical forms, I call them meditations.
00:47:33	PAUL STANKARD I went through some oh, medical challenges and when I, after going through the medical challenges and being away from glass for a year, I started to, when I sat down, I started to think of how much I enjoy glass, and this thing's coming to an end.
00:47:52	PAUL STANKARD So I started thinking of my work as meditations, as a prayer. My labor is my prayer.
00:48:00	PAUL STANKARD

	And um, I'm, I'm doing some, I think I'm, I think I'm doing the best work of my career right now.
00:48:09	PAUL STANKARD I really, I really am so interested in how at age 73, how I'm discovering new ways to learn about nature, new ways to learn about glass.
00:48:23	PAUL STANKARD It's almost this process teaches you how to be creative.
Chapter title	Materials & Working with an Assistant
00:48:28	CHARLES SABLE How about materials? Let's talk about changes in materials from early days to the present.
00:48:33	PAUL STANKARD Well, in the early days, material, there was difficult, it was difficult finding the materials to um, it was difficult finding compatible glasses.
00:48:42	PAUL STANKARD And because of the huge numbers of creative people wanting to work in glass, industry, glass companies started to produce colored glasses and clear glass that would, that could allow the artist to do their work.
00:49:01	PAUL STANKARD In the '60s and '70s, it was difficult finding the materials that you could do good work with.
00:49:08	PAUL STANKARD But then slowly, as more and more artists wanted to work in glass, there was a economic interest in these manufacturers to produce the colored glasses.
00:49:19	CATHARINE TUCZEK Do you usually work with someone else who encapsulates your piece for you, or do you work alone? How does that work?
00:49:25	PAUL STANKARD Yeah, that's a good question, thank you.
00:49:28	PAUL STANKARD

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

	Uh, I've worked with assistants from, almost from the beginning.
00:49:33	PAUL STANKARD Uh, in 1974, two, two years on my own, then I hired an assistant.
00:49:39	PAUL STANKARD And what I found out was it was a blessing, because I could uh, I could delegate a lot of the material preparation to the assistant while I'm focused on developing new ideas or, or just doing more ambitious work.
00:49:54	PAUL STANKARD But I've worked with assistants for the course of my career, and um, my daughter's worked with me for um...
00:50:02	PAUL STANKARD My one daughter worked for me for nineteen years and another for about sixteen years.
00:50:07	PAUL STANKARD Uh, and I have five children.
00:50:09	PAUL STANKARD My three daughters have worked in the studio with me and my son, Joe.
00:50:13	PAUL STANKARD My daughter, Pauline, er, manages the studio, and she works part time.
00:50:17	PAUL STANKARD Now, my children were happy to work part time. They preferred, they wanted to work part time.
00:50:23	PAUL STANKARD They wanted to be Moms, and then they, they came to the studio and worked.
00:50:28	PAUL STANKARD Sometimes it was a real blessing if they brought the grandchildren. (Laughter)
00:50:33	PAUL STANKARD 'Cuz typic- because uh, (laughter) I'd be able to play with the grandchildren. (laughter)

00:50:38	PAUL STANKARD But anyway, it's um, I've benefited from assistants and David Graeber has been, has worked for me for close to twenty-five years, and now works one day a week.
00:50:50	PAUL STANKARD And he's on his own, he's doing very interesting work on his own.
00:50:55	PAUL STANKARD Ya' know, I look at the young paperweight makers, and I think they're gonna' have a challenge, the younger people in glass, the young artists.
00:51:02	PAUL STANKARD They're so much work has been invented, how do I say that?
00:51:07	PAUL STANKARD The diversity of the contemporary glass landscape is, is broad and fascinating.
00:51:15	PAUL STANKARD With, so many people have been able to, to invent a personal vocabulary to uh, invent techniques that distinguishes a work.
00:51:24	PAUL STANKARD And I look at the young people, and I think, "oh my god, they're gonna' have a har- they're gonna have tough sledding to jump over what has been done.
00:51:34	PAUL STANKARD Because it's all about originality, it really is.
Chapter title (14)	Place in History
00:51:41	CHARLES SABLE But don't you think, let me throw this at you, a little counterpoint.
00:51:44	CHARLES SABLE Don't you think that on the shoulders of what is known as the Classic Phase, or (indiscernible) now calls the Classic Phase to do glass there will be new challenges and new weights?
00:51:55	PAUL STANKARD

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

	Yes, yes, there's all, you know, there's two schools of thought.
00:51:59	PAUL STANKARD And when you look at the numbers of people who have distinguished themselves in glass art by doing great work, one school of thought is it's gonna di- it's gonna' be difficult to advance that progress.
00:52:16	PAUL STANKARD But there's another school of thought says that this opens up many more opportunities for more people to be engaged in um, in the field by being influenced by what's been done.
00:52:33	PAUL STANKARD So it's um, it's a double, it's ya' know, it's two different points of view.
00:52:39	PAUL STANKARD But it's predicated on, I think it's predicated on doing good work and making it personal.
00:52:47	CHARLES SABLE Can you go back to the issue of plants?
00:52:50	PAUL STANKARD Ok.
00:52:51	CHARLES SABLE How do you go about getting your ideas for plants for, for botanical motifs that you use?
00:52:59	PAUL STANKARD Well, ya' know, this is an interesting statement that I'm gonna' make because you're interviewing Paul Stankard who has spent his adult life on the creative side encapsulating uh, referencing nature in glass.
00:53:17	PAUL STANKARD If you were to interview me in the first ten years of my s- my career, you would've had a totally different story.
00:53:25	PAUL STANKARD The second ten years, a different story.
00:53:29	PAUL STANKARD

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

	<p>I'm evolving, and I love that. I'm a different person today than I was ten years ago.</p>
00:53:38	<p>PAUL STANKARD And so now, I'm interested in interpreting nature in glass as a metaphor: sex, death and God.</p>
00:53:48	<p>PAUL STANKARD So I went to my wife, I, I talked to my wife Pat, and I said, "hey Pat, I'm gonna' interpret sex, death and God in my glass".</p>
00:53:58	<p>PAUL STANKARD She said, "well Paul, what psychiatry book have you been reading?" "There's nothing else."</p>
00:54:04	<p>PAUL STANKARD But I wanted to also uh, acknowledge how much support you, you have, you're supported by the galleries.</p>
00:54:12	<p>PAUL STANKARD First of all, I wanna' acknowledge the support that I have received from my wife, Pat, uh, my assistants, my daughters and, and my son, Joe, and, and David Graeber and, and others.</p>
00:54:26	<p>PAUL STANKARD But the galleries, they're busi- they are business advisers.</p>
00:54:30	<p>PAUL STANKARD The dealers, the galleries you, you know, you talk about you know, cuh- prices, um, marketing, they're marketing your work.</p>
00:54:40	<p>PAUL STANKARD Right now it's a different world because of the internet.</p>
00:54:43	<p>PAUL STANKARD You know you can uh, Doug Heller, I sent a- an orb, it was "A Meditation on the Healing Virtues of a Plant." A very long title.</p>
00:54:53	<p>PAUL STANKARD He said, "that's a long title. I said, "what can I say? It's a long title.</p>

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

00:54:59	PAUL STANKARD (Laughter) "Meditation on the healing virtues of a Plant".
00:55:03	PAUL STANKARD So he emailed that, he did an email blast, and he sold it.
00:55:08	PAUL STANKARD I was like, "from, to a person in Australia!" Which, you know, it's kinda' cute.
00:55:14	PAUL STANKARD So it's um, you- you know, change. Things change, society changes, your business you know, the museum world is reinventing itself.
00:55:23	PAUL STANKARD I think we're all, we're all eager to reinvent ourselves, and the creative side is especially keen on that attitude, come up with new things.
00:55:35	PAUL STANKARD The trick is I don't want my work to be novel. I want my work to have uh, substance, I want it to be honest.
00:55:45	PAUL STANKARD I want my work to have integrity.
00:55:48	PAUL STANKARD And these are very abstract terms, but they mean something to me and that's what you know, that's what you know, I've protected against. I've protected against the, I protect my quality.
00:56:02	CHARLES SABLE When did you realize you were successful? That's a-
00:56:05	PAUL STANKARD You know, I don't think of myself as successful.
00:56:09	CHARLES SABLE You don't?
00:56:10	PAUL STANKARD No.
00:56:11	PAUL STANKARD

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

	I don't because it's not important to me. What's important to me is to do great work.
00:56:16	PAUL STANKARD And what's important to me is reach my full potential.
00:56:20	PAUL STANKARD Um, how do I answer that? People say, "oh, you're very successful, Paul." I say, "oh, ok."
00:56:30	PAUL STANKARD (Laughter) I'm not gonna' change my life over it.
00:56:33	PAUL STANKARD You know, I go to LA Fitness and work out. You know I, I hang with the same people, uh, I um, I'm proud of my accomplishments.
00:56:44	PAUL STANKARD I'm very proud to be represented in the uh, I'm very proud to be represented in The Henry Ford Museum collection of glass, contemporary glass tradition.
00:56:55	PAUL STANKARD Tradition, I'm, I'm proud to be positioned as a maker who has adva- who has impacted on American glass.
00:57:02	PAUL STANKARD Now these are very sweet accomplishments.
00:57:06	PAUL STANKARD Uh, but I don't want my life to change, I just want to be a maker, and um...
00:57:14	PAUL STANKARD I wanna' share the reason I'm here, to share my experiences with the young people.
00:57:19	PAUL STANKARD By sharing my experiences with the young people, I want them to know that uh, it's about doing something well and, and, and persevere.
00:57:30	PAUL STANKARD And uh, I love the idea of uh, s- uh, quote that's attributed to Joseph Campbell.

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

00:57:39	PAUL STANKARD Joseph Campbell said, "by following your bliss, opportunities will become available to you."
00:57:46	PAUL STANKARD And that's a sweet idea, and I believe that.
00:57:49	PAUL STANKARD I mean you know, I've been, I've been in some pretty tough situations throughout my forty-five years as a studio artist.
00:57:57	PAUL STANKARD But um, by just saying, "ok, it's really tough, money's tight," but I go right back to focusing on my work.
00:58:07	PAUL STANKARD But one of the sweet um, success is a very, very um, personal experience.
00:58:15	PAUL STANKARD I was honored to receive two honorary doctoral finance degrees.
00:58:19	PAUL STANKARD And it's a little abstract.
00:58:21	PAUL STANKARD My brother has a PhD from the University of Pennsylvania, so I called up my brother, Martin, and I said, "hey Martin, I'm a uh, I got a doctorate.
00:58:30	PAUL STANKARD He said, "yeah, but you didn't earn it." (Laughter) Typical brother's response.
00:58:36	PAUL STANKARD But uh, success to me is being, right now success is being a good grandpop.
00:58:43	PAUL STANKARD I wanna' be a good grandpop. If I can be a good grandpop, I'm golden.
00:58:50	PAUL STANKARD And I'm working at it, I love, I love takin' the kids out and buyin' them a toy.
00:58:55	PAUL STANKARD

	Now the toys are getting a little expensive though, god almighty I...
00:59:00	PAUL STANKARD The boy wanted a um, Mac watch. It was 350 bucks or something or... So he had to pay half. (Laughter)
Chapter 15	Personal Collecting
00:59:10	CHARLES SABLE One last question and then we'll let you go, ok?
00:59:12	PAUL STANKARD Yeah.
00:59:13	CHARLES SABLE Uh, what kind of glass do you collect and why?
00:59:17	PAUL STANKARD Well, while I was um, this is interesting, this is, this is um, maybe a psychiatrist could figure this puzzle out.
00:59:30	PAUL STANKARD But as a paperweight maker, and as I was emotionally involved in advancing the tradition, expressing myself through native flowers and, and inventing my own personal um, body of work, I was not competing with the other contemporary glass collectors.
00:59:55	PAUL STANKARD So I would, I would see great contemporary glass and purchase it.
01:00:00	PAUL STANKARD I wasn't, I didn't, emotionally, I wasn't in that mindset.
01:00:05	PAUL STANKARD Uh, uh, how do you say it Charles, I wasn't, I wasn't part of, I mean, I wasn't a part of the studio glass movement but I didn't come up with the tradition of...
01:00:13	CHARLES SABLE Correct.
01:00:14	PAUL STANKARD

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

	I was outs- I was an outsider that had, I was an outsider within the con-
01:00:21	CHARLES SABLE You were in...
01:00:22	PAUL STANKARD I was on the periphery of the studio glass movement, but my work was attracting serious attention in the sh- in the contemporary glass um, con- in the contemporary glass context.
01:00:35	CHARLES SABLE M-hm.
01:00:35	PAUL STANKARD But I enjoyed collecting contemporary glass, and I ended up uh, donating uh, quite a bit of it to Salem Community College and also Wheaton Arts.
01:00:44	PAUL STANKARD Uh, I'm slowly ya' know, at this stage of the game it's important to um, g- give it away and ya' know, you have to uh, you have to shrink it down a little bit.
01:00:59	CHARLES SABLE Yes, the term is downsize.
01:01:00	PAUL STANKARD Downsizing, that's it, yeah.
01:01:02	PAUL STANKARD Ok, you guys got some good stuff.
01:01:05	CHARLES SABLE Did I hear something just ding?
01:01:07	PAUL STANKARD My ding, my phone that was my phone maybe, er?
01:01:09	CHARLES SABLE Oh, that was your phone?
01:01:10	CATHARINE TUCZEK (Laughter)
Chapter title (16)	Legacy
01:01:11	BRADLEY EGEN I listened to you all day long, and I watched you all day long.

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

01:01:14	BRADLEY EGEN Before I knew you were coming here, I looked ya' up and read about ya'
01:01:17	PAUL STANKARD You realized that I'm a bull-shitter.
01:01:19	BRADLEY EGEN No I didn't...
01:01:20	PAUL STANKARD (Laughter)
01:01:21	BRADLEY EGEN Every one of those...
01:01:21	PAUL STANKARD Yup.
01:01:22	BRADLEY EGEN To me is a story.
01:01:24	PAUL STANKARD Yes.
01:01:24	BRADLEY EGEN And when I got to know about you so far is that you're a storyteller.
01:01:27	PAUL STANKARD Exactly.
01:01:28	BRADLEY EGEN And you chose to tell your stories by trapping a moment of you inside of a solid object.
01:01:36	BRADLEY EGEN And I'm really curious about the expression of a story. It's almost a snapshot, it's a three-dimensional photograph, but it's a picture that came out of the autobiography of you. It didn't come out of nature.
01:01:49	PAUL STANKARD Alright, but uh, that's a good question.
01:01:51	PAUL STANKARD Let me say that um, I care about what I do, I wanna' do it well. I found my niche, I found a way to work in glass.

Paul Stankard Oral History Transcript (Complete Interview)

01:02:01	PAUL STANKARD Allows me to um, enhances my sense of self-worth.
01:02:05	PAUL STANKARD I think that as a dyslexic, I, the first twenty-five, twenty-seven years of my life was ya' know, I can't do this, I can't do that. I was always embarrassed if somebody when I worked in industry...
01:02:21	PAUL STANKARD One of the reasons I left was because I was always petrified that I'd have to fill out a form, I have to write something down.
01:02:28	PAUL STANKARD And I, and when I did it was just, it was like, anxious and ya' know, misspelling all the words.
01:02:35	PAUL STANKARD There's something very satisfying about doing something well.
01:02:39	PAUL STANKARD And, and by uh, trying to uh, share with the viewer what I care about and, and bring myth, symbolism and spirituality into my glass, that's me.
01:02:59	PAUL STANKARD And is ya' know, if you give it to, if you, if the viewer takes the time to engage the object into a visual dialog ya' know, there's, there's a lot for the viewer to, to um, absorb.
01:03:14	PAUL STANKARD And they're not gonna' get it at the first take.
01:03:17	PAUL STANKARD I would like to think my, my work reveals itself uh, over uh, time.
01:03:23	PAUL STANKARD (Laughter)
	END