



News Release

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Visit Seattle and Chihuly Garden and Glass Present the 5th Annual Refract: The Nation's Premier Glass Art Festival

The event will run October 12-15, 2023 with programming details now live at refractseattle.org

SEATTLE – Get ready for a captivating fusion of color, heat, light, and passion as Refract: The Seattle Glass Experience, returns to Seattle Oct. 12-15, 2023. Now in its fifth year, this highly anticipated event offers an array of new exhibitions, extravagant galas, rare studio tours, live demonstrations, and the unique opportunity to engage with a new generation of local glass artists of varying backgrounds - all showcasing why Seattle is recognized as the nation's largest hub of glass art.

"I'm deeply proud that Refract has successfully reached its 5th year," says Michelle Bufano, Executive Director at Chihuly Garden and Glass. "We couldn't do this without our incredibly talented glass art community in the Greater Seattle region. Dale Chihuly put Washington on the map decades ago, and our incredible artists, studios, museums, and art enthusiasts keep pushing boundaries and showing the world what it's like to be at the forefront of glassblowing here in America. This is a significant milestone and we can't wait to celebrate!"

"More and more travelers are interested in glass art, and we are delighted to have this opportunity to showcase the incredible talent in our region. Refract has something for everyone, from long-time collectors to curious newcomers, and offers the chance to meet the artists, get up close to the creation

process, and experience a truly unique event. This is the perfect way for us to celebrate Seattle and the Pacific Northwest region as the epicenter of glass art in the United States,” says Tracey Wickersham, Senior Director of Cultural Tourism for Visit Seattle.

With the 2023 program designed to mark the festival’s momentous fifth anniversary, Refract will reach across Seattle and neighboring cities, including Everett, Bainbridge Island, Issaquah and Tacoma.

More than 80 events will feature the works of nearly 60 talented artists. As a testament to Visit Seattle and Chihuly Garden and Glass’ commitment to making the festival accessible to all art enthusiasts, much of the programming will remain free.

Details of the festival's exciting lineup can now be found on the official website, RefractSeattle.org.

Highlights and new elements for this year include:

- New complimentary shuttle service will be provided to and from a number of private artist studios, bringing attendees to the art more directly than ever before.
- New exhibitions, including Women in Glass, a showcase of female glass artists at Seattle Glassblowing Studio, a solo exhibition by Ginny Ruffner at Traver Gallery, and Luminosity, a group glass exhibit at Stonington Gallery of works by contemporary Indigenous glass masters of the Pacific Northwest Coast.
- Events and parties, including Gather: The Official Opening Party* (Oct. 12 at Chihuly Garden and Glass), Pilchuck Glass School’s 45th Annual Auction & Gala* (Oct. 14 at Fremont Studios), and a Closing Party at Pratt Fine Arts Center* (Oct. 15).
- Exclusive tours and access to artist studios, including the rare and coveted opportunity to tour The Boathouse, Dale Chihuly’s private studio and hotshop* (Oct. 12); Refract Artist Open Studios featuring 15 typically private locations across Seattle (Oct. 14-15); a guided tour of the outstanding public glass art at SEA Airport* (Oct. 13), and more.
- Artist demonstrations, including one by Jason Christian, a member of Dale Chihuly's boathouse team (Oct. 14 at Pratt Fine Arts Center); daily demonstrations at Seattle Glassblowing Studio featuring the region’s top women glassblowers including Nancy Callan and Shelley Muzylowski Allen; a demonstration by playful local artist Austin Stern (Oct. 15 at Pratt Fine Arts Center); and an interactive demonstration by Manolo Aguilera, a Mexican artist based in Seattle whose work honors his heritage (Oct. 15 at Cafe Aroma in Shoreline). The Museum of Glass in Tacoma will be hosting a residency with internationally known visiting artist Jay Macdonell (Oct. 12-15).

* Denotes ticketed or RSVP-required event. Visit RefractSeattle.org to secure your spot and see the full list of programs and events.

Top hotels throughout the region will also offer exclusive overnight packages for Refract getaways. Details on Refract hotel packages will be added to the website in August.

Images for media use can be found [here](#).

About Refract: The Seattle Glass Experience

Visit Seattle, Chihuly Garden and Glass, and more than 60 Pacific Northwest arts organizations are joining together for this annual festival, taking place October 12-15, 2023. This year's festival offers a unique mix of in-person shows, demonstrations, parties, and exhibitions, alongside virtual programming options. Visit RefractSeattle.org for further details.

About Visit Seattle

Visit Seattle has served as the official destination marketing organization (DMO) for Seattle and King County for more than 50 years. A 501(c)(6) organization, Visit Seattle enhances the economic prosperity of the region through global destination branding along with competitive programs and campaigns in leisure travel marketing, convention sales, and overseas tourism development. Visit visitseattle.org.

About Chihuly Garden and Glass

Located at Seattle Center, Chihuly Garden and Glass brings together all the elements of artist Dale Chihuly's work, including drawings, signature glass series, large architectural installations, and personal collections. This long-term exhibition features indoor galleries, the centerpiece Glasshouse, and an ever-changing Garden, along with live glass demonstrations, a Theatre, and The Bar, offering unique cocktails and light bites surrounded by Dale Chihuly's collections. Learn more at chihulygardenandglass.com.