



CHIHULY IN THE GALLERIES

HIGH SCHOOL SELF-GUIDED TOUR

"I want people to be overwhelmed with light and color in some way that they've never experienced." -Dale Chihuly

Dale Chihuly was born in Tacoma, Washington in September 1941. His artistic career spans several decades. Start this journey in the Northwest Room and allow the prompts to facilitate group discussion.

STOP 1: NORTHWEST ROOM (THEME: EARLY WORK)

People often ask me why I work with glass, and how I got started. I never know really the answer to why, because I don't start from reasons. I began from a fascination with glass itself." - Dale Chihuly 1998

The American Studio Glass Movement (1958-1962) gave birth to a new way of approaching glass as a medium. Glass was no longer expected to be functional or symmetrical. Working first under the guidance of Harvey Littleton at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, then later at the Rhode Island School of Design, Chihuly explores the aesthetics of the Studio Glass Movement. Later exploration leads to new ways of incorporating shapes and designs onto the surface of the glass.

1. Take a look at Dale Chihuly's work within this gallery, examine the use of form. How are the forms of the woven Native American Baskets interpreted in Dale Chihuly's Baskets and Soft Cylinder series?
2. Examine the patterns on the Native American trade blankets, what similarities do you see in glass baskets?

STOP 2: SEALIFE ROOM (THEME: COLLABORATION)

I began drawing so the gaffers (the guys in charge of the blow team) could see and understand the forms I wanted them to blow. I wanted the drawings to look like the glass. - Dale Chihuly 1988

In the late 1980s, Dale Chihuly collaborated with Italian maestro, Pino Signoretto (born in 1944) to explore Venetian glassblowing techniques. Signoretto, a revered Hot Sculptor, was also invited to teach at Pilchuck Glass School here in Washington, introducing students to Italian materials and techniques. Dale Chihuly believed in the practice of "artists teaching artists". Chihuly works with his own glassblowing team to create the large scale pieces and installations you see here.

1. Chihuly often uses his Drawings to communicate his ideas to the glassblowing team. Find one drawing and compare it to a similar glass Sealife Vessel.
2. The Sealife Vessels seen in this gallery were part of a collaboration between Dale Chihuly and Pino Signoretto— working with Chihuly’s glassblowing team. Take a minute to analyze another vessel. Each consists of many different elements. Which elements were created by glass blowing and which by hot sculpting techniques? *Hint: hot sculpting is the process of shaping molten glass with special metal tools.*

STOP 3: MILLE FIORI (THEME: ORGANIC PROCESS AND DESIGN)

The technology really hasn’t changed [...] We use the same tools they used 2,000 years ago. The difference is that when I started, everyone wanted to control the blowing process. I just went with it. The natural elements of fire, movement, gravity, and centrifugal force were always there, and are always with us. The difference was that I worked in this abstract way and could let the forces of nature have a bigger role in the ultimate shape. - Dale Chihuly 1995

Throughout his career Dale Chihuly has worked with fire, gravity, and air to shape molten glass into organic forms. He continues to push the boundaries of glass blowing, building on previous series. Mille Fiori, first debuted in 2003 at the Tacoma Art Museum. It is the result of over thirty years of working and exploring glass techniques.

1. Take a moment to walk around the entire installation. Identify where a specific piece has been shaped by gravity. Where has a piece been shaped by air?
2. Look at the installation as a whole. Dale Chihuly’s installations appear to be organic or inspired by nature. How does he achieve this organic aesthetic in Mille Fiori through color, shape and composition?

STOP 4: CHANDELIERS (THEME: EXPLORATION)

What makes Chandeliers work for me is the massing of color. If you take hundreds of thousands of blown pieces of one color, put them together, and then shoot light through them, now that’s going to be something to look at! - Dale Chihuly 1996

Travel and exploration have remained important elements throughout Dale Chihuly’s work. In 1968, after receiving a Fulbright Fellowship, he went to work at the Venini glass factory in Venice, Italy. There he observed the team approach to blowing glass, which is critical to the way he works today. Chihuly has traveled all over the world, exploring different countries and learning about different glass blowing practices.

Inspiration for his first Chandelier stemmed from a visit to Barcelona, Spain where Chihuly viewed the artistic quality of a chandelier at eyelevel. This inspired an exploration of chandeliers for pure aesthetic purposes rather than as functional objects. In 1995, Dale Chihuly returned to Italy where he installed Chandeliers over the canals and piazzas of Venice.

1. The Chandeliers displayed in this gallery offer repetitions of form, texture and color. Where else in the exhibition have you seen Chihuly's use of repetition?
2. Where are the lights installed in the gallery? How does this affect the color and texture of the Chandeliers?

STOP 5: GLASSHOUSE (THEME: LARGESCALE DESIGN)

I tend to do things on a large scale because it's exciting; it's a technical challenge. I like to push things in new and different ways. - Dale Chihuly

The centerpiece of Chihuly Garden and Glass is the Glasshouse. A 40-foot tall, glass and steel structure covering 4,500 square feet of light-filled space, the Glasshouse is the result of Chihuly's lifelong appreciation for conservatories. Dale Chihuly has a background in architecture and interior design, having studied interior design at the University of Washington.

The installation in the Glasshouse is an expansive 100-foot long sculpture made of many individual elements, it is one of Chihuly's largest suspended sculptures. The perception of the artwork varies greatly with natural light and as the day fades into night.

1. What makes the Glasshouse at Chihuly Garden and Glass stand apart from other glasshouses and conservatories depicted in the vintage postcards displayed in the Vestibule at the entrance to the Glasshouse? What make the art installation stand apart from the other galleries?

WASHINGTON STATE ARTS STANDARDS THROUGH VISUAL ARTS

This tour as a whole covers the below Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALR) and Grade Level Expectation (GLE) in the Visual Arts. Each listed is applicable for High School level students.

- EALR 1** The student understands and applies arts knowledge and skills in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts.
- GLE 1.2.1** Analyzes and applies the skills and techniques of visual arts to create original works of art in two and/or three dimensions.
- GLE 1.3.1** Analyzes, creates, and evaluates an artistic composition by using visual arts genres and styles of various artists, cultures, places, and times.
- GLE 1.4.1** Analyzes the conventions and responsibilities of the audience and applies the conventions that are appropriate given the setting and culture.
- EALR 2** The student uses the artistic processes of creating, performing/presenting, and responding to demonstrate thinking skills in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts.
- GLE 2.3.1** Applies a responding process to visual arts.
- EALR 3** The student communicates through the arts (dance, music, theatre, and visual arts).
- GLE 3.1.1** Analyzes the ways that visual arts are used to express feelings and present ideas and applies his/her understanding when creating artworks.
- GLE 3.3.1** Analyzes how personal aesthetic choices are influenced by and reflected in visual artworks.
- EALR 4** The student makes connections within and across the arts (dance, music, theatre, and visual).