

Dear Educator,

Thank you for booking a tour with the Museum of Glass. We look forward to your visit!

We're sending you this curriculum to help enhance the museum visit for you and your students. These activities have been carefully prepared to go with the exhibit you will visit. You can use them as pre-visit materials or post-visit, but we strongly encourage that you spend some time with the packet before your visit. We've found that students understand and learn so much more if they are prepared before they come.

Along with this packet, we have extensive curriculum and interactive activities on our website about glassblowing and working with hot glass as an art form. Please visit www.museumofglass.org and click "**Learn**" on our home page. From there, visit the **Virtual Hot Shop**, where your students will get a chance to experience glassblowing by creating a *macchia*. Participants walk through the process step-by-step until they get a finished work of art! Along the way they can also choose to learn more about glass. You and your students can even watch the Hot Shop Live, by clicking "**Watch**" on our home page and selecting the "**Live Web Streaming of the Hot Shop**" link.

We sincerely hope you enjoy these materials and your visit to the Museum of Glass.

Breathing Glass and Raining Popcorn: **Installations by Sandy Skoglund**

January 24 - April 18, 2004

Lesson One: Visual Art Analysis

- Transparency One: *The Cocktail Party*, Sandy Skoglund
- Transparency Two: *Raining Popcorn*, Sandy Skoglund
- Essential Academic Learning Requirements -
Reading: 1.1, 1.2, 2.3
Writing: 1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 2.3
Communications: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.4
Arts: 1.1, 1.2, 2.3

Lesson Two: Visual Art Comparison

- Transparency One: *The Cocktail Party*, Sandy Skoglund
- Transparency Two: *Raining Popcorn*, Sandy Skoglund
- Essential Academic Learning Requirements -
Reading: 1.1, 1.2, 2.3
Writing: 1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 2.3
Communications: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.4
Arts: 1.1, 1.2, 2.3

Lesson Three: Theatre Interpretation of Visual Art

- Transparency Three: *Breathing Glass*, Sandy Skoglund
- Essential Academic Learning Requirements -
Reading: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.2
Writing: 2.2, 2.3
Communications: 1.1, 1.2, 2.1
Arts: 2.1, 2.3, 4.1

Lesson Four: Follow-up – Create Your Own Art

- Essential Academic Learning Requirements -
Communications: 1.1, 1.2, 2.1
Arts: 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.1, 2.3

Lesson Five: Interpret YOUR Art Through Theatre

- Essential Academic Learning Requirements –
Reading: 1.1, 1.2
Writing: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.2, 2.3, (3.1-5 possible)
Communications: 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3
Arts: 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.1, 2.3, 4.1

Lesson One: Visual Art Analysis

Materials: Transparencies One and Two, writing materials

The intent is to teach a process through writing and discussion that will help students delay judgment and open their minds to challenging works of art.

TEACHING PROCESS: Educator

- Show *The Cocktail Party* and *Raining Popcorn* by Sandy Skoglund.
- Lead students in the writing process, linking language with observation for each work of art.
- Guide discussion following each writing component – have students share what they found with the class.
- Describe. List at least 10 adjectives that communicate what you see:
 - Line: *Jagged ... thick ... horizontal?*
 - Color: *Bold ... soft ... blue?*
 - Shape: *Organic ... sharp ... irregular?*
 - Texture: *Rough ... prickly ... smooth?*
 - Form: *Two-dimensional ... three-dimensional ... abstract?*
 - Scale: *Tiny ... huge ... life-size?*
 - Media, tools, and techniques: *Glass ... photo ... mosaic?*
- Analyze: Find relationships between the elements you have just described: What were the artist's decisions?
 - Repetition: *There is a pattern of rectangles ...*
 - Contrast: *Bright colors are combined with dull colors ...*
 - Unity: *Similar colors are used together ...*
 - Space: *The larger figures all appear to be the closest ...*
 - Images: *There are all kinds of fishes in the picture ...*
- Interpret: Write a paragraph communicating what you think the art is about and explain why.
 - Narrative: *This is a story about being lost ...*
 - Current Issues: *This art says the environment is in danger! ...*
 - Personal: *This reminds me of a driftwood shelter I made ...*
 - Historical: *The photographs are from a long time ago ...*
 - Cultural: *The shapes are Native American symbols ...*
- Evaluate: Using vocabulary and ideas from the analysis process, write a paragraph evaluating the art: I like or do not like this art because:
 - ... *it uses natural and man-made materials for contrast. It communicates conflict between man and nature.*
 - ... *it is confusing; it is not unified by a story or message. It has no repeated unifying colors or shapes.*

Lesson Two: Visual Art Comparison

Materials: Transparencies One and Two, writing materials

Similarities and differences: What does one work of art say to another?

TEACHING PROCESS: Educator

- Show *Raining Popcorn* and *The Cocktail Party* by Sandy Skoglund.
- Using the information from the first activity, compare and contrast what was found for each work.
- Using the table included, have them list a few of the similarities and differences they found in each piece.
- Choose one word for each section to expand on. Write a sentence or two comparing the two works. *Example: The texture of the cheese doodles in The Cocktail Party seems smooth and more even than the rough and uneven surfaces of the popcorn in Raining Popcorn.*
- Guide students in the process to discuss and reflect on similarities and differences as a class.

Looking again at the two works of art, imagine what might be going on in each scene. Have students write a short description of what they think is happening in their favorite piece. Now broaden that image – what might the works say to each other if they were to have a conversation? There are people in each work, what if they met on the street or at a party? Write a short dialog.

	Similarities	Differences
Line		
Color		
Shape		
Texture		
Form		
Scale		
Media		
Repetition		
Contrast		
Unity		
Space		
Narrative		
Current Issues		
Historical		
Cultural		

Lesson Three: Theater Interpretation of Visual Art

Materials: Script for *UFO at the MOG*, writing materials

TEACHING PROCESS: Educator

- Review the script for *UFO at the MOG*, a short film based on *Breathing Glass*.
- Facilitate an oral and/or silent reading of the script for students.
- Lead students in character analysis.
- Assist in identifying content (character and setting).
- Lead students in forming written synthesis of ideas supporting personal interpretation of content in script.

Read the script for the film silently or orally: after choosing a character from the script, answer the following questions to develop a written character profile:

What is the character's name? age? race? gender?
Where does the character live? Where is the character now?
What does the character love?
What does the character hate?
What does the character like to do most?
What does the character want more than anything?
Why is the character in the setting?

Some (or most) of this information will come from your imagination.

Reflect on and discuss your character profile, supported by information and connections identified and interpreted in the script.

Identify and discuss how non-verbal scripted elements, as well as the character's monologue, reveal information about the character and setting.

Creating an Image

For the next activity, you will be working backwards. The author of the script *UFO at the MOG* used a photograph of Skoglund's work to create a story. You will use the story to create an image.

Using the terms in Lesson One, describe what you think Sandy Skoglund's *Breathing Glass* might look like. This will be a hypothesis only.

Once the description is written, make a diagram or sketch of what you think *Breathing Glass* looks like.

Museum Visit

When you visit the Museum of Glass, the Gallery Tour will be in two sections – you will get to see the film made from the script you read before hand, and you will tour the two installations, *Breathing Glass* and *Raining Popcorn*.

Lesson Four - Follow Up - Create Your Own Art

Materials: a box per student/group, drawing paper, pencils, crayons/markers, non-traditional art materials (depending on each group's plan – have them bring from home), glue, digital camera (optional).

Sandy Skoglund uses many different items to create her artwork, most of them non-traditional. In the works you've seen she uses food items, broken glass, glass dragonflies, etc. to create an environment that is then photographed. She also uses repetition to create texture and design.

TEACHING PROCESS: Educator

- Working in groups or individually, sketch a possible scene.
- Using the box as a background (like the platforms at the Museum of Glass) create that scene or image using repeated non-traditional items such as food, pennies, nails, pencils, or other easily available things. You may want to cut the box so it leaves an 'L' shape in cardboard like a stage and backdrop.
- If you have access to a digital camera, photograph your work.
- E-mail your picture to the Museum of Glass, care of Meredith Hale, mhale@museumofglass.org.
- We will select photos of your work to publish on the Museum of Glass web site!

Lesson Five - Interpret YOUR Art Through Theatre

Materials: Either the piece created in Lesson Four or one of the Skoglund transparencies, writing materials

After studying the script for *UFO at the MOG*, then seeing the works of Sandy Skoglund, try writing your own theatrical interpretation of a work of art. It does not need to be as long as *UFO at the MOG*, it can be only a few minutes long. Use the piece created in Lesson Four, or choose one of Skoglund's works, like *Raining Popcorn*.

TEACHING PROCESS: Educator

- Write an outline of a story based on your imagination and the scene created in Lesson Four.
- List Characters and flesh out their background as in Lesson Three.
- Write your script. Include non-verbal actions made by the characters as well.
- As a class, act out the scripts, or choose a few to perform.
- If your school has the facilities, film your performances and send them to the Museum of Glass.
- We will choose the best for publication on our web site. For publication, teams must keep in mind quality and language. We cannot publish anything that shows a corporate logo or has questionable language.

UFO sighting at the MOG

A short film

Second Draft, October 7th, 2003

Music. Credits: UFO Sighting at the MOG

Short montage of shots of the outside and inside of the museum.

Ext. night.

Shot of the cone with a UFO hovering about it. Lights flash and the UFO disappears into the night. The cone glows eerily.

Title Card. White letters on black background. Card reads: Describe

Ext. Museum, evening.

Sigmund, a security guard stands in front of the cone as the sun sets. Type Reads: Sigmund Underhill, Chief of Security.

Sigmund

Can I describe what I saw? Well... It was the darndest thing, y'know? We were working the late shift back when there was still a night crew... anyways, there was just the two of us, Dave and I and it was about 11:30 or so when the lights went out. Scared the poo right outa me.

Int. guard booth.

Dave the guard sits in front of the monitor station.

Dave

From here I can monitor the entire facility: bridge, galleries, grand hall, hot-shop, bathrooms... exterior, of course. But I was sitting right here reading Anna Karenina, when suddenly there was this loud cracking sound and a scream. The lights went out and so of course, the first thing I thought was that the police would be showing up to check the automatic alarm system we've got wired throughout the galleries. If that gets tampered with in any way then we've got an entire SWAT team here in minutes. Only happened once before but it was a false alarm. Turns out it was just Newton, the Facilities Manager.

Int. Galleries.

Newton is walking through the galleries showing the camera where the alarm system is. Newton is a middle-aged burnout. Type Reads: Francis “Newt” Newton, Facilities Manager.

Newton

Dude, I just totally spaced the alarm system that night. I thought this would be a great place to play some music. Listen to the echo in here... OOWHAH, OOWHAH (*he listens for the sound of the echo*)... pretty phenomenal. Great place to play some Dylan late at night. I just remember thinking, I've got these tortilla chips, a guitar and a key... totally forgot about the alarm. Anyway, you can see it up in the ceiling there. If I was to blow smoke in here you'd see the laser. `Course, there's no smoking allowed in the galleries. Found that out the hard way... do you know there's a thousand gallons of water that'll come outta those pipes if the alarm isn't shut off in time? Dude, it was like Hurricane Andrew in here...

Int. museum grand hall, daytime.

Nelson Watts, Curator, stands in the grand hall. Type Reads: Nelson Watts, Curator.

Nelson

There are things people need to know about viewing exhibits in a museum. First of all, there's a "no touch" rule, especially for children. I'm sure you can understand why. We get a lot of priceless artwork in here and we don't want to return it broken or with sticky fingerprints all over it. There's also a no camera rule: can't take pictures of things that we don't want other people to see. That's a violation of copyright law. Particularly with dead artists since they can't defend themselves in court. Because they're dead, obviously. And of course, there's no food allowed, no smoking, no walking backwards, no pets, no backpacks, senior citizens are discouraged from attending due to the concrete floors, no babes in arms, no unattended young people under the age of 21... you're probably wondering who that leaves. Let me tell you that if you are a blonde single female, between the ages of 24 to 35, and make roughly 60 to 100k a year, then you are exactly the kind of person I'd like to see in my museum.

Int. hallway.

Newton is standing in front of a door marked “Authorized Personnel Only.”

Newton

This is a door that leads to the... well, I think it leads to the galleries. Wait sec, we just came from the galleries... how can it lead to the galleries when we just came from there? That doesn't make any sense, man. We'll figure this out. I've got a key for it somewhere.

Newton pulls out an enormous bunch of keys and starts to try them in the lock.

Newton

I'm pretty sure I've been through this door before... I'm not sure. Of course, I've been through it, I'm like, the facilities guy... but, this is a pretty big place y'know? It's one of these probably...

Int. Office of Jesse Marie Fargo.

Jesse Marie Fargo, the Deputy Director of the museum sits behind her desk. She is all business. Type Reads: Jesse Marie Fargo, Museum Deputy Director.

Jesse

That door is strictly off limits. “Authorized Personnel” means exactly that. I'm not even authorized to go through that door. It's mostly used for the exhibition staff and even they have very limited access. It's really a safety issue more than anything.

Int. hallway.

Newton is still standing in front of a door marked “Authorized Personnel Only” trying his keys in the lock.

Newton

Dude, why do I have all these keys?

Int. Office of Jesse Marie Fargo.

Jesse

And in regards to the Sandy Skoglund exhibit itself there are some specific safety parameters that we have to abide by. The installation is made of shards of broken glass. So you don't want to be running your hand up and down it. Also, there are thousands of tiny suspended marshmallows. And I'm sure you know how hard they get if they're left in the open air for any length of time. A choking hazard for sure.

So we'll have a stantion blocking off public access, two security guards and a sniper with a scope keeping close eye on this exhibit. My motto is "safety first."

Int. hallway.

Newton is bodily throwing himself against the door over and over.

Ext. Street in Tacoma, daytime.

Kaylee Matthews, is standing in front of the Newspaper building. Type Reads: Kaylee Matthews, Reporter with the Tacoma Daily Sun.

Kaylee

From the beginning there was weird stuff going on over there at the museum. It wasn't any surprise to me when the controversy erupted. The big surprise was finding out that it was aliens from another dimension.

Ext. Cone, daytime.

Troy Minsky, Mystic, stands on the steps in front of the cone. Type Reads: Troy Minsky, Pierce County Mystic and Licensed Massage Therapist.

Troy

Just look at the shape of the cone. It's built like a homing beacon, calling our brothers and sisters from other galaxies. What you have here is a portal, yes, a veritable DOORWAY to the otherworld. I could sense that this was coming. I knew it from the time I was six years old. They've come to take me home.

Int. Theatre.

Wassily Verbatim, Phd. stands in front of a large screen projection of Sandy Skoglund's "Breathing Glass." He uses a laser pointer. Type reads, Wassily Verbatim, Phd. Astrophysical Science and craft specialist.

Dr. Verbatim

Take a close look at the world that Skoglund has created here. You can see that there are beings, these kind of mosaic creatures made out of shattered glass, living in this very blue world filled with marshmallows and dragonflies. These items harken back to her previous work that include elements of food, animals and repetition of pattern. Curiously, she has included these human figures in this world as well. The question that we have asked ourselves at the Astrophysical Science Society is, "who is really upside down in this

world?" By presenting this installation in this way, Sandy Skoglund is perhaps asking us to question our view of reality. What is real? What is perceived? And how can I stop that annoying buzzing sound in my head?

**Title Card. White letters on black background. Card reads: Analyze
Int. guard booth.**

Sigmund and Dave are in front of the monitor station.

Dave

We have the tape from that night. I can replay what we have here...

Sigmund

You've got to hit the rewind button.

Dave

I know what I'm doing.

Sigmund

That's not the rewind.

Dave

Yes, it is. This is on the computer. This isn't like your VCR at home. It's a program.

Sigmund

Look, the rewind button is right here...

Dave

Haven't I told you not to touch the equipment? This is very expensive hi-tech stuff here.

Sigmund

I know how to rewind a tape...

Dave

Are you touching me? How many times do I have to tell you? Personal space. Personal space.

Int. guard booth. View of the video monitor.

Two very blurry shapes are running around, playing with what looks to be a large white balloon.

Dave

You can see here they seem to be performing some sort of “ritual.” I’ve read about these kinds of things: they’re using repetition of pattern, unified movements, and a condensed use of space to make their statement. In a similar way it reminds me of the Druids at Stonehenge who danced in a similar fashion around the symbols of their pagan gods. And at the penultimate moment of the winter solstice, they would sacrifice a young eggplant to appease the gods and bring good fortune on their crops. So beautiful... so poetic.

Sigmund

Looks like they’re playing with a balloon to me.

Int. Education Studio, daytime.

Susan McIntyre, director of Education sits at an art table. Type Reads: Susan McIntyre, Director of Education.

Susan

Here at the museum we try to find ways to educate and enlighten our audience about contemporary art using new and innovative methods of learning. We try to find ways to make the art accessible to the general public. In the case of the Sandy Skoglund exhibit, I wanted to show that glass can be art and art can be glass. But it was important to me to show that “Glass Art” (a term we never ever use here) is not necessarily either. Glass can be art and art can be glass but it’s also true of the opposite. Sometimes glass is just glass and art is just art. Not to say that sometimes glass can’t turn into art or vice versa. It just depends on how long you leave it in the rain. Which, we get a lot of here. Ergo, a lot of glass that is art in the northwest.

Int. Hospital room, daytime.

Torrence Paynter, saleswoman, lies in a bed, looking deathly ill. Type Reads: Torrence Paynter, Sales Professional.

Torrence

I had no idea where I was that night. I had been driving for hours in the rain. I stopped for directions and wandered inside the museum. The front door was wide open at 11 o’clock at night. I thought, there must be something going on, someone here... So I went in

looking for a phone. You know I just needed one more sale that week to win that Cadillac. I was bound and determined to not let Dee Dee Mason-Dixon get the better of me again that month. If she won that sales competition I just know she would drive that caddy in circles around my life just to boast! Well, anyhow, I found myself trapped in a hallway where the only unlocked door was marked, "Authorized Personnel Only." Well, I says to myself, "Torrence, you are either going to spend the entire night in this hallway or you're going through that door." So that's exactly what I did. And that's the last thing I remember.

Int. Office of Dr. Arnie Zoltov, Hypnotist.

Type Reads: Dr. Arnie Zoltov, Hypnotist and Family Therapist

Dr. Zoltov sits in a large leather chair.

Dr. Zoltov

Yes, a very interesting case. Ms. Paynter doesn't seem to remember anything about the trauma. However, in an hypnotic state I was able to piece together her experiences. Upon entering the "Authorized Personnel Only" area she claims that she stepped into another dimension where there were no walls or floors... only stars made out of marshmallows. She was confronted by two beings made entirely of glass. They seemed afraid of her at first and then proceeded to invite her to play a silly "upside down" game. When I inquired what she was standing on since there was no floor she simply said that until she realized that there was nothing tangible to stand on she was all right. But at the moment she looked down, she screamed. And the next thing she remembers is waking up at the Krispy Kreme Donuts off of Interstate Five.

Int. Education Studio.

Erika Carne, Intern, is helping with an art project. She has a photo of "Breathing Glass" that she can refer to. Type reads: Erika Carne, Education Studio Intern.

Erika

Yo, it's like everyone is like, wiggling out about this exhibit. I think it's cool, y'know? Like, it's all about relationships and stuff and like, humanity's relationship with nature and food and how it's all messed up, like upside down and backwards. It works for me so I don't

know what people are getting so freaked out about, y'know. Just chill, man. That's all I have to say. Word.

Title Card. White letters on black background. Card reads: Interpret

Ext. Street in Tacoma, daytime.

Kaylee Matthews, is standing in front of the Newspaper building.

Kaylee

The thing about the alien sighting is that it's brought a whole new revitalization to the Tacoma waterfront area. It used to be that this whole neighbourhood was an industrial wasteland. The city got a hold of it and decided to invest in new retail and affordable housing. But the thing that has made the biggest difference is the impact of the arts. Now we're seeing a whole new generation of visual artists, musicians and theatre performers flock to Tacoma.

Int.Theatre

Victor Lazlo, theatre director, sits in a seat in the theatre. Type Reads: Victor Lazlo, Theatre Director.

Lazlo

You know, I was totally burned out on the theatre scene in Seattle. I had decided not to do theatre anymore and opened a little boutique of handmade cocktail umbrellas. Very chic. But then this event of unparalleled importance happened here in this community and suddenly, inspiration poured over me like honey. Or molasses. Something sweet and sticky. Anyway, I sat down with the newspaper clippings: the reports of the sighting, the eyewitness accounts and of course, the tabloid coverage and I banged out this play in a couple of hours. Just like that. It's never come so quickly or easily before. That's how I know that this is true interpretation of Sandy's art. When it's just given to you by God without the involvement of any effort or, some would say, talent.

Int.Theatre on stage

Lazlo is holding rehearsal with three actors. Two of the actors are dressed in what appear to be "glass" costumes while the third, obviously a representation of saleswoman Torrence Paynter, looks on.

Lazlo

So I really need for you two to keep making sounds while she's screaming.

Glass Actor one

What kind of sounds?

Glass Actor two

Yeah, do you want, you know, "whooping" sounds or like, evil laughing or..."

Lazlo

Well, I don't know. You're the actors: make a choice and I'll tell you if it's the right one.

Saleswoman

And I'm screaming because there's no floor, right?

Lazlo

Exactly.

Saleswoman

But there is a floor. How do I pretend that I'm falling if there's nowhere to fall to?

Lazlo

It's a little thing that we call "suspension of disbelief." It's a theatre term.

Glass Actor two

I've heard of that, Mr. Lazlo.

Saleswoman

So do I suspend my disbelief or does the audience?

Lazlo

Both. You've got to believe it to play it.

Saleswoman

But if I really believe that there isn't a floor then I really would fall.

Glass Actor One

You won't really fall.

Saleswoman

I won't?

Glass Actor One

No. Because the floor is right there.

Saleswoman

I guess I don't really understand the concept.

Glass Actor Two

I understand it Mr. Lazlo.

Lazlo

You don't need to understand it to play it.

Saleswoman

That's good news, I guess.

Int.Theatre seats

Lazlo sits next to Susan McIntyre.

Susan

We were so excited to have Victor's little skit here at the museum. It's such a wonderful integration of current events and the artwork in the galleries. That's what being a contemporary art museum is all about, you know. We decided to present the piece outside on the plazas to get the maximum audience exposure.

Ext. Outside plazas, daytime

The actors are performing the play outside on the plaza. There are a few people watching and even more just passing by.

Susan V.O. cont'd

Particularly with the Sandy Skoglund exhibit, there are so many interesting ideas and concepts. And Victor's little skit really brings those to life in a compelling way.

Int.Theatre seats, cont'd from above

Lazlo sits next to Susan McIntyre.

Lazlo

It's not a "skit."

Ext. Cone, daytime.

Troy Minsky is laying his face and torso onto the cone with his eyes closed.

Troy

You can feel it humming. Come closer. If you just lean up against it like this it actually sounds like singing. Some “out there” singing from another place, a place without notes or music as we know it. The metal is also very cool on your face. On a hot summer day it’s like being licked by a giant Popsicle.

Int. hallway in the museum.

Fisher Maechevish, Chief Custodian is cleaning a mess in the hallway. Type Reads: Fisher Maechevish, Chief Custodian.

Fisher

What’s my “interpretation” of the exhibit? Man, I don’t know. You’ll have to ask somebody with an art degree or something. But I guess if I really thought about it the whole idea of “Breathing Glass” is that maybe the artist is treating this inanimate object like it has a life of its own, you know? Like if you went into another world or dimension where common ordinary objects (like this broom) had a personality and you could communicate with them. That would be cool. `Cause then you could be like, “Hey, mop! Clean the floor! How many times have I told you to get off your lazy stick and do some work around here! Don’t you MAKE me come over there! That’s right...” Yeah, that would be cool.

Title Card. White letters on black background. Card reads: Evaluate

Int. Office, daytime.

Office of Magdalena de la Barca, Director of Marketing. Type Reads: Magdalena de la Barca, Director of Marketing.

Magda

From a marketing standpoint, this is a gold mine. I mean, you know the old saying, “even bad publicity is good publicity.” And this isn’t really bad if you look at it from a cup is half full perspective. We’ve decided to embrace the controversy instead of ignoring it. For example, in the next few months there will be kiosks on every corner from here to the old part of downtown. We’ll be selling T-shirts saying, “I saw Aliens at the Museum of Glass,” bumper stickers, coffee mugs (should be a hot item), key chains, glow in the dark

bracelets, lots of stuff. This is one of the biggest things to hit the art scene ever and we're going to ride the wave for as long as possible. It just makes sense in this economy where the arts are struggling to stay relevant.

Ext. Outside plazas, daytime

The actors are on a break, sitting "offstage" for their interview.

Glass Actor One

I got a chance to meet Sandy Skoglund once. I was doing a show in Denver and she was there for an installation that included the piece that we're interpreting, "Breathing Glass." You know she never intended to be an artist? It's something that just happened to her.

Glass Actor Two

Weird that the aliens decided to show up in her exhibit, though.

Glass Actor One

There weren't any aliens. Somebody just made that up.

Glass Actor Two

You don't believe in the visitation?

Glass Actor One

Are you kidding? You actually believe that alien beings came down here, summoned by the hot shop cone and appeared to a couple of security guards and a travelling saleswoman? It's a publicity stunt made up by people in the museum's marketing department.

Glass Actor Two

I believe it.

Saleswoman

If you don't believe it why are you acting the part?

Glass Actor One

Because I'm an ACTOR. And I needed the money.

Saleswoman

No shame in that.

Glass Actor Two

Well do you even like the artwork?

Glass Actor One

It's okay I guess. Doesn't really do anything for me.

Saleswoman

I like it a lot. I love the use of different materials and the fact that it's a combination of recognizable forms with a kind of an abstract environment. But I don't think I believe that it has anything to do with aliens.

Glass Actor Two

I can't believe you two! This is one of the most meaningful events in my entire life and you're treating it like it's just a paycheck. Well, it's not just a paycheck to me! If I was from another planet and my family came to take me home then I would take that seriously!

Glass Actor Two storms off. The other two exchange a look.

Ext. reflecting pool, daytime.

Newton sitting cross-legged in front of one of the reflecting pools.

Newton

I love this exhibit, man. It reminds me of the caravan we had to San Francisco in the summer of '69. It was out there and beautiful, man. Just like this art.

Int. Office of Dr. Arnie Zoltov, Hypnotist.

Dr. Zoltov

I have been to the museum to view this installation for myself. I think it is a very interesting take on the relationship between man and object. In this way it objectifies people and personalizes objects. Obviously this is very disturbing for some and for others, such as myself, it is quite thrilling.

Int. Education Studio.

Erika Carne, Intern, is working on her art project.

Erika

Be cool, yo. Don't freak out. It's just art, homes.

Int. hallway in the museum.

Fisher Maechevish, Chief Custodian in the hallway.

Fisher

If this art could talk it would be like, “Hey, don’t you make a mess on my floor with those marshmallows!” Don’t MAKE me come over there and kick your skinny glass butt! Yeah! Afraid of me now, aren’t ya?” `Cause you’re made of GLASS, man!

Ext. Cone, daytime.

Troy is hugging the cone, smiling contentedly.

Troy

Take me home, take me home...

Ext. Museum, evening.

Sigmund is standing in front of the cone.

Sigmund

Yeah, the mayor came out and everything. Newspaper, television... they even interviewed me and Dave down in the booth. I was on TV! I’ve got it on tape at home if you want to see it. It was a big deal there for a couple of days but then things died down. Back to business as usual. I’ve still never been able to walk through that particular installation without getting the shivers but I haven’t seen anything unusual since that night the power went out. I don’t know what I think about the whole alien theory. I been here two years now and I’ve seen all types of people walk through the museum. I guess anything is possible. I think the most important thing is that people have a good experience and that whatever the art means, you know, whether it’s aliens or whatever, that you still think about it after you leave. I think about it all the time. I guess art can have an impact even when you least suspect it.

Camera pans back to see Troy still hugging the cone.

Troy

I’m ready. Come and get me. Take me home...

Sigmund

It impacts some more than others...

Music. Credits. End.

Sandy Skoglund

Sandy Skoglund (American, born 1946) is an installation artist, painter, photographer and sculptor whose work plays on the irrationality of modern life. For more than twenty years she has added magical confusion to the increasingly vague lines that separate art, craft and design. In the process she has delighted and shocked audiences with her witty, intriguing and sometimes puzzling installations.

Born in Quincy, Massachusetts, Skoglund received her M.F.A. in painting and filmmaking from the University of Iowa in 1972. During this time contemporary art was undergoing radical changes, and her early work was influenced by the newly defined fields of conceptual and performance art. She began developing work based on a variety of styles, theories and techniques, including using a camera. By the end of the decade she was creating room-size installations and photographing them. Since 1980, she has been sculpting each individual component of her installations by hand.

Skoglund aims to create work that anyone can enjoy, so her installations are made of products from everyday life such as clothes hangers, paper plates and snacks. In an attempt to ground viewers in a familiar setting, she arranges her scenes in mundane environments like the office, bathroom or kitchen, and often includes household objects. Challenging her audience to wade through the distraction of surface materials, she blends the familiar with the unfamiliar in a way that draws viewers into the work and mesmerizes them.

In Skoglund's hands, the everyday becomes extra-worldly; the familiar becomes obscured as if in a dream. Each work of art is imbued with wonder; each installation a playhouse of artistic fantasies. Pointing to the potential power of the imagination, her art makes us see anew what is around us while nudging us to imagine what else might be just beyond our sight. In the words of the artist, "My work is almost like a theme park. You can experience it in many different ways."

Sandy Skoglund (American, b. 1946)

Breathing Glass, 2000

Mixed media

The installation of *Breathing Glass* is commissioned, organized and circulated by the Museum of Arts & Design, New York.

Sandy Skoglund is known for her use of repetition. By duplicating and repeating the common stuff of our everyday world, she creates scenes in which banality and beauty freely converse. In doing so, she prompts viewers to take another look and reevaluate what they see, allowing multiple layers of meaning and interpretation. Skoglund hopes we might find that the world is more beautiful than we expect.

Breathing Glass is Skoglund's first installation that incorporates glass. She created each of the thousands of glass dragonflies by melting small glass tubes with a small torch to shape them, a process called lampworking. The backdrop is composed of fifty deep-blue panels, each holding dozens of dragonflies and marshmallows, which are mechanically choreographed to quiver and flutter. When the tiny motors inside the panels turn, the marshmallows and dragonflies vibrate, giving the effect of the dragonflies making their way through a blizzard.

Once the installation is complete, Skoglund adds live models and creates photographs that tend to undermine our sense of reality. The figures in the photographs bring a sense of scale and immediacy to the work and the photographs offer the viewer a different interpretation of the scene. Together, the installation and its photograph suggest that truth may be as elusive as creativity itself.

Skoglund has always chosen to work in unorthodox and unexpected materials. Like magicians and stage designers, she understands and encourages the suspension of our disbelief, from which emerges fantasy, imagination and engagement. She deliberately keeps the work as open-ended as possible, allowing viewers to participate in the artistic process by trying to make sense or create a story from what they see.

Sandy Skoglund (American, b. 1946)

Raining Popcorn, 2001

Mixed media

Courtesy of the artist

Sandy Skoglund's work is driven by research and experimentation. These are the first steps in every one of her projects. Because she chooses materials, such as popcorn, that have not been commonly used in works of art, she has to figure out how to best utilize them. As a result of this research, the fantasy scenarios in which she specializes can seem uncomfortably real.

Skoglund attended graduate school at the University of Iowa, where the endless fields of corn and their sense of visual order left a lasting impression. She created *Raining Popcorn* as a tribute to the expansiveness of the midwestern state's landscape, its weather and precipitation. The downpours and drifts of popcorn refer to the glacial movements that thousands of years ago rounded the hilltops and filled the valleys of Iowa with rich soil, creating fertile plains. When the indigenous tall grasses were later plowed under for farming, corn emerged as a cash crop, dominating the natural landscape.

Before creating *Raining Popcorn*, Skoglund researched popcorn's historical significance and cultural associations. She learned that popcorn was used to decorate the ceremonial headdresses and necklaces of Aztec gods in Mesoamerica, and that Native Americans served popcorn at the first Thanksgiving feast. In the late nineteenth century, popcorn's popularity grew as it became associated with leisure time and was first sold by vendors at state fairs, public parks and international expositions. By the time of the Great Depression, both popcorn and movies had become so popular and inexpensive that they became linked in the minds of Americans as affordable luxuries.

Throughout Skoglund's career, food has remained one of her preferred materials because it allows her to reach a wide audience. By using familiar materials, her work goes beyond a limited or specialized language that's appreciated by only a few people. Everyone has experiences with food, so it's something everyone can relate to. In *Raining Popcorn*, sculpture and photography, culture and nature interweave to shape a compelling and open-ended scenario about the complexities of the world we live in.

This exhibition is sponsored by the Ben B. Cheney Foundation.

Image Credits

Transparency One:



Sandy Skoglund
The Cocktail Party, 1992
Color Cibachrome photograph
48 x 65 in.

Transparency Two:



Sandy Skoglund
Raining Popcorn, 2001
Color Cibachrome photograph
39 x 49½ in.
Courtesy of the artist

Transparency Three:



Breathing Glass © Sandy Skoglund 2000
Color Cibachrome photograph
45 x 58 in.

The installation of *Breathing Glass* is commissioned, organized and circulated by the Museum of Arts & Design, NYC

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