Glass Art Department at Lviv National Academy of Arts: unique centre of contemporary glassmaking

Glass is one of the oldest materials, which a man has learned to produce and process four millennia ago. Glass art is one of the youngest kinds of fine art, whose history begins in the latter half of the 20th century with the spread of the international studio movement.

In Galician territories, glassmaking trade originated in 10th - 12th centuries. For a short period, the specialty of glass processing and decoration hold its significant place in the system of western Ukrainian city trade. City glassmakers of 16th - 17th centuries, buying the products of country glassmaking factories, gave it a special aesthetic appearance, decorated with ornamental and plot painting, engraving, cutting, enamelling and other techniques [6].

The true peak of blown glass on western Ukrainian lands dated to the 18th century, in particular, along with the traditional workshops operated glass blowing ones, created on the ‘Czech’ model, which began producing ‘Bohemian’ polished and engraved glass. Such rich historical material influenced the formation of artistic and industrial education in Galicia in the latter half of the 19th century and, undoubtedly, the foundation of academic art education in Lviv of the 20th century. Therefore, the existence of the only department of glass art in Ukraine exactly in Lviv has its essential historical and professional base [6].

The history of the Department began in 1961 with an experiment, when at Lviv State Institute of Applied and Decorative Art (today Lviv National Academy of Arts) a small department of plastic and glass art was opened. Full formation of the unit took place in 1963–1964 and corresponded to the needs of provision with the specialists of experimental
workshop of glass art of Lviv Experimental Ceramic and Sculpture Factory of those times. Besides the urgent need for specialists, the foundation of the Department has its deep historical roots.

From the time of the Department foundation to the present day, its stuff has come a significant way, and its pedagogical conception, as well as the creativity of the teachers, students and graduates, reflected the evolution of Lviv glass art of the latter part of the 20th – early 21st century. The Department became the centre of the formation of Ukrainian school of studio glass, the revival of ancient glass blowing techniques, experiments with material and shape [8]. Glass artists work with the material that has exceptional qualities of transparency, light transmission and use these properties in their creative works imparting their knowledge and skills to the students.

For improvement of technical and technological training of the students and mastering of practical skills of the work with the material, in 1973, it is said that at the Glass Art Department the only training and experimental glass-melting furnace in Ukraine was built, where in different years glass blowing masters V. Ivantsov, M. Zavadovskyi, Y. Matsiievskyi, Y. Zyma, V. Bilous, D. Klymkiv and others worked.

The first Head of the Department was F. Tkachenko, and then it was headed by A. Soboliev, M. Tarnavskyi, B. Halytskyi, A. Bokotey, S. Martyniuk, B. Vasyltsiv, F. Chemiak, O. Zvir. Today, the Head of the Department is the Candidate of Art History M. Bokotey [3].

Since 1989, the teachers and staff of the Department have been actively participating in the organization of international symposiums of blown glass that are the most long-lasting continuous forums of glass artists in the world nowadays [2]. On the base of the Department, student mini-symposiums took place, and in 2013 and 2016, a scientific and creative workshop (glass-melting furnace) became the main base for the work of famous glass artists from different countries of the world. Every three years the students have an opportunity to observe the work of the most world well-known artists from various countries, participate in master classes and lectures.

The students of the Department have the opportunity to master traditional and newest techniques of art glass processing in well-equipped workshops: glass blowing processing, thermal shaping, stained glass and painting, and cold glass finishing. There are just a few dozen departments of glass art at high educational establishments in the world, and very few of them have an ability to provide the students with the opportunity to work close to a hot glass furnace.

Against the background of other specializations at LNAA, the educational process at the Glass Art Department differs greatly with its newest methodological approach. First two years of study at Bachelor educational level, the students have the possibility to learn all possible techniques and manners of art glass processing before selecting a specialized direction, which will mostly correspond to their preferences: author's fine art glass, glass art design.

Glass artists work with the material that has exceptional qualities of transparency and light transmission. That is why they need a special ability of transferring of the material through graphic means and advanced spatial thinking. The curriculum of basic art disciplines is formed in accordance with the specificity of the material – glass art and is focused on consideration of the need of imaginative or constructive thinking, according to selected specialized direction. As a drawing, painting and sculpture are three 'elephants', on which all art disciplines are based, here, this triad is complemented by computer design, without which an artist cannot feel himself comfortable in the modern world. The discipline is taught at modern equipment, with the intensive course of 3D modelling.

At the same time, the great meaning is given to scientific activity at Master degree educational level. Complete research of a selected topic in artistic and scientific plane requires much efforts and time. Only at the Glass Art Department, the students can pay all their attention to selected qualification work during the whole period of studying at Master degree educational level.

For decades, the staff of the Department are in contact with glass artists in the whole world, participates in organization of international symposiums and exhibitions, meetings with students, lectures, master classes with the participation of the most famous artists in the world. Accordingly, a graduate of the Department has to know perfectly a foreign language to participate
fully in the world union of glass artists. Glass Art Department is the only department at LNAA, where foreign language is taught during the whole course of studying.

The work of Glass Art Department of Lviv National Academy of Arts can be today summed up in many vectors: as the centre of formation and training of a modern glass artist; as an interesting ‘art project’ continuing in time and being a component of social and cultural environment of contemporary art of Ukraine; as a base or platform for the promotion of Ukrainian glass art in the world and familiarization of artistic environment of Ukraine with the achievements of world glass industry; as an essential educational mechanism in the process of training of specialists in the field of glassmaking and decorative and applied art; as a school in the broader sense of this word.


References

ANNOTATION
Nataliya Benyakh. Glass Art Department at Lviv National Academy of Arts: unique centre of contemporary glassmaking. The preconditions for the emergence of professional art education in the field of art glass in Lviv and Galicia are considered.
The history of artistic glass fishing and its influence on the development of the modern center in Lviv on the basis of the Lviv National Academy of Arts is analyzed. The history of the Department began in 1961 with an experiment, when at Lviv State Institute of Applied and Decorative Art (today Lviv National Academy of Arts) a small department of plastic and glass art was opened. Full formation of the unit took place in 1963–1964 and corresponded to the needs of provision with the specialists of experimental workshop of glass art of Lviv Experimental Ceramic and Sculpture Factory of those times. The curriculum of basic art disciplines is formed in accordance with the specificity of the material – glass art and is focused on consideration of the need of imaginative or constructive thinking, according to selected specialized direction. For decades, the staff of the Department are in contact with glass artists in the whole world, participates in organization of international symposiums and exhibitions, meetings with students, lectures, master classes with the participation of the most famous artists in the world. Since 1989, the teachers and staff of the Department have been actively participating in the organization of international symposiums of blown glass that are the most long-lasting continuous forums of glass artists in the world nowadays. On the base of the Department, student mini-symposiums took place, and in 2013 and 2016, a scientific and creative workshop (glass-melting furnace) became the main base for the work of famous glass artists from different countries of the world. Every three years the students have an opportunity to observe the work of the most world well-known artists from various countries, participate in master classes and lectures. The purpose of the article is to analyze the activities of the Department of Art Glass of the Lviv National Academy of Arts in the modern studio movement.

**Keywords:** art glass, studio movement, department, glass furnace, art disciplines