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## LACMA gets a gift of glass art

*Works by such artists as Ivan Mares, Stanislav Libensky and Jaroslava Brychtova and Michael Glancy are among the 37 items donated to LACMA by Daniel Greenberg and Susan Steinhauser.*

**December 19, 2012** | By Deborah Vankin, Los Angeles Times

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Just in time for Christmas, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art's wish list for its permanent glass collection has been fulfilled. The museum has acquired 37 new items, including vessel forms and sculpture, from longtime museum donors Daniel Greenberg and Susan Steinhauser.

LACMA has a contemporary glass collection that concentrates on studio glass from the mid-1960s to the late '90s. Of the more than 100 pieces in its Decorative Arts and Design collection, the bulk came from Greenberg and Steinhauser, who began donating to the museum in 1984. Earlier this year, the couple invited LACMA to select additional glass works from their personal collection.

"We would never have had the resources to amass such a collection on our own," says Wendy Kaplan, decorative arts and design curator. "This has brought us to a new level, world class, among museums in the country that have outstanding glass."

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In addition to their 37-item donation, Greenberg and Steinhauser also donated money to LACMA this year toward educational programs about glass. And they paid for a new, custom-designed case to display two particularly heavy pieces of art glass by Ivan Mares and the Czechoslovakian couple Stanislav Libensky and Jaroslava Brychtova.

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LACMA chose several works by notable glass artists — including Michael Glancy, Klaus Moje, Ann Warff Wolff, Richard Marquis and the duo Libensky and Brychtova — to show the artists' evolution. They also selected pieces by artists not yet represented in the museum's collection.

"The materials are incredibly beautiful," Kaplan says, "and they reflect all the innovations since 1962. Now we can tell the full story of studio glass in the United States."

The Greenberg-Steinhauser collection, with 400 to 500 pieces, is considered among the top five studio glass collections in the U.S. The couple scoured auction catalogs and galleries from 1975-95 collecting glass "with passion and abandon," Greenberg says. "It was a core part of our lives." They stopped collecting in the late '90s when sculpture and nontraditional forms, he says, began replacing the vessel art he so loved. "Ours is a collection frozen in time," he says.

Over the years, the couple has helped LACMA acquire objects by artists such as Sherrie Levine, Tony Oursler, Lynda Benglis and Kiki Smith, who are not necessarily known for glass work. That diversity was showcased in the 2006 exhibit "Glass: Material Matters," which Greenberg and Steinhauser sponsored. It was LACMA's first major exhibition of contemporary glass, co-curated by Howard Fox and Sarah Nichols.

Greenberg and Steinhilber now focus on collecting contemporary photography. "Something about the light that I've always appreciated in glass — the transparency, the illumination, the color — that fascination got transferred to photography," Greenberg says. "Suddenly, there's a new love."

In honor of the 50th year of the studio glass movement in the United States, which dates to 1962, Greenberg and Steinhilber are dispersing their entire, warehouse-stored glass collection — save for 15 to 20 sentimental pieces — to art institutions around the country in two stages. This year, four encyclopedic museums — LACMA, the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, the Minneapolis Institute of the Arts — as well as the more niche Corning Museum of Glass in Corning, N.Y., will receive works.

Next year, though he hasn't discussed it with them yet, Greenberg will likely make offers to the Smithsonian, New York's Museum of Arts and Design, the Mint Museum in Charlotte, N.C., the Contemporary Museum in Honolulu, and Racine Art Museum in Wisconsin as well as a few others, he says.

"We're giving away as much of the collection as institutions find interesting," Greenberg says. "I hope we'll find homes for everything. It's important for us to share what was truly a passion in our lives with a lot of other people."

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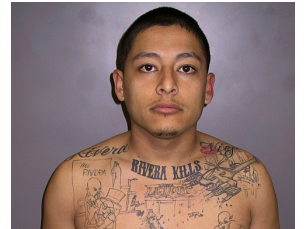
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