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Steven Weinberg, Blue Square, 2000

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Steven Weinberg
American (b.1954)
Blue Square, 2000
Cast and molded glass
4 ½ in. square
Gift of Mrs. Ray Smith, Jr., 2005.26.388



ll objects reveal more to the viewer than the external surface - light penetrates the surface and presents to the viewer a combination of lights from many different levels. Stone itself admits the passage of light, whether from the Michelangelo *Pieta* (bronze copy in the Haggerty) or the marble facade of the Beinecke Rare Book Library at Yale University. Glass, that unique form notably molded by the craftsmen at Murano, can offer the full transition from the opaque to the transparent, with resplendent result.

The Martha W. Smith collection of glass at the MU Haggerty Museum of Art represents as fine a sampling as one would probably find anywhere, including most larger museums. Like any well thought out collection of artistic glass, a museum collection should represent a variety of styles and techniques which nonetheless retain solid aesthetic qualities.

I am sure there are many ways of critically approaching these *objets de verre*. While consideration should be given to the shape, surface, and form of the glass, these in themselves do not lend themselves to as much reflection as do those objects where color and form and finishing are incorporated as well. Many minds may have different, defensible preferences. To this writer, three pieces offer opportunities for examinations that go beyond that object itself. The first, is by Steven Weinberg, who presents incidentally a play on the name of physicist Steven Weinberg whose efforts deal with the remote properties of matter far beyond possible human contact. In *Blue Square*, Weinberg creates the near perfect sphere emerging from the creative blue surface, which potentially represents the beginning of space itself. The object invites us to examine it closer and from any perspective available to us. One has an almost demanding desire to imagine what this is telling us about space and nature.

Plato is reported to have said that God constantly geometrizes. That apt phrase is certainly relevant to Pavel Tomecko, and his *Opal Dream*. The full chromatic spectrum is present at every view, along with the geometries of reflected sizes. As seen, the top surfaces also bring the lighting of the display space into view and thereby combining our external space with the tetrahedral internal space in repeated arrays of triangular shape and color.

Zoltan Bohus' *Concentric Phenomenon*, as displayed in the 2002 Haggerty exhibit, surprisingly shows us that the object has not only its own form and identity but also that it can reflect and incorporate images from its surroundings as well. Clearly this is not limited to this single piece but could be applied to many of those in the Martha W. Smith collection. These many pieces are not only enjoyable individually but also incorporate a deeper potential for including their environment in each one's own display. As such, they can be part of our memory of their presence. Their public display can cause the observant passer-by to stop and reflect on what it means to see in nature what can be made into art.

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