

At the time of this interview Alan Poole was a collector and was with Dan Klein Associates. These are his written responses to my submitted questions.

Describe your collection?

British & Irish Contemporary Glass over the last three to four decades.

Why do you collect the work you do?

For both aesthetic reasons, importance (such as a turning point/change in an artist's work), price, work we can 'live with' and if it will fit in to the collection of work already acquired.

What was the last piece you purchased? Describe the situation and your attraction to this piece.

A unique Angela Jarman cast glass sculpture, quite different what she normally makes as it was commission for a specific exhibition where artists were asked to be inspired by work from another (non-glass) collection.

Taking the example of this piece, describe what elements you see when you interpret it as you explain how you 'read' the work.

I am drawn to the power of the piece, the 'inspiration' from which it was drawn and the fact that it is an accomplished, well-finished piece of work.

What words, or phrases do you find yourself using when describing this and other work?

This is a difficult question as no two pieces of contemporary glass are the same and we collect work across a spectrum of techniques. But having said that, then 'engaging', 'demanding', 'important', 'finished', even 'beautiful' sometimes.

Describe what you are feeling/thinking when you are responding to work in your collection.

Well, being pleased and having been able to purchase the piece, that it might have helped an artist on their way to a productive and fulfilling career, that it gave recognition to a maker that perhaps otherwise not have been noticed by others.

Is this response similar to reactions you have in situations other than your collection? If so, describe these other situations.

Some similar responses, others not, as there are so many wonderful works in glass all over the world, most of which one would probably ever see (in the flesh), or perhaps be able to purchase for either financial reasons, the work being limited to a set number, or perhaps due to size and space.

Are you aware of differences between the way you 'read' work and the way others 'read' it? If so, what do you perceive that others do not? What is in the work that allows this variation?

A good piece of work should bring something different to each person viewing/owning it or, at the very least, provoke different reactions be they positive or negative.

Using specific examples, has work moved you in unexpected ways? Describe these 'unexpected ways'.

Yes, works can move you in different ways. This might be due to the piece itself, or a story attached to it, or the artist that made it. In one piece that I have always adored (and been close to) is one of the oldest pieces in our collection, *After The Great Wave*, 1980, a Stephen Procter engraved and cut glass bowl on it's own bespoke wooden base. I can't give specifics as to why I have always like this piece, but some reason are for purely aesthetic reasons, it being one of the first pieces of 'contemporary glass' I ever looked at and also, because the artist was a wonderful man, a brilliant teacher and a fine artist in general. Add the fact that he isn't with us anymore and for me, this then becomes the sum of this piece.

When viewing a work that emotionally involved you, has your response to the work changed over a period of time? In what ways did your response shift?

On a purely personal level yes, when I think of the piece I commissioned from David Reekie to celebrate the 60th Birthday of my partner Dan Klein. This piece will always stay with me and my bond to it grows stronger as time moves on.

How important is the context of a work. How do you separate these 'contexts' from the work itself?

Context is an important fact, especially sometimes in a difficult or disturbing piece, BUT not always necessary. Sometimes it is good to look at work that say, doesn't have a title or the ubiquitous 'artist's statement' next to it, so that each viewer, possible buyer can draw their own personal conclusions and assumptions. Having said that and wearing a curator's hat, one does sometimes need to initially explain some works to people - if they wish to be informed, that is.