

Nao Yamamoto

The environment I grew up with allowed me to cultivate an appreciation for both contemporary art and traditional craft, and I have so much respect for the Japanese culture. However, the experience of contemporary art based on different culture and the environment changed my perspective, and I felt like it took me beyond the narrow society in Japan. Since I recognized my art as the way to represent myself, or even have conversations with myself, I became devoted to a contemporary art practice. It is so exciting to see my thoughts made visual and how I've been changed by creating my artworks.

I have long created my art pieces based on the simple beauty of glass. I was looking for the way to emphasize what I see in it. During the glassblowing process, I sometimes saw the molten glass as a creature that has a consciousness and tries to challenge my skill or mastery. This idea helped me to create a different body of work which represented my experience or relationship with glass sculpture rather than the materiality of glass. Now glass becomes not only a material, but also my fickle friend which reflects my inspiration and concentration.

I believe that there is nothing that compares with the beauty of Nature. It is overwhelming because any life doesn't think about the meaning of life, but only thinks surviving. When I am at a beach, in a forest, or in the middle of a desert, the simple, pure, clean force of life in nature inspires me to just live, strongly but simply. I believe we have lost that notion in complicated contemporary lives. What I'm doing is creating reinterpretations of elements from nature to celebrate the power of life, both in its significance and in its insignificance.