



*Tears of Light (2022). Glass, 59 x 35 cm*

Ritsue Mishima (b. 1962 Kyoto) is a Japanese-Italian artist working in Venetian glass. Mishima moved to Venice in 1989 and having established a residence in Kyoto in 2011, she lives and works between the two cities.

The autodidact uses exclusively colourless glass and her work stands as a sampler of old glass-blowing and innovative decorating techniques, with strikingly rough, sometimes ornate surfaces. Working with the tradition of see-through *cristallo* glass which was invented in Murano in 1450, the artist takes advantage of the translucency and viscosity of Venetian glass in order to create clear glass sculptures, which bear the contours of light while becoming parts of the environments. "Transparency contains all colours," Mishima has said of her choice to eschew the colourful Murano glass tradition. While working in the Murano tradition, Mishima adds a delicate Japanese minimalism to this legacy, oscillating between light, matter, natural and artificial processes. Mishima's glass sculptures are thus a hybrid of Eastern and Western traditions.

Mishima came to glassmaking over detours. Her artistic career began in 1982 as a designer for Japanese advertising firms, expanding her creative range in 1987 by combining installations and flowers. In the same year, she became enthralled by Murano glass and moved to Venice in 1996. Her fruitless search for an ideal vase inevitably led her to design her own. Her first attempts resulted in very classical forms: elaborate and at the same time graceful designer vases on a foot, exceptionally well suited to arranging flowers. Mishima's traditional vases soon evolved into more abstract objects, a personal style becoming apparent; the vases developed increasingly in the direction of objects, they became larger and heavier, and many vases attracted attention for their technical perfection and visual emphasis.

Her abstract, organically inspired forms develop naturally, without a prescribed plan, as she creates clay models simultaneously while glassblowers create her pieces. Mishima follows every single step of the production and continually intervenes to bring the design to life. She also uses classical Venetian hot decorative techniques, such as wings formed with pincers. Only after detailed reworking in the annealed state is each piece considered finished. Mishima invests a lot of energy in working out the surface structures and three-dimensional decoration; many pieces are cut in detail or polished so that the light appears differently each time, in an attempt to convey the luminosity of the Venetian lagoon that inspires her work.

Mishima has collaborated with renowned glass smiths of Murano, although she has categorically turned down requests from abroad to work with other glassblowers. Her collaboration with the Venetian master Andrea Zilio and the two to four *serventi* of Fornace Anfora is very important to her — she considers it an indispensable condition for her work.

For many years her work has received international recognition and is represented in numerous private and public collections. Mishima won the Giorgio Armani Award from Sotheby's, London in 2001.

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**Public  
Collections**

Alter Hof Herding, Coesfeld, Germany  
Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Netherlands  
Museum Jan van der Togt, Amstelveen, Netherlands  
Musée des Arts décoratifs, Paris  
The Vangi Sculpture Garden Museum, Japan

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**Solo Exhibitions**

2022 *Glass Works*, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice

2020 *Riflessioni*, Galerie Pierre Marie Giraud, Brussels

2019 *HALL OF LIGHT*, ShugoArts, Tokyo  
*Lumina*, Luhring Augustine, New York

2017 *Cristal Blanc*, Galerie Pierre Marie Giraud, Brussels  
*Water Veins*, Shibunkaku, Kyoto  
*Stars*, ShugoArts, Tokyo

2016 *Istante*, Brutto Gusto, Berlin, Germany

2015 *Consciousness*, Galerie Pierre Marie Giraud, Bruxelles, Belgium

2014 *Wan*, Gallery Shibunkaku, Tokyo

2013 *Kiyosumi*, ShugoArts, Tokyo  
*In Grimani. Ritsue Mishima Glass Works*, Museum of Palazzo Grimani, Collateral Event of the 55<sup>th</sup> International Art Exhibition - Venice Biennale, Italy

2012 *Illumination*, Gallery Pierre Marie Giraud, Brussels  
*Sweet Life*, Gallery Shibunkaku, Kyoto

2011 *As it should be*, Shiseido Gallery, Tokyo  
*All That Is Solid*, Hedge Gallery, San Francisco

2010 *Stream of Light*, Brutto Gusto, Berlin  
*Reflexes*, Gallery Pierre Marie Giraud, Brussels  
*Frozen garden/ Fruits of fire*, Museum Boijmans, Rotterdam

2008 *100 Years After Unrealised Archaeology*, ShugoArts, Tokyo  
*East Meets West*, Brutto Gusto, Berlin

2007 *Seeds of Glass*, Gallery Sakuranoki, Tokyo  
*Garden of the Soul*, Hedge Gallery, San Francisco  
*Genese*, Gallery Pierre Marie Giraud, Brussels  
*Gift of Light*, Shibunkaku Gallery, Kyoto  
*Silent Particles*, Vangi Museum, Shizuoka, Japan

- 2005 *Natuurfragmentum*, with Dorian Hiethaar, Brutto Gusto, Rotterdam  
*Life: objects of water and light*, Hedge Gallery, San Francisco  
*Stream of Light on Pollen*, Gallery Sakuranoki, Tokyo
- 2004 *Stream of Light on En-gawa*, ShugoArts, Tokyo  
Installation with Vincenzo Castella, Le Case D'Arte, Milan
- 2003 *Fruits of Desire*, Kroller-Muller Museum, Otterlo, Netherlands  
*Fruits of Fire*, Brutto Gusto, Rotterdam
- 2002 *Mishima Insights*, Sputnik Pad, Tokyo  
*Kirarirola*, Kobo + Space Tomo Gallery, Tokyo  
*Kirarirola*, Bassani Showcase, Blanchaert Gallery, Milan
- 2001 *Resonances*, San Sisto Chapel, Basilica of San Lorenzo, Milan
- 2000 *Gibigiana*, Riva Greenhouse Nursery, Milan
- 1999 *Giardino dell'Anima*, Renzi & Reale Studio, Milan

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## Group Exhibitions

- 2022 *Confluence*, in dialogue with Alessandro Twombly, Tristan Hoare Gallery, London
- 2021 *Where I Am Standing*, ShugoArts, Tokyo  
*The Past in Motion*, Kotaro Nukaga, Tokyo  
ShugoArts Show, ShugoArts, Tokyo  
Contemporary Crafts, Brutto Gusto, Berlin
- 2020 ShugoArts Show, ShugoArts, Tokyo  
*OBJECTively Speaking: Contemporary Sculpture*, Berggruen Gallery, San Francisco
- 2020 *Japanese Wonder*, Erskine, Hall & Coe Ltd, London
- 2018 *Glass, Textiles, Lacquer & Ceramic*, Erskine, Hall & Coe Ltd, London
- 2017 *Endless Energy*, Toyama Glass Art Museum, Toyama  
*Asia Corridor Contemporary Art Exhibition*, Nijo Castle, Kyoto
- 2016 *Contemporary Japanese Crafts, The KIKUCHI Kanjitsu Prize II*, Musée Tomo, Tokyo  
*Living With Art*, Albion Barn, Oxford
- 2015 *Between the Light*, ShugoArts, Tokyo
- 2014 *Luminous Port*, Café Ogurayama, Yokohama Museum of Art, Yokohama Triennale, Japan  
*Spring at Palazzo Fortuny. Ritsue Mishima. Tras Forma*, Museo Fortuny, Venice, Italy
- 2013 *To Wander a Garden*, Vangi Sculpture Garden Museum, Shizuoka, Japan  
*Recent Acquisitions - New in De Hallen Haarlem*, Frans Hals Museum, Netherlands

- 2011 *The Yearning of Venetian Glass - Beauty that Traversed Oceans and Time*, Suntory Museum, Tokyo
- 2009 *...fa come natura face in foco*, Venice Pavilion, the 53<sup>rd</sup> International Art Exhibition, The Venice Biennale, Italy  
*Glass and Ceramics Today*, L'Arc en Seine & Pierre Marie Giraud, New York
- 2008 *Fare Vetro*, Museo del Vetro, Murano, Venice
- 2005 *Earth, Fire & Water*, Katie Jones, London  
*From West and East*, ShugoArts, Tokyo
- 2004 *Vetri. Nel Mondo. Oggi.* Venetian Institute of Sciences, Letters and Arts, Palazzo Franchetti, Venice  
*La Puissance Du Verre*, International exhibition of contemporary glass, Troyes, France  
*Snow Garden*, Shizouka International Garden and Horticulture Exhibition, Pacifica Flora, Hamamtsu, Japan  
*Special Guest at Spring Flower Exhibition*, Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem, Netherlands
- 2003 *Imagining Prometheus*, Palazzo della Ragione, Milan
- 2002 *Glassway*, Archaeology Museum, Aosta, Italy
- 2001 Contemporary Decorative Arts, Sotheby's London
- 2000 Katie Jones, London
- 1999 *Fusion*, Palazzo dell'Arengario, Milan  
*Glass & Ceramics*, Blanchaert Gallery, Milan

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## Awards

- 2012 Bavarian State Award at 'Exempla 2012: Glass - material between tradition and innovation', Munich, Germany
- 2001 Giorgio Armani prize for Best Artist at Sotheby's Contemporary Decorative Arts Exhibition 2001, London, UK

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## Publications

- 2013 *IN GRIMANI: Ritsue Mishima Glass Works*, Marsilio
- 1999 *RITSUE MISHIMA GLASS WORKS VENICE: FRUITS OF FIRE*, Seigensha
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