

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Barbara McBurney

Barbara McBurney has generously served on the Art Center's board more times than most people can remember. A former sales promotion manager at Pillsbury, Barbara is not new to leadership and has chaired the board of directors five times over the past 20 years.

"Barbara is not one to shy away from responsibility," says Executive Director Roxanne Heaton. "It's wonderful when she is serving on the board because if there's a need, she doesn't hesitate, she steps up to serve." Barbara is currently serving a one-year term as board of directors chairperson, quietly but clearly leading by example with her vast skills, dedication and generosity.

As co-chairperson of the capital campaign

for this building more than a decade ago, Barbara lent a great deal of credibility to the process and was very instrumental in raising \$6.5 million. From the start, she has been inspired by this facility: how the layout was thoughtfully planned to serve different mediums with light and space and the necessary equipment. "I'm very proud that we can offer this state of the art facility to the community, where professional artists or beginners can learn and exhibit their art," says Barbara. She operates from a personal belief that those with a passion for the arts and the means, have the responsibility to actively support the arts.

Roxanne is quick to point out that Barbara is also a fine painter and has studied painting at the Art Center for years. She has frequently

exhibited her work including a one-person show at the Frank Stone Gallery in Minneapolis a few years ago. Always self-effacing, Barbara shifts the focus from her work saying it's the friendships that are most valuable to her. Adding that the classes involve a level of dedication to be successful and she stays motivated out of loyalty to her instructor and with insight and feedback from her classmates.

When asked if there was one thing she wished people knew about the Art Center, Barbara described the great personal growth that comes from art education. "It's not just the classes," she says, "it's the whole experience and what is learned on all levels as you practice your art."

Most recently, Barbara, who is a very classy



lady, lent her leadership to the 60th Anniversary Celebration and Fundraiser as co-chair of the committee. "I am so thankful for her leadership making the 60th event such a success!" says Roxanne Heaton.

Sculpture in Glass

This spring, a luminous new casting medium is flowing into our sculpture studio. Glass.

"Using a technique very similar to the bronze investment casting process that we currently offer, glass casting creates the opportunity for our existing students to work in a different medium," says George Hagemann, Sculpture Studio Manager.

Sculpture has always been an art form that sets the Minnetonka Center for the Arts apart. We offer bronze casting, stone carving, bird carving from wood and palm fronds and metalworking, all taught by accomplished artists. Our complete foundry for metal casting stands as one of very few facilities accessible to the public in the Midwest. Last summer, the sculpture studio did its first aluminum pour. And now, classes in kiln glass casting are available thanks to artist-instructor Donna Rice.

"I had been looking for a glass artist to complement the courses in glass fusing," says Holly Nelson, Adult Program Director. "Donna literally showed up at the front desk one day. Seeing her elegant, luminous pieces, I knew right away that she would be a terrific asset for students at the Art Center because of her solid technical skills, aesthetic sensibilities and passion for glass art."

As with metal, glass molds may be open or closed/semi-closed. Open-face molds create reverse-relief, bas-relief, *pâte de verre* (French, literally *a paste of glass*), thick-block and box castings. Closed or semi-closed molds produce fully sculptural pieces.

Sculpturally, the unique aspect of glass is its translucence. "I love the fact that I can see the inside of a piece I cast in glass. That's something that I'm playing with a lot now – the inner piece," says Donna, who knew at age 10 that she would be a glass artist. "With glass, you can see all sides of a sculpture at one time. All sides of a flower, all sides of a bird. You're going to see that in glass."

The product of the early studio glass movement, Donna got her start when glass artists in this country numbered in the hundreds, rather than the thousands today. She has known and worked with some of the greats, including Dale Chihuly. "I had the opportunity to meet amazing artists and designers," says Donna. "It was a time of immense sharing of information. They were no longer keeping secrets, they were sharing, and that influences the way I teach today."

Donna received her B.F.A. degree in glass blowing, metal and drawing from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. She worked in the Pilchuck Glass school, doing blown glass with Dan Dailey in Washington and pursued post-graduate glass studies at the Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam, Netherlands. When she returned to the Pittsburgh area, she met and married her husband. The next 20 years they lived in the South and there were no glassblowing facilities available to her, so she set up a kiln in the garage and began casting. She also worked for a time producing carved and engraved crystal for reward and recognition pieces.

"I was intrigued by her depth of skills," says Holly Nelson. "We have not offered glass casting since 2007, and the discipline offers students of glass as well as sculpture an entirely new method of working with the medium, and to creatively experiment with forms and light in ways not possible with fused glass or cast metal."

"Casting is something I love, and that's why I'm teaching it." In her class, *Kiln Glass Casting and Pâte de Verre* (page 12), Donna wants to help her students take a spark of an idea and create it in glass. "When I look at a flower, I see the stamens, I see the other side of the petal, the negative, the positive that might happen within the form," says Donna. "I want to help students begin to see the sculptural possibilities of glass." See www.djrglass.com for more information.

