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SALVIATI

Masters in Glass for 140 Years (Italian, 1816 – 1890)

Venice 1859 – Venice 2000. A span of time embracing a remarkable artistic adventure, a story of multi-coloured harmonies and exquisite transparencies that has, since the middle of the last century, constituted one of the most inspiring examples of Venetian glassworking. Antonio Salviati, a lawyer by profession, was himself, deeply in love with the city of Venice. It was his vision that led to the rebirth of Venetian glass in the period following the decline of the Republic of Venice, when the Venetian tradition was in danger of being eclipsed by the glassworkers of Bohemia and England. Salviati engaged the city's most creative artists and conceived an exclusive system for the safe dispatch of his precious products. Their creations rapidly found favour in the courts and capitals of Europe and, before long, in Asia and America, becoming one of the most famous names in the prestigious world of collectors. Today, 140 years later, Salviati remains one of the most exclusive exponents of glassmaking through the application of the world-famous Venetian traditions along with the highest standards of design.

Methods

Venetian Glass is composed out of soda and silica. The soda gives a “long” glass, which allows the glass-master to work and model it for longer periods of time. The glass mix is melted in large pots called *crogioli*, and there is one pot for each color.

Glass workers are usually organized in teams of four people; the *maestro* (master), his *serventi* (first assistants) and *serventini* (second assistants). For such a team to work successfully requires a tremendous amount of dexterity, co-ordination and strength.

To start the process, one of the master's assistants gathers a small amount of hot glass from the *crogiolo* onto a blow pipe and rolls it around on a flat metal surface to shape it. Then, the glass master blows the molten glass and shapes it by hand with a variety of special tools. The piece is reheated and then reshaped, which involves much physical effort. The glass master leaves his own personal mark on each piece he creates, and in this way, no two SALVIATI pieces are ever identical.

SALVIATI pieces tend to focus on contrast, such as contrasting colors, types of glass (transparent paired with opaque glass), and types of surface (shiny next to matte). The SALVIATI collection also reflects many traditional Venetian techniques, such as *sommerso*, *incamiciato*, *canna*, *battuto*, and *pulegoso*.

Sommerso (submerged); this technique is executed by dipping the gob of glass on the blowpipe into *crogioli* containing different colors. The effect is that of floating strands of color in the finished piece.

Incamiciato: This technique is used to achieve opaque colors, a layer of transparent colored glass is superimposed over opaque white glass.

Canna (cane): The Canna is a piece of either transparent or opaque glass that has been drawn out into a long stick (or cane). Segments of canes of various lengths and colors are laid out on a flat surface in a decorative pattern and are heated in the furnace. The maestro gathers a first layer of glass onto his blowpipe, rolls it up into the prepared mosaic of canes, and models it into the desired shape.

Battuto: With this technique of decoration, the entire surface of the piece is cut as if it was ground, producing small, irregular and adjacent markings running in the same direction.

Pulegoso: This is the effect created by the inclusion of many irregular air bubbles in the glass.