

CURRICULA VITAE

KENNETH FREDERICK von ROENN, JR

Kenneth Frederick von Roenn, Jr. was born in 1948 in Louisville, Kentucky. As a young man, his interests were primarily athletic, primarily springboard and platform diving. He attended Florida State University, on a full athletic scholarship, while also pursuing his interests in fine art, philosophy and english, earning a B. A. degree in 1970.

von Roenn began his career in glass in 1970 at Louisville Art Glass. Within a few years he had become the General Manager and in 1975, he was promoted to President. In the early 70's he was an active member of the Stained Glass Association of America serving on the executive committee, as chairman of the publications committee and serving as Guest Editor for a special edition of its quarterly magazine. During this period, he compiled a body of innovative architectural glass art work and establishing the studio as one of the most aesthetically and technically progressive in the country. During this period von Roenn wrote regularly for several magazines on the topic of glass in architecture and taught courses in architectural art at the U of KY School of Architecture from 1974-76.

Recognizing a need to pursue his evolving interest in architecture, he took a leave of absence from the studio in 1977 to pursue a Masters Degree in Architecture at Yale University. While at Yale, von Roenn further developed his interest in architectural art through work with the architect/sculptor Kent Bloomer, which was culminated in his independent thesis entitled, 'The Primary Modalities of Art's Relationship to Architecture: Integration, Juxtaposition and Synthesis'. He graduated in 1981 and established von Roenn Studio Group in Branford, CT, which designed glass, architecture, graphics and furniture, executing commissions nationally and internationally. In 1983, he returned to Louisville and worked for two architectural firms before establishing an architectural practice with two partners to form Bailey, Preston, von Roenn Architecture. It was also at this time that he returned to competitive diving, which was culminated with winning two masters World Championship titles, setting two world records at the age of 41. Having achieved his earliest goal at long last, von Roenn turned his exclusive attention back to his primary passions, architectural art and expressive glass.

In 1991, von Roenn bought the Louisville Art Glass Studio and renamed it **Architectural Glass Art, Inc.** He expanded and reorganized the company, redirecting its focus on new roles for glass in architecture. The studio became recognized for its innovative application of new technologies. He served as the director of design and CEO/President, managing a staff of thirty.

In the late 90's, von Roenn's desire to expand the studio led to his search for a new space

to accommodate the growth of the studio. During this period, he joined with a group of developers and investors interested in the revitalization of downtown Louisville as well as the region's commitment to the arts. The group, guided by von Roenn's vision of a multipurpose glass facility, formulated a concept for *Glassworks*. From this original simple idea of a new home for Architectural Glass Art, von Roenn ultimately created a space not just for his studio but also for more than 50 glass artists to work and sell their art. Von Roenn owned and oversaw the two galleries, a public workshop, a tour program, a special events program and the glass blowing studio, all of which comprised *Glassworks*. More than 125,000 people visited Glassworks annually, which made it one of Louisville's most popular attractions. In 2012 von Roenn sold his interest in Glassworks to focus his attention once again exclusively on Architectural Glass Art.

Under von Roenn's leadership the AGA executed more than 1,000 projects throughout the United States as well as projects in Japan, Mexico, the Caribbean, Europe, the Middle East, and China. In addition to designing his own projects, von Roenn has also collaborated with many significant artists on major projects including Al Held, Jose Bedia, Laura Battle, Thomas Sayre and Jennifer Bartlett. He has also worked with many of the leading American architects including Cesar Pelli, Charles Moore, William Turnbull, Thomas Ventulett, Graham Gund, etc. Von Roenn designed, and his studio produced, the world's largest glass sculpture, which crowns the top of Wachovia Bank's Corporate Headquarters in Charlotte, NC. This work weighs more than 500,000 pounds, can be seen from miles away and is designed to withstand hurricane force winds.

Von Roenn's work has been published in numerous books and in many major architecture magazines, including a feature article in "Architecture" magazine. He has lectured extensively throughout North America and Canada and has written dozens of articles on art and architecture. Von Roenn has received numerous awards, including the Faith and Form Visual Arts Grand Award, American Crafts Award for Architectural Art, the AIA Allied Professional Award, the DuPont Benedictus Award, the Corning Museum Award, the Al Smith Fellowship, Tau Sigma Delta Architecture Fraternity Award, five Ministry & Liturgy's Bene Awards and fifteen CODAworx Awards. In addition, von Roenn received the Crystal Award for his design of a new all glass bridge for the Louisville arena. This project has been recognized as a technological tour de force for the way in which artistic glass was used as a primary structural element for the bridge. He has been inducted into the American Glass Hall of Fame as well as the Atherton High School Hall of Fame and was named one the twenty-five most influential people in the arts in the Midwest by *Dialogue* magazine. He was presented with the Governor's Award in the Arts for Lifetime Achievement in 2011 by the governor of Kentucky, which is the highest honor bestowed on a Kentucky artist (following George Clooney in the previous year).

In 2013 von Roenn decided that it was time in his life to begin to slow down (primarily at the urging of his domestic partner, Ursula Vourvoulis). He closed Architectural Glass Art and moved to Tallahassee, FL to work with Florida State University as the founder of a new

program in Public and Architectural Art as well as the Director of the Master Craftsman Studio. As a professor von Roenn taught courses in public and architectural art as well as sculpture and creative entrepreneurship. He did not renew his contract with FSU in 2016 so he could once again turn his attention exclusively back to glass.

With his move to Florida he established Kaiser / von Roenn Studio with his partner, Ursula Vourvoulis, and currently serves as its Design Director. K/vR Studio's focus is on large-scale architectural glass projects nationally and internationally. Since its founding, K/vR Studio has completed major projects in Manila, Philippines, Dublin, Ireland, Austin, TX, Nashville, TN, Denver, CO, Los Angeles, CA, Washington D.C., Dallas, TX, San Diego, CA, Miami, FL, and Denver, CO. von Roenn is active in the Florida Association of Public Art Professionals and the Public Art Network, a national organization of public artists and administrators. He lectures frequently on the topic of public art and its role in communities as well as the role of artistic glass in architecture.

In 2016 von Roenn founded the consulting firm, von Roenn Collaborative, which was established to assist architects, public art agencies, artists, studios, developers, churches, and companies with the planning and execution of art projects and the implementation of expressive glass in architecture. In this capacity the firm works with Derix Glasstudios of Germany, considered to be the premier glass studio in the world, to consult with them on their projects in the U. S..



