



1	Scent Bottle #080302	40 x 14 x 8"
2	Scent Bottle #110302	40 x 6 x 6 1/2"
3	Scent Bottle #010102	47 x 12 x 12"
4	Scent Bottle #040302	51 x 9 x 3"
5	Scent Bottle #120302	42 x 7 x 7 1/2"
6	Scent Bottle #030102	50 x 12 x 9"
7	Scent Bottle #180302	36 x 6 x 6"
8	Scent Bottle #020102	47 x 6 x 8"
9	Scent Bottle #020302	56 x 12 x 12"
10	Scent Bottle #240302	41 x 7 x 7"
11	Scent Bottle #200302	47 x 6 x 4 1/2"
12	Scent Bottle #250302	48 x 7 x 7 1/2"
13	Scent Bottle #070302	44 x 14 x 7 1/2"
14	Scent Bottle #260302	41 x 8 x 8"
15	Scent Bottle #050302	54 x 12 x 3"
16	Scent Bottle #140302	41 x 7 x 7"

May 19 – June 30  
Opening May 19 2.30pm

N I C K M O U N T

Thomas R Riley Galleries  
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## Form and Feeling

### Nick Mount's Scent Bottles

Contemporary glass artists form a loose-knit global community, meeting together at glass centers around the world when they exhibit, teach and attend conferences. Australian glass artist, Nick Mount, is a respected member of that international glass family. He leads a partly nomadic existence, teaching regularly at glass centers in America, Canada, Europe and Japan. His roots, however, are firmly planted in Australia, where he works from a studio in Adelaide.

Mount has been a pivotal influence in the flourishing Australian studio glass movement.

Since his original introduction to glass blowing by Richard Marquis in 1974 he has been at the forefront of innovation and achievement in his field.

His first influences were the US west coast art scene of the 1970s and Venetian glass-blowing traditions, but from the outset his work has been distinctively individual.

It is also quintessentially Australian – informed but not confined by tradition, perpetually pushing frontiers and imaginatively intrepid. His wry sense of humour, too, is distinctively Australian.



Mount's major opus, the Scent Bottles, an evolving series of sculptural assemblages that he commenced in 1997, exemplifies these qualities. This new ensemble of Scent Bottles, all completed in early 2002, reveal him at the height of his mature powers, with a masterly finesse in eliciting the luminous poetry of glass to convey a spectrum of moods from exuberant theatricality to lyrical serenity.







The Scent Bottles are a study in contrasts and in meticulously calibrated balance – towering in scale yet intimate, spectacular from afar yet yielding jewel-like detail to close inspection.

Sections of dazzling transparent colour are juxtaposed with the texture of carved surfaces and with incised designs based on the interplay of opaque and transparent colours.

The warmth of gestural pencil markings is offset by the cool metallic precision of aluminum spikes. Improbable juxtapositions of form are precisely balanced despite their precarious angles.

Each piece is a finely judged composition of separately blown and cold finished sections, loosely based on the classic segmented structure of the perfume bottle.

Over the period he has been exploring this form, the Scent Bottles have evolved in series, each successive suite of works reflecting an increasing complexity and sophistication, while becoming more autonomous as sculptural assemblages that owe less and less allegiance to the perfume bottle.

For Mount the Scent Bottle is a 'found object' from the history of factory glass. His interest in such historical 'found' objects goes back to the 1980s with his series from that era of Funnels, Fishing Floats and Walking Canes.

As a vessel form richly layered with historical nuance, he has found in the scent bottle a poetic resonance that offers him limitless possibilities of creative exploration.

It signifies the qualities of anonymous craftsmanship and beauty associated with the traditional glass factory artisans who once made perfume bottles, while also alluding to associations of 'scent' with passion, luxury and allure.

Mount first makes all the individual components for a suite of up to maybe twenty Scent Bottles, creating each component as an artwork in its own right,



without at that stage having pre-conceived the final composition. Individual sections are blown and hot formed, cold-finished with a spectrum of hand and wheel-carving techniques and finally polished. He then assembles the complete form, treating the individual components as 'found' objects from which he makes a partly random selection.





This process gives the finished work a sense of chance discovery within controlled stylistic parameters – reminiscent of the balance between disciplined control and improvisation in contemporary jazz. Despite the element of chance, Mount carefully composes each piece to create its particular persona or style.

The current ensemble reveals new directions and an evolution of his sculptural tendencies. Statuesque rotund Scent Bottles, balancing with humorous aplomb on narrow cone-shaped bases, evolve into slender forms with elaborately carved central sections featuring textural detail from hand and wheel-carving. He uses inciso carving to expose the underlying layer of glass in jagged patterns, or battuto to create a honeycomb pattern, or intricate diamond wheel embellishment to create a luminous translucent glow.

The most recently evolved Scent Bottles feature striking 'plumb-bob' stoppers tapering to an aluminum spike.

The plumb-bob, an ancient mason's tool used to measure depth or verticality, signifies the recurring motif of balance and calibration underlying his approach to glass as sculptural form.





Mount has developed a unique enamel glass pencil that can be fired onto the glass and he uses this to draw directly onto the surface of the 'plumb-bob', creating loose abstract designs that in some pieces mimic murrine or cane patterns. With these hand drawn markings he succeeds in extending the technical limitations of the medium and introduces a

more intimate gestural element into his work.

Technical virtuosity is never an end in itself for Mount. Rather, technical breakthroughs such as the enamel glass pencil are for him a means to push glass further as an expressive medium, to mix colours and achieve a more subtle palette.

Through the gradual evolution of the Scent Bottles series he is continuing his quest to imbue glass with personal as well as historical nuance – with the feelings and the passion that inspire his work.

In the Scent Bottles Mount has created containers for the uncontainable – embodiments of the transmutation of feeling into form.



## **Nick Mount**

Born Adelaide,  
South Australia 1952

**Nick Mount** is one of Australia's pre-eminent glass artists. In a career spanning three decades his work has combined virtuoso technique with a keen instinct for design, freely adapting traditional Venetian decorative styles to his own distinctive sculptural approach. He is recognised for his commissions, teaching, and exhibitions in Australia, Europe, South America, the United States and Japan and his work is represented in many major public and private collections.

## **Professional Profile**

- 2001** Three year Appointment to the Australia Council's Visual Arts/Crafts Board
- 2000** Appointed Co-chair Pilchuck Glass School International Council
- 1994 - 1997** Appointed Head of Glass Workshop, Jam Factory Craft & Design Centre, Adelaide, SA

## **Selected Exhibitions**

- 2002 Material Culture** National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, ACT  
**Facets of Australian Glass** Leo Kaplin Modern, New York, NY, USA
- 2001 Glass Art in Australia** Quadrivium, Sydney, NSW  
**GlassState** Jam Factory Craft & Design Centre, Adelaide, SA  
**Compilation** Quadrivium, Sydney, NSW
- 2000 At the Edge – Australian Glass Art** Touring Exhibition ...  
Brisbane City Gallery, Brisbane, QLD  
Object, Australian Centre for Craft & Design, Sydney, NSW  
Galerie Handwerk, Munich, Germany  
**Vessels** Koganezaki Glass Museum, Koganezaki Crystal Park, Japan  
**Desire** Contemporary Australian Glass, Quadrivium, Sydney, NSW
- 1999 Fabricated Vessels** BMGART, Adelaide, SA  
**Nick Mount Glass** Brisbane City Gallery, Brisbane, QLD  
**GAS International Expo 2** Tampa, Florida, USA  
**Australian Studio Glass** Lisbon, Portugal  
**Creative Australia** Osaka, Japan
- 1998 New Glass** Makers Mark, Melbourne, VIC  
**Nick Mount** Galerie L, Hamburg, Germany  
**Aperto Vetro – Esposizione, Internazionale Del Vetro**  
**Contemporaneo** Venice, Italy  
**Translucence** Quadrivium, Sydney, NSW
- 1997 Les Grands Fabliers** BMGART, Adelaide, SA  
**Internationale Handwerksmesse Munchen, Portrait der Meister**  
Winner of the Barvarian State Prize, Munich, Germany



A R T S A



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Margot Osborne is a curator and  
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