



GLASS ACT

Viewers entranced by this spring's glass show at the Orlando Museum of Art are in luck with a documentary and landmark exhibitions in store for the summer.

Curling tendrils of crimson red, electric green and cobalt blue. Lily pads of translucent yellow and pink – it's hard not to be intrigued by the creations of renowned glass artist Dale Chihuly. One who has been bitten, hard, by the Chihuly bug is local collector Steve Goldman.

Goldman was in a college chemistry lab when glass first caught his eye. "I always thought scientific glass was really beautiful, the way they got the strange shapes that they blew glass into," said the Winter Park philanthropist. "It had a unique intrinsic beauty."

Though Goldman was intrigued, it was decades before he began to collect true "art glass." Then, during an Orlando Museum of Art tour to San Francisco in 2000, he saw the works of glass artist icons, such as Dale Chihuly.

"It was startling to actually realize it was something worth collecting," Goldman said. "I had a few pieces I liked, so I started a collection. I had just moved into a new house, and it was perfect for displaying glass. It has a lot of light, and it's sort of a minimalist house. The glass stands on its own."

Now, a Medusa-like mass of Chihuly glass hangs from the ceiling of Goldman's soaring atrium, and more Chihuly glass covers a wall. In the living room, a series of "cocoon" stands near a piano. More than 100 pieces from various artists adorn the rest of the house, including a 600-pound "egg" by artist Christopher Ries.

Education is key when beginning a collection, Goldman noted. In fact, the trip that spurred his fascination with glass art was led by Sue Scott in order to broaden the knowledge of the Orlando Museum of Art's Acquisition Trust members.

For Goldman and other Chihuly fans, this should be a very educational year.

Chihuly in the Hotspot, a new documentary directed by Peter West, premiered on opening weekend at the 19th Annual Palm Springs International Film Festival in January. The film had its Northwest premier in Washington State February 6 at the Museum of Glass in Tacoma and is currently showing in

theaters and on PBS stations nationwide. It was also released simultaneously to the home market; DVDs are available on Amazon and Portland Press (portlandpress.net).

A frenetic schedule of exhibitions is already underway. In addition to the inclusion of Goldman's Chihuly at the OMA's spring show, there are Chihuly shows popping up all over.

- From now through mid-May, you can see a collection of Chihuly inspired by the patterns on American Indian trade blankets at the El Paso Museum of Art in Texas (elpasomuseum.org).

- Tracer Gallery in the artist's hometown of Tacoma, Washington, has mounted a collection of his works that will be on view through June 8 (tracergallery.com).

- Through August, the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago is running *The Glass Experience*, which explores glassmaking over the past 4,000 years. Master glass blowers demonstrate their art live, and the exhibit includes a 2,000-square-foot Macchia Forest created by Chihuly expressly for this show, along with glass lamps by Louis Comfort Tiffany and Frank Lloyd Wright.

- On September 27, the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, Chihuly's alma mater, will incorporate its expansive new Chase Center with a 6,000-square-foot exhibition of his work. The show runs through January 2009 (riad.edu).

- The big daddy of this year's round of Chihuly is again in the Bay Area: The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco will present a major Chihuly exhibition, June 14-September 28 at both the de Young Museum and the Legion of Honor (famsf.org).

If you can't get out of town to see some Chihuly, you can bring Chihuly to your doorstep: Portland Press carries a mind-boggling array of books, videos, calendars and even a series of lithographs.

And if you're longing for your very own piece of Chihuly glass, they have that, too, with a wide selection of his "suites" (or styles) available at prices generally from \$4,000 to \$8,000.

