



Jirawatn Chavanatit



HE HAS A DREAM. He dreams that someday, he will be able to raise the status of art glass in Thailand to elevate the people's spirit.

Using traditional and contemporary techniques, he creates coloured glass pieces that takes the art to a new level, bringing a fresh new look in fine art glass. His glass studio, the Jrawatn glass Studio, creates exclusive design for art glass collectors. It also introduces the fine art of Murano glass to the people of Thailand.

Located off the shores of Venice in Italy, Murano is a known city of trade, a commercial port known for its art and jewelry. It is known for its glass art of intricate pieces and beautiful designs. Enchanted by these seemingly magical crystals, Chavanatit returned to Thailand, bringing with him Murano treasures. Now known as the father of Thai Murano glassmaking in Thailand, Chavanatit aims to explore all of the avenues of the art of coloured and fine glass in Thailand.

He is not as eloquent in speech, but his glass sculptures speak loud and clear of truth, beauty, and life. In an interview with *asianTraveler*, he reveals, with humble honesty, his passion for the art and his desire to show the world not only Thailand's beauty but also Asia's magnificence.

How and where did you discover your love for the art?

My journey started around 20 years ago in Murano, Italy. I also fell in love with stained glass in Northern church France, but even way before that, I loved art since I was young. I even have a portrait collection. I finished painting for Poh-Chang Academe of Fine Art. Later I shifted to sculpture, hoping to show Thai art and Asian culture through glass. I believe that Asian glass art is unique.

What are some of your creations that you are most proud of?

I was commissioned by Khun Victor Sukserree to produce something magnificent that would grace the lobby of the Dusit Thani Hua Hin. I am most proud of the *Ice Buddha*, the *Ice Naga*, and the *Ice Water Fountain* which symbolizes everlasting flow.

I was also given the honour by Dusit Thani Hua Hin to create something special for the latest ASEAN Summit. I created the crystal souvenirs for the ten ASEAN member nations' leaders at the 14th ASEAN Summit held at Dusit Thani Hua Hin.

What inspires you?

My home garden and lovely family inspire me to create. Also, the people, the place, the pathways and sidewalks at Murano, Italy are the places where I find inspiration.

Most of our projects come from inspiration and impression first, and goal would follow later.

And what is your goal in creating these ice masterpieces?

To think different. I would like to show different and unique Thai art. I want to show Thailand as gentle, attractive, and smart through design and art. Art is life; I believe art will always be around. My art is aesthetic that can frankly express. Glass has value when it has reflection of life and truth.

Do you believe that art should be functional as well as beautiful?

It is important for both of aesthetic and functional to come together. I also believe that less is more. You must reduce the unessential detail but the art must still remain full of life.