

# ISGB GATHERING

2006  
Kansas City

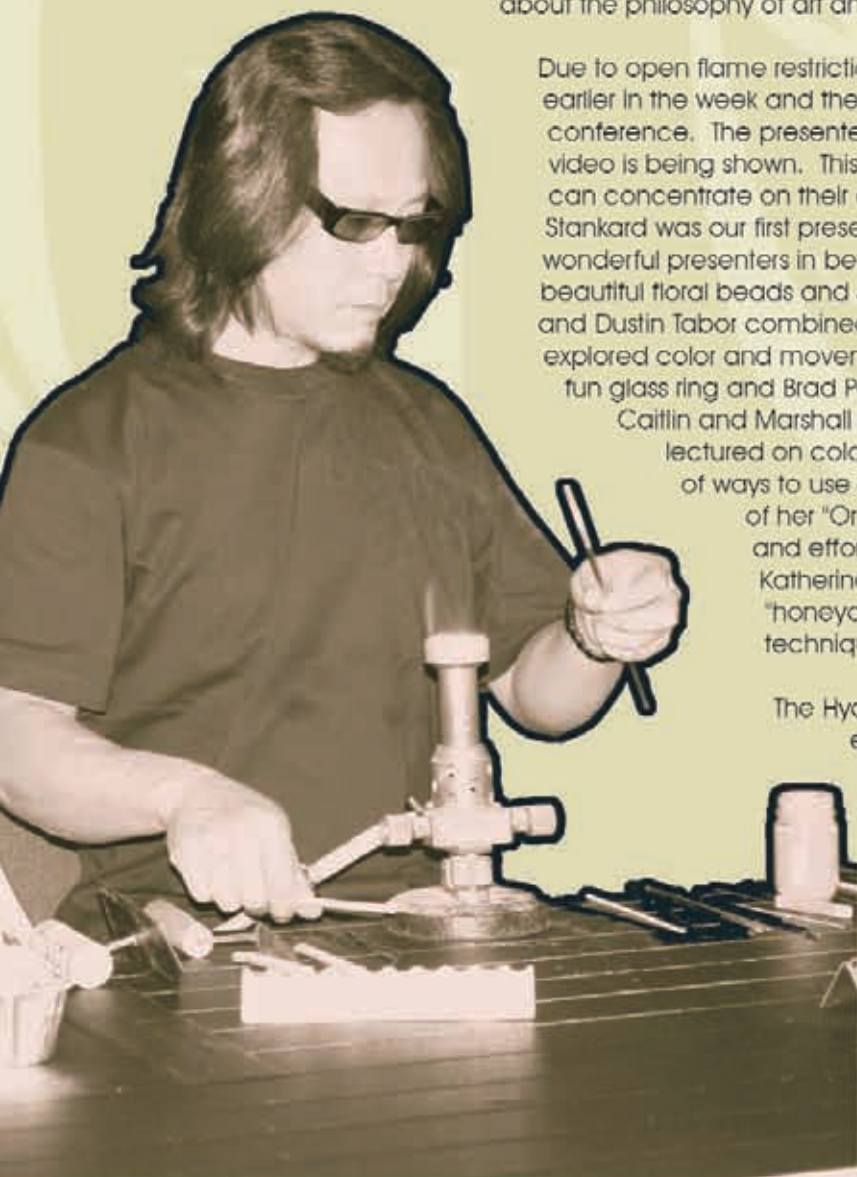
By: Lisa St. Martin

The annual conference of The International Society of Glass Beadmakers was held July 20 - 23 in Kansas City, Missouri. The conference "The Gathering" is held each summer in a different location and hosts beadmakers, flameworkers, fusers and glass enthusiasts from all over the world. This year's conference was held at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center. Great shops, galleries and fabulous restaurants high lighting Kansas City's world-class barbecue surrounded this downtown location.

Paul Stankard, renowned glass artist, was the keynote speaker and helped kick off this year's conference. Paul's words of wit and wisdom inspired attendees to find the spirituality in the creation of art and strive for excellence in all their artistic endeavors. The international presenter this year, Toshimasa Masui from Japan, demonstrated his masking technique to a packed house at the final presentation Sunday evening. Using sataake glass and a traditional Japanese torch called a "volcano", he created a beautiful drum shaped bead and talked about the philosophy of art and its importance in the creation process.

Due to open flame restrictions in hotel ballrooms, the presentations were video taped earlier in the week and then shown on large screens on the Friday and Sunday of the conference. The presenters lecture and discuss their work and techniques while the video is being shown. This has proven to be the best of both worlds as the presenters can concentrate on their demo and then later give a better lecture. Since Paul Stankard was our first presenter and Toshimasa Masui our last, there were many wonderful presenters in between. Kim Fields demonstrated making one of her beautiful floral beads and Jim Anspach, his "Fire and Ice" bead. Stephanie Sercich and Dustin Tabor combined their talents on a "double bead" bead, while Nancy Tobey explored color and movement in one of her boro beads. Kathryn Wardrill created a fun glass ring and Brad Pearson made a marble demolling his masking techniques. Caitlin and Marshall Hyde demoed a sculptural bead and then Robin Foster lectured on color theory for beadmakers. Margaret Zinser showed a variety of ways to use goldstone in your beads and Jennifer Geldard created one of her "Ornate Series" beads. Tom Holland lectured on his research and efforts to recreate ancient beads, such as the folded bead and Katherine Wadsworth made a beautiful amber colored "honeycomb" bead. There was a lot of variation and unusual techniques discussed and demonstrated this year.

The Hyatt had an attached Exhibit Hall where all the open flame events were held. Workshop classes were held before and after the conference. Aaron Abbott taught a business workshop on website design while Debi Johnson's covered pricing and budgeting. Veterans as well as new instructors taught eight different torch workshops focusing on varied techniques. Pre-conference classes included Caitlin and Marshall Hyde on sculptural beads, Stephanie Sercich and Dustin Tabor on advanced techniques, Jennifer Geldard on experimenting with new techniques and Brad Pearson using complex patterns. Post conference classes included Kim Fields florals, Sage and Tom Holland on advanced techniques, Cathy Lybarger on making unique mask beads and Margaret Zinser on shaping and color.





Open Torch was held there on Thursday and Friday evenings. Many of our equipment and glass suppliers sponsor the event. Stations were set up and supervised by four different torch manufacturers. Carlisle, Nortel, Bethlehem and Glass Torch Technology. They put out their latest and greatest torches for attendees to try. Glass suppliers also contributed to the stations so that attendees could try many different kinds of glass with dozens of torches. Other suppliers brought everything from tools to oxygen generators for members to try. This popular event is truly a win-win for all involved. Members can try out equipment they are considering buying and suppliers can demonstrate their products to a huge concentration of their potential customers. An added bonus is the chance to watch a veteran glass artist at work.

Since education is the primary goal for the Gathering, 460 attendees also enjoyed learning about the new equipment and glass on the market. The technical vendor's area was filled with booths from our favorite suppliers, tempting us with wonderful tools, books, findings and the latest glass colors. The only problems were not deep enough pockets and how to get all that great stuff home.

Each year, the ISGB honors one of its own for their contribution not only to the ISGB and its mission to educate, promote and preserve the traditions and techniques of the art of glass beadmaking, but also to the studio glass movement itself. This year, the ISGB honored Mike Frantz for his generosity and vision. Congratulations Mike! Thanks for everything and keep bringing us all those great colors.

There are so many activities going on during The Gathering that it was hard to take them all in and get any sleep. Between the gallery shows, bead bazaar, meetings and impromptu sharing sessions, the most fun is meeting old friends and making new ones. Whether you are a green dot newbie (a first timer) or you have been to every Gathering, there is always something new and exciting to explore.

Gathering XIV is scheduled for July 26-29 in Minneapolis, MN in 2007. The lineup of teachers and presenters has already begun to take shape and the Board and National Conference Committee is working hard to bring another exciting conference next summer. If you would like more information about the next conference or other benefits of membership to the ISGB, please look us up at [www.isgb.org](http://www.isgb.org). Looking forward to seeing ya'll in Minneapolis!



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[www.isgb.org](http://www.isgb.org)