

# CHIHULY<sup>®</sup> IN THE HOTSHOP

## Press Release

SEATTLE – In 2006, world-renowned artist Dale Chihuly reunited glassblowers from important periods of his career in a weeklong residency at the Museum of Glass in his hometown of Tacoma, Washington. The event brought the artists and craftsmen together to produce pieces revisiting some of Chihuly's most important series, representing more than 30 years of work. Each series featured in the residency was originally developed with a specific gaffer or artist. Chihuly had envisioned each of them returning for the historic event—and return they did. Forty gaffers and artists participated in the residency, joined by more than 10,000 visitors who came to the museum to witness the creative process first-hand.

The fast-paced documentary ***Chihuly in the Hotshop*** captures highlights of the Museum of Glass residency, following Chihuly and his teams as they create magnificent pieces of glass art before an appreciative live audience in the museum's state-of-the-art hotshop. Their work revisits 13 of Chihuly's best-known series: *Cylinders*, *Baskets*, *Seaforms*, *Macchia*, *Soft Cylinders*, *Persians*, *Venetians*, *Piccolo Venetians*, *Putti*, *Ikebana*, *Nijijima Floats*, *Pilchuck Stumps* and *Fiori*.

***Chihuly in the Hotshop*** will be available for broadcast on public television stations nationwide, in both 60-minute and 90-minute versions, beginning November 1, 2008. (Please check local listings.)

Filmed in high-definition television, ***Chihuly in the Hotshop*** provides viewers with an intimate, close-up look at the challenging, often physically grueling, process involved in creating a work of art in glass. The documentary shows Chihuly drawing designs for the glass pieces and puts viewers literally in the middle of the action as team members create those pieces, blowing, rolling, firing and shaping them to completion. From applying a thin layer of gold foil to a molten sphere of glass, to lining a mold with pieces of wood in order to impart a bark-like texture to the glass that will be blown inside it, the artists and gaffers use a variety of techniques to achieve the striking results for which Chihuly and his teams are known. The documentary reveals the wide range of artistic styles seen in Chihuly's work, from the *Navajo Blanket Cylinders* produced with skilled glassblower and gaffer Benjamin Moore to the *Putti* series—featuring small, cherub-like characters crafted from blown glass—created with Pino Signoretto, whom Chihuly describes as “the best glass sculptor alive.”

In the film, Chihuly discusses the genesis of each collection of works. His early, breakthrough *Baskets* series, for instance, was inspired by Indian baskets he saw on display of Tacoma's Washington State Historical Society in 1977. Chihuly recalls how he created the *Venetian* series with Italian master glassblower Lino Tagliapietra after seeing a display of Art Deco glass in Venice; ultimately, the series “took on a life of its own,” drawing upon forms and techniques from throughout history and becoming totally unlike anything Chihuly had previously done. Chihuly also recounts how a visit to a Japanese island in the mid-1990s evoked boyhood memories of collecting fishing floats along the Washington coast; those memories spurred the creation of the *Nijijima Float* series, which features pieces that are not only the largest Chihuly and his team have created, but also among the most complicated and challenging to make, as the documentary shows. Interwoven with high-energy scenes of the artists and gaffers bringing Chihuly's designs to fruition, these and other recollections offer fascinating insights into the artist's work.

Rounding out the documentary are comments from team members including William Morris, who first saw Chihuly in action at a late-night glassblowing session at the Pilchuck Glass School in 1978: “He picked up a blowpipe, and he gathered some glass, and he blew a small piece without using any tools. ... The approach to it was so fresh and, I realized, so brilliant, that I was just amazed ... This guy was authentic.”

Directed by Peter West, ***Chihuly in the Hotshop*** premiered January 3, 2008, on the opening weekend of the 19th Annual Palm Springs International Film Festival. Filmgoers praised the documentary as the most accurate portrayal ever made of the artist at work. The film has since been screened at the 31st Portland International Film Festival in Portland, Oregon, as well as at the Museum of Glass. ***Chihuly in the Hotshop*** will wrap up its 2008 film-festival tour with a screening at HDFEST, a major digital-cinema festival being held in New York City in October.

Peter West is a Northwest filmmaker who first filmed glassblowing in 1986. He has devoted himself to documenting artists’ practices since 1999, capturing the work of such artists as Dale Chihuly, Takashi Murakami and Italo Scanga. The film’s producer, Mark McDonnell, is an artist whose work can be found at the Louvre, the Smithsonian Institution and the Corning Museum of Glass.

Dale Chihuly has contributed to revolutionizing the studio glass movement by expanding its original premise of the solitary artist to encompass the notion of collaborative teams and a division of labor within the creative process. For three decades, the artist has exhibited extensively in museums, and his site-specific, public sculptures can be seen in cities the world over. In April 2008, the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco’s de Young and Legion of Honor museums opened an exhibition and installations featuring several pieces by Chihuly—a prelude to *Chihuly at the de Young*, a major exhibition of the artist’s new and archival works that opened in June 2008.

***Chihuly in the Hotshop*** is a production of Portland Press.

The program is presented by KCTS 9/Seattle Public Television and is distributed by American Public Television (APT).

PRODUCER: Mark McDonnell. DIRECTOR: Peter West. Editors: Peter West and John Campbell.

CINEMATOGRAPHERS: Joseph Hudson, Bruce Hutson and Peter West. MUSIC: Tom Tom Club.

###

**Station Relations/Publicity Contacts:**

Tom Niemi  
KCTS 9/Seattle Public Television  
206.615.5445  
tniemi@KCTS9.org

Shaylan Frazee  
KCTS 9/Seattle Public Television  
206.443.4217  
sfrazee@KCTS9.org

# CHIHULY<sup>®</sup> IN THE HOTSHOP

## Program Fact Sheet

### Description:

In 2006, world-renowned artist Dale Chihuly reunited glassblowers from important periods of his career in a weeklong residency at the Museum of Glass in his hometown of Tacoma, Washington. The residency brought 40 artists and gaffers together to produce pieces revisiting 13 of Chihuly's most important and best-known series. This documentary captures highlights of that historic event, following Chihuly and his teams as they create magnificent works of glass art before an appreciative live audience in the museum's state-of-the-art hotshop. Filmed in high-definition television, the documentary offers an intimate, close-up view of the artist's process, from initial design to completed piece.

*Chihuly in the Hotshop* is available for broadcast in both 60-minute and 90-minute versions.

**Program Length:** 56:46 and 86:46

**Feed for Record:** Available to stations in both NTSC letterbox and high-definition television versions.

NTSC letterbox version:

60-minute version: October 26, 2008, 1300-1400ET/511

90-minute version: October 26, 2008, 1400-1530ET/511

High-definition television version: Feed date/time and transponder to be announced.

### Public Television

**Premiere:** November 1, 2008

**A Production of:** Portland Press

**Presenting Station:** KCTS 9/Seattle Public Television

**Distributor:** American Public Television (APT)

**Credits:** PRODUCER: Mark McDonnell. DIRECTOR: Peter West. EDITORS: Peter West and John Campbell. CINEMATOGRAPHERS: Joseph Hudson, Bruce Hutson and Peter West. Music: Tom Tom Club.

**DVD & Book Set:** This set consists of the 90-minute documentary and a small-format (7¾ in. x 5½ in.), 144-page hardcover book that captures the Museum of Glass residency through evocative descriptions and more than 90 images that re-create the experience from the attendee's perspective; liner notes are by independent art critic and curator Matthew Kangas. PRICE: \$29.95, plus shipping and handling.

To order, visit [channel9store.com](http://channel9store.com) or call 1.800.937.5387.

**Web Site:** For more on Dale Chihuly and his work—including a schedule of current and upcoming exhibitions, lists of public installations and museums exhibiting Chihuly's work, writings by and about the artist, and images of selected works—visit [chihuly.com](http://chihuly.com).

### Station Relations/ Publicity Contacts:

Tom Niemi  
KCTS 9/Seattle Public Television  
206.615.5445  
[tنيemi@KCTS9.org](mailto:tنيemi@KCTS9.org)

Shaylan Frazee  
KCTS 9/Seattle Public Television  
206.443.4217  
[sfrazee@KCTS9.org](mailto:sfrazee@KCTS9.org)

# CHIHULY<sup>®</sup> IN THE HOTSHOP

## About Dale Chihuly

Born in 1941 in Tacoma, Washington, Dale Chihuly was introduced to glass while studying interior design at the University of Washington. After graduating in 1965, Chihuly enrolled in the first glass program in the country, at the University of Wisconsin. He continued his studies at the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), where he later established the glass program and taught for over a decade.

In 1968, Chihuly was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to work at the Venini factory in Venice, Italy. While in Venice, Chihuly observed the team approach to blowing glass, which is critical to the way he works today. In 1971, Chihuly cofounded Pilchuck Glass School in Washington. With this international glass center, he has led the avant-garde in the development of glass as a fine art.

Chihuly's work is included in more than 200 museum collections worldwide. He has been the recipient of many awards, including eight honorary doctorates and two fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Chihuly has created many well-known series of works, among them *Baskets*, *Persians* and *Seaforms*, but he is also celebrated for large architectural installations. In 1995, he embarked on the international project *Chihuly Over Venice*, which involved working in glass factories in Finland, Ireland and Mexico, with the resultant sculptures installed over the canals and piazzas of Venice. The project was documented in the award-winning 1998 PBS documentary *Chihuly Over Venice*, produced by KCTS 9/Seattle.

In 1999, Chihuly mounted his most ambitious installation to date, *Chihuly in the Light of Jerusalem*, which drew more than 1 million visitors to the Tower of David Museum to view his work. In 2001, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London curated the exhibition *Chihuly at the V&A*. The Chihuly Bridge of Glass in Tacoma, Washington, was dedicated the following year.

Chihuly's lifelong affinity for glasshouses has grown into a series of exhibitions within botanical settings. His garden exhibition was first presented in 2001 at the Garfield Park Conservatory in Chicago. He exhibited at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, near London, in 2005, and at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Coral Gables, Florida, in both 2006 and 2007. An exhibition at the Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, opened in May 2007.

Chihuly's most ambitious exhibition to date, *Chihuly at the de Young*, runs June 14–September 28, 2008, at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco's de Young Museum. The show includes 11 galleries of new and archival works spanning Chihuly's career and is the artist's first major exhibition in San Francisco.

# CHIHULY® IN THE HOTSHOP

## Publicity Stills

These color stills are available to download from [KCTS9.org/about/press](http://KCTS9.org/about/press).

Images may be used only in conjunction with print or online promotion of *Chihuly in the Hotshop*.

### Station Relations/ Publicity Contacts:

Tom Niemi  
KCTS 9/Seattle Public Television  
206.615.5445  
tniemi@KCTS9.org

Shaylan Frazee  
KCTS 9/Seattle Public Television  
206.443.4217  
sfrazee@KCTS9.org

### Photo credits:

1. Dale Chihuly CREDIT: Brian Ohno
2. Venetian Glory Hold CREDIT: Claire Garoutte
3. Fiori CREDIT: Terry Rishel
4. Team Chihuly CREDIT: Scott M. Leen (same photo as on the mailer)
5. Team Chihuly CREDIT: Terry Rishel

