



## RED SEA GALLERY

**Ben Young**, b. 1982  
New Zealand



Residing in Mount Maunganui, New Zealand, Ben Young has been making glass sculpture for over 15 years and has exhibited alongside well-known glass artists both internationally and in Australia. Having spent most of his life in the Bay of Plenty (North Island, NZ), it seemed natural for him to explore the local landscape and surroundings for early inspiration in his art. A keen surfer and a boat builder by profession, he is largely influenced by the ocean and brings these passions together in his evocative glass forms.

Each of Young's sculptural works are hand drawn, hand cut and handcrafted from clear sheet float glass, then laminated layer upon layer to create the final form. He constructs models, draws templates, makes custom jigs and then cuts the layers with a glazier's hand-tool. The complexity comes from the planning phase, where he says 'I do a lot of thinking before I even start to draw or cut'. He then sketches the concept by hand and creates a plan using traditional technical drawing techniques: 'I work with 2D shapes and have to figure out how to translate that into a 3D finished piece. Sometimes my starting point changes dramatically as I have to find a way to layer the glass to create certain shapes.'

At one point, the acquisition of a large amount of recycled glass from an old glass-house provoked new thoughts and ideas around the creation of life, in the 'Life Within Series'. The concept that the glass had previously been used to house life and growth inspired him to create his own life forms and shapes, such as a pregnant figure, within the glass. The lamination process complemented this idea as each work grew from being a single, solitary layer of glass, into a series of layers that together formed a complete creation.

Young's current work explores the use of industrial materials to compliment the organic glass shapes. He liked the idea that concrete is a basic construction material, and also the physical and visual contrasts between the textures and colours of both materials. Still noticeably influenced by the ocean and bodies of water - the concrete forms have become an integral part of his art forms as have the small bronze carvings which he sculpts initially from wax and uses to help portray the narrative suggested by his landscapes.