

Sunday, March 13, 2005

Louisville's Flame Run shows a lot of glass

By Becky Linhardt
Enquirer contributor

IF YOU GO

Flame Run: 828 E. Market St., Louisville. Gallery hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday and by appointment, (888) 584-5353; www.flamerun.com.

Workshops (\$175): Paperweights 10 a.m.-5 p.m. first Saturday of month. Sand-casting: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. second

Saturday of month

Demonstrations: Katie Creyts and Ona Magaro, 6-9 p.m. April 22

Karen Willenbrink-Johnsen, 2-4 p.m.

June 12

Getting there: As I-71 south ends near downtown Louisville, stay right to access I-64 west. Take Third Street exit and go under the interstate and into downtown. Continue south on Third Street. Turn left on Market Street. Flame Run is on right just past Shelby Street. Parking on street.

At Louisville's newest glass studio, Flame Run, the artists want the public to share the excitement of the creative process.

"We feel we have a lot of talent and an opportunity to share that talent with the community," said artist/owner Brook Forrest White Jr. "It is so much more than the gallery and the hot shop. It is the interaction of people with our art."

"Probably as many people enter through the hot shop door as the gallery entry," added White's business partner, artist Susie Garbee Slabaugh. "The hot shop is really the heart of the Flame Run and people are welcome to watch us at work."

The greater part of the 12,000-square-foot facility is devoted to studio space. A roomy observation loft was built on one side of the studio, and there is never a charge to stop to see what is happening. Artists are willing to answer questions, explain processes and discuss or price special commissions.

"We encourage people to learn more about working with glass in our community classes or with private lessons," said White. "We even hosted a corporate group that used the glass-making processes for a day-long team-building session."

The group of seven artists working regularly at Flame Run includes four women: Slabaugh, Devyn Baron, Amy Pender and Casey McMains.

With hair tied back or safely tucked up into ball caps, the women move through the dance of glassmaking, helping each other and the men, White, Paul Nelson and Paul Hugues. They create large fine art pieces priced \$100 and up, as well as "production pieces," smaller, individually made glass ornaments, paperweights, perfume bottles and vases priced \$20-90.

The Flame Run Gallery showcases the work of the studio's artists and hosts shows of regional and national importance.

Slabaugh is excited about the Women in Glass exhibit, which runs April 22-June 25 and features works by Karen Willenbrink-Johnsen, "one of the country's most renowned hot glass artists."

"The intrinsic qualities of a woman's nature translate into the glass they make," said Slabaugh. "There aren't many women glass artists who want to make amazingly perfect vessels. They want to bring their emotion into their work."