

Brassy glass

Judith Schaechter breaks the mold, shatters stereotypes of prim, polite stained glass

By JEN GRAVES
The News Tribune

The only use artist Judith Schaechter ever had for a hot shop was for lighting her cigarettes in the furnace. She's not a glassblower. She's a stained-glass punk.

Her vivid, sometimes demented, visions turn the cathedral tradition upside down. Stained, indeed. She's creator of a girl vomiting flowers, a hallucinating clown, a suicide entombed in a floral valentine.

"She shatters the illusions of pretty glass," said Josi Callan, director of Tacoma's Museum of Glass. Schaechter's audacious works are on display here and have been included in the Whitney Museum of American Art Biennial, collected by the Metropolitan Museum of Art and shown on the cover of *The New Yorker*.

Would the late Louis Comfort Tiffany, known for his art-nouveau lamps and windows, like her work?

"Would I care?" the 43-year-old Philadelphian quips in a phone interview.

The exhibition, "Extra Virgin," is 22 glass panels in individual light boxes, with 14 drawings. It's a wedding of the sacred and the profane, the gallery lights turned low to let the gothic portraits glow. In "Child Bride," a girl in a dress spews flowers, eliminating her innocence. In another piece, a shadowy corpse with a hand grenade in the chest lies beneath a field of cartoon stars. A bumblebee chained to the grenade pin is about to fly off.

Macabre as it is, "Extra Virgin" is also a carnival of irresistible



Judith Schaechter

If you go

What: "Extra Virgin: Work by Judith Schaechter"

When: Through Aug. 1

Where: Museum of Glass, 1801 Dock St., Tacoma

Admission: \$10 adult; \$8 seniors, military and students; \$4 ages 6-12

Information: 253-284-4750 or www.museumofglass.org

Please see **Glass, E3**



IMAGE COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND CLAIRE OLIVER FINE ART

"A Ship on Her Shoulder," 2002



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"Dog Mama," 2002