



AN EXHIBITION CELEBRATING THE ARTISTRY AND TECHNICAL MASTERY OF PIONEERING ARTIST RICHARD MARQUIS

*R & Company's New Exhibition Marquiscarpa
On View October 5, 2021 to January 8, 2022*

New York, NY—October 4, 2021—An unpredictable array of bold, repeating patterns—miniature, swirling snowmen with black top-hats and geometric forms—emerge from the exquisite surfaces of Richard Marquis' *Marquiscarpa*. Inspired by Carlo Scarpa's *Murrine Opache* series, Marquis' objects present masterfully woven murrine arranged to create beautifully ornamented surfaces that draw in the viewer, forcing them to admire both the vibrant colors and the technical skill needed to create each work. Eight of Marquis' objects will be on view in the new exhibition *Marquiscarpa*, opening October 5, 2021 at R & Company's 64 White Street galleries.



For nearly 60 years, pioneering artist Richard Marquis has been on a journey of experimentation with form and pattern, as well as pop culture, kitsch, and humor. His work may take from a day to months to create—employing unparalleled levels of technical skill and attention to detail—yet, for Marquis, it is always about the end result and not just the process. A student and eventual peer of form-breaking artists Peter Voulkos and Ron Nagle, Marquis began as a ceramicist and transitioned to glass-making in the late 1960s. In 1969, he was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to support his work and secured a position at the Venini Factory in Murano, becoming the first American to be permitted to blow glass in the workshop. There he learned the traditional Venetian techniques, such as the creation and use of caning and murrine and millefiori—colored glass patterns and endlessly repeating flowers, respectively. Marquis also met Carlos Scarpa there, who would go on to greatly influence his work.

Marquis' exposure to traditional glass blowing techniques at Venini forever changed the trajectory of glassmaking, in the U.S. and internationally. Marquis brought these techniques back to the U.S. and taught them to his students, who in turn incorporated them and expanded their use in the U.S. and around the world. At the same time, Marquis himself went on to upend the traditional application of many of these complex techniques by inserting different narratives and pop culture references into his objects.

Central to Marquis' body of work is an attention to small detail and an appreciation for the impact that scale and proportion can have—whether an item is large or small. Equally important to Marquis is that each work communicates a concept or narrative to the viewer, seeing the glass as both a canvas for ideas



as well as an artistic medium. For example, his *Acid Capsule*, 1969-1970 (in the collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Corning Museum of Glass) is a small red, white, and blue glass pill made from shards of glass found on the floor at Venini. The work makes references to Americana that would have resonated with any viewer in this period, making the work a smart and playful social critique.



Of the *Marquiscarpa* series, Marquis himself said: “The *Marquiscarpas* are the result of my wonder and admiration for ancient Roman work and for Carlo Scarpa’s designs for Venini before World War II. I made the *Marquiscarpas* because I pay attention to history. I made them because I wanted to see how I would make them. I made them because to me it was the obvious thing to do.” (From *Richard Marquis: Objects*, University of Washington Press, 1998)

“Dick Marquis’ *Marquiscarpa* are another manifestation of his often-irreverent approach to art-making, in this case taking a classical, sacramental form that dates to the ancient world and reimagining it in colorful, nearly kitschy patterns,” said Evan Snyderman, Principal at R & Company. “Marquis expanded the idea of what an artist working with glass could do. His work marries playfulness and perfection in ways that are rare for any artist, and this exhibition honors those qualities.”

“Marquis’ *Marquiscarpa* continue his experimentation with shape, form, color, and imagery with unexpected and beautiful results, creating objects that are both unique on their own and yet an evident part of the artist’s larger ideas,” said Zesty Meyers, Principal at R & Company. “This exhibition builds on the recent installation of Marquis’ works in our *Objects: USA 2020* show, another chance to showcase his creativity and expand appreciation for his work within the broader context of design innovation.”

R & Company will also open on October 5 an exhibition of works by groundbreaking designer Verner Panton.

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