



**R & Company Announces Representation of Pioneering Artist Richard Marquis
And Major Gift of Marquis's Archival Materials**

**Gallery to Present Series of Exhibitions Revealing Breadth and Depth of Marquis's Oeuvre
With First Exhibition to Open This Fall**

Marvels of Murrine On View September 7 – October 27, 2023

New York, NY—R & Company announced today its representation of pathbreaking artist Richard Marquis, with the vision to establish new scholarship about his influential practice and expand the collecting audience for his innovative work across glass, ceramics, and other media. As part of the newly formalized relationship, R & Company received a substantial gift from Richard and Johanna Marquis for its Library and Archives, including early drawings and notebooks, image slides, murrine canes and samples, and rare catalogs capturing important moments in the development of the Studio Glass Movement. Over the next two years, R & Company will present a series of focus exhibitions illuminating the breadth of Marquis's oeuvre, capturing his unwavering commitment to experimentation, unparalleled technical skills, and significance to the evolution of art and craft movements in the United States.



Richard Marquis, *Crazy Quilt Coffee Pot*, 1979, glass.
Photography by Tiffany Smith, courtesy of R & Company.

The first of these presentations will be on view at R & Company's 64 White Street location, from September 7 through October 27, 2023. Titled *Marvels of Murrine: The Artistry of Richard Marquis*, it will reveal his decades-long engagement with and mastery of murrine—a centuries-old technique that allows for fine and intricate glass patterning. The first American to be permitted to blow glass in the famed Venini Factory in Murano, Marquis not only honed his skills with the complex, traditional techniques but applied them to create entirely new kinds of objects that embraced pop culture, humor, and social narrative. Marquis's experience at Venini,

coupled with his own distinct artistic perspective and interest in pushing the boundaries of form, forever changed the trajectory of glassmaking, in the U.S. and internationally.

Marvels of Murrine will feature a selection of decorative murrine tea and coffee pots, produced between 1979 and 2005, including a 1979 example from his iconic *Crazy Quilts* teapot series as well as *Silhouettes and Stripes Teapot*, 1999, which captures his early engagement with symbols of American patriotism and counterculture. The exhibition will also include archival materials, such as sample boxes of murrine tiles



that reflect Marquis's deep understanding of the process and innate ability to create new patterns and forms using the technique. Among these objects are the canes and murrine from Marquis's groundbreaking work *The Lord's Prayer*, which captures a prayer that appears often in folk and outsider art. The completed work, with letters made in murrine, was entirely unprecedented and required tremendous endurance and technical prowess to create. *Marvels of Murrine* will be followed by additional presentations of Marquis's highly varied and distinct murrine works.

"Richard Marquis is widely hailed as the world's greatest murrine maker, with each of his intricate pieces serving as a testament to his visionary artistry and tireless dedication. *Marvels of Murrine* offers an entry into what will be a journey through Marquis's murrine mastery and innovation—one that recognizes Marquis as a luminary who changed and shaped the path of contemporary glass art. To understand his career, is to see it as a tapestry woven of his murrine masterworks," said Zesty Meyers, R & Company's Co-founder and Principal.

"Marquis found an unparalleled way to combine his interests in Pop Art and cultural movements of the 1960s with historical glassmaking techniques of the Venetian maestros. Many of those techniques date back centuries but had never been applied to anything other than a vessel of traditional form. Marquis's sense of humor invaded every aspect of his work, and it has been a joy to discover so many unknown stories about this process and his practice. We look forward to years of exploration into the Marquis archives," added Evan Snyderman, R & Company's Co-founder and Principal.

More About Richard Marquis

For nearly 60 years, pioneering artist Richard Marquis leveraged the formal qualities of his media to create objects imbued with humor and that embraced the power of kitsch and pop culture to exciting and unexpected effects. A student and eventual peer of pioneering artists Peter Voulkos and Ron Nagle, Marquis began as a ceramicist, incorporating glasswork into his practice 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.

During his time at the Venini Factory, he was a tireless student, studying the work of the maestros and meticulously capturing their distinct technical and creative approaches in his notebooks. Through this process, he learned the traditional Venetian techniques, such as the creation and use of filigrana and murrine. His direct engagement with the workers on the Factory floor rapidly led to his own experimentations with color and form. He would go on not only to become a technical master but to upend the traditional application of many of these complex techniques by inserting different narratives and pop culture references into his objects.

It was important to Marquis 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. Many of his early murrine works incorporated red, white, and blue as well as the stars and stripes of the American flag. His interest in these



symbols grew out of the intense political atmosphere in Berkeley, where he lived and worked prior to traveling to Italy. Marquis was equally attuned to small details, and his works reflect his appreciation for scale and proportion as well as for what the Venini maestros would have deemed mistakes—or purposefully imperfect forms. His exceptional expertise in crafting intricate murrine made Marquis a true pioneer in contemporary glass art, with his works redefining the very essence of glass art. At the same time, Marquis taught the traditional Venetian techniques to his students, who in turn incorporated them and expanded their use in the U.S. and around the world, allowing for an ongoing evolution in contemporary glassmaking.

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