

PRESS RELEASE**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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The Premonition, detail

Bellevue Arts Museum presents
Paul Marioni, The Premonition
on view
July 3, 2007 - January 20, 2008

Bellevue, WA – The exhibition features several works created by Northwest artist Paul Marioni and spans between 1981 and 2006. The actual piece entitled *The Premonition* is essentially a light box and has previously shown only once, upon its completion in 1981. The piece offers a glimpse, both humorous and ominous, of a possible future. Yet because the nature of the threat it represents remains unclear, it allows the sensation of foreboding to transcend time, so that the work remains as poignant today as at the moment it was first seen.

The Premonition relegates the human presence to the darkness of a shack as a solitary pitchfork rests outside the window. The piece is charged with a sense of impending catastrophe, and we are left to wonder whether it may be an environmental calamity affecting the planet or an ethical disaster of the soul. “I don’t want to give away too much information as part of the experience is the mystery and the viewer’s first impressions of the piece.” according to museum Curator Stefano Catalani, “The measure of the power of *The Premonition* can be felt not just in its ability to elicit an emotional and intellectual response, or curiosity about its subject—whether literal or

metaphorical—but also in its endurance, as it passes the ambiguous attraction of its questions down from one generation to the next, with each generation interpreting the work in different ways.”

The Premonition was made in 1981 and among the other works being shown are *Bagman Blues*, 1987; *Hiroshima*, 1988; *Whistling Vase*, 2000; *Looking Back*, 2001; and *The Kiss*, 2006. Each piece was selected in collaboration between artist and curator as a token representing the multifaceted and experimental creativity Marioni’s work has achieved over a span of three decades. This exhibition was organized by Bellevue Arts Museum and is on view in the Pilchuck Glass Gallery.

About Paul Marioni

“The further I look the more I see”

Paul Marioni

One of the pioneers and founding members of the American Studio Glass movement, Marioni has pursued the physical and psychological dimensions of the glass medium with the unyielding rigor and curiosity of the intellectual that he is. With humor, wit, and mastery, for over three decades Marioni has blown, painted, laminated, and cast glass, while teaching generations of future glass artists.

Growing up in a family of artists—Tom, his older brother is a sculptor, and Joe, his younger brother a painter—and on the evidence that *artists can do whatever they want, because society is always ready to excuse them by saying “Oh, they’re artists,”*¹ Paul decided to become an artist. A class with the San Francisco filmmaker Robert Nelson fueled his interest in 16-millimeter films. *Self-Portrait*, *R.I.P.*, and *Hole* are the titles of a handful of films he produced toward the end of 1960s and into the early 1970s. The controversial *Hole*, a pseudo-documentary about a man obsessed with holes, won several awards. The film was also shown at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York.

¹ Paul Marioni speaking to the audience in New Orleans in 2004, upon receiving The Glass Art Society Honorary Lifetime Achievement Award.

Marioni's interest in the glass medium started in the 70's—a territory that, unlike film, was at that time still largely uncharted. With its ability to capture and manipulate light, and to create an illusion of motion or three-dimensionality in the two-dimensional plane, glass proved to be an ideal laboratory for Marioni's investigations into the relation between reality and illusions.

Marioni's work is included in a number of prominent collections, such as those of the Museum of Arts and Design, New York, NY; the Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, NY; the Oakland Art Museum, Oakland, CA; the Museum of Glass, Tacoma, WA; and the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC.

Bellevue Arts Museum

Bellevue Arts Museum is the Pacific Northwest's center for the exploration of the fine art of craft and design. An emphasis is placed on regional craft artists as part of the national and international conversation on fine craft and design. Bellevue Arts Museum is located at 510 Bellevue Way NE, Bellevue, WA 98004. Main information line: (425) 519-0770 Website: www.bellevuearts.org
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