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Judy Tuwaletstiwa: Glass



Synopsis

Near White Sands, New Mexico, on July 16th, 1945, at 5:29:45 am Mountain War Time, a nuclear fireball sucked the white sand of the Jornada del Muerto desert high into a still dark sky. The melted sand returned to the earth as a rain of molten glass. Scientists named these glass shards Trinitite, after the site, Trinity. At the time, artist Judy Tuwaletsiwa (born 1941) was four years old. Haunted by the specter the United States released in detonating atomic bombs in New Mexico, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Tuwaletsiwa turned to sand and fire, as artist in residence at Pilchuck Glass School in 2000, to explore this primal creative/destructive act. In a second residency the following year, she explored the Holocaust using blown glass. In 2012, Bullseye Glass Company gave Tuwaletsiwa a residency. Over 18 months, she worked with kiln-fired glass. It has become her central medium. The artist writes: "The raw material that becomes glass holds an interaction of wind, water, fire and earth, the organic creative process lived over geologic time. This transformative process continues to live in my studio through how I work with glass." A follow-up book to the sold-out Mapping Water (Radius Books, 2007), Judy Tuwaletsiwa: Glass weaves a story of her discoveries and explorations while working with glass over the past 4 years based on her work over the past 45 years in fiber, paint and writing. Her use of glass on canvas and paper is at once refined and surprising—a truly revolutionary response to a well-known medium. The highly personal combination of text and images in this book bridges fine art and craft, technology and nature, the political and the aesthetic, the conceptual and the material. Each copy of the book is unique: the cover has a hand-tipped on original piece of glass by the artist.

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