# Creative Living



## Hot glass, heavy art

ataif writer

ARBARA WALLACE SAYS

she's a glass blower because it combines three
cause it combines three
musta and dance. The art part is
self-explanatory. The music is
what she turns on to work by and
the dance, more precisely choreography. Is the fast-paced, timed
movements she goes through nontop for 45-60 intuites at a crack.
No hesitations, no stopping to
look around, just intense activity,
from the time she first puts the
glass on the end of the long blow
pipe or punty, until she cuts it loose
to put into the annealing oven.

Between the the beginning and
the end, she will have the piece in
and out of the furnace and the glory hole beside it (to reheat) from
20-25 times.

AT THE glass studio at the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Association (BBAA), she and her assistant, Gerry Mace, two 100-pound lightweights, had danced and strained their way through a couple of rounds before the glass furnace and were getting ready to go one more round before they called it a day, It was a 55-degree November day.

ber day.
"In six hours, we'll do three large pieces and five small ones . . . I can wring my clothes out when I leave here," Wallace sald.

BBAA on Wednesdays.

SHE PUT herself through three years of college making stained glass, heading loward a degree in clementary education. After student teaching and more work with glass, she decided to change direction. Instead of completing her degree in elementary education, abe decided to go for a degree from the Center for Creative Studies. It took six years, but in 1986, she received her digree.

Her first exposure to working with bot glass was at the Toledo Misseum in 1981, she knew then it was her medium. She has since gone to glass worstshops in Maine, Seattle and North Carolina.

"Twe had my hands in it for a long time," she said.

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SHE WORKS on two to three different levels. The small pieces like those she has in the BBAA Hollday Sales Show, through Dec. 10, are her bread and butter pieces. Larger works such as overlay wases are at llona Gallery of Farmington Hills, Signature Gallery in the Michigan Design Center and the Detroit Artists Market.

Yet, when describing her work, she said, "Tim known for sculpture—bronze with glass. The Detroit Institute of Arts purchased a piece of mine (like that) in April and it's She will be at the Detroit Listitute of Arts founders Society members Thursday, Dec. 8, with Herb Babcock of the Center Orcative Sudies. They should be a good combination, Wallace said.



Barbara Wallace shapes the hot glass with wet newspaper while Gerry Mace blows.

Barbara Wallace and Gerry Mace (behind) vase is already well on its way.

"We're both sculptural types."
Mace, a free-lance photographer, came into glass blowing by fluke. She arrived here from Boston to do a plece on glass blowing and ended up at the business end of a blow pipe.
"I talked her into staying," Wallace said, "She does the actual blowing for me. I have to move real fast."

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lace said. "She does the actual blowing for me. I have to move real fast."

WALLACE'S VASES are complicated. She uses one color glass for the inside, another for the outside. Then she adds glass shards that she makes herself ahead of time for color and texture, and canes that the transport of the state of the state

IN THE furnace the shards became soft and congealed with the whole. As soon as that happened with the wallace would put it out quickly to pick up more shards — paper, blow, singe, heat. Repeat.

"Two more blows. Keep going — blow. Blow. Blow. Blow. Blow. Blow. Blow. Coo-ow — mice." In and out again to pick up the cones on the marvering table. It took two tries to get all of them in position.

took we tries to get all of them in position.

If you have the service of the ser

ty.
"This is something I always
wanted to do and I love it,"Wallace

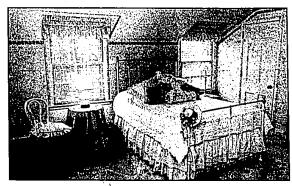
### Selling gift items

jewelry, wall hangings, glass, hand-painted scarves, candles, chimes, folk art Santas, hand-decorated aby clothes, ceramics, a whimst-cal line of children's furniture and

#### Staff photos by Jerry Zolynsky



Barbara Wallace just dropped a piece of overlay glass made especially to smash for shards. She retrieves the best to use for the piece she is about to make.



### **Tour visitors welcome**

"Yuletide Treasures" is the theme of the 3Pth annual Christmas Walk sponsored by the Detroit with Middle Eastern treasures; a charming home Symphony League. The Birmingham-Bioconfield with seven Christmas trees; a country style home walk, featuring ask homes from contemporary to new England farm traditional, decorated for the holidays, will be held from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 7.

Grosse Polota homes will be featured in the walk there from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 14.

The door prize will be Christmas tree done by Bonnie L. Meyer, a first-prize winner in the Festival of Trees. Ticket are \$5 for groups of 10 or val of Trees. Ticket are \$5 for groups of 10 or val

The door prize will be Christmas tree done by Bonnie L. Meyer, a first-prize winner in the Festi-val of Trees. Tickets are \$8 for groups of 10 or more, \$8 advance and \$10 at the door. For infor-mation, call \$51-2132 or \$42-9585.



The dining room table is set, and Christmas dec New England farm house, done in shades of blue and raspber-ry by Interior designer Bonnie L. Meyer. At left is a temon yel-low-and-white bedroom fit for a little princess. This family home is one of six on the Symphony Leegue's Christmas Walk.

See related story.