

Title: John Paul Robinson: Art, Science and Myth

Date: May 02, 2014 02:30 PM

URL: <http://pirsa.org/14050062>

Abstract: Canadian glass artist and Renaissance man, John Paul Robinson, explores the mythic potential of science. Explaining that, "This is the idea that scientific discovery is changing our mythology by changing our understanding of the world and our place in it." Backed with a firm understanding of the science he references, his sculptures poetically interpret such theoretical phenomena as wave particles, string mathematics and black holes. Most people, especially scientists see mythology and science as mutually exclusive and many believe that a scientific understanding of the world will eventually eliminate the need for myth. This idea is based on a misunderstanding as to what myth really is and its relationship to science. Myth is not superstition, fairy tale or lies nor is it truth, history or fact. Myth is Art. Myth is a picture, a story, a map; we use to navigate the world. Not the external material world but the world we all create and hold in our minds. In every human mind is a mythic picture of the world that provides the stage for all we experience. This picture not only helps us navigate our world but also performs the critical function of informing our sense of place and belonging within that world. Science cannot replace myth but it can inform it for mythology deals not with the mysteries generated by our ignorance of how the world works but by our understanding of how the world works. The mathematics of string theory is a powerful tool to describe the world but even physicists have to close their eyes and picture in their minds the world their equations are describing. The equation is pure logic and reason, but the picture of tiny strings playing the music that creates the universe is pure mythology. Award-winning glass artist and instructor John Paul Robinson was educated at the Georgian College of Arts and Technology in Barrie, Ontario, and the Ontario College of Art, where he subsequently taught for a number of years. His work has been exhibited in solo shows throughout Canada and the United States, in cities such as Montreal, Toronto and Chicago. Robinson's works are held in the collections of The Museum of Civilization in Ottawa, Ontario, the Museum of American Glass in Millville, New Jersey and the Musée des Beaux-arts de Montréal, Québec. He has also created the Amber Archive, an annual participatory art project to communicate our existence and creative endeavours (by artists, designers and scientists) to beings millions of years in the future.









































