



Virginia Wilson Tocalino and husband/partner Tony Tocalino display some of the hand blown art glass available at their Galactic Art Glass Studio.

recreation & entertainment

YOUR GUIDE TO WHERE TO GO & WHAT TO DO IN HALTON

Looking glass future

STORY AND PHOTO BY DONNA DANIELLI

of art glass that the world is literally seeing for the very first time.

Pioneering a new style of art glass is intensely satisfying for the artists, an important factor considering that this particular technique is not only labour intensive but also requires a high level of skill to produce. Many of the pieces found in the Galactic Art Glass Studio can take days or even weeks to produce the final product. "We really want to dive into this deeply," admits Ginny. "It really accentuates the work that we do." Focussing on new and innovative techniques is crucial to their business which is caught in an increasingly fierce global competition. "Every artist is shaking in their boots that their designs are being copied off shore," explains Ginny of the alarming increase in foreign manufacturers producing inexpensive reproductions at a cut-rate price. "It's a pretty scary world," says an indignant Tony. "The playing field is nowhere near level. They can copy the work for a fraction of the price. It costs us more money to melt the glass. It's a real balancing act to stay in this business." Still, Ginny is quick to point out the bright side of the competition. "There are still people that want hand made in Canada pieces. There's a trend to be unique in what you offer," she says. "We need to focus more on being better and using more technologically advanced work and designs." One of the key aspects of a collectible piece of glass art is the artist's signature on the piece, and Ginny is currently working on a glass rod that will embed her initials in a logo on even the smallest, most delicate pieces of jewellery she is creating. "That signature is a very important part of our work," says Tony. "It guarantees that you are purchasing an original work of art, not something that has been mass produced cheaply."

Her one of a kind, unusually creative jewellery is just one of the signature items that Ginny is known for. The studio also features ribbon and filigree glass icicles, a wide variety of vases and bowls, paperweights, friendship hearts, angels, per-

fume bottles and more. While marbles can be found in everything from Damascus to a Dichroic Whimsy style, it is an invention of Ginny and Tony's that particularly stands out in the showcase. The Marblelizer, which is comprised of a handle with a large marble on one end and a small marble on the other, is a classic example of just how functional art glass can be. Made completely of hand blown glass painstakingly created in studio, the Marblelizer is the perfect massage tool. It glides smoothly over skin, is made to rest in heated oil in a way that retains the heat, and is hygienic to use.

"There's a different collector for every style of glass blowing," explains Ginny. "There's a collector for everything that we do." The Galactic Art Glass Studio is open to the public by chance or by appointment. The nature of the work of glass blowing is such that Ginny and Tony don't have specific hours during which the working studio is available. "Our business is nothing like any business you've seen," says Tony. "The glass requires total focus and concentration. You let go or lose concentration for a moment and you're falling." Tony and Ginny are opening their studio to the public for the weekend of November 11th though as they welcome visitors to their annual Christmas Open Studio and Seconds Sale that will feature not only their award winning art glass but will offer a limited number of works that "are not quite perfect" at a discounted rate.

"I think it's pretty interesting stuff, we're captivated by it," says Tony of the complex pieces of hand blown glass they create together. "There are only two things that can limit you - your imagination and your skill. If you have the skill to handle the glass and the imagination to design, then there's no limit to what you can create."

For more information about the Galactic Art Glass Studio, where past traditions meet the future, please call Ginny or Tony at 905-876-1609 or check their website at www.galacticglass.ca.

There aren't many of us that can plan on leaving a legacy that will last a millennium but Virginia Wilson Tocalino (Ginny) and her husband /partner Tony Tocalino have the pleasure of knowing that they are creating one of a kind pieces of art within their Galactic Glass Studio that will live on long after them. "They're future heirlooms," explains Tony. "Glass is the eternal material, the colours won't fade and it doesn't deteriorate." Ginny and Tony produce their hand blown glass at their custom built studio on Main Street in Milton, creating an artwork that mixes vibrant coloured threads in layers with sections of beautiful, clear crystal.

Specializing in techniques that were mastered by the Venetians over 1,500 years ago and held as a closely guarded secret for centuries, Ginny and Tony are constantly challenging themselves to create new and innovative works of art within their studio. "We're taking new scientific glass and modern technology and mixing it up with the ancient Venetian techniques," explains Tony. "It really combines the old and the new. We always want to push the envelope and do more innovative work technically." By adding new technology to historic techniques, the couple are producing cutting edge works

PETER C. MCCUSKER
PHOTOGRAPHER

CORPORATE EVENTS

...
PORTRAITURE

...
FAMILY GATHERINGS

...
WEDDINGS

...
GENERAL PHOTOGRAPHY

905-580-0658 OR E-MAIL
PCMCCUSKER@YAHOO.CA

Thirty years experience and still fresh

THREE DAYS ONLY

**WATERFORD CRYSTAL
PERTSHIRE GLASSWORKS
KOSTA BODA**

**ARE ALL GOING TO BE VERY ANGRY
WHEN THEY HEAR ABOUT THE SALE AT**

Galactic Art Glass studio



Home of
Spaceside Hot Glass

**Annual Christmas Open House
& Seconds Sale**
*Featuring Beautiful Works in Glass
that are "not quite perfect"*

**Friday November 11, 10-5
Saturday November 12, 10-5
Sunday November 13, 12-5**

**781 Main St. E., Unit 26-27
Milton • 905-876-1609**

Dreamer:

Inspired by a true story

Dreamer is sure to tug at any audience member's heartstrings when Dakota Fanning, Kris Kristofferson, and Kurt Russell come together to save the life of an injured racehorse. Ben Crane was once a great horseman, but as a trainer his gifts are now being wasted making other men fortunes racing horses. When Crane (Russell) is suddenly cut loose from his job as a horse trainer, his severance pay is certainly far from normal. Cut short by a career ending broken leg, Sonya the great racehorse is given to Ben after her accident.

Sonya isn't exactly an ideal racehorse, but when Ben's young daughter Cale falls in love with the animal, she becomes determined to bring her back as a top-notch racer. Considered as good as dead to her previous owner, Cale (Dakota Fanning) shows her unwavering confidence in the animal as they bond along the journey to the Breeders Cup Classic.

Also starring in this film is Kris Kristofferson as Ben Crane's father whose strained relationship is recon-

film review

By LAURA SCHOFIELD

nected by their shared hopes for Sonya. Other cast members include the Oscar nominated Elisabeth Shue (*Leaving Las Vegas*), David Morse (*The Green Mile*), Freddy Rodriguez (HBO's *Six Feet Under*), Luis Guzmán (*Anger Management*) and Oded Fehr (*The Mummy*). Although John Gatins makes his directorial debut with *Dreamer*, producers Michael Tollin (*Radio*) and Brian Robbins (*Varsity Blues*) add a little experience to the behind the scenes crew.

The acting in *Dreamer* is generally good but Dakota Fanning is what really makes the film worth seeing. Her maturity and sense of presence in her role as Cale propels the plot of the film and also seeps into the other characters making this film an immediate success. Although *Dreamer* has an MPAA rating of PG, due to brief and mild language, this film is a great example of a quality family story that is sure to entertain children and adults alike.