

CURRICULA VITAE  
KENNETH v o n R O E N N

Kenneth Frederick von Roenn, Jr. was born in 1948 in Louisville, Kentucky. As a young man, his interests were athletic, primarily in springboard and platform diving. He attended Florida State University, on a full athletic scholarship, while also pursuing his interests in fine art, philosophy and English, earning a B. A. degree in 1970.

Von Roenn began his career in glass in 1970 at Louisville Art Glass Studio and within a few years he had become the General Manager and in 1975, he was promoted to President. In the early 70's he was an active member of the Stained Glass Association of America serving on the executive committee and also as chairman of the publications committee. During this period, he compiled a body of innovative architectural glass artwork and establishing the studio as one of the most aesthetically and technically progressive in the country. During this period von Roenn wrote regularly for several magazines on the topic of glass in architecture and taught courses in architectural art at the U of KY School of Architecture from 1974-76.

Recognizing a need to pursue his evolving interest in architecture, he took a leave of absence from the studio in 1977 to pursue a Masters Degree in Architecture at Yale University. While at Yale, von Roenn further developed his interest in architectural art through work with the professor/architect/sculptor Kent Bloomer, which was culminated in his independent thesis entitled, *'The Primary Modalities of Art's Relationship with Architecture: Integration, Juxtaposition and Synthesis'*. He graduated in 1981 and established von Roenn Studio Group in Branford, CT, which designed glass, architecture, graphics and furniture, executing commissions nationally and internationally.

In 1983, he returned to Louisville and worked for two architectural firms before establishing an architectural practice with two partners to form Bailey, Preston, von Roenn Architecture. It was also at this time that he returned to competitive diving, which was culminated with winning two masters World Championship titles, setting two world records at the age of 41. Having achieved his earliest

goal at long last of being a world champion, von Roenn turned his exclusive attention to his true passion, expressive glass.

In 1991, von Roenn bought the Louisville Art Glass Studio and renamed it **Architectural Glass Art, Inc.** He expanded and reorganized the company, redirecting its focus on new roles for glass in architecture. The studio became recognized for its innovative application of new technologies. He served as the director of design and CEO/President, managing a staff of thirty. In the late 90's, von Roenn's desire to expand the studio led to his search for a new space.

Von Roenn joined a group of developers and investors interested in the revitalization of downtown Louisville as well as the region's firm commitment to the arts. The group, guided by von Roenn's vision of a multipurpose glass facility, which was the foundational concept for **Glassworks**. From the original idea of a new home for Architectural Glass Art, von Roenn created a space for more than 50 glass artists to work and sell their art. Von Roenn owned and oversaw the two galleries, a public workshop, a tour program, a special events program and the glass blowing studio, which comprised Glassworks. More than 125,000 people visited Glassworks annually, which made it one of Louisville's most popular attractions.

In 2012 von Roenn sold his interest in Glassworks to focus his attention exclusively on Architectural Glass Art. Under von Roenn's leadership the studio executed more than 2,000 projects throughout the United States as well as projects in Japan, Mexico, the Caribbean, Europe, the Middle East, and China. In addition to designing his own projects, von Roenn has also collaborated with several significant artists on major projects including Al Held, Jose Bedia, Laura Battle, Thomas Sayre and Jennifer Bartlett. He has also worked with many of the leading American architects including Cesar Pelli, Charles Moore, William Turnbull, Thomas Ventulett, Johnson/ Burgee, Graham Gund, etc. Von Roenn designed an architectural glass work in collaboration with TVS Design, which his studio produced that is the world's largest glass sculpture, crowning the top of Wachovia Bank's Corporate Headquarters (now 3 Wells Fargo) in Charlotte, NC. This work weighs more than 500,000 pounds, can be seen from miles away and is designed to withstand hurricane force winds. Von Roenn's work has been published in dozens of books and in many major architecture magazines,

including a feature article on his work in “*Architecture*” magazine. He has lectured extensively throughout North America and Canada and has written many magazine articles on art and architecture.

Von Roenn has received numerous awards, including the Faith and Form Visual Arts Grand Award, American Crafts Award for Architectural Art, the AIA Allied Professional Award, the DuPont Benedictus Award, the Corning Museum Award, the Al Smith Fellowship, Tau Sigma Delta Architecture Fraternity Award, five Ministry & Liturgy’s Bene Awards and ten CODAworx Awards. He has been inducted into the American Glass Hall of Fame as well as the Atherton High School Hall of Fame and was named one the twenty-five most influential people in the arts in the Midwest by *Dialogue* magazine. He was presented with the Governor’s Award in the Arts for Lifetime Achievement in 2011 by the governor of Kentucky, which is the highest honor bestowed on a Kentucky artist.

In addition, von Roenn received the Crystal Award for his design of a glass bridge for the Louisville arena. This project has been recognized as a technological tour de force for the way in which expressive glass was used as a significant structural element of the bridge.

In 2013 von Roenn decided that it was time to begin slowing down so he first closed Architectural Glass Art and moved to Tallahassee, Fl to work with Florida State University, where von Roenn served as the founder of the Public and Architectural Art program and the Director of the Master Craftsman Studio. As a professor von Roenn taught courses in public and architectural art as well as sculpture and creative entrepreneurship. He did not renew his contract with FSU in 2016 so he could once again turn his attention exclusively back to glass. With his move to Florida he established Kaiser/von Roenn Studio with his partner, Ursula Vourvoulis, and served as its Design Director. K/vR Studio’s focus was on large-scale architectural glass projects nationally and internationally. Since the inception of the studio in 2013 K/vR Studio completed major projects in Manilla, Philippines, Dublin, Ireland, Austin, TX, Nashville, TN, Denver, CO, Los Angeles, CA, Washington D.C., Chicago, IL, Dallas, TX, San Diego, CA, Miami, FL, Denver, CO, el Paso, TX, and Gambier, OH. He lectures frequently on the topic of public art and its role in communities as well as the role of artistic glass in architecture.

A documentary film of von Roenn's work, "*Beyond Stained Glass, The Architectural Glass of Kenneth von Roenn*" was produced by the film maker New Zealand filmmaker, Sam Halstead, in 2023 for the permanent collection of the Corning Museum and was broadcast by PBS nationally as well as online streaming on You Tube.

In 2024 von Roenn moved to Austin, TX to be with his daughter and her family and relocated the K/vR Studio from Florida, renaming it the **Kenneth von Roenn Studio** to continue his exploration of glass in architecture, primarily on smaller scale and residential projects.

