CHIHULY
STUDIO

Dale Chihuly | Chronology

1941 Born September 20 in Tacoma, Washington, to George Chihuly, a butcher and union organizer, and Viola Magnuson Chihuly, a homemaker and avid gardener. His father is predominantly of Hungarian, Czech, and Slavic ancestry; his mother, Swedish and Norwegian.

1957 Older brother and only sibling, George, dies in a navy flight-training accident in Pensacola, Florida.

1958 His father suffers a fatal heart attack at age fifty-one, and his mother has to go to work.

1959 Graduates from high school in Tacoma. His mother persuades him to enroll at College of Puget Sound (now University of Puget Sound) in his hometown.

1960 An interest in art (including a term paper on Van Gogh) and his remodeling of his mother's recreation room motivate him to transfer to University of Washington in Seattle, where he studies interior design and architecture.

1961 Joins Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity and becomes rush chairman. Learns to melt and fuse glass.

1962 Disallusioned with his studies, he leaves school and travels to Florence to focus on art. Frustrated by his inability to speak Italian, he moves on to the Middle East.

1963 Works on a kibbutz in Negev desert, Israel. Meets architect Robert Landsman in Jericho, Jordan, and they visit the site of ancient Petra. Reinspired, returns to University of Washington and studies interior design under Hope Foote and Warren Hill. In a weaving class with Doris Brockway, incorporates glass shards into woven tapestries.

1964 While a student, receives the Seattle Weavers Guild Award for innovative use of glass and fiber. Returns to Europe, visiting Leningrad and making the first of many trips to Ireland.

1965 Receives BA in interior design from University of Washington and works as a designer for John Graham & Company, architects in Seattle. Introduced to textile designer Jack Lenor Larsen, who becomes a mentor and friend. Experimenting in his basement studio, Chihuly blows his first glass bubble by melting stained glass and using a metal pipe. Awarded Highest Honors from the American Institute of Interior Designers.

1966 Earns money for graduate school as a commercial fisherman in Alaska. Enters University of Wisconsin at Madison on a full scholarship, to study glassblowing in the first glass program in the United States, taught by Harvey Littleton.

1967 After receiving MS in sculpture from University of Wisconsin, visits Montreal World Exposition '67 and is inspired by the architectural glass works of Stanislav Libenský and his wife, Jaroslava Brychtová, at the Czechoslovak pavilion. Attending Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) in Providence, he begins exploration of environmental works using neon, argon, and blown glass. Artist Italo Scanga lectures at RISD, and the two start a lifelong friendship. They consider themselves brothers. Awarded a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Grant for work in glass.

1968 Receives MFA from RISD. Spends the first of four consecutive summers teaching at Haystack Mountain School of Crafts in Deer Isle, Maine. Its director, Fran Merritt, becomes a friend and mentor. A Fulbright Fellowship awarded earlier in the year enables Chihuly to work and study in Europe. Accepts an invitation from architect Ludovico de Santillana, son-in-law of Paolo Venini, and becomes the first American glassblower to work in the prestigious Venini factory, on the island of Murano.

1969 Visits relatives in Sweden and makes pilgrimages to meet glass masters Erwin Eisch in Germany and Stanislav Libenský and Jaroslava Brychtová in Czechoslovakia. Establishes the glass program at RISD, where he teaches full time for the next eleven years. Students will include Hank Adams, Howard Ben Tré, James Carpenter, Dan Dailey, Michael Glancy, Roni Horn, Mark McDonnell, Benjamin Moore, Pike Powers, Michael Scheiner, Paul Seide, Therman Statom, Steve Weinberg, and Toots Zynsky, among many others.

1970 While Chihuly and friends shut down RISD to protest the U.S. offensive in Cambodia, he and student John Landon develop ideas for an alternative school in the Pacific Northwest, inspired by Haystack Mountain School of Crafts. Meets artist Buster Simpson, who later works with Chihuly at the new school, created in 1971. Meets James Carpenter, a student in the Architecture Department, and they begin a five-year collaboration.

1971 On the site of a tree farm north of Seattle owned by art patrons Anne Gould Hauberg and John Hauberg, the Pilchuck Glass School experiment is started. A $2,000 grant to Chihuly and Ruth Tamura from the Union of Independent Colleges of Art and funding from the Haubergs provide seed money. Pilchuck Glass School will grow into an institution with a profound impact on artists working in glass worldwide. *Pilchuck Pond*, Chihuly's first environmental installation at the school, is created that summer. In the fall, at RISD, he makes *20,000 Pounds of Ice and Neon*, *Glass Forest #1*, and *Glass Forest #2* with James Carpenter, installations that prefigure later environmental works by Chihuly.

1972 While he is at Pilchuck, his studio on Hobart Street in Providence burns down. Returns to Venice with James Carpenter to blow glass for *Glas heute* exhibition at Museum Bellerive, Zurich. They collaborate on more large-scale architectural projects and, using only static architectural structures, create *Rondel Door* and *Cast Glass Door* at Pilchuck. In Providence, they have a conceptual breakthrough with *Dry Ice, Bent Glass and Neon*.

1974 In Santa Fe, builds a glass shop for the Institute of American Indian Arts. Tours European glass centers with Thomas Buechner, then president of Steuben Glass. Works with James Carpenter and a group of students at Pilchuck to develop a technique for picking up glass thread drawings and incorporating them into larger glass pieces.

1975 At RISD, begins *Navajo Blanket Cylinder* series. Kate Elliott and, later, Flora C. Mace fabricate the complex thread drawings for his artwork. He receives the first of two National Endowment for the Arts Visual Artists' Fellowships. Becomes artist-in-residence with Seaver Leslie at Artpark, an annual arts program on the Niagara Gorge in New York State. Begins *Irish Cylinders* and *Ulysses Cylinders* with Leslie and Mace.

1976 Visits England with Seaver Leslie. On their way to Ireland, an automobile accident in England leaves him, after weeks in the hospital and 256 stitches in his face, without sight in his left eye and with permanent damage to his right ankle and foot. After recuperating at the home of painter Peter Blake, he returns to Providence to serve as head of the Department of Sculpture and the Program in Glass at RISD. Invites Robert Grosvenor, Fairfield Porter, Dennis Oppenheim, Alan Seret, and John Torreano to RISD as visiting artists. Henry Geldzahler, curator of contemporary art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, acquires three *Navajo Blanket Cylinders* for the museum's collection—a turning point in Chihuly's career and the start of the artist's friendship with both the curator and the museum director then, Thomas Hoving.

1977 Breaking with 2,000 years of glassblowing history, he begins a lifelong pursuit of organic and asymmetrical forms, using fire, gravity, and centrifugal force to help shape his work. His *Basket* series—inspired by Northwest Native American baskets he sees at Washington State History Museum in Tacoma—is first made at Pilchuck with Benjamin Moore as gaffer and exhibited at Seattle Art Museum. Continues teaching at both RISD and Pilchuck. Charles Cowles curates an exhibition at Seattle Art Museum of works by Chihuly, Italo Scanga, and James Carpenter.

1978 Meets William Morris at Pilchuck, and the two begin a close, eight-year working relationship. Another career milestone is a solo exhibition at the Renwick Gallery, a branch of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.

1979 Dislocates his shoulder in a bodysurfing accident and relinquishes the gaffer position for good. William Morris becomes his chief gaffer for several years. Chihuly begins to make drawings as a way to communicate his designs. With his own American team, blows glass at Lobmeyr studio in Baden, Austria.

1980 Resigns his teaching position at RISD but returns periodically in the 1980s as artist-in-residence. Begins *Seaform* series. Creates his first architectural commission: windows for Shaare Emeth Synagogue in St. Louis. Purchases the Boathouse, in Pawtuxet Cove, Rhode Island, for his residence and studio.

1981 Begins *Macchia* series, using up to 300 colors of glass. His mother dubs these wildly spotted, brightly colored forms "the uglies," but his friend Italo Scanga eventually christens them *Macchia*, Italian for "spot."

1982 With William Morris, tours 1,000 miles of Brittany by bicycle in spring. First catalog is published: *Chihuly Glass*, designed by RISD colleague and friend Malcolm Grear.

1983 Sells the Boathouse in Rhode Island and returns to the Pacific Northwest after sixteen years on the East Coast.

1984 Begins work on *Soft Cylinder* series, with Flora C. Mace and Joey Kirkpatrick executing the glass drawings. Honored as RISD President's Fellow at the Whitney Museum in New York.

1985 Returns to Baden, Austria, this time to teach with William Morris, Flora C. Mace, and Joey Kirkpatrick. Purchases the Buffalo Shoe Company Building just east of Lake Union in Seattle and begins restoring it for use as his studio.

1986 Begins Persian series with Martin Blank as gaffer, assisted by Robbie Miller. Establishes his first hotshop in Van de Kamp Building near Lake Union in Seattle. *Dale Chihuly Objets de Verre* opens at Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Palais du Louvre, in Paris.

1987 Donates permanent collection to Tacoma Art Museum in memory of his brother and father (adding works to the collection years later in memory of his mother). Completes *Rainbow Room Frieze*, an installation at Rockefeller Center in New York, with artist Parks Anderson, the start of a long working relationship. Marries playwright Sylvia Peto.

1988 Inspired by Italian Art Deco glass, begins *Venetian* series with Italian glass master Lino Tagliapietra, working from Chihuly's drawings; Benjamin Moore also plays a very important role, including translator.

1989 With Lino Tagliapietra and fellow glass master Pino Signoretto, as well as a team of glassblowers, begins *Putti* series at Pilchuck. With Tagliapietra, Chihuly creates *Ikebana* series, inspired by travels to Japan and exposure to ikebana masters.

1990 Purchases Pocock Building located on Lake Union, realizing his dream of being on the water in Seattle. Renovated and renamed the Boathouse, it serves as studio and hotshop. Returns to Japan.

1991 Begins *Niijima Float* series with Richard Royal as gaffer, creating some of the largest pieces of glass ever blown by hand. Chihuly and Sylvia Peto divorce.

1992 Begins Chandelier series with a hanging sculpture for *Dale Chihuly: Installations 1964–1992*, curated by Patterson Sims at Seattle Art Museum. Designs sets for Seattle Opera's 1993 production of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*. The *Pilchuck Stumps* are created during this project but not widely exhibited.

1993 With Lino Tagliapietra, begins *Piccolo Venetian* series. University of Washington's alumni association bestows its most prestigious honor on him. Creates *100,000 Pounds of Ice and Neon*, a temporary installation in Tacoma Dome.

1994 *Chihuly at Union Station*, five installations for Tacoma's Union Station Federal Courthouse, is sponsored by the Executive Council for a Greater Tacoma and organized by Tacoma Art Museum. Supports Hilltop Artists, a glassblowing program in Tacoma for at-risk youths, created by friend Kathy Kaperick. Within two years, the program partners with Tacoma Public School District.

1995 A Macchia is added to the White House Collection of American Crafts. An international project, *Chihuly Over Venice*, begins with a glassblowing session in Nuutajärvi, Finland, and subsequent blow at Waterford Crystal factory, Ireland. Creates *Chihuly a Spoleto*, an installation for 38th Spoleto Festival of the Two Worlds, in that Italian city.

1996 Creates installation for Governors Ball after Academy Awards ceremony in Hollywood. After a blow in Monterrey, Mexico, *Chihuly Over Venice* culminates with the installation of fourteen *Chandeliers* around Venice and a glassblowing session with Pino Signoretto and Lino Tagliapietra on Murano. Chihuly purchases a building in Seattle's Ballard neighborhood for use as mock-up and studio space. Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in Kansas City, Missouri, is the first venue for a national tour of *Chihuly Over Venice*. Creates his first permanent outdoor installation, *Icicle Creek Chandelier*, for Sleeping Lady resort in Leavenworth, Washington.

1997 Expands work with experimental plastics he calls Polyvitro in his newly renovated Ballard Building. *Chihuly*, the first book on his entire career to date, is designed by Massimo Vignelli and copublished by Harry N. Abrams, Inc., and Portland Press. Travels to Japan to blow glass at Niijima Glass Art Center and creates several temporary outdoor *Float* installations. Travels with his team to a glass factory in Vianne, France, and they work with local glassblowers to create new works, some using industrial molds.

1998 Participates in Sydney Arts Festival in Australia. A son, Jackson Viola Chihuly, is born February 12 to Dale Chihuly and Leslie Jackson. Two large *Chandeliers* are commissioned for Benaroya Hall, home of Seattle Symphony. Chihuly's largest sculpture to date, *Fiori di Como*, is installed in Bellagio lobby in Las Vegas. Expands *Putti* series with Pino Signoretto, adding sculpted glass birds, fish, and other animals. Completes a commission for Atlantis resort on Paradise Island, Bahamas. PBS stations air *Chihuly Over Venice*, an early high-definition television broadcast.

1999 Begins *Jerusalem Cylinder* series with gaffer James Mongrain. Chihuly starts an ambitious exhibition, *Chihuly in the Light of Jerusalem 2000*, for which he creates fifteen installations within an ancient fortress, now Tower of David Museum of the History of Jerusalem. Just outside the museum, builds a sixty-foot-long wall made of twenty-four massive blocks of ice shipped from Alaska. Travels to Victoria and Albert Museum, London, to unveil a large *Chandelier* within main entrance.

2000 Designs and exhibits *Crystal Tree of Light* for White House Millennium Celebration; it will be installed at Clinton Presidential Library and Museum, Little Rock, Arkansas, in 2004. Creates *La Tour de Lumière* sculpture for *Contemporary American Sculpture* exhibition in Monte Carlo. More than one million visitors enter Tower of David Museum to see *Chihuly in the Light of Jerusalem 2000*, breaking the world attendance record for a temporary exhibition during 1999–2000.

2001 *Chihuly at the V&A* opens at Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Artist Italo Scanga dies after more than three decades as friend and mentor. Chihuly groups a series of Chandeliers for the first time, as an installation for Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. *Chihuly in the Park: A Garden of Glass*, at Garfield Park Conservatory, Chicago, begins *Garden Cycle*, a series of exhibitions in conservatories and gardens.

2002 Creates large-scale installations for Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City. Chihuly Bridge of Glass is dedicated in Tacoma; conceived by Chihuly and designed in collaboration with Arthur Andersson of Andersson•Wise Architects, it is a pedestrian overpass featuring three permanent installations of Chihuly's work.

2003 Begins *Fiori* series with gaffer Joey DeCamp and creates first *Mille Fiori*, for exhibition at Tacoma Art Museum. A garden exhibition opens at Franklin Park Conservatory, Columbus, Ohio.

2004 Orlando Museum of Art and Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida, collaborate and present complementary exhibitions of his work. Installs garden exhibition at Atlanta Botanical Garden.

2005 Marries Leslie Jackson. Installs garden exhibition at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, outside London. Exhibits at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, Coral Gables, Florida.

2006 Mother, Viola, dies at age ninety-eight in Tacoma. Between April and June, begins *Black* series; exhibits at Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis; begins *Clear* series; and exhibits at New York Botanical Garden. *Chihuly in Tacoma*—a weeklong residency featuring hotshop sessions at Museum of Glass—reunites Chihuly and glassblowers from important periods of his career. A film, *Chihuly in the Hotshop*, documents this event and is broadcast nationally on public television stations. Returns to Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden for exhibition there until mid-2007.

2007 Exhibits at Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, Pittsburgh. Creates stage set for Seattle Symphony's production of Béla Bartók's opera, *Bluebeard's Castle*; the set will be used for years in productions in several American cities as well as in Tel Aviv, Israel.

2008 Presents exhibition at de Young Museum and Legion of Honor, San Francisco. Returns to his alma mater with an exhibition at RISD Museum of Art. Exhibits at Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix.

2009 Begins *Silvered* series. Participates in 53rd Venice Biennale with *Mille Fiori Venezia* installation. Returns to Franklin Park Conservatory, Columbus, Ohio, with a garden exhibition. Creates commission with multiple installations at island resort of Sentosa, Singapore.

2010 Creates temporary installations outdoors at Kennedy Center for Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., and Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla, California. Presents exhibition at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park in Grand Rapids, Michigan. *Chihuly in Nashville* opens with exhibitions at Cheekwood Botanical Garden and Museum of Art and at Frist Center for the Arts. Begins *White* series.

2011 Holds exhibitions at Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Tacoma Art Museum.

2012 Exhibits at Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden. *Chihuly Garden and Glass* opens at Seattle Center; the long-term exhibition of the artist's work features gallery spaces, a sculpture garden, and a glasshouse designed by Chihuly. Exhibits at Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond.

2013 Montreal Museum of Fine Arts holds exhibition of Chihuly art. Begins *Rotolo* series with gaffer James Mongrain. *Chihuly on Paper*, a three-volume set, is published by Chihuly Workshop. With Seaver Leslie, revisits the *Irish Cylinders* from nearly forty years ago with new *Ulysses Cylinders* inspired by the James Joyce novel. Returns to Desert Botanical Garden, Phoenix.

2014 At Clinton Presidential Library and Museum, displays temporary installations. Exhibition opens at Denver Botanic Gardens. Shows the new *Ulysses Cylinders* at Dublin Castle in Ireland. Volume 2 of *Chihuly*, covering 1997–2014, is published by Chihuly Workshop and distributed by Abrams. Returns to Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden.

2015 An exhibition of Chihuly's drawings opens at Museum of Glass, Tacoma. The Toyama Glass Art Museum, in Toyama, Japan, commissions permanent installations of his work.

2016 Returns to Atlanta Botanical Garden. Exhibits at Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto. His set for the opera *Bluebeard's Castle* appears in a production in Portland, Oregon.

2017 Creates a new body of work—*Glass on Glass*—by painting with vitreous-glass enamel on glass panels that are then kiln-fired. Returns to New York Botanical Garden. A permanent architectural space, *Chihuly Sanctuary*, opens at the Buffett Cancer Center, Omaha. Exhibits at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas.

2018 Installs garden installation at Biltmore, Asheville, North Carolina. Exhibits his art with that of Stanislav Libenský and Jaroslava Brychtová at DOX Centre for Contemporary Art, Prague, celebrating their longtime friendship. Groninger Museum in Groningen, the Netherlands, opens Chihuly exhibition.

2019 Returns to Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in London. Returns to Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, Columbus, Ohio.

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