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Works to debut new glassblowing program

BY ABBEY ROY
Advocate Reporter

NEWARK -- A breath of fresh AIR awaits The Works visitors in September as a fresh lineup of glassblowing artists take up residence in Newark to demonstrate their talents and become a part of the community.

The museum on Monday announced its new Artist In Residency program, which will kick off in September with the arrival of 2009 Columbus College of Art and Design graduate Erinn Bessler.

The program will host two glassblowing artists a year, each selected by The Works following a "rigorous interview process," director Marcia Downes said.

"The Works new Artist in Residency Program is an excellent opportunity to establish a new depth in our community in relation to the art of glassblowing," she said.

Each Artist in Residency will live and work in the community for four months, overseeing classes and giving demonstrations, selling pieces in The Works Gear Shop and interacting with local schools and organizations.

Bessler, who will begin her residency Sept. 1, specializes in Venetian-inspired glass and goblets. She most recently worked as an instructor, artist and studio manager at Crystal Traditions, a glass factory in Tiffin.

The Artist in Residency program will fill the vacancy left by current glass artist Aaron Buchholz, who is leaving to open his own studio in his hometown of St. Louisville. He has been blowing glass and teaching classes at The Works since 2002.

"We are very excited for Aaron and the future for him," Downes said.

The Artist in Residency program will mean a new operation schedule for The Works. July and August will serve as a "hiatus" period for the glass studio, Downes said, in which it will be cleaned and inventory taken.

The Artist in Residency will occupy the studio from September through December, followed by jewelry-making and pottery classes in January. In February through May, another Artist in Residency will be featured at the studio, with glass classes and camps in June.

Downes said the new program will go a long way in educating the community about the art of glassblowing.

"I think it's just a great opportunity for us," she said.

For more information about The Works and the Artist in Residency program, visit www.attheworks.org.
