

CHIHULY

STUDIO

Chronology

- 1941 Born September 20 in Tacoma, Washington, to George Chihuly and Viola Magnuson Chihuly.
- 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. Enrolls at College of Puget Sound (now University of Puget Sound) in his hometown.
- 1960 Transfers to University of Washington in Seattle to study interior design and architecture.
- 1961 Joins Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity and becomes rush chairman. Learns to melt and fuse glass.
- 1962 Chihuly interrupts his studies and travels to Florence to focus on art. Unable to speak Italian, he moves on to the Middle East.
- 1963 Works on a kibbutz in Negev Desert, Israel. Reinspired, returns to University of Washington and studies under Hope Foote and Warren Hill. In a weaving class with Doris Brockway, he incorporates glass shards into woven tapestries.
- 1964 Returns to Europe, visiting Leningrad and making the first of many trips to Ireland.
- 1965 Receives B.A. in Interior Design from University of Washington. In his basement studio, Chihuly blows his first glass bubble by melting stained glass and using a metal pipe.
- 1966 Works as a commercial fisherman in Alaska. Enters University of Wisconsin at Madison and studies glassblowing in the first glass program in the United States, taught by Harvey Littleton.
- 1967 Receives M.S. in Sculpture from University of Wisconsin. Enrolls at Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) in Providence, where he begins exploration of environmental works using neon, argon, and blown glass. Awarded a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Grant for work in glass. Italo Scanga, then teaching in Pennsylvania State University's Art Department, lectures at RISD, and the two start a lifelong friendship.
- 1968 Receives M.F.A. in Ceramics from RISD. A Fulbright Fellowship enables him to travel and work in Europe later in the year. Spends the first of four consecutive summers teaching at Haystack Mountain School of Crafts in Deer Isle, Maine. Becomes the first American glassblower to work in the Venini factory on the island of Murano.
- 1969 Returns to Europe and meets glass masters Erwin Eisch in Germany and Jaroslava Brychtová and Stanislav Libenský in Czechoslovakia. Establishes the glass program at RISD, where he teaches for the next eleven years.
- 1970 Meets James Carpenter, a student in RISD Illustration Department, and they begin a four-year collaboration.

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- 1971 On the site of a tree farm owned by Seattle art patrons Anne Gould Hauberg and John Hauberg, the Pilchuck Glass School experiment is started. *Pilchuck Pond*, Chihuly's first environmental installation at the school, is created that summer. In 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 Collaborates with James Carpenter on more large-scale architectural projects. They create *Rondel Door* and *Cast Glass Door* at Pilchuck and *Dry Ice*, *Bent Glass and Neon*, a conceptual breakthrough, in Providence.
- 1974 Working at Pilchuck with James Carpenter and a group of students, with the support of a National Endowment for the Arts grant, he develops a technique to pick up glass thread drawings to incorporate into larger glass pieces. In December at RISD, he completes his last collaborative project with Carpenter, *Corning Wall*.
- 1975 At RISD, begins *Navajo Blanket Cylinder* series. Kate Elliott and, later, Flora C. Mace fabricate the complex thread drawings. He receives the first of two National Endowment for the Arts Individual Artist grants. Artist-in-residence with Seaver Leslie at Artpark, on the Niagara Gorge, in New York State. Begins *Irish Cylinders* and *Ulysses Cylinders* with Leslie and Mace.
- 1976 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, he returns to Providence to serve as head of the Department of Sculpture and the Program in Glass at RISD. 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 a friendship between artist and curator.
- 1977 Inspired by Northwest Coast Indian baskets he sees at Washington State History Museum in Tacoma, begins the *Basket* series at Pilchuck, with Benjamin Moore as gaffer. Continues teaching in both Rhode Island and the Pacific Northwest.
- 1978 Meets Pilchuck student William Morris, and the two begin a close, eight-year working relationship. A solo show curated by Michael W. Monroe at the Renwick Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, in Washington, D.C., is another career milestone.
- 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.
- 1980 Resigns his teaching position at RISD but returns periodically in the 1980s as artist-in-residence. Begins *Seaform* series at Pilchuck. In Providence, creates another architectural installation: windows for Shaare Emeth Synagogue in St. Louis, Missouri.
- 1981 Begins *Macchia* series.
- 1982 First major catalog is published: *Chihuly Glass*, designed by RISD colleague and friend Malcolm Grear.

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- 1983 Returns to Pacific Northwest after sixteen years on East Coast. Further develops *Macchia* series at Pilchuck in fall and winter, with William Morris as chief gaffer.
- 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 Purchases the Buffalo Shoe Company Building on the east side of Lake Union in Seattle and begins restoring it for use as a primary studio and residence.
- 1986 Begins *Persian* series with Martin Blank as gaffer, assisted by Robbie Miller. With *Dale Chihuly Objets de Verre* at Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Palais du Louvre, in Paris, he becomes the fourth American artist to have a one-person exhibition at the Louvre.
- 1987 Establishes his first hotshop in Van de Kamp Building near Lake Union in Seattle. Donates permanent collection to Tacoma Art Museum in memory of his brother and father. Marries playwright Sylvia Peto.
- 1988 Inspired by a private collection of Italian Art Deco glass, Chihuly begins *Venetian* series. Working from Chihuly's drawings, Lino Tagliapietra serves as gaffer.
- 1989 With Italian glass masters Lino Tagliapietra and Pino Signoretto, and 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 historic Pocock Building on Lake Union, realizing his dream of being on the water in Seattle. Renovated and renamed the Boathouse, it serves as studio, hotshop, and archives. Returns to Japan.
- 1991 Begins *Nijima Float* series with Richard Royal as gaffer, creating some of the largest pieces of glass ever blown by hand. Completes architectural installations. He and Sylvia Peto divorce.
- 1992 Begins *Chandelier* series with a hanging sculpture at Seattle Art Museum. Designs sets for Seattle Opera's 1993 production of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*.
- 1993 With Lino Tagliapietra, begins *Piccolo Venetian* series. Creates *100,000 Pounds of Ice and Neon*, a temporary installation in Tacoma Dome.
- 1994 Creates five installations for Tacoma's Union Station Federal Courthouse. 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 *Chihuly Over Venice* begins with a glassblowing session in Nuutajärvi, Finland, and subsequent blow at Waterford Crystal factory, Ireland.
- 1996 After a blow in Monterrey, Mexico, *Chihuly Over Venice* culminates with fifteen *Chandeliers* installed around Venice. Creates his first permanent outdoor installation, *Icicle Creek Chandelier*.

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- 1997 Expands series of experimental plastics he calls Polyvitro. Travels to Japan to blow glass at Niijima Glass Art Center and creates several temporary outdoor *Float* installations. Continuing to other countries with historical glass traditions, he makes use of industrial molds at a factory in Vianne, France, as a starting point for new ideas.
- 1998 Participates in Sydney Arts Festival in Australia. A son, Jackson Viola Chihuly, is born February 12 to Dale Chihuly and Leslie Jackson. Creates architectural installations for Benaroya Hall, Seattle; Bellagio, Las Vegas; and Atlantis, Bahamas.
- 1999 Begins *Jerusalem Cylinder* series with gaffer James Mongrain. Mounts an ambitious exhibition, *Chihuly in the Light of Jerusalem 2000*, at Tower of David Museum of the History of Jerusalem. Builds a sixty-foot wall outside from twenty-four massive blocks of ice shipped from Alaska.
- 2000 Creates *La Tour de Lumière* sculpture as part of *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. Groups a series of *Chandeliers* for the first time, as an installation for Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. Presents his first major glasshouse exhibition, *Chihuly in the Park: A Garden of Glass*, at Garfield Park Conservatory, Chicago. Artist Italo Scanga dies after more than three decades as friend and mentor.
- 2002 Creates installations for Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City, Utah. Chihuly Bridge of Glass, conceived by Chihuly and designed in collaboration with Arthur Andersson of Andersson•Wise Architects, is dedicated in Tacoma.
- 2003 Begins *Fiori* series with gaffer Joey DeCamp for opening exhibition at Tacoma Art Museum's new building. Museum designs a permanent space for its Chihuly artwork. *Chihuly at the Conservatory* opens at Franklin Park Conservatory, Columbus, Ohio.
- 2004 Orlando Museum of Art and Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida, become first museums to collaborate and present complementary exhibitions of Chihuly's artwork. Installs glasshouse and outdoor exhibition at Atlanta Botanical Garden.
- 2005 Marries Leslie Jackson. Installs major 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. Begins *Black* series with a *Cylinder* blow. Presents exhibitions at Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis, and New York Botanical Garden. *Chihuly in Tacoma*—hotshop sessions at Museum of Glass—reunites Chihuly and glassblowers from important periods of his career.
- 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*.
- 2008 Presents major exhibition at de Young Museum, San Francisco. Returns to his alma mater with an exhibition at RISD Museum of Art. Exhibits at Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix.

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- 2009 Begins *Silvered* series. Presents garden exhibition at Franklin Park Conservatory, Columbus, Ohio. Participates in 53rd Venice Biennale with *Mille Fiori Venezia* installation. Creates largest commission with multiple installations at island resort of Sentosa, Singapore.
- 2010 Exhibits outdoors at Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla, California. Presents exhibitions at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Cheekwood Botanical Garden and Museum of Art, Nashville.
- 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*, a long-term exhibition, opens at Seattle Center. Exhibits at Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond.
- 2013 Montreal Museum of Fine Arts holds exhibition of Chihuly art. Revisits the *Irish Cylinders* from nearly forty years ago with new *Ulysses Cylinders* inspired by the James Joyce novel.
- 2014 At Clinton Presidential Center, Little Rock, Arkansas, displays temporary installations. Exhibition opens at Denver Botanic Gardens. Shows the new *Ulysses Cylinders* at Dublin Castle in Ireland.