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**A WOMAN'S PLACE IN GLASS (Published in the August 2005 issue of Columbia Home.) - 8/1/2005**

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A WOMAN'S PLACE IN GLASS

COLUMBIA, Mo. – Susan Taylor Glasgow's art is about shattering the feminine mystique, so she uses the most shatter-able medium she can find.

It's glass, of course. But this glass is not your average blown bottle or crystal goblet; it is sewn together in sheets like feminine plate armor to forge artwork that pokes fun at traditional sex roles. Glasgow, a contemporary glass artist, especially enjoys toying with the 1950s vision of perfect womanhood, a domestic goddess who works like a Trojan to keep her home immaculate but who also manages to maintain an extremely sexy persona for her man.

"I really enjoy the imagery of the Fifties because it's perceived as a simple time," Glasgow said. "I grew up in the Fifties. I remember crawling under my desk for bomb scares, the Cold War and digging bomb shelters in the backyard. It wasn't so simple."

Glasgow's "Wholesome Goodness Toaster Cozy" attacks the feminine dichotomy with a vengeance. A Madison Avenue happy homemaker pops up, nattily dressed in 1950s attire, as a slice of bread from the sewn glass contraption. On the reverse side, however, the woman's nude assets are on full display. And it goes without mention that the device chosen for Glasgow's artistic treatment is an instrument whose utility in the kitchen is highly questionable, but thoroughly domesticated.

Likewise, her "Next to Godliness Corset," made of golden sculptured glass sewn together with waxed linen thread, shows sandblasted inlaid lacy patterns of women vacuuming and ironing. It looks like something an Amazon housewife queen would wear for a night on the town.

She often uses scissor and apron imagery in her art. "The scissors are mostly a female tool," she said. "They have this tension about them that I really like. They're pointy, and I really enjoy the energy that the apron has."

She labels her work "Domesticity Gone Awry," which served as the title of a recent showing of her work at the Heller Gallery in New York. Her artwork is shown in galleries around the United States, but not in Columbia, except for a few commissioned works such as artwork at the new Fire Station 8, built a few years ago. Her pieces tend to be expensive, between \$2,000

and \$6,000 apiece, which is often beyond the range of local audiences.

Glasgow buys sheets of colored glass to which she sometimes adds color. In a process she developed, pending a patent, at her studio on north Ninth Street, she fires the glass with special forms to create holes so that the sheets can be sewn together.

After getting a degree in graphic design at the University of Iowa, she and her husband, Brian, moved to Columbia in the early 1990s. With a background in the hopelessly domestic art of sewing, she opened a sewing shop, "On Pins and Needles," which she later sold, using the proceeds to develop her art studio. Her emphasis in sewn glass utilizes her sewing skills, but on a much different palette.

Her work appears in the American Glass Museum in Wheaton Village, New Jersey, the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh, has been featured in such magazines as *Craft Report*, *American Style*, *FiberArts*, *Corning's New Glass Review*, and *Glass Craftsman*.

Even with her work breaking into the wealthy New York market, you get the feeling that this artist hasn't yet shattered her glass ceiling.

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