

## Article by Luke Jerram

July 2012

Since his professional career as an artist began in 1997, Luke Jerram has created a number of extraordinary art projects which have excited and inspired people around the globe. Based in the UK, Luke Jerram's practice involves the creation of sculptures, installations, live arts projects and gifts. Further information on Luke's entire practice can be found here: [www.lukejerram.com](http://www.lukejerram.com).

This body of microbiological glass work has been developed since 2004. Made to contemplate the global impact of each disease, the artworks were created as alternative representations of viruses to the artificially coloured imagery we receive through the media. In fact, viruses have no colour as they are smaller than the wavelength of light. By extracting the colour from the imagery and creating jewel like beautiful sculptures in glass, a complex tension has arisen between the artworks' beauty and what they represent.

His transparent and colourless glassworks consider how the artificial colouring of scientific microbiological imagery, affects our understanding of these phenomena. See these examples of HIV imagery. If some images are coloured for scientific purposes, and others altered simply for aesthetic reasons, how can a viewer tell the difference? How many people believe viruses are brightly coloured? Are there any colour conventions and what kind of 'presence' do pseudocoloured images have that 'naturally' coloured specimens don't? How does the choice of different colours affect their reception?

Photographs of Jerram's glass artworks are now used widely in medical journals, text books and media stories and are seen as useful representations of virology within the scientific community. In 2009 his work was used in the Lancet, the British Medical Journal and on the front cover of Nature Magazine.

The sculptures are designed in consultation with virologists from the University of Bristol, using a combination of different scientific photographs and models. They are made in collaboration with glassblowers Kim George, Brian Jones and Norman Veitch.

The virus sculptures are approximately 1,000,000 times larger than the actual viruses.

Jerram's Glass Microbiology sculptures are in Museum collections around the world from The Corning Museum in NYC to the Wellcome Collection in London. In 2012 his sculptures were presented at the Museum of Art and Design NYC. In 2009, his sculptures were at The Mori Museum, Tokyo along with work by Damien Hirst, Warhol and Leonardo da Vinci.

In 2010, he was awarded the coveted 'Rakow Glass Award' for his work and in 2007 the 'Institute for Medical Imaging Award'. Jerram has recently completed a fellowship at the Museum of Glass, Washington, USA. Awarded Europe's largest arts award the NESTA Fellowship in 2002-2005, his first sculpture was created during this time.

Works are for sale to private and public collections. You can view his catalogue of works available for sale on his website at [www.lukejerram.com](http://www.lukejerram.com) Collections of works can also be loaned from the artist for display.

Contact [info@lukejerram.com](mailto:info@lukejerram.com) about purchasing and the loan of work. For sales in the USA, contact the Heller Gallery in NYC [info@hellergallery.com](mailto:info@hellergallery.com)

