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THE WHOLE IS GREATER THAN THE SUM OF ITS PARTS

*"The Return" an Exhibition by West Coast Artist Sheila Klein
Opens Oct. 2 at Pittsburgh Glass Center*

NEWS FACTS

- "The Return" is an installation at Pittsburgh Glass Center by Washington-based artist Sheila Klein.
- The opening reception from 6 to 9pm on Friday, Oct. 2 is free and open to the public.
- Klein was selected to adorn the Eastside pedestrian bridge in Pittsburgh with the assistance of Pittsburgh Glass Center in 2010.
- Exhibition runs from October 2 to Jan. 10, 2010 at Pittsburgh Glass Center.

Pittsburgh, PA – September 7, 2009 – Welcome home Sheila Klein! A West Coast-based artist who grew up in Pittsburgh, Sheila Klein has temporarily returned to her home to continue her mission to "Dress the World." Pittsburgh Glass Center (PGC) is hosting Klein for two significant projects.

Opening Friday, October 2, "The Return" is Sheila Klein's experimental and spontaneous reaction to her return to her home. The installation at Pittsburgh Glass Center explores the relationship between the visuals of childhood and the artist's invention. "The Return" will be on view at PGC through January 10, 2010. The opening reception on October 2 from 6 to 9pm is free and open to the public.

In 2010, PGC will work with Klein again as she completes the new pedestrian bridge linking Shadyside and Eastside in Pittsburgh. She is working with the artists at Pittsburgh Glass Center to adorn the bridge with thousands of glass sequins. These handmade glass sequins will edge the chain link fencing creating a gleaming definition to the necessary safety fencing.

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Mom's Aesthetic through Klein's Lens

"The Return" is an installation combining inherited items with handmade objects. Components include heirloom clothing that belonged to Klein's mother Minnie and permanent fixtures from the home in which she grew up. Klein rediscovers, interprets and reacts to these objects and memories of her childhood in "The Return."

"This exhibition is all about me coming back to where I started. It is a personal piece that I am responding to and reacting against and with. I was surprised to discover how much of what I made related to my mom, the aesthetics of our home and the relationship that existed between us," said Klein.

Klein grew up in Pittsburgh in Stanton Heights (East Liberty), an urban neighborhood located on the east side of Pittsburgh, Pa. Her family was Jewish Orthodox. Klein describes her home as modern American with old European sensibilities and a lot of tradition. Her father was in the wholesale produce business. Her mother was creative and involved in charities. According to Klein, her mother decorated and personalized everything from applying sequins on her clothing to rhinestones on the telephone.

An ornate chandelier that once hung in a special place in Klein's home is the focal point of "The Return." The chandelier represents both grandeur and tradition while at the same time is the quintessential decorative arts object. Sequins designed to decorate the Eastside pedestrian bridge will accompany the chandelier. Klein examines this dichotomy and explores the relationship between the baubles on the chandelier and the sequins as well as her family relationships. Klein said, "The sequins are definitely inspired by my mom. She understood bling."

"The Return" will be on view at Pittsburgh Glass Center through Jan. 20, 2010. Pittsburgh Glass Center Hodge Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Thursday 10am – 7pm, Friday – Sunday 10am – 4pm and closed on Monday.

About Sheila Klein

"Yes, I still want to dress the world... I get interested in the interconnectedness of things... uncovering the architectural underpinning of all objects. My early investigations of this theme began after a trip to Asia in the late 1970's. Because of my interest in the sculptural and architectural aspects of jewelry, I was impressed by the connection between the way that

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people there adorned themselves and the way that they decorated their buildings. That jewelry can be more architectural than buildings. Consequently, the bland urban boxes of Seattle began to look like 'skeletons waiting to be dressed,'" said Klein.

Sheila Klein, visual artist, straddles the worlds of art and architecture. Born in 1952 in Pittsburgh , Pennsylvania she now lives in Bow ,Washington on a farm with her husband artist Ries Niemi and sons Rebar and Torque. Klein first lived in the Skagit Valley in 1976 and returned in 1995. Klein has exhibited widely at such diverse organizations as P.S. 1, Institute for Art and Urban Studies in New York, Memory and Lands of the 20th Century in Florence, Italy, and La Foret Museum in Tokyo, Japan. She practiced architecture in the early '80s as a member of the award winning architecture firm group A2Z. Her output includes studio work, public work, installations, urban planning, collaborations, design, and architectural projects not to mention sewing and gardening. For more information please see sheilaklein.com

About Pittsburgh Glass Center

Pittsburgh Glass Center is a nonprofit, public access glass school, studio and gallery dedicated to teaching, creating and promoting glass art. A growing arts organization in the region, PGC is bringing new life to Pittsburgh's glass art legacy and maintaining the momentum brought to the region by Dale Chihuly and Pittsburgh Celebrates Glass 2007. Learn more about the Pittsburgh Glass Center by visiting our Web site at www.pittsburghglasscenter.org or by calling 412-365-2145.

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