SILICA VALLEY ACTIVITY – JOANNE MITCHELL
The beauty of technology often goes unnoticed because of its overwhelming presence in our day to day lives. This exhibition currently at Pittsburgh Glass Center (PGC) features a group of artists that have developed their unique body of works with the aid of modern machines. Although the technology is integral to each of their processes; the human hand is what brings the work to life. Each artist is an expert in their field and is leading the way in developing new and unique techniques in glass. The work showcases the fact that every robot needs a human.

JOANNE MITCHELL
Joanne Mitchell has practiced as a professional artist and designer since graduating in 2000, and spent time as a designer for Edinburgh Crystal, and as a resident artist at the National Glass Centre, Sunderland, UK, before moving to Lime Street Studios, Newcastle-upon-Tyne in December 2012.

Joanne's work explores the metaphorical qualities of air and glass, often incorporating the human form. Her practice combines the innovative use of waterjet cutting and kiln-forming to control the form of air entrapment within the internal space of glass for personal expression, a technique she developed during her PhD research.

In her artwork Jo examines how the immaterial can be exposed or preserved, making visible the intangible; utilizing air as a metaphor for thought, memory, being and absence. Her work draws connections in what makes us human, exploring themes around identity, anonymity and empathy.

"Mitchell’s works are simultaneously expansive yet claustrophobic. There is nothing conceited or ostentatious here. Whilst ‘Deconstructed Being’ may deal with the fragmentation of the physical and psychological self, ‘Legion’ explores the collective, the need for communion and conversation yet ultimately addresses the overwhelming sense of alienation in the modern day. These works demand engagement; they invite, then demand the viewer to contemplate and reflect. They are conversation pieces in all contexts of the phrase. Glass, even the material itself is a metaphor for the human condition, always fluid in a state of flux and capable of being moulded and shaped. Depending on the external and internal stresses it is both ductile and brittle, robust and fragile. Very much like the psychological self."
Aidan Moesby (2016), Curator, "An ‘In’ With A Stranger", A Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre Exhibition, Torfaen, Wales
TRY THIS AT HOME
Compare and contrast her art works. Look at the individual blocks versus the groups in blocks versus the groups swimming/co-mingling in block. Share your thoughts.

- What might it feel like to be “trapped” inside one of these pieces?
- Can you relate to feeling trapped inside?
- Write a few words or sketch how this makes you feel.
- Use 4 - 5 words or short phrases to describe these works.
- Read your words and phrases out loud as a short descriptive poem.
- If you could be one of the people “trapped” inside, which sculpture would you want to be in, and why?

Show us your work!
Post pictures and videos of your work on Instagram and tag @pghglasscenter and #artatadistance