

# Artists inspired by the call of the sea

CITYNEWS.COM.AU

REVIEW August 28, 2024



Benjamin Edols & Kathy Elliott , Squall I – overlay blown and wheel carved glass.

*Craft / Tidal Threads by Benjamin Edols and Kathy Elliott. At Beaver Galleries, until August 31. Reviewed by **MEREDITH HINCHLIFFE**.*

**Benjamin Edols and Kathy Elliott live near the ocean in Sydney.**

He is a surfer and she is inspired by the constantly changing moods of the ocean and consequent weather. Their new work reflects the ever-changing environment in which they live. Edols blows the forms and Elliott creates the surface decoration, but as they say they collaborate on all their work, making it impossible to distinguish where the work of one stops and the other begins.

Each work is named, hinting at the form and decoration. The surface on Zephyr, a rounded blue form, in wheel carved glass spirals out from near the centre, as though a light breeze had just passed over, causing a disturbance on the surface of the water. Rising Deep is a clear glass form, on which the carved glass waves rise three-quarters of the way up, from the base. Pale Blue cane work has been added, telling us that the sea is deep in this area.

Three forms are titled Squall I, II and III. The waves are curved and rise out of the sea below. The sky is depicted in different colours. The first, a bright green, has pillowy clouds – which is not unexpected on a squally afternoon. The pale pink/lilac blues of Squall III create abstracted waves.

Shore Break depicts waves which quickly peak and break onshore. To add to the frisson, they have added coloured glass canes. Pale blue form Rise, evokes the waves and surface of the water in the woodblock print The Great Wave off Kanagawa by Japanese ukiyo-e artist Hokusai from 1831. You can almost hear the waves breaking and feel the spray.

The work There will be More than Ocean Water Broken, has an ominous feel to it. Glowering clouds hover above the tumultuous ocean – the coloured canes add to the concern we feel.

The term east coast low is one those living on the eastern coast of Australia are very familiar with. Features are heavy moisture and heightened wind speed. At their worst they can become cyclones. This work evokes the ocean before the storm.



Benjamin Edols & Kathy Elliott , Riptide – overlay blown and wheel carved glass.

The final work, Riptide is a deep blue, tall work that is carved and has additional cane work. In the centre, the surface is smooth, and surrounded by concentric circles. It captures the differences in the surface of the ocean when seen from a height.

These dynamic works speak to us of the passivity of the ocean as well as the terror it can instil. One can almost smell the salt in the air, and the wind created by low and high relief carving and additional surface decoration.

This artistic couple have been exhibiting together since 1993, and have had nearly 40 exhibitions around the world. They have won numerous prizes and awards.