

# Sculptural Tutorial

## Two Mushrooms and a Fish

By Mary Lockwood

Thank you for your interest in my Sculptural Tutorial. I cover step-by-step instruction of 3 separate beads in this tutorial, and I've also packed it full of useful tips and techniques that will make all your sculptural efforts easier to accomplish and result in more stable finished pieces.

Special emphases in this tutorial are heat control and correct joining of elements, as these are the two most important aspects of building structurally sound pieces. **Please read the entire tutorial through once before beginning to work.**

### Necessities and Materials

#### GLASS & MATERIAL

5mm rods of 104coe glass:

A small assortment of short glass rods in opaque and transparent colors.

Clear  
White  
Black  
Ivory (light or dark)

Silver foil or leaf

Enamels or fine frit

#### EQUIPMENT & SAFETY

Standard Safe Studio Requirements including but not limited to:

Fire Extinguisher  
Good Ventilation  
Lampworking Safety Glasses  
Propane Outside  
Oxygen Tanks chained securely  
Bowl of water on work surface  
**Respirator Mask suitable for powdered glass protection**  
**\*You are responsible for your own safety!**

Tools and equipment:

Color Wheel  
Mashers  
Graphite Marver or paddle  
Tweezers and/or pliers  
Hot Plate or Warmer  
Bent Steel rake or poker

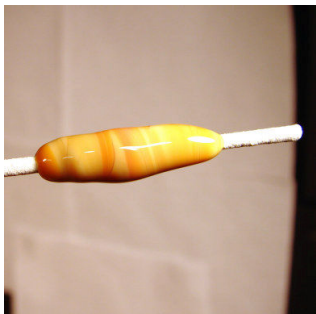


# Mushrooms

I make two general shapes of mushrooms and they are built differently enough that I will demonstrate both. These are merely a starting point and could be further decorated or enhanced in many ways. Have fun with them!

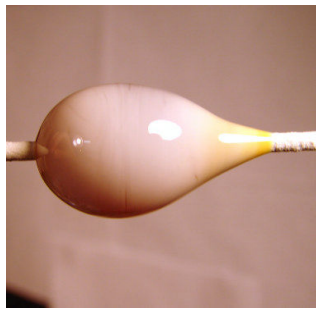
## Mushroom #1- Tall Woodsy Organic – 15 minutes

A relatively simple bead at the heart of this that could be considered 'beginner', but adding detail to the underside of the cap or exaggerating the shape can up the skill level tremendously. Do what suits your abilities at first, and then build from there.



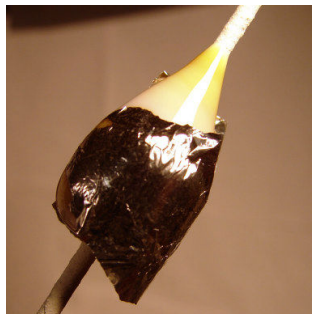
1- Before beginning, pull about two feet of thin silvered ivory stringer.

2- Lay down a long narrow footprint of a pale non-reactive glass. I used opal yellow here.



3- Tilt the mandrel as you heat the glass to allow it to balloon out at the bottom.

**\*I usually make the top of the bead be closest to the tip of the mandrel.**



4- Roll this base onto a piece of silver leaf or foil and burnish lightly.



5- Melt this silver in, also called burning off the silver.



6- Roll this in a nice small, preferably reactive frit.

I have used light silver plum here.



7- Melt this frit in smooth and equalize the heat in your base by bringing the whole volume of glass to a low glow.

This is your mushroom's stem. The more advanced you are, the longer and thinner you can make it.



8- Form a small donut shaped bead around the narrow top of the stem.

**You want to form it far enough down the stem that you don't leave too narrow of a neck that will be unstable in the finished piece.**



9- Tilt the mandrel tip down and melt this donut smooth. Be careful to only heat the donut and not the stem.

This is the footprint for your cap. Be sure to form a decent dimple at the hole and strive to maintain it through finishing the bead.

## Mushroom #2- Chubby Button – 25 minutes

A round little mushroom. The taller version seems to hold emphasis at the stem, but for these short little guys, the cap is the star. In this demo, I'll be adding raised flowers to the cap, but you could decorate the basic shape of this in any way you like.



1- Roll the preheated tip of a rod of dark or light ivory onto a 1 inch square of silver foil or leaf.

2- Burnish the silver onto the rod, then burn off in the flame.



3- Allow the silver coated rod tip to form into a round gather of glass about the size of a large pea.



4- Roll this hot gather in a puddle of green enamel.

**Wear a suitable respirator in addition to your ventilation when working with glass powders.**



5- Melt the enamel smooth onto the surface of the silvered ivory.

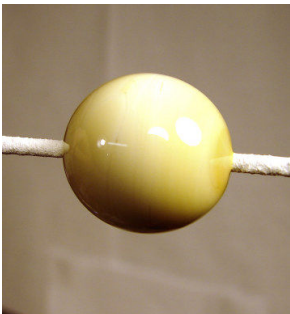
6- Repeat the enamel coating and melting once more for an even covering.



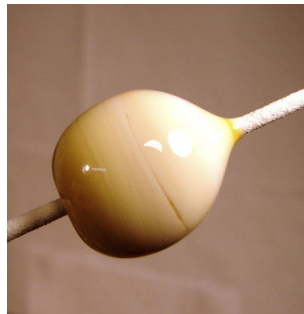
7- Heat the gather to molten and use pliers to pull into stringers. You need about 2 feet of this stringer. Set aside.

Enameled silvered ivory stringer.

**\* Be careful when making and using the enameled stringer, it will boil if you are too heat aggressive.\***



1- Begin with a fat round bead. I used opal yellow for this demo. Make it well balanced and centered.



2- While turning the mandrel, tilt up the tip of the mandrel while heating the round bead to make the glass collect at the bottom of the 'stem'. You should have a nice dimple at the bottom, and a taper at the top.



3- Roll the bottom portion of the stem in a colored enamel. I used brown for this demo. Be light handed, enamel can carry very strong color.

4- Melt enamel smooth.



5- Use enameled silvered ivory stringer to paint/draw lines and scrolls onto the stem.

6- Because I'll be doing florals on the cap, I'm shooting for these spirals to look like vines.

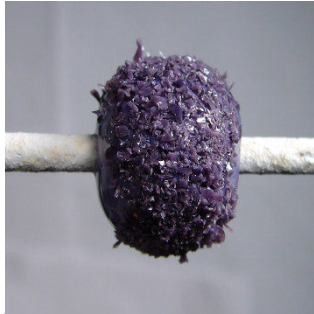
Because of the portly nature of this mushroom shape, it is a bit more thermally sound. If you are relatively new at sculptural pieces, you might want to try this one first because even though you can go very detailed with the decorations, the compact shape is easier to keep hot.

# Fish

I just love to make fish; they take on a personality of their own as you make them. They are substantially trickier from a thermal standpoint than the mushrooms because of the thin fins and the fact that there are a lot of appendages/ protrusions.



1- Form a donut shaped bead on the mandrel. This should be well centered and balanced.



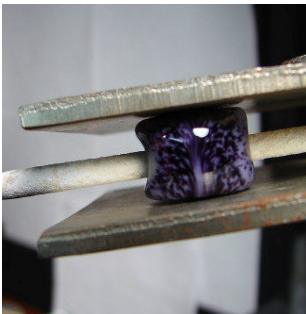
2- Heat and roll in a small sized frit.



3- Melt the frit flush with the surface.



4- Heat the surface of the bead and rake the frit around the perimeter of the belly to form a pattern.



5- Use parallel mashers to form the bead into a tab. Don't make too thin or it'll be more susceptible to thermal shock.



6- Here is what you should have so far.



7- Heat only one side of the tab to brightly glowing and use gravity to make it droop to a soft point.



8- Here is what you should have at this point.



9- Repeat on the other side of the tab.



10- Here is what you should have at this point. Notice one side is pointier than the other, which is good.



11- Use an opaque stringer to draw a swipe of glass for the pectoral fin. Slant it away from the head end of the fish.



12- Make a mirror image of this fin on the other side. I am using the pointier side of my tab as the head end of my fish.