

PETER LAYTON LONDON GLASSBLOWING

Gito by London Glassblowing

A beautiful charitable collection of glass works inspired by the orphaned orangutans of Borneo

Over the years leading glass artist and founder of [London Glassblowing](#) Peter Layton has drawn inspiration for his work from some fascinating sources, including favourite artists and even Highgrove Royal Gardens. His latest series, Gito, is no exception.

In October 2018 Peter and his wife Ann travelled to Borneo accompanied by vets Nigel Hicks and Sara Fell. The pair are co-founders of [OVAID](#), a charity whose mission is to raise awareness of the plight of orangutans. According to the World Wildlife Fund Borneo orangutan populations have declined by more than 50 per cent over the past 60 years and their habitat has been reduced by at least 55 per cent in the past two decades. The party visited rescue centres, witnessing at first hand the plight of these apes and the hugely important work the charity performs.

As a direct result the Laytons decided to adopt an orangutan called Gito, who had been discovered by International Animal Rescue in 2015. Gito had been kept as an illegal pet and was found abandoned, riddled with highly contagious demodectic mange, and left to die. OVAID played a vital role in his recovery, giving him one-to-one care. Since then he has gone from strength to strength and will one day return permanently to his home in the forest.

When they returned to London Peter and Ann were keen to do more to help and so Peter has launched a new collection of glass named after the young ape they fell in love with and adopted. Each piece is free-blown and crafted with the greatest care, while the series aims to capture the vivid oranges and dark emeralds they encountered on their trip. Most importantly though London Glassblowing will be donating 20 per cent of all proceeds from the series to OVAID on a continuing basis, to help Hicks and Fell continue their work. Prices range from £320 to £2600.

“It really was a trip of a life time and we learned so much,” says Peter Layton. “Seeing these extraordinary creatures in such danger was hugely moving and we became completely smitten with Gito. When we got home we wanted to do more to help OVAID and creating a special collection of glass was just the obvious thing to do.”

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About London Glassblowing

London Glassblowing is one of the UK’s most renowned contemporary glass studios. Importantly it is a place where pieces are made as well as displayed. Located in one of the capital’s cultural hotspots of Bermondsey Street, it was founded by Peter Layton in 1976.

Layton initially started his professional life as a ceramist, learning at the Central School of Art and Design under the likes of Ruth Duckworth and Gordon Baldwin, before travelling to the States and working in the ceramics department of the University of Iowa. By coincidence Harvey Littleton and a number of other potters were working on new hot glass techniques there at the time and he became fascinated by the material.

Nowadays the studio consists of Layton, who at the age of 81 remains extraordinarily active, as well as 10 resident artists – from some of the nation’s leading names in glass such as Louis Thompson and Layne Rowe via up-and-coming makers like Elliot Walker. Together they create pieces in the workshop at the back of the building.

The studio is available for bespoke private, corporate or public commissions. Each one is given careful and comprehensive consideration to provide unique and inspired solutions to any given brief. These may be free-blown, hot-worked in solid glass, or moulded and kiln-formed as required, and in consultation, with the client.

Entry to the studio and gallery is free and visitors can pull up a chair to watch master makers at work. London Glassblowing also offers glass making classes.

<https://londonglassblowing.co.uk/>

About OVAID

Orangutan Veterinary Aid (OVAID) is a voluntary-run charity dedicated to providing veterinary equipment, medicines, scholarships, up-skilling and training to vets working in Indonesian and Malaysian orangutan rescue teams and centres. The charity works tirelessly to improve the animals’ welfare and to spread awareness of conservation and environmental impact issues pertaining to the negative effects of deforestation on the orangutan, countless other wildlife species and human populations.

<https://www.ovaid.org/>