



LETTING THE LIGHT *Shine in*

BY LISE LAROCQUE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JESSICA DEEKS



When you first see the vibrant coloured pieces of glass created by local artists Oded and Pamela Ravek, you can't help but pause and take notice.

This husband and wife team create captivating pieces that simply draw you in. Layered hues of blue and vivid shades of orange and gold contrast beautifully, creating works of art that are both soothing and inspiring.

From a young age, Oded says he was passionate about art and would often doodle and paint. An art teacher encouraged him to pursue art when he grew up, however, Oded shelved his creative talents and pursued a career in aviation, specializing in jet propulsion.

Eventually, he and Pamela, who has a background in communications and multi-media production, turned towards something a bit more creative and established their own graphic design company; something they did for the better part of 20 years.

But the story of how they became glass artists is a story that emerges from personal pain. At the age of 10, their eldest daughter experienced an injury that triggered a serious health condition she still deals with 13 years later. "We went through a dark time," says Oded. "We had a lot of issues and had to travel to Toronto many times for her treatments." With two other children in the mix, the parents lives became consumed with their care and the special medical requirements of their young daughter. "It was a difficult period," says Oded. *Continued on page 42*



people



One day, Pamela found an advertisement for a beginner's course in stained glass and discussed it with Oded. Their eldest daughter overheard their conversation and encouraged them to do something fun for themselves, so they signed up. They each created a tiny stained glass piece they still use today; one to hold sweetener packets, the other to hold a small message pad. "That began the transformation," says Pamela. "It took awhile but that kind of planted the seed about change."

Eventually the projects became larger in scale and complexity. They created beautiful stained glass panels for their home's front entranceway, which radiate with light and uplifting colours. People began to take notice. A neighbour admired their home's unique feature and commissioned them to create something for her own double-entranceway, and it continued to grow from there.

Pam and Oded continue to take specialized classes in glass design and have seen their own methods evolve from the traditional ones they were initially

taught. Pam describes their style as more free-hand. "Sometimes you have to see where the glass will take you," she says. "It's part of the magic and the mystery."

They now work at their art glass business, **OR DESIGN glassworks** full-time and they continue to explore new possibilities for their work, including larger architectural pieces. They participate in home design shows and also have their own gallery to showcase their art. Among the decorative sculptures and bowls that line the gallery shelves are pieces that combine art with function; unique glass vessel sinks, intricate glass cabinet door inserts and even little sparkling glass knobs to dress-up cabinetry doors and drawers.

The possibilities for their work seem endless. "It boggles me how simple it is because you are only using a cutter," says Oded. "You just cut glass and if you have patience and a vision, you slowly see something that is hidden and locked inside. It's always an amazing feeling to transform sheets of glass into works of art." **OH**