PLAYING WITH FIRE

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Students dip a glassblowing pipe into molten glass in the hot shop's furnace. Media credit: Corinne Thrash

“It's like being in the middle of a volcano. In molten states, there's this primeval Promethean quality to it. The way it moves between liquid states and solid states is a beautiful thing.”

Mark Zirpel is talking about glass, a material he finds endlessly fascinating. That makes sense given that Zirpel heads the glass program in the UW School of Art + Art History + Design — a program he built from the ground up after joining the faculty in 2008 as the Dale Chihuly Endowed Chair of Glass.

It hasn't been easy.

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