



How do you catch a wave?

A wave is a disturbance that travels through a medium transferring energy from one location to another location. As definitions go, it's certainly not the most complex one around. There are equations that help calculate the amount of energy and the speed of transfer among other aspects of each individual wave but again, these formulae aren't too intimidating for people with a mathematical bent. But, the question still remains, how do you catch one of these things?

Sound waves can be recorded, seismic waves can be drawn as lines on a machine: is that the same? Does it capture the imagination enough? Does it help demonstrate the true nature of a wave? Ocean waves have a randomness about them driven primarily by wind conditions which results in different heights, durations, and shapes with limited predictability. Can we capture that? When faced with these sorts of questions there is only one action open – find the experts and cling on for the ride.

The experts in this case are two accomplished, diverse, and inspiring artists who continue to push the boundaries of mixed media of glass fusion. Add in a sea of oceanographic expertise, an enthusiastic clinger-on (me!), a wave tank, and a boat load of cameras and you begin to get the answers to your questions.

However, it's not as easy as you may think. Cameras don't like essentially transparent objects that move and reflect light. They also don't like to synchronise in order to ensure numerous digital points can be captured at the same time. Wave tanks are designed to produce uniform, consistent motion that doesn't accurately represent an ocean space. The list of obstacles goes on to encompass not only the capturing process but also the 'what are the next steps' pieces...but here is proof that you can actually capture a wave.

