



glass : art design architecture

THEME 4: A LOVE OF NATURE
Clare Belfrage and Jessica Loughlin

Clare BELFRAGE

Works: *Russet and Brown Collection* 2014 blown glass with **cane drawing, hand sanded and hand polished**
Awash in Black 2014 blown glass with cane drawing, hand sanded and hand polished



Lines appear everywhere in nature from precise parallels to soft flowing lines that swell and move and be ever changing. Belfrage was inspired by structural patterning made in naturally occurring lines to decorate her beautifully crafted glass forms. Her glass shapes also appear to be inspired by nature, often suggesting giant pebbles from the bed of a running river where they have been shaped and polished to a silky finish.

As Nature grinds and washes beautiful surfaces onto wood and stone over thousands of years of weathering, Belfrage has achieved simple and elegant beauty by meticulously shaping, grinding and polishing glass. Her choice of understated colours and fine linear patterns echo the subtlety of many natural surfaces and they draw the audience to look into and over her glass surfaces.

Artist`s statement

‘My work for at least the last decade has been drawn from the rhythm, patterns and detail found in the natural world. It has unconsciously had a natural relationship to textiles. This has been a pleasing coincidence as I have always interested in the rhythm and metaphors associated with woven fabric.

I have also really loved natural fibres and patterns used in basketry. In this body of work I have worked with consciousness towards the qualities and rhythm of woven lines while still working with reference to nature such as plant life and shells, rocks and sand. I’m working with pattern and rhythm expressive of life, growth and the passing of time, the weave of a fabric and the qualities of drawing. When I am drawing with fine glass threads onto the blown form in the hot process I have a clear plan of where I am going but I also try to let myself be absorbed by the intensity of the process. This enables me to fall into the line work and focus only on how each line I draw relates, intersects, runs parallel or contrast to another line. This is the way I like to draw.’

www.fosterwhite.com/dynamic/artist.asp?ArtistID=199

Other Perspectives

Inspired by experiences in the natural world for many years now, Clare Belfrage has forged an international reputation for her distinguished work with detailed and complex glass drawing on blown glass forms.

“As an artist, my point of view is often looking from close up. The big feeling that small gives me is intimate and powerful. The industry in nature, its rhythm and energy, dramatic and delicate still holds my fascination as does the language and processes of glass.”

She has maintained a vibrant practice for over twenty-five years. She has been an active part of artists' communities particularly in Adelaide and Canberra, including the glass based studio blue pony, of which she is a founding member, the JamFactory Glass Studio in Adelaide and, Canberra Glassworks where she played the pivotal role of Creative Director from 2009 to 2013.

<http://www.clarebelfrage.com/about/>

Jessica LOUGHLIN

Work: *continuum*, 2014 kiln formed glass



Nature is a constant inspiration for artists in all aspects of its beauty and its extremes. Although we know about the predictable cycle of seasons, artist Jessica Loughlin has been excited by nature`s more unpredictable and dramatic events. Such as the irregular flooding of the inland lakes of Central Australia, events that can occur once in thirty years or alternatively two years in a row.

It was a momentous flooding event that attracted Loughlin to Lake Eyre to witness the lake`s vast expanses and whiteness, its reflective qualities and stillness. She wanted to embed these visual impressions in her memory before they were changed with a flood.

Loughlin`s glass pieces convey ethereal qualities of atmosphere and landscape and they invite your contemplation and meditation of her surfaces. She draws her audience to linger over still, white mists that seem frozen into the glass. Her mists float within grey spaces created by the edges and boundaries of her rectangular panels. She suggests how the elements of land, salt, dust and mist are caught in a cycle of never ending change.

Artist`s statement

“To me, the Australian landscape is defined by its vast space and a sense of distance. There is an inherent quietness and stillness here, which is unlike any other country. Being out in a vast space creates stillness and space within my mind, and it is portraying this stillness that has remained a constant aim within my work”

<http://www.bullseyeprojects.com/Artist-Info.cfm?ArtistID=287>

Other Perspectives

Jessica Loughlin takes her artistic cues from the landscape, creating an illusory sense of depth in her quiet horizons of glass powders and cast layers. Loughlin received the Tom Malone Prize from the Art Gallery of Western Australia in 2004 and 2007 and was the 2001 winner of the Outstanding New Artist in Glass award from UrbanGlass.

<http://www.bullseyeprojects.com/Artist-Info.cfm?ArtistID=287>

Jessica Loughlin is a highly committed and passionate artist who is highly regarded both in Australia and internationally. Her thoughtful and instinctual approach, together with extraordinary technical skills with the medium sees her work collected by both public institutions and private collectors around the world. With a gentle colour palette of soft muted hues, her work often explores ideas of evaporation, space and distance, all inherently in the Australian landscape.

Jessica Loughlin's work is characterised by a strict reductive sensibility and restricted use of colour. Fusing kiln formed sheets of opaque and translucent glass together in flat panels or in thin, geometric compositions and vessels, she alludes to shadow, reflection and refraction. Loughlin's work is influenced by the flat landscapes and salt lakes of South Australia, and the recurring motif of the mirage appears in much of her work. Each piece their own poetic statement.

Originally from Melbourne, Australia, Jessica Loughlin is a graduate of the Canberra School of Art under the tutelage of late Stephen Procter. Her work can be found in the permanent collections of the Corning Museum of Glass, the National Gallery of Australia, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, National Museums Scotland, Edinburgh GB, and the Musée de Design et d'Arts Appliqués Contemporains in Lausanne, Switzerland.

<http://sabiigallery.com/artists/jessica-loughlin>

THEME 4: A LOVE OF NATURE

Guiding Questions and Research

- Australian artists have a strong heritage of depicting our landscape in a range of media. How do Clare Belfrage`s and Jessica Loughlin`s contemporary 3D views of the landscape add to this tradition?
- Jessica Loughlin`s artwork can play visual tricks with our senses, causing us to be unsure of what we are seeing. What do you see and what is really there?
- The high degree of crafting displayed in both artists` works can only be achieved by mastering their chosen media of glass. Research the glass making techniques of both artists and present your research findings to your class.
- Both artists describe the importance of nature`s influence in the creation of their artworks seen in this exhibition. From your point of view argue how successfully each artist has demonstrated a connection to nature.
- Describe how your understanding of Loughlin`s artwork changed as you spent time looking closely at it. Consider not only the ideas behind the works but also the artists` use of media and techniques.

Research:

Clare Belfrage

<http://clarebelfrage.com/awards-and-grants/>

Jessica Loughlin

<http://www.art-almanac.com.au/2014/10/jessica-loughlin-the-unfamiliar-edge-of-t> - exhibition statement

You Tube LINK SERIES: Jessica Loughlin (4.09 min)