

February 6, 2019,

The Alberta Craft Council is proud to nominate Brenda Malkinson for the Eldon + Anne Foote Edmonton Visual Arts Prize, an award created to celebrate the brilliance of Visual Artists in Edmonton. We feel Brenda is a very deserving artist for this award who should be celebrated for her expression and dedication to her craft and artistic practice, her commitment in strengthening the arts community through long term volunteerism, teaching, mentoring, and modeling an impactful career in the Arts.

Brenda has a long record of dedicated service to the Edmonton and Alberta visual arts community, particularly in her chosen mediums of glass and print. She is a founding member of the Alberta Craft Council, serving on our Board of Directors for multiple terms over our almost 40 year history. She is also a long time Board member of SNAP, the Society of Northern Alberta Printmakers. Brenda has generously volunteered to build these organizations, mentor artists, staff, and promote the arts to the broader community.

She has passed on her skills and career advice through mentorships, teaching at the University of Alberta Faculty of Extension for 23 years, leading workshops at Series Summer School for the Arts at Red Deer College for 16 years, and numerous workshops across the country.

Her contributions as both a creative community builder and visual artist are recognized by her peers and the organizations she serves. In 2018, Brenda was awarded with the Alberta College of Art + Design Legacy Award in recognition of an outstanding alumni. Honoured for her professional achievements, artistic endeavours, and her service to society. As an exceptional individual who brings honour to the institution, the greater community, and provides an invaluable source of inspiration to emerging artists, craftspeople and designers.

Brenda has studiously and successfully had a full-time career working in glass and print over the past 40 years. Bringing historic craft practices and techniques into contemporary expressions of nature, transparency and luminosity. Glass is an expensive and demanding medium to pursue, but her unique approach has helped her cultivate a strong following where she was able to work full-time, creating glass works primarily for private collectors and public commissions.

She has executed major architectural commissions and her work is in many corporate, public and private collections including The Alberta Foundation for the Arts, The Massey Foundation Museum of Man Ottawa, The University of Alberta, the Stanley Milner Public Library, the CK Hui Heart Centre at the Royal Alexandra Hospital, and St. Kateri Chapel, St. Josephs St. Kateri Chapel, St. Josephs College, to name a few. Recent exhibitions include Chicago Printmakers Collaborative Finalist in the 3rd Annual International Print making Award; International Print Exhibition Canada and Japan in Kyoto; New Prints at Christie's New York; Juried New Prints at the International Print Centre New York; Central Booking Gallery, New York; Pulp Paper Pages, Wonju, Korea.

Brenda's success as a full-time artist is a testament to her artistic vision, craftsmanship and unique explorations in the medium. Through these 40 years working on commissions, which was often a very collaborative process with a client, Brenda found herself yearning to explore her singular creative vision and exhibit a body of work publicly. An Edmonton Artist Trust Fund award in 2013 allowed her the budget and the time to focus full time on her own creative expressions in print and glass.

This work culminated in her solo exhibition *The Surface of Things: Chasing Light*, June 2 – July 14, 2018 at the Alberta Craft Council. This exhibition and Artists Talk was one of the ACC's feature exhibitions as part of the Works Art and Design Festival. The work was also featured in our YEG International Airport Vitrine for the summer/fall 2018 and has been selected to travel to the ACC gallery in Calgary, March 30 - June 1, 2019, where Brenda will also launch her first publication on her works.

This body of work continues to explore the interplay of light and surface. Brenda captures isolated "snapshots", from infinite possibilities, through the passage of time. The series aims to illustrate an individual's sublime placement in time and space, while considering an infinite stream of fixed moments.

Brenda Malkinson's Artistic practice in her own words:

Organic forms and undulations shaped in stained glass and woodcut prints suggest the metaphorical properties of bodies of water, representations of the flow of time, and ever-changing, yet consistent wholes. As Kafka said, "...dare to dive from the quivering everyday experience and sink into the depths in order to rise again...to the now doubly illuminated surface of things."

I think of my work as surfaces composed of floating objects, natural elements and fragmented forms. I concentrate on the surface of things and build compositions that include reflections, shadows, glimmers of light and natural forms. This way of seeing connects with my way of making, I build work that floats on the surface of paper, wood and glass.

Surfaces change in an instant, they shift with the slightest breath or touch, nothing is fixed, solid or whole. Like memories they break apart, fragment, intertwine and evolve into a layered recollection of time and impermanence. For many years I have been working toward the idea of making a body of work that becomes an abstract language of time when being faced with an unlimited and continuous stream of embedded moments. I choose a small patch of surface water as the muse, the result - *The Surface of Things, Chasing Light*.

This body of work contains my impressions and observations of this specific surface. I would return to the site at different times of the year and various times throughout the day. I would make sketches, note the date and time and this became reference for the process and impetus for the titles of each piece. I would go back to the studio and let my intangible vision and memory take over. This intuitive approach became a conversation between me and my materials. What would often start in one direction would change as the layers shift and affect each other.

The media that I work with is woodblock printmaking on paper and layering stains and enamels on glass, known as stained glass or vitrified glass. These media share

the qualities of transparency and luminosity. I developed strategies in the studio that allow these techniques to extend their tradition.

The prints grew from six baltic birch hand carved plates. I use lithography inks and intuitive inking methods while alternating the order of the plates resulting in as many as four to twelve layers pressed onto the surface of the paper. The repetition of the plates and altering of the colour and transparency creates a sensation of elements floating forward and backward, in and out of focus, constantly shifting and changing. The layers are altered or covered though the preceding layers remain, and act as evidence of where I have been, and a memory that fades into the background.

The glass is made by painting glass enamels onto the surface and firing in the kiln. Several layers of colour are applied and each layer is fired separately resulting in a curious fusion of colour and textures. The glass was informed by the prints and share many of the same elements. Sculptures were created with multiple layers of glass, and the woodblock plates that were used in the printing process, held within a steel framework. Creating three-dimensional works that shift in luminosity and colour depending on the time of day and year they are viewed, embody the concept of shifting form and memory.

Each print and sculpture stands on its own but taken together tell a shifting story of the abstract nature of time and reflection. Like memories they break apart, fragment, intertwine and evolve into a layered recollection of time and impermanence.

Brenda Malkinson

Since creating the work for *The Surface of Things* Brenda has continued her commitment to shifting the focus of her practice to developing her voice and explorations in glass and print, she has ceased taking on commission work and has stepped back from the Board of Directors of the Alberta Craft Council and SNAP after decades of service. Stepping into an important phase in her career; focused self expression and exploration of her mediums.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'J. Stanton', with a stylized, flowing script.

Jenna Stanton
Executive Director
Alberta Craft Council