

Alana Biffert Biography

Alana Biffert's obsession for glass is mirrored by the depth of her skill set, materialized, through her passion for the Arts. A European upbringing constructed the first decade of Biffert's life in the glass culture of Malta, a small island in the Mediterranean Sea. Glass engulfed her childhood with a dream of becoming a glassblower.

Biffert took home a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Glass from Alberta University of the Arts in 2008. Through volunteering locally, she landed a life changing job as a Glass technician at Red Deer College. Opportunities blossomed and after working with several well-known local artists, Biffert spent the next two years in her pursuit on a professional level.

Welcoming every opportunity, this Commonwealth cavalier worked with various talents in both New Zealand and Australia in her travels down under. Fourteen years entrusted into this endless love affair has placed Biffert back into the bosom of Alberta. Enthusiastic to learn and accumulate techniques, she persisted in teaching glass at Alberta University of the Arts for seven years and is eager to share her inspirations collected. She has attended Corning Museum of glass as well as other well-known studios, as she continues to build her knowledge and understanding of this demanding material. Her goal is to learn all there is to know about glass.

With a multifaceted set of skills, Biffert focuses her energy on concept driven, large-scale installations. She has recently exhibited her collaborative work with Marta Gorski in a solo show in Edmonton, Alberta Canada at The Harcourt House. Currently, Biffert is exhibiting her first solo, public art exhibit at The Devonian Gardens titled *Opulence*, which will be displayed for three months. Drawing her inspiration from the leafy essence of the mountain forests, and the human condition, her works surround permanent impressions left.



Artist Statement: 'Opulence' Installation Overview

Opulence is comprised of three installations: *Umbra*, *Lumina* and *Tempo*. Each art piece is congruent to the next. Designed to enunciate Canada's abundant resources, harmonized through process, conceptual content and location. The Devonian Gardens is the perfect setting for this body of work, a lush green space industrialized for our enjoyment with beautiful water features and a living wall.

Art making for me is about significant moments of introspection. Imparting those observations as an offering; the ubiquity of art, honoured within the material's language. I have dedicated my education and growth to being just that; an Artist. It is my job to discover the hidden beauty in the unfamiliar. Glass has the capability of assuming any form in an immaculate way. It is a technically demanding material that takes time and dedication to be mastered. It is not harmonious with everything. Glass has a sympathetic relationship with light that arouses a traditional connection. This is what draws me to glass as a material.

I believe that art gives us a voice, an opportunity to be heard. My work consists of large-scale mixed media installations that fall under the conceptual umbrella of consumerism and the authentic consequences of time. There is a dynamic relationship between glass and wood that I have chosen to venture. The resolution of these contradicting materials passing through one another are objects that hold the permanent print of an exchange, much like the conversation about the industrialization of our environment. This mirrors the depreciation of one material in exchange for another. A frozen timeline, like a catalogue of memories offering us an opportunity to examine our impact on the environment.

These discoveries embodied through the destruction of the wood take on a form that make each individual glass casting authentic, enunciating the understated beauty of a moment. As two materials reveal, the dichotomy is extracted and mimicked, accentuating the indelible qualities of glass and its ability to achieve unfamiliar forms while preserving continuity with light.

This grouping of work is a contemporary study representing this investigation. The variables that stay the same throughout the process represent the pulse of our industrial growth. One could not be without the creation of the prior, all displayed, lined up and mounted in chronological order. The vertebrae of mother nature versus the binding notions of cultural consumerism, displayed is the depletion of our environment in exchange for industry. The wood, though not present in physical form, is still evident. Through the process of hot casting, it is reduced to nothing but ash. This speaks to the impact left on mother nature. The glass embodied through its destruction represents "Industry" and the corrosion caused by consumerism.