

Pittsburgh Glass Center show has glittery poultry, lustrous lichen, and other stunning works

By Amanda Waltz



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CP Photo: Amanda Waltz

"Seven skins" by Karola Dischinger, part of *Tg: Transitions in Kiln-Glass* at Pittsburgh Glass Center

Sometimes you're having a normal one, and sometimes you walk into an art gallery and see a giant glass onion so vibrantly hued, so finely detailed, so uncannily realistic that you nearly weep.

So goes the experience with *Tg: Transitions in Kiln-Glass*, the latest group show at Pittsburgh Glass Center, the straightforward name of which fails to communicate the visual delights throughout the gallery. The works represent winners of a biennial juried competition held by the Portland, Ore.-based Bullseye Glass Co., described as "honoring outstanding contemporary kiln-glass design, architecture, and art."

The exhibition, on view through Jan. 22, 2023, is presented as a part of the International Year of Glass 2022, with support from the Art Alliance for Contemporary Glass.

As a whole, the varied works exemplify a process of shaping glass in an extremely hot kiln, during which it sits between "behaving like a solid and behaving like a liquid," according to PGC. Despite focusing on a single method, the results vary widely, from the German artist Karola Dischinger's hyperrealistic onion, to the delicate, coral-like bowls of Argentinian artist Ana Laura Quintana, and the Kandinsky-like glass "paintings" of David Hendren, who states that his contributions were inspired by Los Angeles music venues closed during the pandemic.



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Like Dischinger, Evan Burnette also looked to the world of food for inspiration with "Pink Dichroic Glitter Chicken," a whole chicken cast in hot pink and presented on a bright blue platter. Seeing these brought to mind *Full Spectrum*, a PGC show from earlier this year that saw bananas worked into a surprising number of pieces.

The absurdity of Burnette's chicken strikes one of the many tones found throughout *Tg: Transitions in Kiln-Glass*. Asian American artist Abegael Uffelman takes a more serious direction with "Moon, Hyun Kyung," through which she explores her identity and race by transferring her adoption records onto plates of *pâte de verre*. A finely "woven" multicolored glass box by Bonnie Huang takes on a heavier meaning when a description reveals that it represents the "liminal experience" of the Australian artist's migration and experience of growing up in a detention center.

Not to be overlooked is "Meremere (venus – evening star)," an impressive cape created from layers of red glass strips, and inspired by New Zealand artist Te Rongo Kirkwood's experience as an Indigenous Māori person.



CP Photo: Amanda Waltz

"Home Range" by Sibylle Peretti, part of *Tg: Transitions in Kiln-Glass* at Pittsburgh Glass Center

Drawing viewers into the show's thoughtful themes and statements are works defined by spectacular technique. It's impossible to deny, even at the risk of coming off as shallow, how much beauty the gallery contains, much of which has its roots in nature. "Home Range" by Sibylle Peretti, for example, depicts photorealistic foxes against a blue-tinted multi-media collage. Welsh artist Verity Pulford wows with "Study of Lichen," a trio of jarringly gorgeous pieces splashed with rich yellow and fanned out in delicate, organically inspired structures.

In attempting to, as the show description puts it, reflect the "expansion and evolution of the medium and its community," *Tg: Transitions in Kiln-Glass* covers a diverse range of artistic voices from around the world and gives audiences a taste of the many, wildly varied ways to employ a single material.

Tg: Transitions in Kiln-Glass. Continues through Jan. 22, 2023. 5472 Penn Ave., Friendship. Free.
pittsburghglasscenter.org

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