



APRIL SURGENT

Artist Statement: Future Unfolding

My work is a meditation on time and impermanence. In an era characterized by unprecedented environmental and social change, I find solace in actively bearing witness to, documenting, and paying homage to the present moment. As a custodian of both contemporary narratives and a traditional craft, I embrace the slow, deliberate process of engraving as a counterbalance to the frenetic pace of modern life. The watercolor, oil pastel, and acrylic surface embellishments initiate an antithetical dialogue about permanence, impermanence, the present moment, and our precarious future.

The pieces included in this show are part of a long-term series focused on weather; the implications of climate change are that life on Earth will become uninhabitable due to persistent changes in the composition of the atmosphere. One of the most direct ways climate change impacts us today is by extreme weather events. As the frequency and intensity of severe weather systems increases, I have become interested in looking at weather through the lens of habitability. The intention is to encourage the viewer to consider how climate directly impacts all aspects of our lives.

Bio

April Surgent started working with glass in 1997, at open access hot shop studios in her hometown of Seattle, WA. She went on to study at the Australian National University, Canberra, Australia where she graduated with honors in 2004. In 2003, she changed her focus from blown to wheel engraved glass after studying under Czech master engraver Jiri Harcuba at the Pilchuck Glass School. She has been engraving for 20 years, interested in contemporary approaches to the traditional craft of wheel engraving. Notable recognitions for her work include a 2009 Behnke Foundation Neddy Fellowship, a 2016 USA Ford Fellowship and acquisitions by Iowa State University and the Smithsonian's, American Art Museum.

Observation and in-depth research inform her work discussing our changing planet. Her interest in natural history, applied science and climate change have led her from Antarctica to Alaska studying vulnerable species and ecosystems. In 2013, she worked at Palmer station as a recipient of the National Science Foundations', Antarctic Artist and Writers Program and in 2016 as a volunteer field biologist for the Hawaiian Monk Seal Research Program. Most recently Surgent has worked in Southwest Alaska with the US Geological Survey assisting with pelagic food web research. Surgent lives and works on the Quimper Peninsula in Washington state.