



JamFactory Icon 2018 Clare Belfrage: A Measure of Time

Numerous temporal and temperature ambiguities collide in Belfrage's work: patterns which have taken a millennia to coalesce are reproduced from a fast fiery furnace, the natural ephemeral is caught within a medium that becomes still and stable, and hot breath is cooled down into firm smooth forms.¹

JamFactory is pleased to announce leading South Australian glass blower Clare Belfrage as the JamFactory Icon for 2018. With a career spanning almost three decades, the multi-award winning artist has forged an international reputation for her finely detailed glass sculptures that marry organic blown forms with intricate line work.

Throughout her career, Belfrage has maintained a vibrant studio glass practice and is known for her distinctive artworks in which complex patterns of fine glass lines trace her forms. Inspired by the repetitious patterns found in nature and the woven lines of textiles, Belfrage is particularly drawn to the layered rhythms that mark growth, change and the passing of time in the natural world.

The characteristically fluid lines that are found throughout Belfrage's works are part of a technical breakthrough involving the artist's innovative use of fine glass rods known as 'stringers'. In this process, Belfrage applies heavily stretched, thinned and lengthened stringers to her blown glass forms at an early stage in production. Rather than using commercially available stringers, Belfrage makes her own, painstakingly walking and stretching glass along tracks in order to produce very fine lengths of glass with the desired thickness, density, transparency and linear effects.

The fine threads of glass are carefully positioned and fused onto the surface of the blown glass form with a torch to create the desired repetitious patterns. The resulting surface has an almost textile-like quality akin to those produced by knitting and weaving. As very few glass artists have extended their knowledge and experimented with the practical application of drawing with stringers as much as Belfrage, she is widely regarded as an ardent pioneer and innovative developer of the technique.

Currently blowing her forms at JamFactory's Glass Studio, before cold working them in her home studio, Belfrage has had an enduring relationship with JamFactory since she first came to the organisation, as a Glass Studio Associate in 1991. In the years that followed the Associate Program, Belfrage spent a year working as the Glass Studio's Production Manager before joining the University of South Australia's School of Art in 1996 as a Lecturer in Glass Studies.

With a strong focus on cultivating strong connections within the glassblowing community, Belfrage has been an active member of the glass community throughout her career. Belfrage was one of the founding members of iconic Adelaide-based glass studio Blue Pony, which was used for over fourteen years by a diverse group of both independent and collaborative glassmakers from 1997 to its closure in 2011. Furthermore, during her five-year tenure as Creative Director of the Canberra Glassworks from 2009 to 2013, Belfrage played a pivotal role in nurturing the careers of emerging and established glass artists.

JamFactory's Icon series was launched in 2013 as a series of solo exhibitions celebrating the achievements of South Australia's most outstanding and influential craft and design practitioners.

Each exhibition presents a leading practitioner with significant national and international profiles and considerable influence in their chosen field. Held annually during the SALA (South Australian Living Artist) Festival, previous JamFactory Icon exhibitions have celebrated the creative practices of Stephen Bowers, Nick Mount, Giles Bettison, Gerry Wedd and Catherine Truman.

Belfrage is the 2018 SALA Festival Featured Artist. She is the subject of the SALA publication written by local writers and artists Emeritus Professor Kay Lawrence and Sera Waters and published by Wakefield press.

The exhibition *JamFactory Icon Clare Belfrage: A Measure of Time* will tour to 10 venues nationally.

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JamFactory respectfully acknowledges the traditional lands of Kurna people and we pay respect to their spiritual relationship with their Country. We also acknowledge the Kurna people as the traditional custodians of the Adelaide region and that their cultural and heritage beliefs are still as important to the living Kurna people today.

JamFactory acknowledges the support and assistance of Arts South Australia and is assisted by the Visual Arts and Crafts Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments. JamFactory is also assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

Image: Clare Belfrage, *A Measure of Time*, Collection of works. Photo: Pippy Mount.