



Verdant
Faith
Layard Strata

Faith Layard, *Rock Face Bowl*, 2024. Hand-polished FS Cloisonné, copper form. Diameter: 13cm x 4.5cm. Collection of the Artist.



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When viewing the works of Faith Layard, it quickly becomes apparent that Layard's practice is rooted in the appreciation of nature, while simultaneously transforming the way we perceive it. Through stunning layers of enamel and intricate metalwork, Faith's art evokes the complexity, depth, and shimmering beauty of our environments and ecosystems. Her works encourage viewers to engage in a deeper state of looking beyond passive observation: to slow down and consider the quiet magnificence embedded within the interconnected environments that surround us daily. Whether depicting wildlife, plants, reflective wetlands, or lush overgrowth, Layard transforms familiar landscapes into spaces of contemplation, wonder, and reverence.

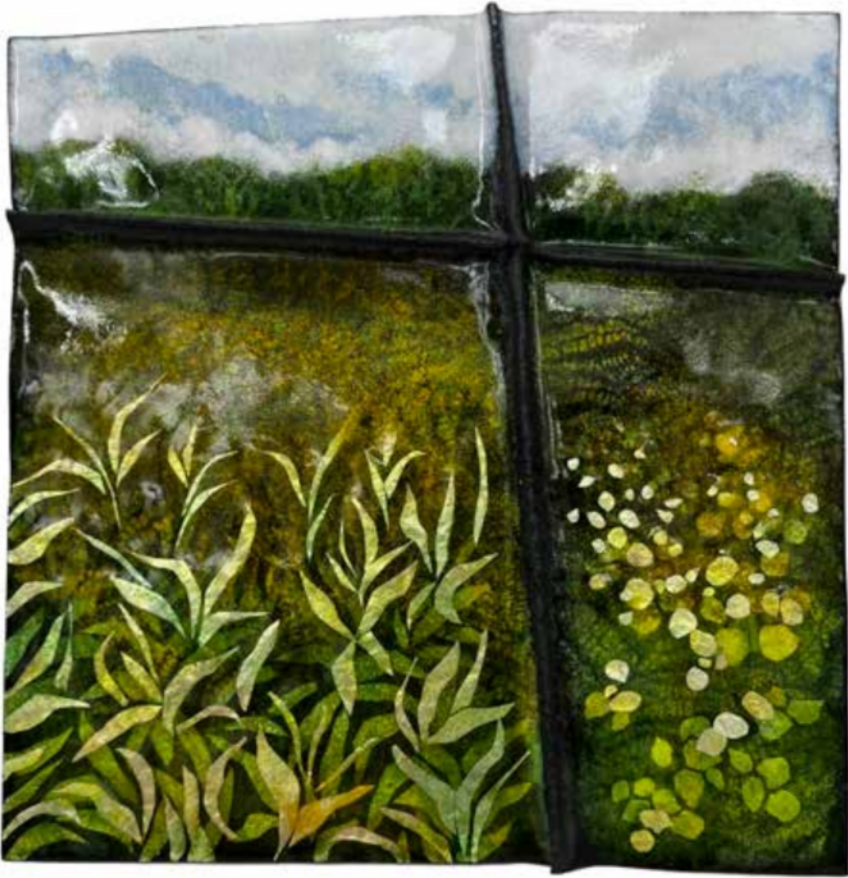
Milkweed brings reverence, appreciation, and evolution to a common species that otherwise might be overlooked. The name of the plant itself creates a sense of aversion — a weed. Layard, however, understands the hidden truth: the wondrous and elusive nature of these highly important plants. Milkweed is beloved by pollinators, most notably the monarch butterfly, and serves as a critical component of many southern Ontario ecosystems. Named for the milky latex it exudes, the plant can be found throughout wild fields, gardens, roadsides, and forest edges, often blending quietly into the landscape. Yet, Layard's careful use of cloisonné techniques in combination with thoughtful layers of colour and texture elevates the plant into something precious and luminous.

Cloisons, the delicate metal wires that form the structure of the image, are painstakingly manipulated to create elegant stems, blossoms, and pods, which are then filled with layers of enamel. Through this process, Layard honours the species with extraordinary care. Fine stippling of enamel powders creates a glowing quality in the apex blooms and seed pods, contrasting beautifully against the earthy terracotta tones and lush greens that surround them. The work becomes both a botanical study and a quiet act of devotion, encouraging viewers to reconsider what is often dismissed as ordinary.

Similarly, *Into the Pond* creates an otherworldly and mythical atmosphere through its contrasting use of opaque enamel and the reflective, polished surface of the copper bowl beneath. The work evokes the mysticism of water depths — the unseen worlds hidden just below the surface of a pond or marsh. Organic forms drift across the composition like lily pads, bubbles, spores, or reflected light, creating a sense of movement and suspended stillness simultaneously. During a meeting with Layard, she remarked that the process of enamelling is not unlike emerging from the depths of a body of water: each firing adds another layer of colour, light, and translucency, allowing her to slowly build toward the surface of the image. This layered process becomes materially embedded within the work itself; viewers are not simply observing a pondscape, but the accumulated depth of the artist's labour, patience, and intuition. The exposed copper lines carve curving pathways across the vessel, simultaneously resembling root systems, waterways, and cellular structures. In this way, Layard collapses the distinction between macro and micro worlds, reminding us that patterns in nature are mirrored across vastly different scales.



Faith Layard, *Milkweed*, 2025. FS Cloisonne, copper dish. 19 x 9 x 1.5 cm. Collection of the Artist.



Fold-formed Field, as its namesake suggests, utilizes the unique technique of fold-forming, whereby a flat metal sheet is physically manipulated, annealed, folded, and hammered to create dynamic three-dimensional forms. The resulting surface bends outward and inward, transforming the work into something sculptural. The central raised seam divides the landscape like a windowpane, subtly altering the viewer's relationship to the depicted environment. Layard's enamel surface shimmers with layered greens, yellows, and cloudy blues, evoking a humid summer field just after rainfall. Dense foliage in the foreground appears almost illuminated against the reflective surface, while the distant treeline dissolves softly into the sky. The physical folds of the metal catch and refract light differently across the piece, causing the landscape to shift as the viewer moves around it. This interplay between material and imagery reinforces Layard's interest in transformation — not only the transformation of metal through heat and force, but also the transformation of perception through attentive looking. The enamelled landscape itself becomes alive and constantly changing, much like the ecosystems it depicts.

Taken together, Layard's works reveal that transformation lies at the heart of her practice. Through processes of heating, layering, folding, and refinement, she transforms metal and enamel into vivid encounters with the natural world. At the same time, she asks viewers to undergo their own transformation by reconsidering what they see every day. A roadside milkweed plant, the surface of a pond, or a familiar field become sites of wonder when approached with sustained attention. By drawing connections between material process and ecological observation, Layard encourages viewers to reconsider their own relationship to the natural world: not as something distant, but as something immediate, fragile, and profoundly interconnected with our daily lives.



Faith Layard, *Andean Condor*, 2024. Hand-polished FS Cloisonne, copper form. 19.5 cm x 11cm x 2cm. Collection of the Artist.

Faith Layard

Faith Layard is an active Enamellist/Jeweller/Metalsmith living and working in Burlington, Ontario, and a parttime Professor in the Jewellery Studies Program at George Brown College in Toronto. "Shifts and Transformations in nature inform and influence my creative thinking. While enamelling allows me to express form, movement, and line, with a full spectrum of colour, brilliance, and depth, the interplay of enamel and metal guide my process. Through jewellery, vessel forms and wall pieces, I celebrate a moment of beauty, contrast, evolution, existence. In creating, teaching, and sharing my Enamel works, I hope to inspire viewers to see deeply, and live passionately."



Above: Faith Layard, *Fold-formed Landscape*, 2025. Fold-formed copper, impasto with FS foils. 15 x 15 cm. Collection of the Artist.

Cover: Faith Layard, *Into the Pond*, 2025. Champlève enamel on copper form. 11 cm x 7 cm x 1 cm. Collection of the Artist.

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