



Stefanie Dueck

Stefanie Dueck is a metal sculptor trained as a blacksmith, employing both traditional and modern techniques for manipulating steel, stainless steel, copper, and bronze.

What's your background?

Art was always a big part of my life growing up, and I particularly enjoyed working three dimensionally. When I enrolled at Kootenay School of the Arts in 2003, the plan was to become a ceramics major, as that was the sculptural medium I was most familiar with. However, my focus quickly changed when introduced to the metal shop. I knew absolutely nothing about metalwork at the time, but recognized immediately the potential of the medium and appreciated the intersection between art, craft, and trade. After completing the three year metal program, I moved to southern Spain where I was fortunate to find work in a studio creating architectural ironwork. Upon returning to Canada, I set up my own practice in Vancouver, BC, where I continue to create hand forged flatware, sculpture, and custom work.

What inspires you?

I am inspired by complex forms, how multiple components unite to form a whole. A lifelong interest in entomology lead to many of my early works, interpreting the segmented bodies of insects and arachnids. More recently I have been examining man-made constructs, including the patterns found within industrial structures.

What's integral to the work of a craft artist?

Prioritizing time for experimentation and play is integral to my practice. Not only can this push my work in new and unexpected directions, but also reminds me that I love metalwork, which can sometimes be forgotten during the daily grind. It refreshes my perspective.

What memorable responses have you had to your own pieces?

I am always surprised by how varying the responses can be for a single piece. One sculpture has had some people telling me I have a great sense of humour, while others ask whether I suffer from nightmares. I have also had several people compare my flatware to the implements used in the movie Dead Ringer.

What's going on now or in the future for you?

I have been increasingly focused on custom work lately. This allows me to work in varying scales and techniques. Recent projects have included cutlery settings for a restaurant opening on Long Island, NY, brushed stainless bookshelves, and forged steel and copper door hardware. I am also always seeking opportunities to create and exhibit sculptural pieces, and am in the early planning stages to curate a show featuring non functional craft for the Crafted Vancouver Festival in 2019.

Do you have any wild stories to tell?

The wildest moments from my metalworking career usually involve moving some kind of heavy equipment with inadequate resources. Then there was the time the motor on my air compressor spat flames, or when a pipe in my unheated studio burst and I was greeted in the morning by large icicles encasing all my tools..

I will be involved in three events in Vancouver this fall and winter. It will be my fourth year participating in Address assembly, which will be held as an offsite event during the Interior Design Show in September. My studio will be open during the Eastside Culture Crawl in November, and a new collaboration between OH Studio and Strange Fellows Brewery, Krampusmarkt, will be held in December.

Visit Stefanie's website at

<http://www.stefaniedueck.com/>.

This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.