



SMARTER. FRESHER. DIFFERENT.

BEYOND THE BBQ

Gaga for Glassblowing

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WHY YOU SHOULD CARE

This fired-up art collective will change the way you see glass. And dinner. And maybe fire, too.

How to cook dinner, the Burnt Asphalt Family Way: Prep the molten glass. Set a lot of things on fire. Try not to burn the place down. Eat. Back in 2007, glass artists awarded fellowships to the Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center in New Jersey brainstormed a performance piece using glass to cook a turkey. Since that retreat, dinner performances with anywhere from 20 to 40 artists have scorched live audiences around the country.

Imagine a glass disc so hot it fires almost everything it touches – and then put a piece of meat on it. Avant guard BBQ.

The idea, says Jessica Jane Julius, one of the organizers, is to bust open the idea of the independent artists slaving away by their lonesome, and also rethink assumptions about not-so-delicate glass. The dinners turn the very act of cooking on its head – instead of glass as a vessel, it's the primal heating element. Instead of a delicate art in need of gentle handling, the glass becomes a powerful statement of strength that can be reheated, reused and manipulated. The hot glass ovens aren't tucked away in the bowels of the studio – they become the stage.

"We are in search of redefining the notion of craftsmanship and studio practice of the glass artist," says Julius, as adjunct professor at Temple University's Tyler School of Art. "We want to invite an audience to participate in a material that is very secluded through its mysterious properties and challenge their notions of the potential of glass as art."

Their performance doesn't generate enough to feed the entire audience a full dinner, but folks do get to taste. Their servers just wear sunglasses and massive industrial heat-resistant mitts. Beyond the BBQ, the collective has been known to encase a stack of whole chickens in a glass bell, and string sausages through a giant glass tube so hot, the links roast as they stream through the glass.

Definitely do not try this at home.

The Bay Area Glass Institute in San Jose, Calif., hosts the next Burnt Asphalt Family meal on April 19.

"We will serve deviled eggs, bruschetta with red pepper, roasted tomato and goat cheese, blacken green beans with a spicy dip, pork and vegetarian Bahn-mi, pickled carrots and dip, letter cookie sculptures, cast lemon homemade marshmallows s'mores and homemade lollipop sculpture," Julius says.

"Also acts of spectacle that involve hot glass."

And a spork tornado sculpture.

Not a California local? Here's a look at their fall feast at the UrbanGlass studio in Brooklyn, N.Y. And bonus: you don't have to worry about the falling flames from the safety of your computer screen.



<http://www.ozy.com/performance/fire-up-the-glass-for-dinner/30849.article>