



# Exploring Landscapes Using Copper Leaf

*Text and Demonstration by Lisa St. Martin*

Photography by Andrea Mays

Convergence III Necklace Photo by Jerry Anthony

## **Effetre 104 COE**

Clear

White

Dark Silver Plum

## **Tools and Materials**

Copper Leaf Marver Bead Release

Protective Eye Wear Carlisle Mini CC

Long-Nosed Pliers or Tweezers Mandrel



**I**n my never-ending exploration of the Landscape Bead, I am always looking for different materials and techniques to achieve my goal.

Copper leaf has caught my interest for several reasons. I love the color of it in beads, and the bottom line is that it is cheap. I'm always trying to be frugal with my beads, since they tend to be large.

Okay, I admit it. Most of my beads are honkers. Lower-cost materials do help in offsetting the high cost of all those deliciously expensive indulgences. This bead was made using 104 COE Effetre glass on a Carlisle Mini CC with tanked oxygen and propane.

Most of my beads have clear cores.

There are a couple of reasons for this. Clear is nice and stiff, and larger beads will hold their shape better while you are adding the details. Also, here I'm being frugal again. When you work larger, most of the bead is clear. Then I thinly encase it with my more expensive color, so I use a couple of inches versus a couple of rods of that glorious, expensive color.

Before you begin, preheat the mandrel just where you are going to do your first wrap of clear. When working larger beads, I find that if you preheat the whole mandrel, it can thermal-shock from being hot, then cool, then hot again. The bead release will crack and ruin the bead. When you work on a bead for hours, which I do for my more complicated beads, you really need the bead release to hang in there for you. Continue to preheat the next bit of mandrel as you work your way down the mandrel to your desired size.

**1**

*Lay down the clear core, smooth it out, and perfect the shape.*



With big beads, it is important to get the shape perfect after each step. It is really hard to muscle that much glass to perfection at the end. Patience is painful but well worth the effort.

**2**

*Randomly swipe White glass over the clear core.*



Since I want this to seem like mist as part of the landscape, I add the White thicker in some areas and thinner in others around the bead, perpendicular to the mandrel. Leave some clear showing, since this will add to the visual depth in the landscape.

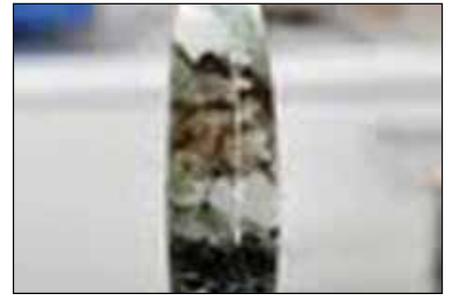
3

*Smooth it all out and perfect the shape.*



7

*Smooth it out and, since you're almost done, perfect your shape.*



4

*Prepare and apply the copper leaf.*



8

*Add a wrap of Dark Silver Plum to each end of the bead to represent bead caps, marver it in, and smooth it out.*



Using your pliers or tweezers, tear off a piece of copper leaf and crinkle it up. This will give you depth of color. One layer of leaf will give you a lighter blue-green, which is great for trees and bushes in the distant background, while crinkle layers will give you depth and texture in the landscape's middle ground.

Heat the bead and roll it on the copper leaf. Next burnish (rub) the leaf onto the bead. Any leaf not stuck on the bead will burn off when heated in the flame. Heat the leaf in.

9

*Add trailing or spider webbing of Dark Silver Plum on top of the end caps.*



5

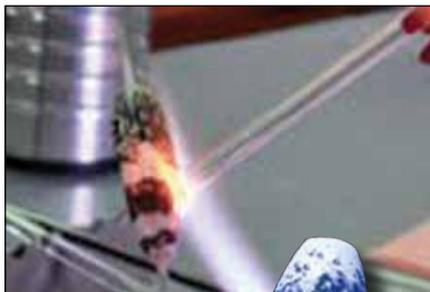
*Add as much copper leaf as needed to create an interesting design, then perfect the shape.*



Marver the trailing in slightly, keeping the texture, but make sure all trailing is stuck onto the base bead. Strike the Dark Silver Plum to bring out its beautiful metallic sheen.

6

*Thinly case the bead in clear, keeping the bead fairly cool and the clear really hot.*



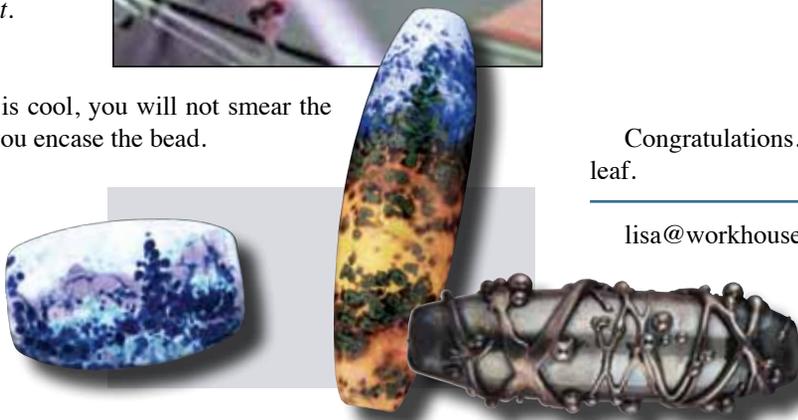
10

*Give the shape a final check and get that puppy in the kiln.*



If the base is cool, you will not smear the copper when you encase the bead.

Congratulations. You've made a Landscape Bead using copper leaf.



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FLOW

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Lisa St. Martin was classically trained in art education at the University of Maryland. With graduate courses in glass technology at the University of Kansas, Lisa has been working with hot glass since the 1970s. Working under a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, Lisa studied glassblowing and engraving at the Jon Meyer Studio as well as with artisans from Steuben in Corning, New York.

With work all over the world and in many books, Lisa's time is spent refining her craft, developing new techniques, and teaching. She serves on the International Society of Glass Beadmaker's (ISGB) National Conference Team as the Loss Prevention Specialist/Artist Liaison. Lisa was also the recipient of the ISGB's 2010 Hall of Flame Award and is a resident artist at The Workhouse in Lorton, Virginia. She lives in northern Virginia, where she tries to keep her husband, two sons, and many cats at bay!



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