

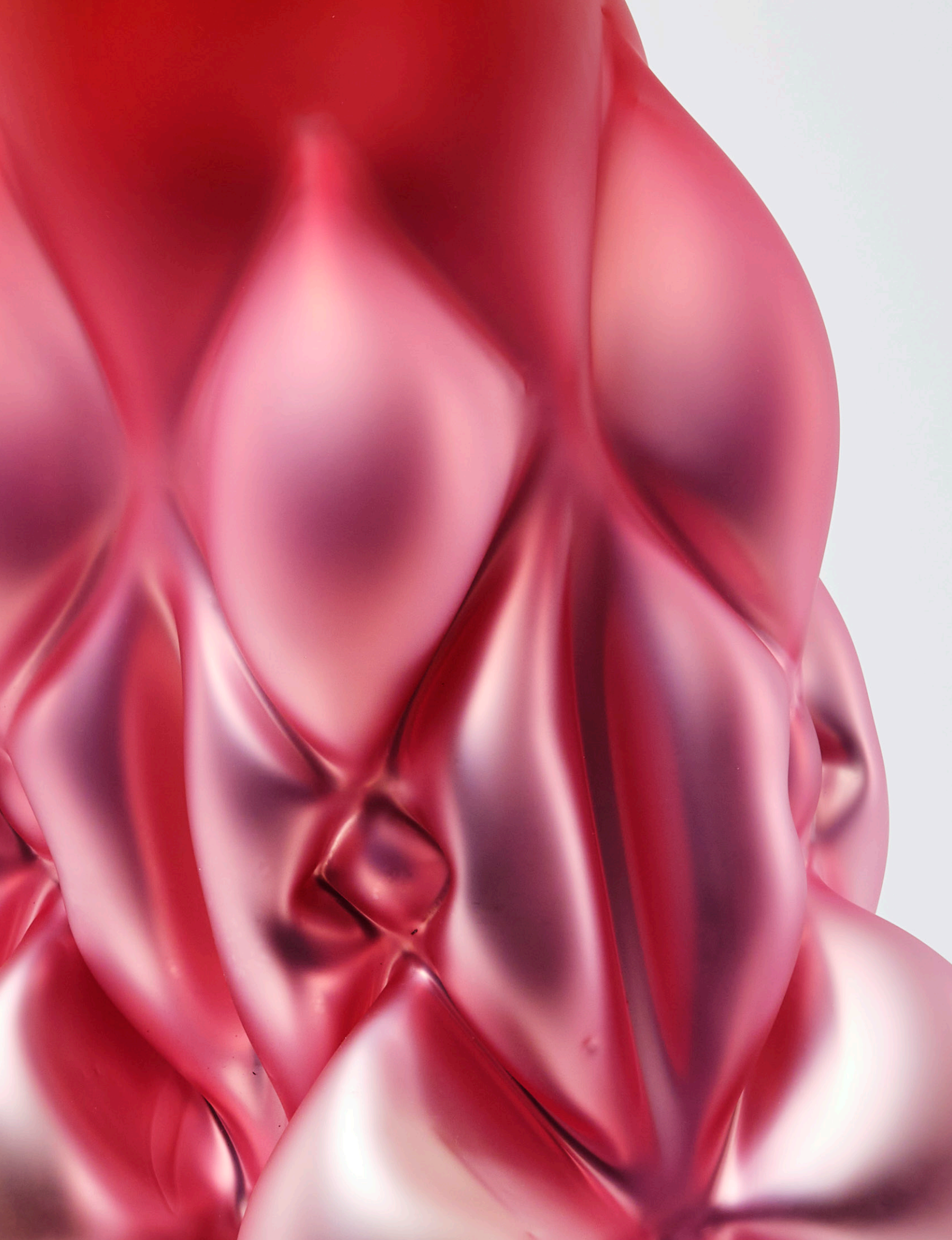
C F H K L

Generation Glas

June 9
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GENERATION
GLAS



Generation Glas

Art glass is deeply ingrained in Swedish culture and heritage. It is seen as a national treasure and a source of pride for the country. Sweden's longstanding tradition and rich history of glassmaking dates back several centuries and can be traced to the mid-17th century when the first glassworks were established. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, Swedish glassworks collaborated with renowned artists and designers, resulting in unique and innovative glass artworks that push the boundaries of traditional glassmaking.

In the wake of the closure of major glassworks, a new generation of glass artists and designers has established itself and developed a new, more individual, platform for Swedish art glass. This new, young group of artists and craftsmen – let's call them *Generation glass* – has revitalised the scene. From their hot shops in the 'Crystal Kingdom' of Småland, the Stockholm area and Denmark, and with experience from historically important glassworks, the artists demonstrate their ability to mix traditional craftsmanship with contemporary aesthetics and create works that are both timeless and modern.

We are delighted to present works by Hanna Hansdotter, Isa Andersson, Maria Bang Espersen, Frida Fjellman, Bjørn Friborg, Simon Klenell, Fredrik Nielsen, and Rasmus Nossbring. Each artist has pushed the boundaries of the material and its expressions, showing the aesthetic and technical possibilities of glass. These inspired and gifted strong individuals are also not afraid to cooperate with each other as a team, designing and blowing glass together, finding strength in a shared passion.

Welcome!

Michael Elmenbeck
Anna-Karin Pusic
Michael Storåkers

Swedish art glass – a new generation sprung out of tradition

Text by Pedro Westerdahl

Art glass is deeply ingrained in Swedish culture and heritage. It is seen as a national treasure and a source of pride for the country. Furthermore, Swedish glass industry has played a significant role in the country’s economy and cultural identity, contributing to its international recognition. Swedish glassmakers, internationally renowned for their impeccable craftsmanship, are highly skilled in techniques such as blowing, cutting, engraving, and etching glass. The meticulous attention to detail and precision in their workmanship result in glass pieces that are of exceptional quality and finish.

Sweden’s longstanding tradition and rich history of glassmaking dates back several centuries. The country’s glassmaking tradition can be traced to the mid-17th century when the first glassworks were established. Several of these celebrated glassworks have made significant contributions to Sweden’s art glass legacy. To name but a few, the most prominent ones are Kosta Boda (a merger from 1990 between Kosta, founded in 1742, and Boda, founded in 1864), Reijmyre (founded in 1810), Åfors (founded in 1876), Skruf (founded in 1897) and, finally, Orrefors (founded in 1898).

Kosta Boda (tracing its roots back to one of the oldest glassworks in Sweden) is recognised for its artistic and colourful creations. Kosta Boda has been instrumental in pushing the boundaries of glass art, experimenting with various techniques and styles. The glassworks have collaborated with numerous renowned artists creating distinctive and, internationally, collectible glass pieces. A list of the artists and designers having created pieces for Kosta and Boda could be regarded as a ‘Who’s Who’ of prominent Swedish artists with names like Alf Wallander (1862–1914), Gunnar G:son Wennerberg (1863–1914), Karl Hultström (1884–1973), Edvin Ollers (1888–1959), Ewald Dahlskog (1894–1950), Tyra Lundgren (1897–1979), Sven Erixson (1899–1970), Signe Persson-Melin (1925–2022), Erik Höglund (1932–1998), Bertil Vallien (1938–), Ulrica Hydman Vallien (1938–2018), Kjell Engman (1946–) and Åsa Jungnelius (1975–).

Reijmyre (also one of Sweden’s oldest glassworks) has a reputation for producing high-quality crystal glass and art glass. Known for its collaborations with Swedish artists, including Ferdinand Boberg (1860–1946), Anna Boberg (1864–1935), Axel Törneman (1880–1925), Johnny Mattsson (1906–1970) and Margareta Hennix (1941–), resulting, once again, in unique and collectible glass pieces.

Skruf (recognized for its traditional craftsmanship and attention to detail) specialises in handmade, mouth-blown glass, including art glass pieces and decorative objects by celebrated artists and designers such as Ingegerd Råman (1943–). Åfors (eventually part

of Orrefors Kosta Boda) was widely known for its art glass production. The glassworks gained prominence for its elegant and innovative designs, often incorporating vibrant colours and organic forms. Åfors collaborated with prominent artists such as Vicke Lindstrand (1904–1983), Ulrica Hydman Vallien (1938–2018) and Bertil Vallien (1938–) contributing to its artistic legacy.

Orrefors (from 1990 to 2013 part of Orrefors Kosta Boda), finally, was one of the most renowned glassworks in Sweden. It had a long history of producing high-quality crystal glass and is known for its exceptional craftsmanship and innovative designs. Orrefors collaborated with numerous artists and designers, resulting in iconic pieces that have garnered international acclaim. A list over, a few of, the famous artist’s having worked with Orrefors would read as follows: Simon Gate (1883–1945), Edward Hald (1883–1980), Sven Palmqvist (1906–1984), Edvin Öhrström (1906–1994), Nils Landberg (1907–1991), Ingeborg Lundin (1921–1992), Gunnar Cyrén (1931–2013), Eva Englund (1937–1998), Per B Sundberg (1964–) and (!) Karl Lagerfeld (1933–2019).

As can be deduced from the above, Swedish glassworks have a long history of collaborating with renowned artists and designers. These collaborations have resulted in unique and innovative glass artworks that push the boundaries of traditional glassmaking. Artists and designers from various disciplines have, over centuries, been attracted to the possibilities offered by Swedish glassworks, leading to exciting and groundbreaking creations.

This long-standing tradition has resulted in a wealth of expertise and craftsmanship that today is highly regarded worldwide. The glassworks have played significant roles in shaping the Swedish art glass industry and have been instrumental in establishing Sweden’s reputation as a global leader in glassmaking. Their exquisite craftsmanship, innovative designs, and collaborations with artists have contributed to the international recognition and celebration of Swedish art glass.

What was to be known as a golden era began around at the turn of the century 1900, with the introduction of cameo glass. The technique created a luxury form of glass art produced by cameo glass engraving or etching and carving through fused layers of differently coloured glass to produce designs, usually with white opaque glass figures and motifs on a dark-coloured background. In Sweden, cameo glass was often used during the Art Nouveau era and was designed by, among others, Alf Wallander and Gunnar G:son Wennerberg at Kosta. Another famous designer of Swedish Art Nouveau cameo glass was Karl Lindeberg (1877–1931), also at Kosta, who not only designed the pieces but also executed them as engraver and etcher.





Worth mentioning also in this context is Axel Enoch Boman (1875–1949) who, as a very accomplished engraver/etcher, carried out most of the designs drawn by Wallander and Wennerberg at Kosta. A further development of the cameo glass is grail glass and ariel glass, which were developed at Orrefors glassworks in 1916 and 1936/37 respectively. The grail glass was developed by Simon Gate (hired in 1916) and Edward Hald (hired in 1917), together with master glassblower Knut Bergqvist (1873–1953).

The 1920s brought further international recognition for Swedish glass. This time Orrefors, with Simon Gate and Edward Hald, led the way. Simon Gate designed magnificent, engraved clear glass compositions. He decorated his urns, vases and bowls with neo-classical pageants, dancing women and other life-affirming motifs. At the World Exhibition, *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels*, in Paris in 1925, his and Edward Hald’s work garnered massive praise whilst also bringing world reputation to Orrefors. The designs of Gate and Hald were partially responsible for the term ‘Swedish grace’ (coined by British art critic Philip Morton Shand in response to Swedish design at the Paris Exhibition) which refers to the luxurious Swedish version of the international Art Deco movement.

The World Exhibition in Paris was followed by further international success with the travelling exhibition *Swedish Decorative Arts* (Metropolitan Museum of Arts, New York/Chicago) in 1927 and *Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne* in Paris in 1937. The Paris exposition of 1937 saw the international launch of the celebrated ariel glass.

During the post-war era, the Swedish glassworks produced high modernist as well as postmodern pieces of the highest international standard. Swedish art glass, known for its exceptional design and innovation, has gained international recognition through exhibitions, museums, and galleries. Major glass collections around the world feature works by Swedish artists and designers. Additionally, prestigious awards and honours have been bestowed upon Swedish glassmakers, further solidifying their reputation as leaders in the field.

The 1980s and 90s marked a kind of culmination for Swedish glass art, where extensive volumes were exported to countries such as the United States and Japan. Visiting tourists spent large amounts of money on Swedish art glass while a variety of artists and designers reaped great success. The variety and diversity displayed by art glass from the period can be exemplified by Ulrica Hydman Vallien’s garish and life-affirming pieces on the one hand and Ingegerd Råman’s fastidiously sophisticated collections on the other.

This hype was, unfortunately, followed by stagnation in the world economy and recession which led to several glassworks across the country having to close operations. Even major players such as Orrefors Kosta Boda AB were hit hard – Boda closed in 2003 and Sandvik the following year. In 2013, operations at Åfors and Orrefors also ceased.

However, in the shadow of the closures of the major glassworks, a new generation of glass artists and designers has established themselves and developed a new, more individual, platform for Swedish art glass. We are talking here about small private enterprises and glassworks spread out across the country; in the traditional “Kingdom of Crystal” of Småland as well as in Stockholm and other areas all the way to Denmark.

This new, young group of artists and craftsmen, let’s call them *Generation glass*, has revitalized the Swedish art glass scene to such an extent that even large enterprises such as Orrefors Kosta Boda AB seem to have found inspiration and gained new energy. We are clearly experiencing a revival for Swedish art glass, nationally as well as internationally. These inspired and gifted strong individuals are also not afraid to cooperate with each other as a team, designing and blowing glass together, finding strength in a shared passion.

To name but a few of these talents, it comes close to hand to bring up Hanna Hansdotter (1984–), a major media profile that has ensured that art glass ended up on the cover of Swedish daily newspaper DN. Hansdotter has emerged as one of the most interesting glass artists of our time. With a studio in Kosta and Boda she has participated in several gallery and museum exhibitions, including Richard Heller Gallery (LA), Steinsland Berliner, Prins Eugen Waldemarsudde, and CFHILL in Stockholm.

Hansdotter is known, amongst other things, for ‘Fading Prints’, a series of glass sculptures that move between the ornamental and the abstract where the technique is a new interpretation of the blow-moulded glass where the objects swell out between the individually shaped iron lattices. She was named *Rising Star of the Year* at the Elle Decoration Design Award in 2018 and is also represented in the permanent collections of Nationalmuseum in Stockholm.

Also, worth bringing forward in this context are the immensely talented Rasmus Nossbring (1991 –), running his own glassworks with Simon Klenell (1985–) in Gustavsberg (on the outskirts of Stockholm), Fredrik Nielsen (1977–) collaborating with major international brands like Loewe and Missoni whilst, also, exhibiting in international museums, Frida Fjellman (1971–) and Isa Andersson.

Rasmus Nossbring, awarded several prestigious prizes, was hired at Reijmyre glassworks directly after graduation (having just turned 18) and worked in the factory for five years. From early on, Nossbring has taken every chance to educate himself internationally. During his travels, and for his master’s degree at Konstfack, Nossbring developed his unique expression in figurative glass sculpture. He draws inspiration from music and poetry – as well as from favourite artists such as Egon Schiele (1890–1918), Jean-Michel Basquiat (1960–1988), and his slightly senior Swedish sculptor colleague Joakim Ojanen (1985–). Nossbring is represented in the permanent collections of Nationalmuseum, Stockholm and has been awarded several prestigious prizes, most recently *Young Artisan of the Year* by the friends of Nationalmuseum in Stockholm in 2021.

Simon Klenell studied at Orrefors Glass School 2004–2006 and received his MFA at Konstfack College of Arts, Crafts and Design 2011 before undertaking postgraduate research studies, Konstfack, 2014. Klenell is one of the most influential contemporary glass artists in Sweden. He is represented in several museum collections, such as Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, Röhsska museum, Gothenburg and the Vitra Design Museum, Weil am Rhein. Klenell’s work is based on craft and unique art objects. Represented by Gallery Fumi in London, some of his past exhibitions include *Attention Craft*, Liljevalchs konsthall, Stockholm in 2014, *Glass is Tomorrow*, Nationalmuseum, Stockholm in 2015 and a solo exhibition at Galleri Sebastian Schildt, Stockholm in 2016.

Fredrik Nielsen, once described by independent curator Anne Klontz as ‘the poster boy of cool rebellion, rocking an attitude that makes Swedish contemporary glass beat with a pulse’, is stimulated by various aspects of popular culture. Improvisation has fueled his inspiration for pushing the material boundaries of glass beyond something merely banal whilst taking calculated risks to establish his on artistic license inspired by graffiti, music, videos and performance.

Frida Fjellman is among the contemporary artists and designers who have contributed to the renewal of Swedish craft-driven art over the past decade. Her bold, colourful, sometimes radical style in glass, ceramics and other materials has celebrated triumphs in Sweden and internationally – especially in the US, where in recent years, Fjellman has completed several prestigious public commissions for clients such as Art Basel.

Through everyday objects and material translations, Isa Andersson investigates contemporary power structures, status symbols and survival aesthetics. Andersson uses a sharp, precise visual language

in her clear glass objects and installations, challenging conventions of beauty, aggression, and identity. Isa Andersson is educated at Beckmans School of Design and has a master’s degree in design from Konstfack. She is active in numerous art and design projects. As for our neighbouring countries there is currently a busy scene in Denmark, represented by, amongst others, Maria Bang Espersen (1981–) and Bjørn Friborg (1983–). Maria Bang Espersen works around the idea that all things are malleable, like glass, and that nothing can be permanently defined. Her experimental sculptures are therefore not only an approach but also a statement; one that states to never get caught up in the restrictive norms or to obey established hierarchies. Essentially, her works in glass, are a play with the possibilities of the material and an attempt to expand the viewer’s understanding of her chosen medium.

Although static and solid in their final sate, Espersen stretches, pulls and bends her glass, resulting in works that appear soft and almost possible of languid movement. Her chosen candy confectionery colour palette entices and draws the onlooker towards the artwork, which deliciously glisten. Espersen studied glass and ceramics at Engelsholm Højskole, in Denmark, continuing her studies at the Kosta School of Glass in Sweden, The Royal Danish Academy of Design, and Haystack Mountain School of Crafts in Maine. She has exhibited extensively throughout Europe and the USA, where she has also participated in several residencies, whilst winning numerous prizes and nominations.

Bjørn Friborg (1983–) is a glass artist who defies historical methods of making and reinvents process with a dramatically physical approach that pushes the limits of material and technique and is as much a performance as it is a means to an end. With bravado he penetrates, manipulates and ruptures the molten substance for results that are otherworldly, sublimely beautiful, and where the materiality viscerally and outwardly reflects his tour de force movements. Friborg received a BFA from The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts School of Architecture, Design and Conservation in 2013 after studying in Sweden at both the Åfors Glasbruk, V.1 Mästare Ingvar Carlsson ‘Kalle Pack’ and the Kosta Glass School. His work has been exhibited nationally in Denmark and throughout the Scandinavian region as well as internationally.

In 2023 Swedish (and Scandinavian) art glass is, still, known for its exceptional design and innovation. The contemporary glass artists have a unique ability to blend traditional craftsmanship with contemporary aesthetics, creating pieces that are both timeless and modern, appealing to a wide range of collectors and enthusiasts all over the world.





Hanna Hansdotter

‘ Colour exploration and making glass appear in new ways that we haven’t seen before is always the goal. ’

What is your background, how did you start with glass blowing?

— It’s really by accident that I started working with glass. I was 23 or 24 years old, working at a gas station in Oslo, when I visited my mom in her summer cabin. We watched a news story about glass blowing and I said “Okay, that’s what I’m gonna do.” It was completely random, but I knew I had to do something practical. It turned out that glass blowing suited me quite well because it requires a certain tempo. I’m quite fast and impatient, which the glass is too. We have matching qualities. Working with glass, it takes up all of your senses and you have to be fully present. Glass has a lot of limitations and conditions, it’s quite a complex process and environment. I think this complexity has always appealed to me.

Could you tell us a bit more about the works in this exhibition? You present both sculptures and wall-hung works.

— I’ve been working on the sculptures for a quite a few years now. I started developing the technique at Konstfack, where it also became clear to me that I like creating frameworks or conditions for production. It’s the same way sort of that I started working with sheet glass since about a year. I’ve tried translating the process and developing the same technique that I use when

blowing glass, building a patterned iron lattice. Placing the glass sheet over it and heating it up, it sinks into the lattice and you end up with a tactile wall work. It's still glass but it's a completely different process, it's not the hot shop process. But for me, it doesn't really matter so much, I see this whole work with the glass like a journey and sometimes you just have to be along for the ride. It's important to me that the process can steer where we're going because I'm too indecisive. There's so many decisions to make all the time and it can be very pleasant to let the process of the glass to show the way. I will show both the new and old techniques, and in the new works, the pattern becomes enlarged, it's like a cut-out of the sculptures that I've worked with before. There's a continuation of pattern, tactility, body and movement.

There is a lot of movement in your works, how do you work with colour and form in relation to it?

— Colour exploration and making glass appear in new ways that we haven't seen before is always the goal. I silver coat a lot of objects, so it's interesting to see how that technique can be taken to new levels as well. Then there's the whole pattern exploration and for me it becomes a bodily presence in the objects that I like to have, a sense of movement. Maybe it's an attempt to humanise these objects in some way, giving them more life. Stina Wollter talks about the body as an

adventure of form. The body itself is so political, problematised and questioned. I really like how she talks about it also just being a form and a pattern, it's such a good layer of looking at it.

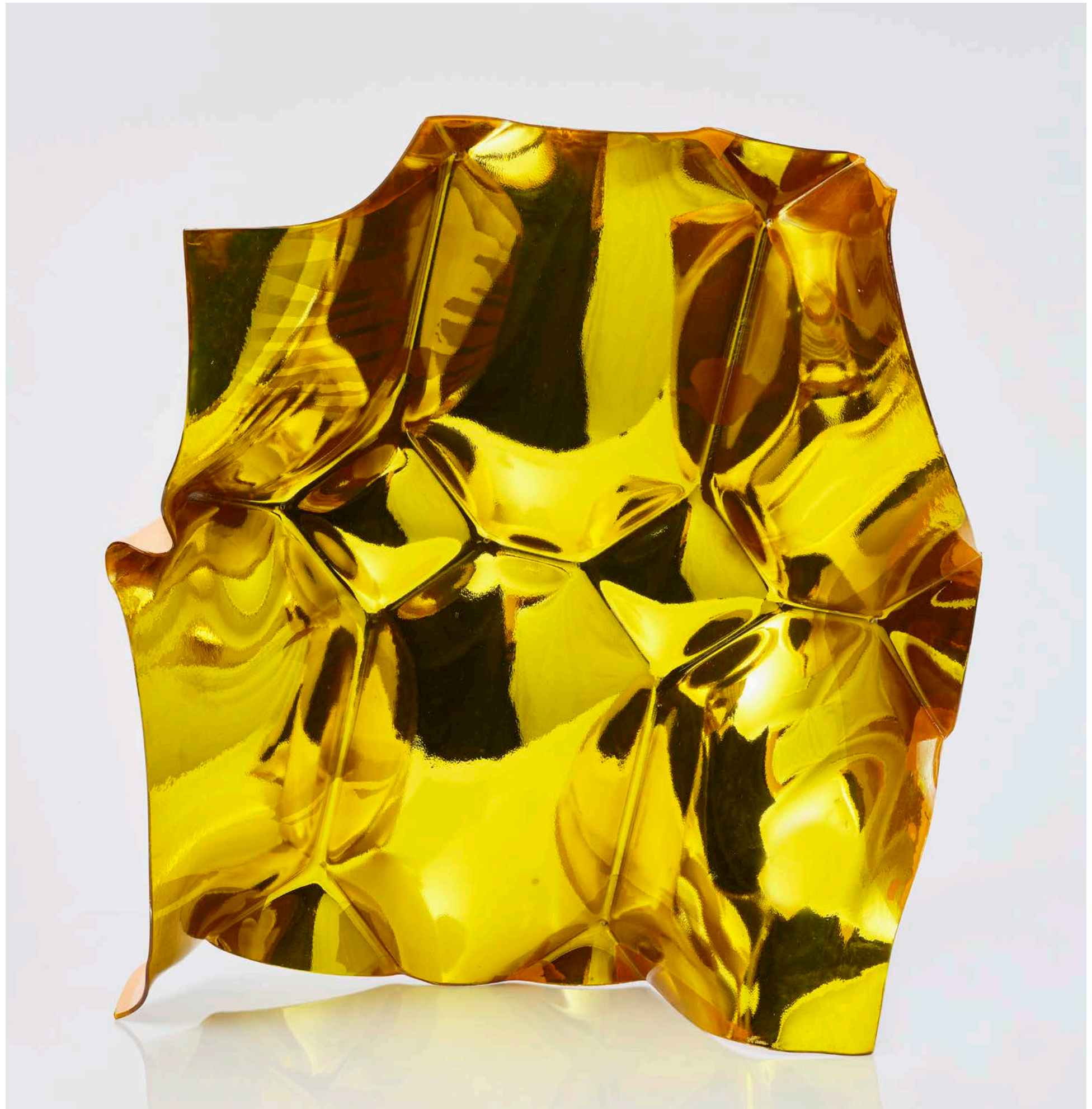
Could you tell us more about the technique and how you create these shapes?

— Mould blown glass is nothing new and blowing in iron moulds is something that's been done before, but with a closed shape all objects become the same. I was trained in Kosta and Orrefors, so I have a very traditional glassblower background where the industry has shaped both my training and myself. The idea of repetition, production and tradition has imprinted on me from the start and it followed along when I started exploring the technique with the iron moulds. It's a mix between free-blown and moulded glass where it swells through lattices with different patterns.

Where do you find inspiration for your works?

— It can be anything big or small, I'm very thrilled about the process and the techniques, that type of material exploration. Then, I'm also inspired by bigger questions, by people who do amazing things, artists, expressions, borderlands, clashing styles... I find inspirations in patterns, architecture, and bodies.





Hanna Hansdotter
Edge and Glory I
2023
Cast glass and chrome
58 x 56 cm



Hanna Hansdotter
Edge and Glory II
2023
Cast glass and chrome
59 x 60 cm



Hanna Hansdotter
Untitled
2023
Cast glass and chrome
61 x 29 x 29 cm



Hanna Hansdotter
Untitled
2023
Cast glass and chrome
62 x 32 x 32 cm



Hanna Hansdotter
Untitled
2023
Cast glass and chrome
64 × 34 × 34 cm



Hanna Hansdotter
Untitled
2023
Cast glass and chrome
59 × 30 × 30 cm



Hanna Hansdotter
Untitled
2023
Cast glass and chrome
67 x 58 and 55 x 53 cm



Bjørn Friberg

‘ It’s a moment that takes all the bodily energy and injects it into a material, and that’s where you make the best art. ’

**How did you start with glassblowing and art glass?
What is your background?**

— I was a high school dropout and started working in the industry in 1999. I wanted to learn glassblowing and was very fascinated by it. I got a job in Denmark but they told me to move to Sweden. I attended the technical school in Kosta for three years and got a job straight out of school at the Orrefors glassworks where Kosta Boda produced all of their art glass. I joined a very good workshop and worked there for five years before attending the Royal Danish Academy for Architecture, Design and Conservation. There, I studied ceramics for three years. When I produce my artworks, I draw parallels between ceramics and glass. Actually, ceramic glaze and glass are the same thing. I started making my works with these associations in the series *Penetration*. I’ve also worked as hot shop manager at The Glass Factory in Småland and at Holmegaard in Denmark.

Could you tell us more about the works in *Penetration* and how you work between glass and ceramics?

— When I started working with ceramics, the process of opening the ovens came naturally to glass person, working with a material that is dynamic while it’s active and hot. I understood this connection to glass and the identity of glass. They’re sculptures of a process, I blow these large objects than I then penetrate with a mass of silver

nitrate-based glass that I pour on top of it and which then sculpts the shape in the glass. It freezes and becomes an artwork. It's all about these seconds that capture that moment, it's its own moment that uses these forces to create glass. It's like a blast of energy. When I'm in that process, all that power that you channel into the material gives it the expression. That's what it contains, and that's what I mean when I say that I'm just trying to find the maximum of honesty that it just has.

Some of the other artists in the exhibition speak about the power and adrenaline in the hot shop. What does that mean to you?

— There's so much power in it that it can take over. It's a moment that takes all the bodily energy and injects it into a material, and that's where you make the best art. It's like a marathon.

Where do you find your inspiration?

— I'm just trying to push myself to the limits, everything is just really impulsive. All the mixes, I'm like a DJ mixing music. Everything

is created in the moment. Creating something is coming closer to yourself, getting to know yourself better. It's like an addiction, both in terms of doing and not being able to stop doing it.

What's your next project?

— I've been working on the *Penetration* project for four years. I don't know if I'll ever get away from it. It's a constant part of a development to be in it. That's what takes you further. In terms of technique, I'm working on wall-hung works and I'm also building a ceramics workshop. At some point, I would like to work with stainless steel – I'm kind of a material boy in a material world, I want the materials. Glassblowing can be making a mug or creating an artwork, or interior design – it can be anything. But from a sculptural point of view, it's a very difficult, strong material that you're working with. It's a battle with your material. Letting the material go is quite a nice feeling, letting it obtain its maximal expression.





Bjørn Friborg
A series of penetrations I
 2023
 Glass and nitrateshine
 80 x 29 x 29 cm



Bjørn Friborg
A series of penetrations II
 2023
 Glass and nitrateshine
 70 x 35 x 25 cm



Bjørn Friborg
A series of penetrations III
2023
Glass and nitrateshine
78 x 30 x 30 cm





Bjørn Friborg
A series of penetrations V
 2023
 Glass and nitrateshine
 78 x 30 x 30 cm

Bjørn Friborg
A series of penetrations IV
 2023
 Glass and nitrateshine
 73 x 40 x 40 cm



Simon Klenell

‘ Each process you start is like a hypothesis; you have the planned and expected outcome, and then I try to get the material and the components to do what I hope they will do. ’

What is your background? How did you start with artglass?

— I grew up with glass. I come from a family where both my parents work with glass and then I started working with it as a teenager and got caught in it. Perhaps it came to me naturally and it became a sort of bridge into the world for me, I got to meet people and travel.

What’s special to you about glassblowing and glass as a material?

— I’m partly drawn to glass because it’s full of contradictions. I’ve come to realise that I love amorphous materials that do not have a base structure but are just a liquid mass. It doesn’t have a melting point; it just starts moving at a certain temperature and then it becomes increasingly volatile. I think I’ve always found it exciting to push the parameter forward, the state of dissolution, and that it can be cold, hard, and sparkling and at the same time a liquid mass. It can say so many things and take so many shapes. Traditional art glass carries so many noble ways and eternal worlds, but at the same time, in your hands, it’s volatile and elusive. And, of course, the process is amazing; it’s fast, you have to respond quickly and the material allows for a very rapid chain of reflection. My workshop [Sthlm Glas] is also a social organism and meeting place. We can be up to four or more people working on one piece and it creates a kind

of hive mind. You develop and create new knowledge together, which is kind of like a dance. It's very rewarding to be among people and those of us who work with the material are very hands on and part of a chain of oral storytelling because you can't learn it without being in touch with someone who already knows it. Lately, I've been thinking a lot about being somewhere in the chain of the material's journey.

A lot of the other artists also mention the energy of those part of the process, is it an energetic moment for you?

— I agree, but for me it's not so much about the adrenaline or the kicks. It's more about planning, producing and succeeding. Each process you start is like a hypothesis; you have the planned and expected outcome, and then I try to get the material and the components to do what I hope they will do.

Could you tell us more about your works in this exhibition and their techniques?

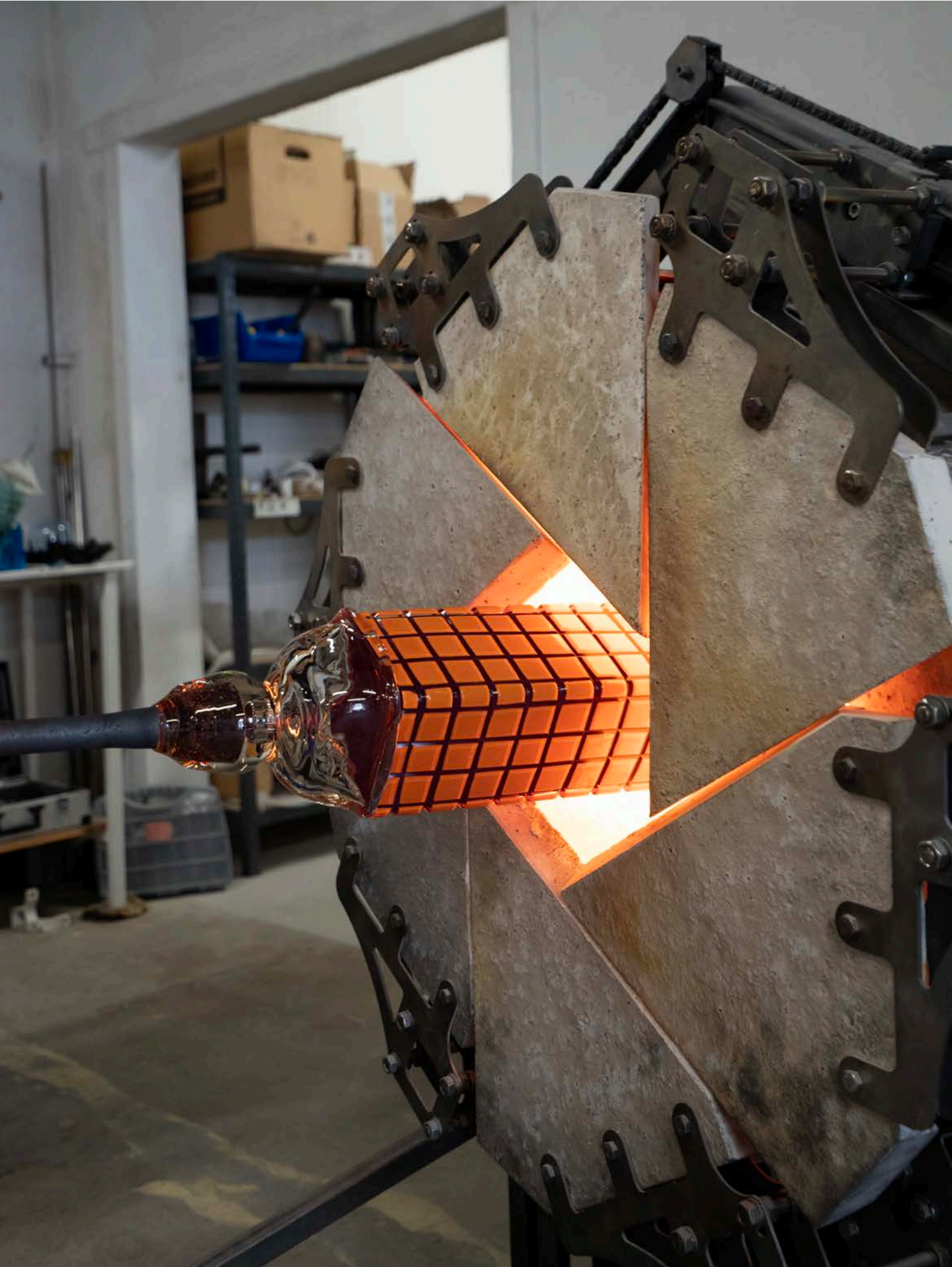
— I started making this series mixing cold techniques and cut glass with hot techniques, setting the cut patterns in motion, building shapes and bodies out of that. I've worked with that for a long time and it's something I often return to. I received a stipend and residency to work at Kosta glassworks where I worked together with Kosta Boda to explore this further and worked more with colour, which I haven't done so much before. It's a lot about movement, body and improvisation, letting the amorphous and the structured meet.

I sometimes think about that Disney clip, where he paints with the checkered paint and that's my goal – getting that glassy expression to become so free that it's almost like painting in the air.

— It's been very fun and new to collaborate with these glassworks. I'm used to doing everything myself and as an artist you get to work with completely different resources and scales in the industry. The pieces in the exhibition are made in Gustavsberg by me and the team at Sthlm Glas but they are part of this larger project with Kosta Boda. It's my first journey in this very long tradition of Swedish design history and it's been very exciting.

What you mention about colour is very interesting, these pieces have a very strong colour palette?

— It may have had to do with the stipend I recieved, it was named after Ulrica Hydman Vallien and she made a very strong mark on Swedish glass and design, and was also a painter. Perhaps it's an afterthought, but somewhere I think that's why I used such strong colours and looked deep in the boxes for colours that were in stark contrast to each other. If these objects didn't have any colour they would just look like crystal glass, so I've taken a step out and used colour for emphasis. I think it's exciting to pattern something and then start twisting it so that the movements become more distinct. The colour and pattern have a function in describing movement. In some pictures that I've taken of these new works, they almost look like oil paint. It's new territory for me to work with.





Simon Klenell
Tubular V
2023
Blown and cut overlay glass
34 x 12 x 12 cm



Simon Klenell
Cobioïd
2023
Blown and cut overlay glass
27 x 12 x 12 cm

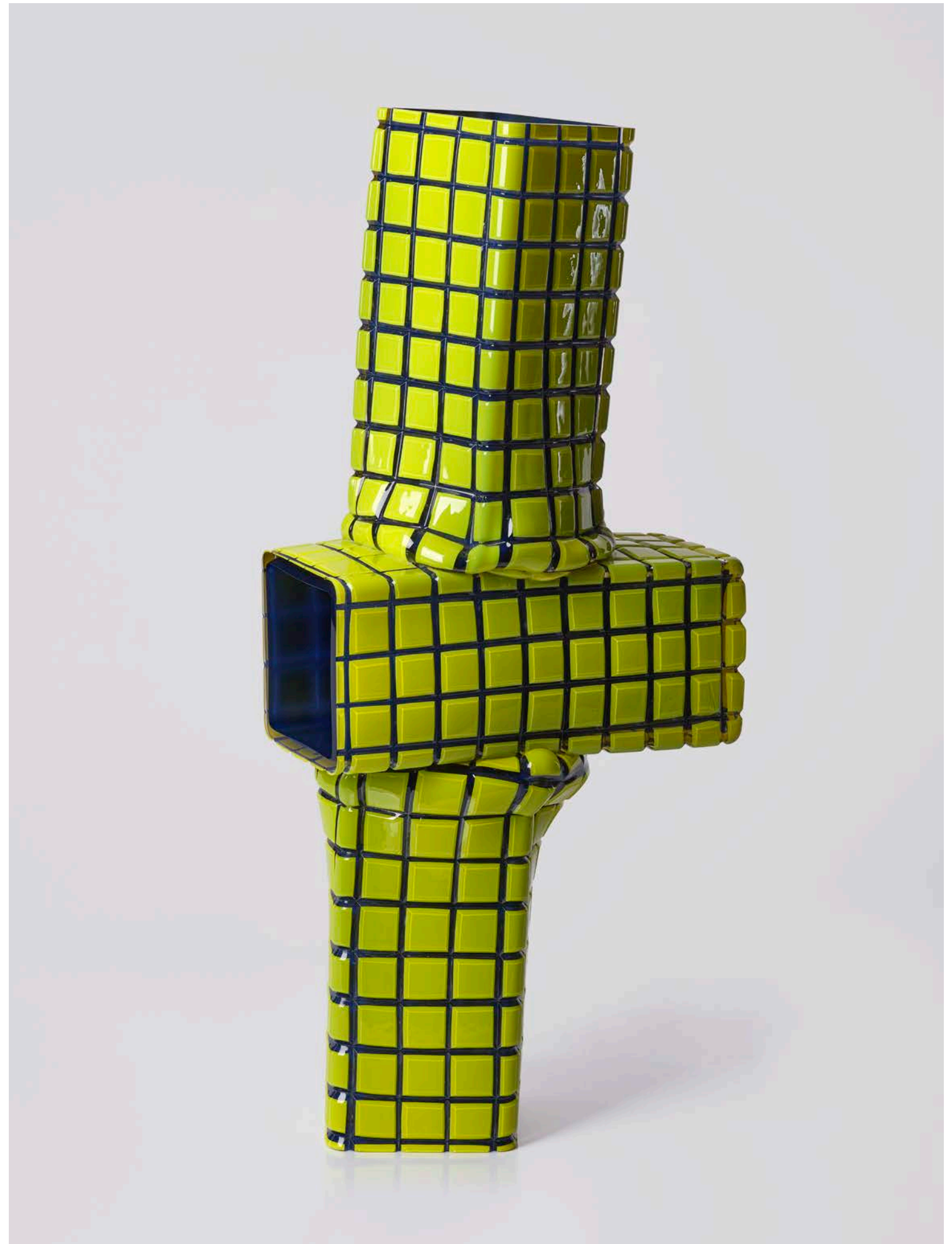


Simon Klenell
Tubular 2
2022
Blown and cut overlay glass
20 x 7 x 7 cm



Simon Klenell
Stacked Tubular Composition
2023
Blown and cut overlay glass
58 x 12 x 12 cm

Simon Klenell
Stacked Cuboid Composition
2023
Blown and cut overlay glass
64 x 29 x 18 cm





Simon Klenell
Table Mirror, Himmel
2020
Blown and mirrored glass
42 x 34 x 14 cm



Frida Fjellman

‘ In a way, chance makes something happen. ’

Could you tell us about your background? You work both with glass and other materials?

— I don’t just work with glass, but I’ve ended up making a lot of it. When I attended Konstfack, you studied both ceramics and glass. For one of the classes, we had access to a hot shop and it was just as easy as that. I think it’s a very fun material, glass is very joyful for me. But it’s hard to work with it on a large scale, so then I’ll opt for different materials. I’m quite flexible about my materials and will adapt them to what I create, you could say.

The works you show in this exhibition are hung from the ceiling and lit. How do you work with lighting?

— I’ve worked on these prisms for a while, it’s kind of like a side project in my practice that I continuously develop and try new things with. I’ve tried different ways of illuminating them, and sometimes they have no light at all. I work a lot with the space where I’m showing my pieces.

Where do you find your colour palettes?

— It’s from work, one work gives rise to the next. Maybe a mistake. Right now, I’m actually making a chandelier from a mistake – I got the wrong colour code which didn’t fit in that context, but now I’ve

found one for that colour. It can be from seeing colours that happen to be next to each other, you might see a combination somewhere that you think might fit. But it's a lot about work, one work feeds into the next all the time. The inspiration comes from the work itself.

These jewels or prisms, how did you start working on them?

— They came from me needing something very exaggerated that would stand for a kind of symbolism and take visual space in another exhibition I did. I tried just making something very sparkly and precious, then exaggerating it in a simple way. They're very fun to work with because they can be punk or romantic, classical or new. There are so many ways to work with them so it's fun for me to come back to them all the time.

Is it colour or form that give them these different vibes?

— It's about the form and how I assemble them. For a while, I assembled them symmetrically and had a very mathematical formula for their placement so that they together created one large form. Now, I'm more into punk and assembling them in a messier way.

But that also requires planning, you can't assemble them in just any way. One carries the other, so it's the form is very important.

What is the largest piece you've ever made?

— I did a whole lounge for Art Basel Miami with more than a hundred prisms in the colours of the rainbow, but with very light colours. It had this pulsating light that had this very light, breathing pulse. When making the biggest prism in the constellation, three out of four would break and it took four people to blow it. I've remade the shape so it's almost just as big but with slightly different proportions so that it's easier to blow.

How do you think about chance?

— It's how you work, that's where the mistake come in. If you've been working on something for an hour and it goes wrong, you have to make a quick decision and change, perhaps. In a way, chance makes something happen and sometimes it turns out well, sometimes bad, so it's important to be there when making the pieces.



Frida Fjellman

Forêt pastel

2023

Blown glass and stainless steel

(7 piece installation)

3 models of prisms

(42 x 33 x 33), (44 x 27 x 27) , (48 x 25 x 25) cm

145 x 200 x 33 cm





Frida Fjellman
Pastel dégoulinant
2023
Blown glass and brass
(3 piece installation)
60 x 45 x 45 cm (each prisma)



Maria Bang Espersen

‘ The thing that I love about glass is its softness. It’s like I want to drag the softness out of it. ’

How did you start with glassblowing and art glass?

— I never set out to be an artist. My entrance to it was that I started studying art history, but I couldn’t just sit and read all day long. I felt that I needed to do something with my hands and the only thing I could think about was that I should try out glass blowing. I went to Kosta, back in the days when there was a school there, and I thought I was just going to become a glassblower who did functional ware, go back to Denmark and start my own hot shop. But from there it just took off and I was curious to learn about the glass material itself rather than following the technical path. Many glassblowers want to master the material, but for me it just completely flipped and became all about engaging in a dialogue with the glass, figuring out what the glass had that was secretive that we didn’t know about. It was a lot more investigative.

What’s so special about glass?

— The thing that I love about glass is its softness. It’s like I want to drag the softness out of it. That’s what’s so fun about working with glass, it’s so uncontrollable, especially if you allow it to be so. You really have to be ready to change in a second if it’s behaving slightly differently. Being so present in the moment when you’re making something is really special to me, it’s a space where it’s just me and the glass in this super intense moment.

What happens if it doesn't go according to plan?

— The worst-case scenario for me is that it drops to the ground, and then there's nothing I can do about it. All the other times when something does not go according to plan, in that last minute, I have to make a decision and I'll often start crumbling it up so it creates its own shape. I allow for those mistakes to be part of my process. Very often I have an idea for a piece and then when I make it and do exactly what I intended to, it might not look like it. I embrace those surprises and let the sculptures be what they are. With the pieces at CFHILL, I have actually taken some that I made years ago but put aside because they had a huge crack. Then I've taken a hammer and chisel and started breaking them apart. I put those pieces into the oven and then reheat them slowly, because if you go up too fast the glass will completely crack. I start making these little pieces that I throw onto the pieces that I made all these years ago. It's a way of reusing the mistakes from my own past, but in a way where they can do something that I wouldn't be able to do if I restricted myself to only work with what I was doing that day. By having premade pieces, I can work with these cut-offs that you see in some of the pieces and let them be a bit rawer. Thereby you can see both the way that the glass can appear super soft but also how it really isn't. A lot of people that see my works don't realise that they're glass unless they're told it is.

Your sculptures seem very sharp, I've seen you sanding the edges of them?

— They're super sharp depending on the cut. If you have a long piece that is cut directly in the middle, then it's not so sharp, but if it's cut on an angle then we start getting close to the sharpness of a knife. Then I just go in with a diamond pad to take out the rough parts. I can lift my own pieces without wearing gloves because I know how to touch and not let them slide, but they're slippery because they're strings. Even the ones that don't look like they would be sharp can be so and that's just because of the way that they are pulled. Sometimes they stick together and when you pull it that creates almost like a tiny knife's edge.

How do you work with titles?

— I have named two of the pieces *Soft Connections*, one is *Love and Champagne* and the other is *Tough Love*. They are really about the fact that the pieces that I have thrown on top of each other – the parts that look soft – are what connect the whole piece. Everything was loose until the fact that these pieces were put on top of each other, and they were so soft when they went in that they just slumped down around the original pieces and then sort of had this grip on them. The pieces are partly made out of upcycled glass, so it's about the connections of life in a way, and how important it is that we stay connected. It can be a metaphor about how we treat our surroundings, how nature and the environment are currently falling apart but we're trying to hold onto them. Or you can view the titles simply as love stories, it doesn't have to be about the fact that these are partly upcycled.



Maria Bang Espersen
Nonlinear (pink)
2020
Glass
47 x 51 x 16 cm





Maria Bang Espersen
Coexistence (keeping it together) #1
2022
Glass
26 x 25 x 26 cm



Maria Bang Espersen
Soft Connections (Tough Love)
2022
Glass
21,5x 56 x 28 cm



Maria Bang Espersen
Soft but Hard (Blue Feelings)
2022
Glass
15 x 28 x 27 cm





Maria Bang Espersen
Soft Connections (love and champagne)
2023
Glass
23 x 77 x 30 cm



Fredrik Nielsen

‘ I think you need a certain volume to express yourself, it depends on where you are in your life or art, your career or the energy you have. ’

What’s your background, how did you start with glassblowing and art glass?

— I was born in Sturefors outside of Linköping and moved to Sigtuna when I was 10 years old. I had this enormous longing back to Sturefors and a sense of security and comfort. Secretly, I started tagging maps and bulletin boards with an ‘S’ to mark my connection to Sturefors. It was my first tag and I think some of the sculptures at CFHILL may have one somewhere. It’s really symbolic of that boy’s impossible longing for something. I realised I wanted to start glassblowing when I saw *My Life as a Dog*, Lasse Hallström’s first movie, when I was 13 or 14 years old, and recognised myself in that boy and how he returned to the comfort of Småland again. So, I went to Småland in 1998 and thought I wanted to try this out. It was far from being an artist, I had a longing for the material and the security, the warmth, in some way. It was never about an aesthetic.

You have a very strong aesthetic today, how did you arrive at that?

— If I go back 10–15 years from now, I didn’t think that it was that cool to know a material, I just wanted to have really cool ideas. But then I had this burden from glassblowing which I thought was more problematic when I wanted to be conceptual and contemporary.

Today, being able to do something with my hands is so great. The language in the material, I don't think it blossoms until 20 years later, that's when you're able to really speak. For me, I don't really care about aesthetics, more volume and mass. How it looks comes with the territory, somehow.

Can you tell us more about the size or your sculptures, they're quite large for glass?

— Yes, they're large. I often think about music or painting when I work. I think you need a certain volume to express oneself, it depends on where you are in your life or art, your career or the energy you have. The size of my sculptures, that's my canvas size. I met Jim Butler, a painter from New York, in Seattle when I was attending the Pilchuck Glass School. He said that he loves painting transperence, he's a super realistic painter so he likes painting so that the canvas disappears. He told me: 'Nothing holds colour in space like glass.' What I've realised in the past few years is that I have the best glue in the world, like an autobahn, like a race car, like an instrument.

Can you tell us more about your technique?

— There's a lot of technical controls with glassblowing, but I like to think of it like when Keith Jarrett gets ready to play the Köln concert: he doesn't know what he's going to play but he knows he's playing a concert and he knows that he can play the piano. I know that I can blow glass, I know the framework, I know the size of my canvas. The rest is just vulnerability and taking a risk. It hurts, it's not pleasurable. And those who know how to blow glass, they know that they can control the material to a certain point. Most will stay a few centimetres from that point and that's when it still looks good from the pointer's point of view, like Mick Jagger says. If you take a step over that line, it looks awful, you look like a beginner, but that's where art might exist for me. It's a long and hard process getting there, but once there, it's not about making decisions, you just have to continue.

What about your titles?

— I love a title that's cut-out of a movement. I like for the title to have a musicality. Take this sculpture Thinking of his Lonely Room, it gets something going. The sculpture might have something to do with it and it starts a fire in your own imagination surrounding the work. It's important and a clue to who you are as a human, what you listen to, what you inject yourself with to create the energy around the making of an artwork.

You also create podiums for your works?

— For the piece Another Excuse 2023, I have covered a pallet in mirror plates. A lot of the time with glass, you are so busy with the sculpture that you don't think about how it will be presented. I've often showed my sculpture on graffitied pallets, but now I'm covering it with stainless steel and I like the contrast it creates for that piece. But I really think it's beautiful how Constantin Brancusi said that it's about the piece's relation to its stand.





Fredrik Nielsen
Magic in the garbage bag
2022
Glass
52 x 40 x 32 cm



Fredrik Nielsen
Furniture in the Garage
2022
Cast glass and chrome
45 x 54 x 49 cm



Fredrik Nielsen
ANOTHER EXCUSE 2023
 2023
 Blown and cast glass
 52 x 47 x 34 cm



Fredrik Nielsen
Thinking of his Lonely Room
 2022
 Blown and cast glass
 52 x 47 x 34 cm





Fredrik Nielsen
Venice - 1999
 2023
 Blown and molded glass
 47 x 36 x 19 cm



Fredrik Nielsen
Fantasy Red
 2023
 Blown and cast glass and car paint
 29 x 24 x 17 cm



Rasmus Nossbring

‘ Through glass, I can express something that I cannot put into sentences. ’

How did you start with glass blowing?

— I’m a traditionally trained glass blower and worked in the glass industry for many years before I realized that I had some sort of need to push the limits of the material but also to express myself through it. For a long time, it was all about the craft as a job. Now, it’s more about me expressing what I want to say rather than producing wine glasses for a factory.

How was it going from producing in the industry to move onto your own expression?

— It took quite a long time. When I had been working for 5–6 years, I started developing my own stuff. I was working during lunch and breaks, evenings and weekends. It was mostly about figuring out how to do things that were above my knowledge level. From there also came an experimentation, finding my own way of doing things. I found an enormous freedom in being able to express things through the material that I could not say with words and tell stories that I couldn’t formulate. Through glass, I can express something that I cannot put into sentences.

Could you tell us more about the works in this exhibition?

— In this project, I explore the moulded, kitschy glass which has been around for a long time, it emerged during the ‘70s and ‘80s,

taking something that I think is ugly and trying to conquer it, combining it with contemporary influences but also everyday events and situations in my life.

There are also small figurines that you incorporate in your sculptures?

— I’ve worked a lot with moulded details, most of which were produced during the ‘60s, ‘70s, and ‘80s – moulded animals and figurines that were mass-produced and sold to tourists visiting the industries. They were cute and kitschy but are today completely rejected, flea markets and auctions are teeming with them. I went to Reijmyre where I trained and went through histories with my old maestros, talking about the production. The conversations led on to fishing stories, old flings, and so on. I started producing them in the moulds from Reijmyre but now I actually work with the ones that were produced back then and found a way to combine them with my hand-sculpted components.

Could you tell us a bit about the glass blowing community?

— I know almost everyone who is part of this exhibition. Today, there are a lot more independent glass blowers and events where people gather, so you have some form of contact. When we build sculptures, we’re four or five people when we put them together. I never thought that I would have my own glass-studio, but after I had graduated Konstfack, I realised that I needed an advanced workshop in order to create what I wanted, but also skilled people around. It’s always teamwork. I could sit and make the individual components and tinker for hours by myself if I wanted to, but for the assembly, you have to work in a team. It’s a bit like an orchestra where everything has to match and time.

What role does chance play when you’re blowing?

— Preferably, none at all. But it’s a highly complex material, you have to listen to what it wants, and you can’t always go the route that you planned. It’s a lead-and-follow relationship all the time. Like dancing. At the same time, some describe it as an extreme sport, which is quite special.

The elegant meets the extreme, is it full of contradictions?

— It becomes so. When you make them, the first moments are not very crucial but when everything is assembled and the sculpture needs to go into the cooling oven, if anyone goes too fast or comes too early with something to add on, it can become too warm or too cold and everything you’ve worked on goes to waste for everyone. It becomes a very charged moment. But it’s also very rewarding because it is such a fast material. It hardens fast and you can make things relatively fast, unlike ceramics or oil painting that need to dry for months.

Rasmus Nossbring’s solo exhibition Lost and Found will open at Galleri Glas on August 17, 2023





Rasmus Nossbring
Balancing slug
 2022
 Glass
 37 x 19 x 7 cm



Rasmus Nossbring
Still too far
 2021
 Glass
 37 x 15 x 10 cm

Rasmus Nossbring
Mindboggle
2022
Glass
68 x 20 x 16 cm





Rasmus Nossbring
Lookout
2022
Glass
46 x 17 x 10 cm



Isa Anderson

‘ *It’s a powerplay with the glass. It’s viewed as something that’s very fragile, but it can handle quite a lot.* ’

What is your background?

— I studied product design at Beckmans College of Design and then did my master’s at Konstfack. I trained as an industrial designer and have worked with glass like any other material in my practice in designing objects. I have done a lot of glass and I’m very fond of it, but I don’t blow glass myself and am more trained to communicate through someone else’s hands.

How did you start working with glass? What fascinates you about it as a material?

— I often say that I’m like a magpie, it’s so glittery. Coming from an industrial design aspect, I like working with uncoloured glass to create form and will look at the concept rather than what is possible from a craft perspective.

Where do you produce your pieces?

— I’ve blown a lot of pieces at The Glass Factory in Kosta and then I have works made in Gustavsberg in Stockholm and Småland.

Can you tell us about the works that you present in this exhibition?

— I have two works in this exhibition: *Armed*, the wall of weapons, and *Guardian*, the chain with spikes. I work a lot with ideas like symbols of power and survival. I made the work *Armed*, a wall of weapons for my solo exhibition at The Glass Factory last year. The exhibition was about survival in a kind way and how you could take care of each other. Then you come into the room with this wall of weapons, which is a kind of depressing and sad way of how to survive. But if you’re gonna live with weapons and awful things, you might as well use the glass. At the same time, it’s a powerplay

with the glass too. It’s viewed as something that’s very fragile, but it can handle quite a lot.

Where do you find inspiration for your works? Is it more from an idea or a material?

– Coming from my background, I do a lot of research. In a lot of my pieces I have done some form of material translation of a design object, sometimes more straight forward and other times more poetically. I’m genuinely interested in how we actually live, how people are around these objects. For *Armed*, I was inspired by the Royal Armoury [Livrustkammaren] and their weapons. I have looked at these historical objects, how we defend ourselves and how we’ve glorified them and made them beautiful to actually have them in a home. *Guardian*, the chain, is based on one in Kungsträdgården. It’s one of those chains that surround a statue of king Karl XIII. I’m very interested in the question of monuments but aesthetically, it’s in line with the idea of protection, who protects, invisible protections, power structures, and so on.

Is there anything else you would like to explore around glass as a material?

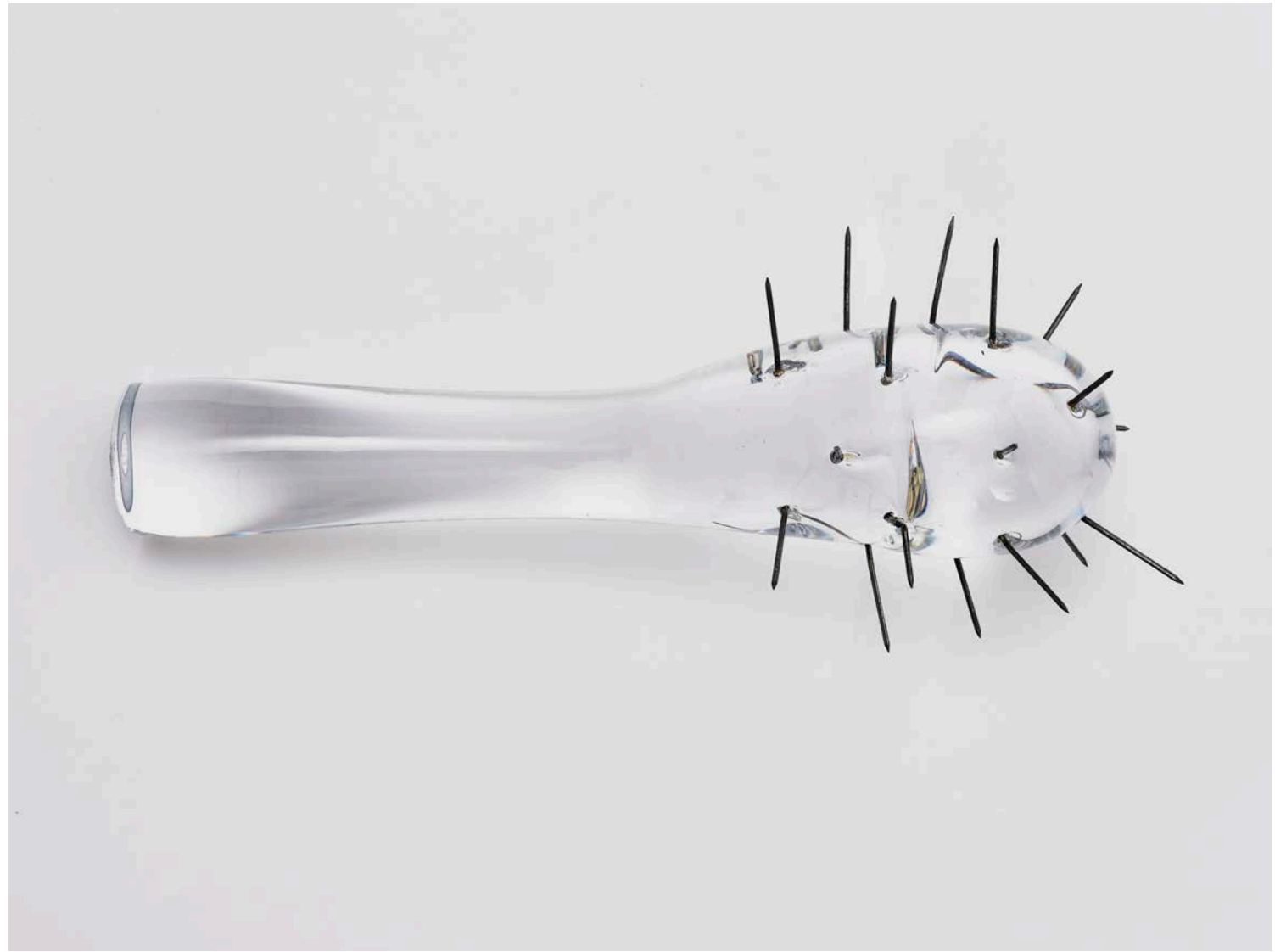
– Yes, I would like to look at glassware, like I’ve done in some of my works. I’d like to look at how much it can tolerate but also at some type of lost knowledge. I work very literally, almost too literally, which I think is quite fun. I like art to have a democratic aspect and that anyone can look at my works and get it. Some may think it’s too on the nose, but I like working with the glass’s transparence – invisibility, clarity, strength, non-strength – and now I’d like to explore an aspect related to lost knowledge.



Isa Andersson
Armed
2022
Glass, textile, metal
Installation 12 pieces
150 x 300 x 15 cm



Isa Andersson
Morning Star
 2022
 Glass
 37 x 12 x 12 cm



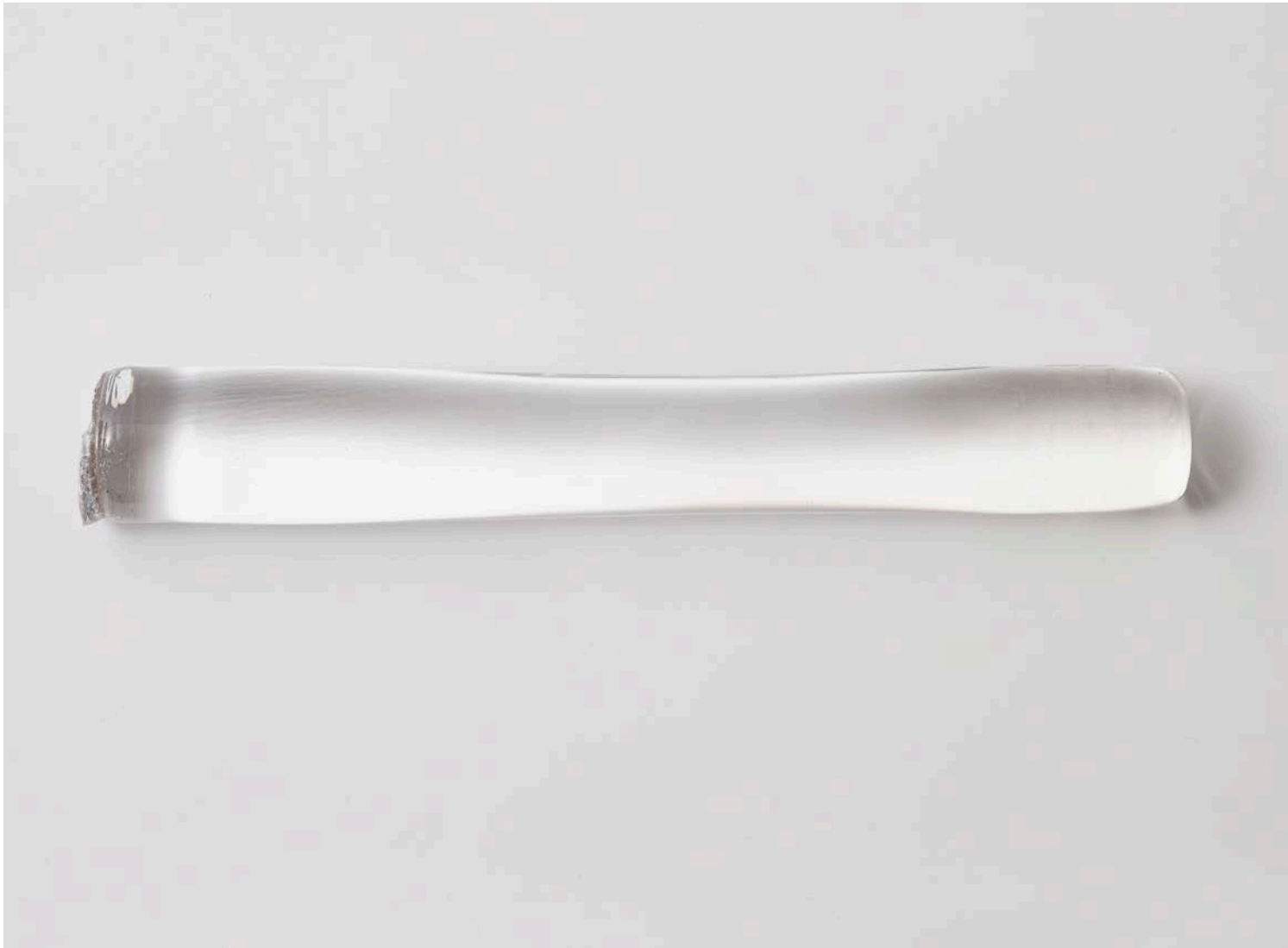
Isa Andersson
Spikklubba
 2022
 Glass and Metal
 35 x 15 x 15 cm



Isa Andersson
Påle 1
 2022
 Glass and textile
 27x 6 x 6 cm



Isa Andersson
Påle 2
 2022
 Glass, textile and metal
 8 x 19 x 36 cm



Isa Andersson
Batong 1
2022
Glass and metal
9 x 12 x 40 cm



Isa Andersson
Batong 2
2022
Glass and Metal
33 x 8 x 12 cm



Isa Andersson
Klubba 1
2022
Glass and metal
12 x 12 x 50 cm



Isa Andersson
Klubba 2
2022
Glass and textile
53 x 11 x 11 cm



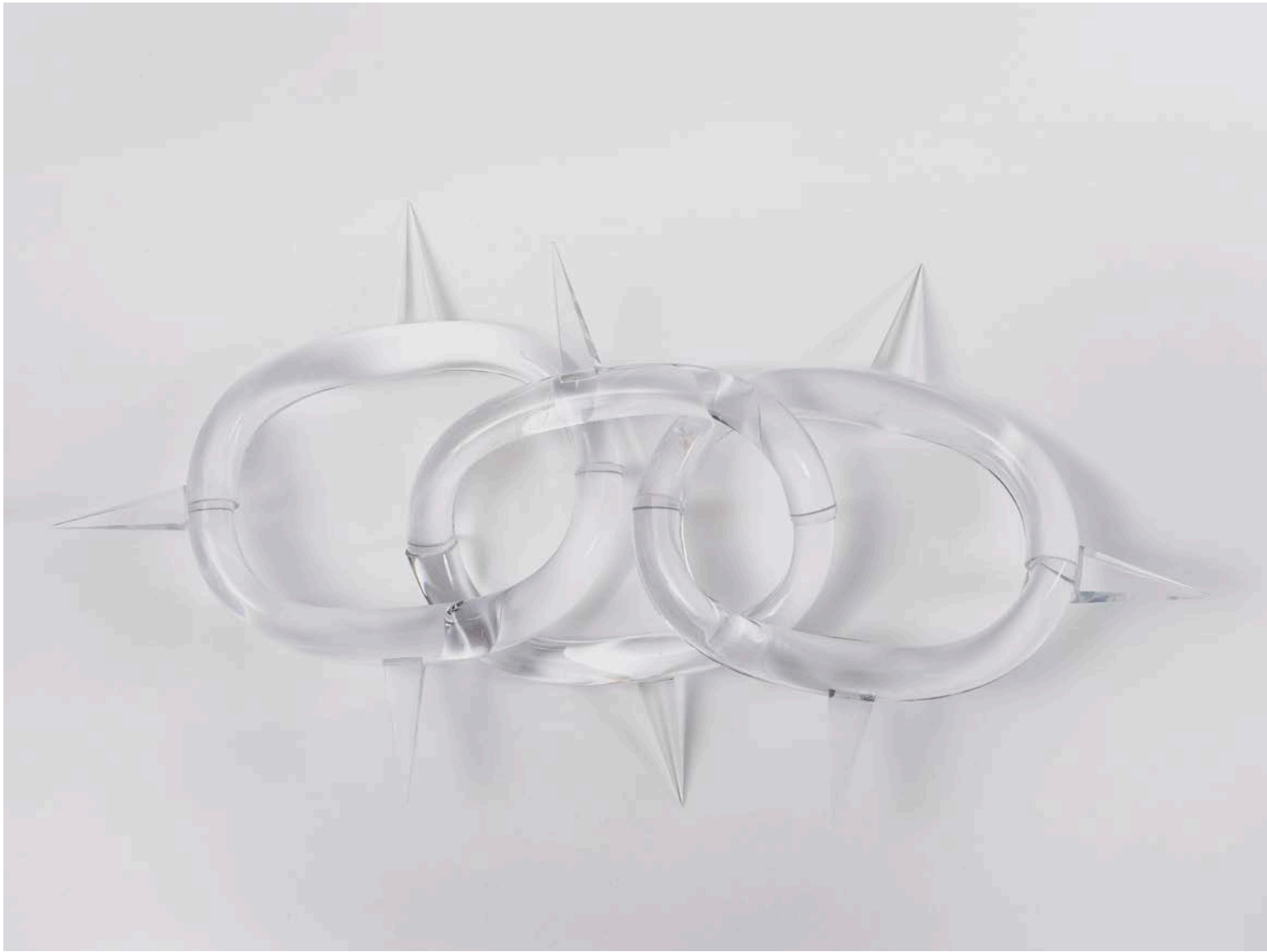
Isa Andersson
Spira 1
2022
Glass
27 x 27 x 18 cm



Isa Andersson
Spira 3
2022
Glass
25 x 17 x 18 cm



Isa Andersson
Spira 2
2022
Glass
23 x 23 x 70 cm



Isa Andersson
Guardian
2022
Glass
80 x 40 x 40 cm



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