

Lothar Böttcher

Catalogue Sept. 2026



Biography

Lothar Böttcher is a South African glass sculptor whose work is held in permanent collections across three continents, including the **Corning Museum of Glass** (USA), **Glasmuseum Frauenau** (Germany), and the **Pretoria Art Museum**. He works predominantly in cold-worked optical crystal — carving, cutting, and polishing glass in a process that is slow, physical, and irreversible.

Böttcher holds the German Glasveredlermeister qualification, the highest professional accreditation in glass cold working, and is inducted into the **Homo Faber Guide** as an international master artisan. He is a Board Member of the **Glass Art Society**, founding Director of the **Moya African Glass Network**, and a founding member of the **Lathe Riders**, the only international collective dedicated to cold-working technique. His work was featured in **New Glass Review 45**, published by the Corning Museum of Glass in 2025.

Represented by galleries in South Africa, Germany, and the USA, Böttcher has exhibited in Paris, Venice, Sofia, Tokyo, Washington DC, and Düsseldorf. He lives and works in Pretoria, South Africa.

Artist Statement

My practice is rooted in making. Craftsmanship — learning, refining, and expanding what the hands can do — forms its foundation. Glass allows me to translate lived experience and universal questions into sculptural form.

I work glass in its cold state, carving and polishing the material in a manner closer to stone

sculpture than to traditional glassblowing. There are no corrections — only decisions. The result reveals itself only after the final polish, when the work and I meet for the first time. That search for the unknown is where the meaning lives.

My work is organised across two bodies of enquiry.

Anima reaches back into our oldest human impulses — the need to make things that carry meaning beyond their function. Prehistoric objects, votive figures, animal forms carved thousands of years ago still speak to us. We have not changed. Everything around us has. When I carve glass, I search for that same charge — the moment a sculpture animates in the viewer's mind. Ongoing series such as my Precious Beasts and Detritus emerge from this search. Glass is essential: it absorbs, reflects, and bends light. Light gives life in ways that stone or bronze never could.

Apparatus examines the tools that shape how we see the world — the lens, the screen, the signal — and how those tools have come to shape us in return. These works are observations, not criticisms. Series including TINATV, Pocket Lens, and Portals use optical glass to make visible the mechanisms we normally look *through* rather than *at*.

These are not separate practices. They are the same question asked from opposite ends of time.

Key Roles & Representation

- **Homo Faber Guide** — Inducted Master Artisan.
- **Moya African Glass Network** – Founding Memeber, Director & Chairman.
- **Glass Art Society (USA)** – Board Member.
- **Association of Arts, Pretoria** – Board Member.
- **Lathe Riders** — Founding Member.

Selected Solo / Collaborative Exhibitions

- **2026:** *Echoes of Presence* (Collaborative with Caitlin Greenberg), Alliance Française, Pretoria
- **2025:** *Artefacts* (Collaborative with Caitlin Greenberg), Pretoria Art Museum.
- **2023:** *Changing Channels*, Association of Arts, Pretoria.
- **2022:** *Precious Beasts*, Ebony Curated, Franschoek.

Recent Group Exhibitions (Selected)

- **2026:** *Grit & Wheels*, Glasmuseum Frauenau, Germany
- **2025:** *Glass Art & Design Salon*, Paris, France; *International Biennale of Glass*, Sofia, Bulgaria; *Fluid Matters*, Venice, Italy.
- **2024:** *Glass Cutting World Cup* (Representing South Africa), Czech Republic; *At the Tip of the Wheel*, Boda Glasbruk, Sweden.
- **2022:** *New Glass Now*, Toyama Glass Art Museum, Japan.
- **2021:** *New Glass Now*, Smithsonian Renwick Gallery, Washington DC, USA.

Major Highlights

- 2025**
- Course leader, *Carving Light*, International Summer Academy, Bild-Werk Frauenau.
 - Co-curator *Glass Now – African Perspectives*, Association of Arts, Pretoria.
 - Featured in *New Glass Review 45*, Corning Museum of Glass.
 - Exhibition *Artefacts*, with Caitlin Greenberg

- (Pretoria Art Museum).
 - Group exhibitions in Venice, Sofia, Leerdam.
 - Grit + Wheels, Lathe Riders symposium, Leerdam, NL.
- 2024**
- Elected Board Member of the Glass Art Society.
 - Co-founder & Director of **Moya African Glass Network**; Co-curator and symposium leader internationally.
 - Represented South Africa at the Glass Cutting World Cup, Czech Republic.
 - Won 2nd Prize, Glass Competition, glasstec, Düsseldorf with *Croco Bear*.
 - Built cold working shop with historic Swedish lathes at *The Glass Factory*, Sweden for the group exhibition *At the Tip of the Wheel*.
- 2023**
- Course leader *Carving Light*, Bild-Werk Frauenau.
 - International presentations: International Biennale of Glass (Bulgaria), Contemporary Glass Society UK (UK), Lathe Riders Symposium (Germany).
 - Cold shop assistant, The Glass Factory, Sweden.
 - Solo exhibition: *Changing Channels*, Association of Arts, Pretoria.
- 2022**
- Regional coordinator for Africa, United Nations’ International Year of Glass.
 - Co-curator *Fired Up! – Celebrating Southern African Glass Art* (Pretoria Art Museum catalogue).
 - Jury member and coordinator for *7 Glass Wonders for IYOG2022*.
 - International projects: Glass Art Society Conference (USA), *GlassTec* (Düsseldorf), *Toyama Glass Art Museum*(Japan).
 - Solo exhibition: *Precious Beasts*, Ebony Curated.
- 2021**
- Virtual presenter *Lathe Riders – Secrets from the Cold Shop*, Glass Art Society Conference.
 - Curator & coordinator of *Blow Your Sculpture* exhibition, Pretoria Art Museum.
 - Exhibited in *New Glass Now*, Smithsonian Renwick Gallery, Washington DC.

TINATV - Photon
(2026)

Medium: Hand cut,
carved and polished
optical crystal

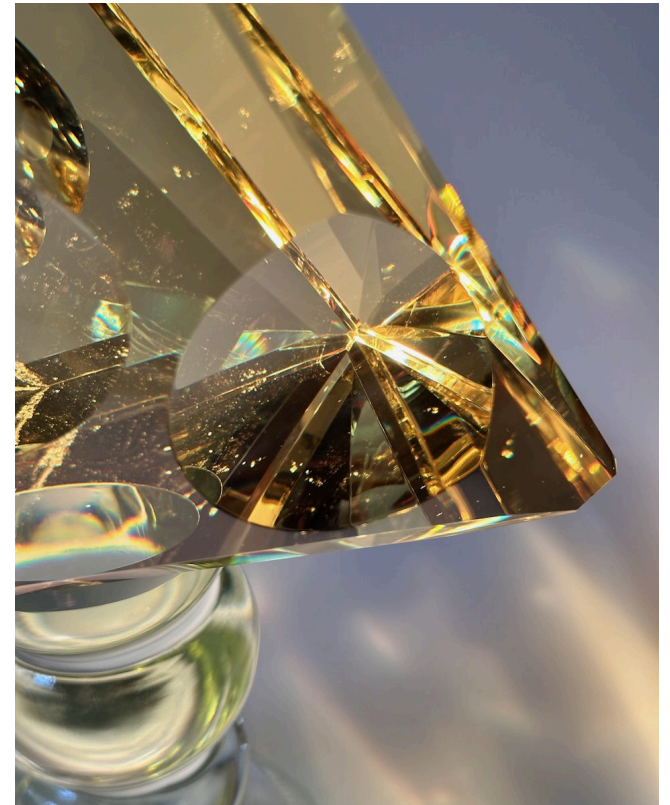
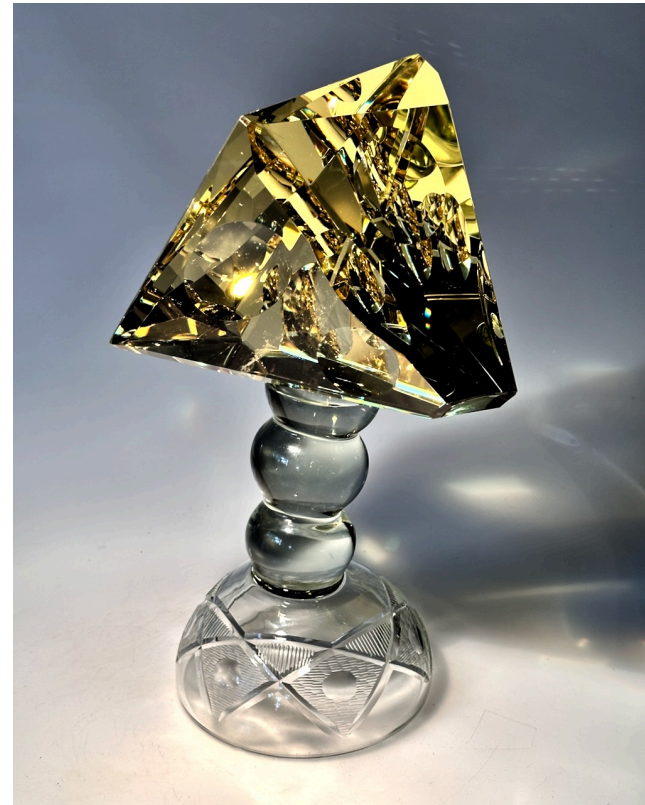
Size: H:17 W:13 D:9cm



Golden Prism (2026)

Medium: Optical
crystal, blown glass,
hand cut and
polished

Size: H:33 W:16 D:18cm



TINATV - Pressure
(2025)

Medium: Hand cut
and polished optical
crystal, steel, found
objects

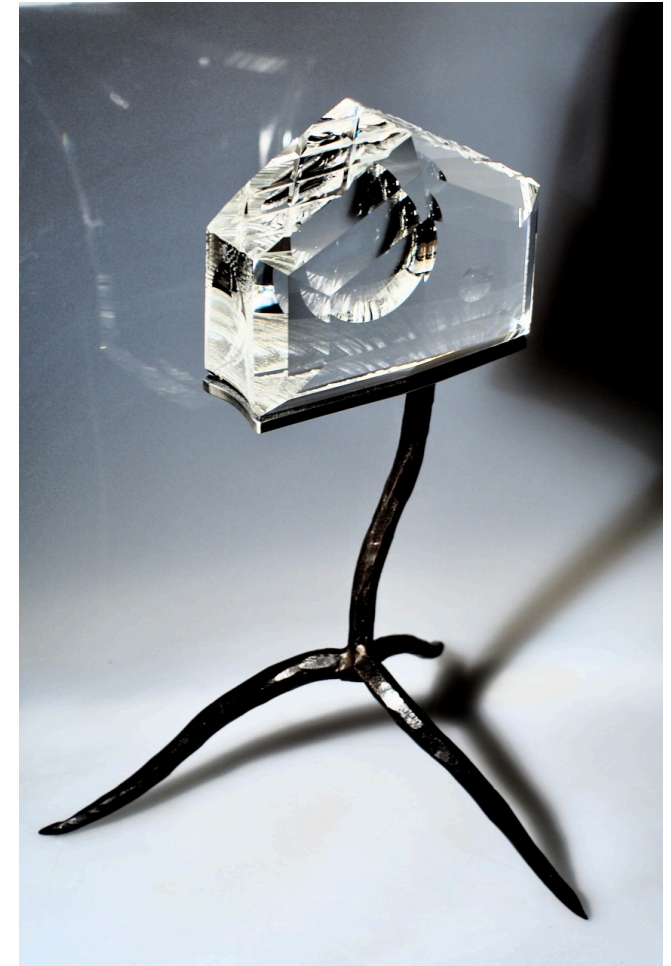
Size: H:70 W:75 D:24cm



Uprooted (2024)

Medium: Hand cut
and polished optical
crystal, steel

Size: H:50 W:36 D:31cm



Woman = Man
(2021)

Medium: Hand cut
and polished optical
crystal

Size: H:16 W:18 D:6cm



Inhale / Exhale
(2020)

Medium: Hand cut
and polished optical
crystal

Size: H:19 W:15 D:8cm



Memento Mori
(2020)

Medium: Hand cut,
carved and polished
optical crystal

Size: H:15 W:21 D:9cm

