

Labor lurking under the surface of glass

Discussion between the visible and invisible



Image 1. "Preserve", Rosita Ståhl, vita havet, Konstfack, Stockholm, 2021.

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Craft Glass

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*" What is behind the surface of glass?
Fragments of information, not even the whole.
Parts and bits.
Something you might see somewhere and sometime.
Something you heard but only parts of."*

Rosita Ståhl

Abstract

This text is about visibility and invisibility of work and labor through research from history and present time and through my own work, process and thinking.

Through these topics I want to raise discussions and make comments in the field of craft and glass. To evoke our senses and feelings through video, sound and perception of the work and installations together with the properties of glass.

To discuss that there are underlying layers of a work of glass that we see in a museum or gallery space. Why some information is visible, and some is lost by the presented state.

Is the material and finished product that we see more important than the underlying layers and process? Can we change how we present and document our pieces with information better?

Together with the labor of my interest, there is also about the loss of an industry and a personal loss of the time I had there coming to an end.

Keywords

Labor, Installation, Materiality, Senses, Visibility/Invisibility, Glass, Reflections, Light/Shadow, Interactive, Performance

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Introduction

I am a glass artist who started my career as a glassblower in Orrefors, Sweden, then I went on to study my bachelor at The Royal Danish Academy on Bornholm, Denmark. Here I've got the tools to understand the glass techniques, its properties and how to design my own work.

I have a long background that is the basis for where I stand today. And for me it is so much worth and holds a big personal value.

My early experience as a glassblower has informed my practice today and is the heart of this project.

It is my belief that if we continue to make craft, to put forward the workers and to honor the labor behind the work, then craft, factories and glass might survive. The labor and the makers are important in my work, the skill and our cultural heritage. What would Sweden be if we never were introduced to glass? Would I even be working with it as my medium? Are the creators of the work not meant to be mentioned and honored from the knowledge and hard work? Or is it just the designers of the work that should be most visible? Is the whole thing based on just showing a nice package to sell and make the designers famous and remembered?

And will the museums and galleries change their labels of information?

In this paper I aim to discover more about and discuss the keywords related to my project in a deeper understanding of the topic through research and my own thoughts. For me it is important to experiment and have my hands in the material as I go researching about the theory. I will mention topics and underlying importances from each keyword that I would like to focus extra on. I will touch upon the most important for myself in this writing and then go deeper into it or to develop it as I go on with the text and practice in the MA2 year and future career.

I want to tell different stories through my installations. They will be rooted and born from my own feelings, and what I believe is lurking under the surface and what is missing out from glass, and its created state to make it visible in its existence for the viewer.

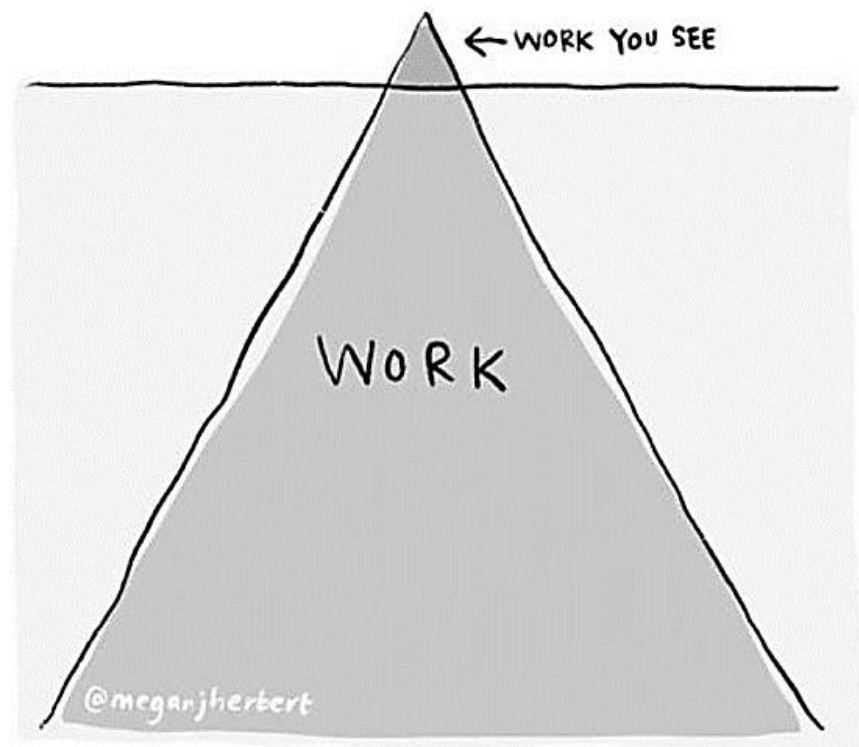
It could be myself making a comment about it, a direct visible video or a more unclear and invisible message. For me it is not always important that you understand the work exactly like I do but I want to start conversations.

Key Question/Working question

- ***How can I use my glass practice to raise discussions about labor, material and maker behind the work of glass in a visible/invisible state and through/with the properties of glass?***

Overview of the paper

In the first part of the text, I'll talk about my background and what inspires me in my work. Then I'll go on to talk about my time in Orrefors. I'll give examples of visibility in making glass and its properties. Then I will go into my own previous work which describes how I work with visibility and invisibility of work and labor. I will give examples of togetherness in making, signatures, and other writers that inspire me and talking about the same topic- Frida Hållander and Ezra Shales, and some examples from the book "*Orrefors- Ett svenskt glasbruk*" (1984). How work is displayed and labeled in museums and how famous artists do PR on social media in present time. I will talk about other artists that inspire me in their thinking and making- Mierle Laderman Ukeles and Olafur Eliasson. Then I will end this paper with methods and material processes for the final work and presentation.



The life of an artist.

Where it started

I have always wanted to create with my hands and to decide for myself what the objects and shapes around me were supposed to look like. In a younger age I had a shelf in my room with organic shaped bottles in different colors. I really enjoyed placing them next to each other in different settings from one day to another. I guess this was my first attempt to arrange and enjoy how the perception of the shapes changed as I moved them.

Orrefors is the place where everything started, at least for me, on the journey with glass (2002). By this written moment it is 21 years ago. I moved from Hönö, an Island on the west coast of Sweden as a 16-year-old. In Riksglasskolan we spent our last 2 years up at Orrefors glass factory, where we had our own department. By the third year in school the teachers at school started to talk about the glass industries and how bad it had started to look. There has been a sorrow in Småland throughout the years since many glass factories have closed. Even though new studios have started up, they will never be the same again with the glass factories and work communities.

My work often comes from my own feelings, memories, materials and places. I have later understood that it is often coming from opposites or contrasts, for example:

Visibility- Invisibility

Happiness- Sorrow

Life- Death

Light- Shadow

Inside- Outside

Coarse- Fine

Transparency- Opaque

Strenght- Fragility

It is most often blown glass shapes that I use for my installations. It can also be other materials such as metal, wood, plaster, paper and concrete etc.

Craft at Orrefors- our cultural heritage

*Echoes from a forgotten place. A place that exists, but not in its origin.
In the heart of the place I could still hear the sounds of labor. It was there in the
background of the pigeon's talk.
Even the cold metal that was touched by hundreds of hands and the fire that used to
heat up the working souls. Sweat, small talk and laughter.
In the shadows of what remained there was something left and I could almost touch
it. My feet could feel the once active movements from the ground. In my mind it
became a reality and I wanted to clean it all up and start over.*

Rosita Ståhl

At the factory when going to school we saw the employed glassblowers working. We were looking at them with curiosity, and they were looking at us, sometimes they applauded us and they came forward to give us advice.

My walks up and down between the school in Orrefors and the factory meant so much. I could finally feel like I had found my place in the world.

Other people that loved the same thing as me. And there was a sort of connection.

Even if you didn't know everyone, you felt you did because we had glass in common. I think therefore there are feelings involved in what I now make wanting to honor the glassblowers and labor behind the work. I have seen what is behind the scenes and have experienced it myself, and it is a big part of my life from my memories. My teachers, and especially Mikael Andersen, became like a role model, and a father figure. I don't know if that was because moving from home at such a young age. It could be that, or simply the fact that he was that person that was going to teach me how to be a skilled glassblower. Glass is a joy for me and there is a lot of passion involved. I am also proud to have this long background and to understand the material so well from spending so many years with it.

The sorrow for me is that Orrefors is a world known name and part of our cultural heritage. The factory closed in 2012, and I felt a big loss when going back to visit again in my field studies this spring of 2022.

The place of the factory is now only just visible as an empty skeleton with pigeons inside pooping in the middle of the whole floor. From what I've heard some production is also made in Kosta Boda and in China. The sticker of Orrefors is still visible on the surface of the glass.

I wonder what visitors from China or Japan would think if visiting Orrefors and they realise that they traveled all that way to see an empty building. But luckily Ingemar Andersson, owner of LILJAS BIL opened Orranäs Glasbruk AB which is a glass studio next to the factory. And they blow all the glass and have their own production but also make glass for other artists or designers who wants their ideas to come into realization.

In the book "*Och sen då- vad händer i glasriket?*"¹ (2013), Carina Adolfsson Engestam talks about and raises questions about honesty in production. For example, how the different glass factories make each other's work and then puts the sticker of the company on it. And the same when it comes to the glass being produced, (parts of it) in low paid labor in other countries. Carina is a social democrat member of the Parliament and asked a question in 2003 to the minister of agriculture which is responsible for consumer issues related to this. Carina means that it should be a security in purchase for the customers, to know where the work is made. That it needs to be honest for the buyers to be able to choose if they want glass from another low paid country, or for it to be made in Sweden. But the minister then said that this could mean barriers to be able to sell and meant that the glass factories themselves could tell the buyers that.

I am so sad about all this limbo of not being honest to not be able to sell. What if we just were truthful about it all from the beginning. And proud about it and showed the world the glassblowers of Sweden. Wouldn't that make a change? I don't know. But at least a more understandable state of how it is. I am sad about the glass being industrialized and moved abroad. Because it is cheaper to manufacture this way. We lose our knowledge by doing this. And the postindustrial society we live in now with mass produced works imported to out compete our own craft. I don't like the thought that everything is about making money and does not show the reality. And no one wants to take care of the building now because of the expensive costs to clean up the toxics.

In a short clip at the SVT, Christina Davidsson who is part of Nybro's municipal council talks about that the New Wave Group AB, the new owners since June 2005, "just left the shit" and the building to them after closing 9 years ago. She means that they should pay for the sanitary costs. And New wave group says that it is not their responsibility because they owned it before the current environmental legislation. The New Wave Group has appealed to this.²

¹ Agneta Gustavsson, "*Och sen då- vad händer i glasriket?: vart tog nit och redlighet vägen?*", ABF östra Småland/Öland, Oskarshamn, 2013, P. 138-142.

² Karin Ahlgren, SVT nyheter, *Nio år efter nedläggningen i Orrefors: "De har lämnat skiten kvar till oss"*, <https://www.svt.se/nyheter/lokalt/smaland/nio-ar-efter-nerlaggningen-i-orrefors-pagar-tvist-om-vem-som-ska-betala-saneringen>, [19 jan 2023].



Image 3+4. Inside Orrefors glassfactory, birdpoop, fieldtrip, Orrefors, 2022.





Image 5. Dead pigeon, Inside Orrefors glassfactory, fieldtrip, Orrefors, 2022.



Image 6+7. Outside Orrefors glassfactory, fieldtrip, Orrefors, 2022.



Materiality and senses

As well as my motivation to highlight the labor and forgotten glassblowers, I am also interested in the effect of transparency and light in my work.

Glass has so many interesting qualities for example:

Layers

Light/Shadows

Transparency

Opacity

Reflections

Texture

Color

Fragility

Sound

The ability to mimic other materials

In the book *“The Glass Skin”* (1997) Ricke talks about the qualities that you can gain in your expression when working with glass. He says that if you rely too much on the design of the piece, you sacrifice the potential in depth effects with for example the reflections, textures etc. They get stuck in the superficial surface. He describes the glass as a wearer of skin (like human skin), not just a skin but a wrap. He claims that it has its inside, outside, an underneath, and in front of. The wrap in glass can be that you are hiding things under the surface, or you can make it transparent- something only glass can do.” *The skin as a wrap has a double character. It covers, protects, hides, isolates, holds together, and sheaths.*”³

Ricke also writes that glass reveals and that it can appear naked. As he describes this, I feel like we work in similar ways when it comes to how we think about the material. Also how I lately have been experimenting with different surfaces and colors together with light and projection to be able to see the nakedness that glass holds, and to reveal it into space with the help of light. (See image 8 for example).

³ Ricke, Helmut, “Inside, Outside, and In-between”, in: *The glass skin: Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art, Sapporo, Japan, October 1-November 16, 1997...*, Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art, Sapporo, 1998, P 9-10.



Image 8. *"The eternal"*, Rosita Ståhl, (detail installation), Konstfack, Stockholm, 2022.

Previous works

My work has been a lot about emotions over the last 10 years. I make something out from a memory or a beautiful place (mountains I've visited), and then in the gallery space I want people to look at my work and to feel something as well. Not necessarily the same thing as me. But to evoke something, and for them to ask questions. (See Image 9).

Some people remember a place that they went to, and they tell me about their experiences, and we exchange our memories. This for me opens interesting topics for discussions and creates a more personal meeting between myself as a craftsperson and the viewer. A handmade piece has a lot more soul behind it than for example a machine-made glass piece. It has a long process behind it from a person's mind into a drawing, then the making and coldworking.

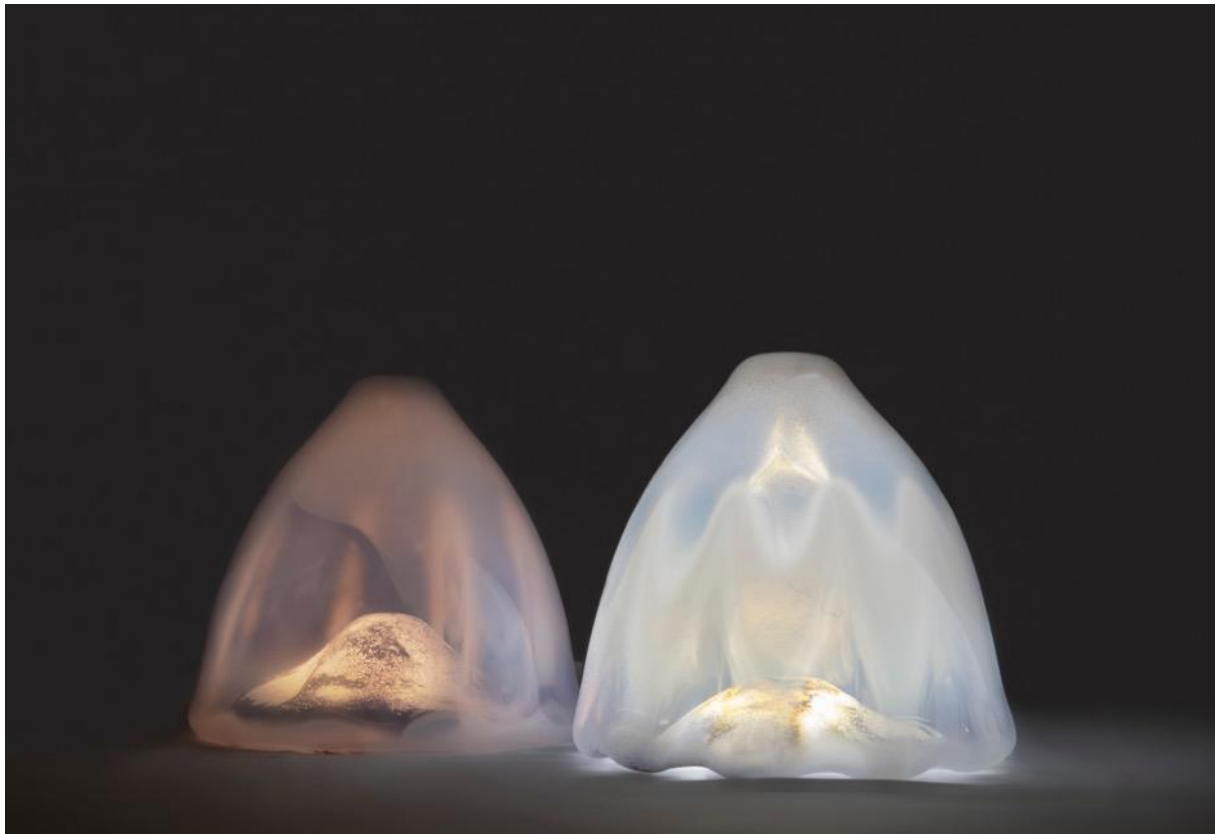


Image 9. *"Mountains at night"*, Rosita Ståhl, Photo Lars Lundberg, Gothenburg, 2020.

In my later work at Gothenburg School of Art and at Konstfack I've worked more with installations and by inviting the public into different settings.

I want the public to stay in the room, or in front of the work to explore, and hopefully get some feelings or evoke their senses in some ways.



Image 10. "Minnet av glas" ("Memory of glass"), Rosita Ståhl, Photo Lars Lundberg, Boiler room, Konstpedemin, Gothenburg, 2021. ("Microverse", degree show, Artistic development program, Gothenburg School of Art).

"Minnet av glas"- Sound of a glass furnace made into a breathing sound, empty bucket with the sound from water and how it usually sounds when glass is cracking of the pipe, burnt newspapers from the process into a big collage, (intentionally folded and burned away text and or images). Burned front and back of whole newspapers hanging onto the walls, glassblowing pipe, glove and tools.

It is important to open up for discussions about the craft because we want to keep it alive and for it to be an interesting topic to talk about. To show the visions of what glass can do and to tell stories about that.

By the exhibition the important part for me was to engage by talking with the audience. It created interesting discussions such as the curiosity of how things look like in a hotshop, tools and the raw material for glass. Also our culture heritage and Orrefors, because most of the material that I didn't make myself in the installation were picked up from Riksglasskolan in Pukeberg from Orrefors closed glassfactory. If the public could hear stories through my work about the background of the pieces, it could evoke more curiosity. It could make people want to write about my work since I take on topics that not many other glassblowers do.

To experience something through your senses makes you remember that special moment and you might tell others about what you experienced.

If you also make the work more Interactive, the viewers will feel more that they are a part of the work. This is something that **Olafur Eliasson** works with and I find it quite interesting. (More on page 36).

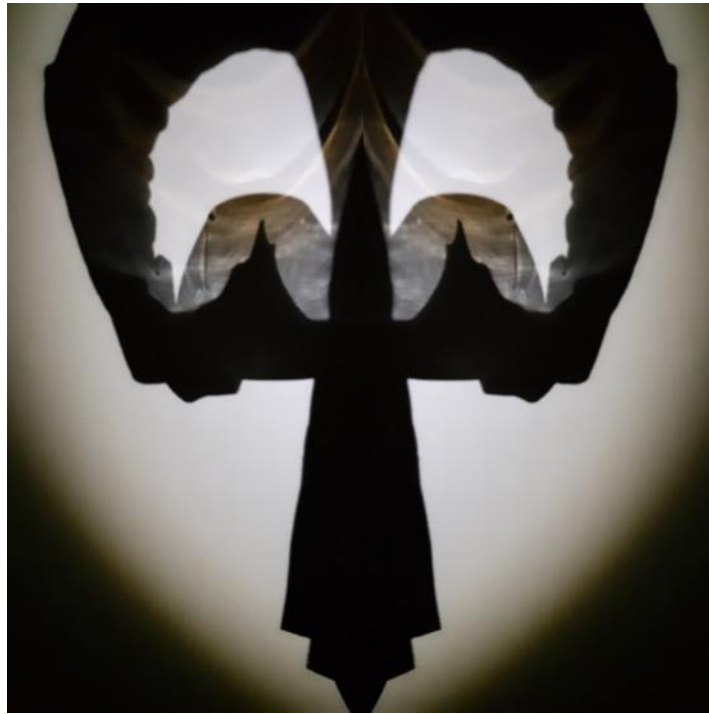


Image 11. *"Uterus"*, Rosita Ståhl, Photo, Gothenburg School of Art, 2020.



Image 12. *"Aura of me and glass"*, Photo, Páll Ágúst Jónsson.
Aura photography, Bollebygd, 2020.

As you can see above, I have for some time now been interested in light and shadows behind the body and work of glass.

Visible Labor

Is the glass that is made by hand only “an object” meant to be shown on a white podium in a gallery or to be used as a function by someone in their home? Is there no value in the story behind the work? For me there is, and I have lately been thinking a lot about what is under that surface, behind the finished work. What’s lurking under the surface. The labor is a big part of the process before the work reaches the public, and I think it should be more visible or included in the presentation of the work.

Visibility in glass practice will also make the public understand more about the time it takes, the environment where it is created and its properties.

In this section I intend to describe three of my most central works. Their relevance to my master project is to show what is behind the making of glass.

“The eternal”- Installation of myself projected onto the actual work of glass. Here I work alone in the hotshop, as I often have been doing the last years as my production allows that.

“Traces in time” Installation/collaboration with the glassblowers at Rejmyre glassfactory. Coming in as a designer, not to make glass. But to use glass to make traces of their hands onto the newspapers I folded and prepared for them.

“Invisible labor of craft”

The authority between maker and designer, having another glassblower make my work for the first time. Blowing glass with my signatures and a photo of me onto it. To video the glassblower and labor and show it back onto my own installation.

“The eternal”



Image 13+14, “*The eternal*”, Rosita Ståhl, Installation, Video projection of me making parts of this installation, glass, shadows, Konstfack, Stockholm, 2022.



Here I share myself with the viewer. As they are stepping into my world of making, hearing me speak in the process while making the actual pieces on the podiums.

“Traces in time”

Project in Rejmyre

Course- Rejmyre Art Lab, Site specific rural work,” Everything you want was already here”.

Collaboration, Installation, sound and performance.

Glassblowers at Rejmyre glassfactory.

Ronnie, Linnéa, Sophie, Rasmus, Mikael, Reshad, Stefan and Roland.



Image 15. Roland Sonevang, Shaping newspaper, Rejmyre, 2022.



Image 16. Some of the glassblowers names, aluminium, Rejmyre smedja, 2022.

Here my project was about getting the glassblowers at the factories hand traces onto the paper they shape the glass with. I then made castings over each one of them in plaster. I wanted to make small monuments of their "traces in time". I went to the smith in town, Michael Maasing to hammer all the glassblower's names onto aluminum backs for the books. Letter by letter after their handwritings onto papers.



Image 17. "Traces in Time", Rosita Ståhl, Detail book, Rejmyre, 2022.

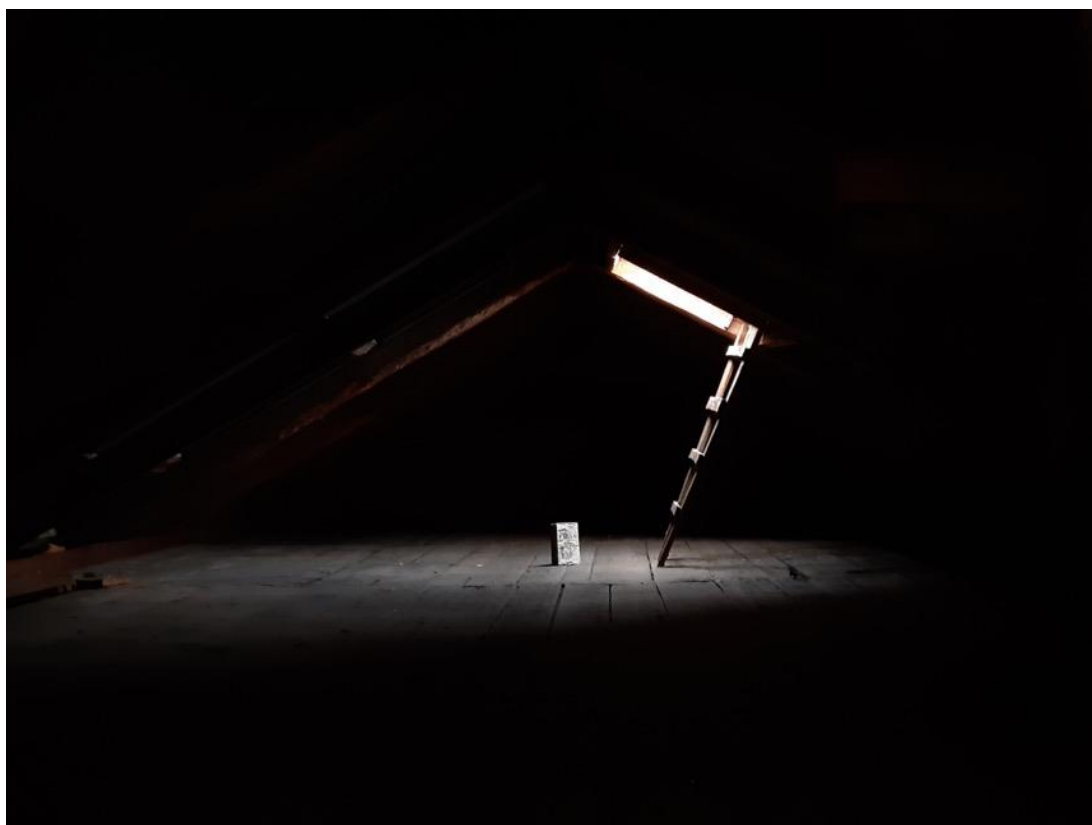


Image 18. "*Traces in Time*", Rosita Ståhl, Attic next to the glass factory, Rejmyre, 2022.



Image 19. "*Traces in Time*", Rosita Ståhl, Part of installation, Rejmyre Art Lab, Books from glassblower's hands, Rejmyre, 2022.

I also made a performance in the attic of the glass factory's old warehouse. I pretended that I came back from the future and found these books. Tried to read the information that was left from the newspapers and to open the books that were solid casted in plaster without success.

"Invisible labor of craft"



Image 20. "Invisible labor of craft", Rosita Ståhl, Installation, Video projection of Peter Kuchinke, Konstfack, 2022.

In November of 2021 I went to Boda in Småland to take a screen print class with Claudia Virginia Vitari from Italy. I had also prepared for an Interview with Peter Kuchinke that works in the hotshop of The Glass Factory (see image 20-22). I had prepared questions like "How does it feel to be invisible as a maker behind a designers work", and other questions. In the end of the class Kuchinke blew up our pieces from the course. It was the first time another glassblower blew "my design", since I am taught to do it all by myself this felt somehow wrong to let anyone else do it. As he was working, I recorded the process in a video.

When I came back to school to continue this project I took only parts of the interview and the process in sound together with parts of the video to then be projected back onto my work again. The vase that he blew was standing behind the box, while I got all the fame and beauty from the lights onto my work of him blowing the glass. Here I worked with the material glass and how the different surfaces created light reflections onto the walls and newspaper (see image 23). And some sandblasted shapes who captured and absorbed the image more from the projection in a fragmented aesthetics.



Image 21. *"Rosita Ståhl"*, blown vase by Peter Kuchinke, screen prints and signatures by and of myself in photo, The glass factory, Boda, 2021.



Image 22. Detail of Peter Kuchinke behind the glass installation, white wall paint on newspapers that is crumpled and ripped apart to create cracks, Konstfack, 2021.



Image 23. *"Invisible labor of craft"*, Rosita Ståhl, Installation, Seminar street, Konstfack, 2021.

Designer/Maker

For me it is important to appreciate craft and making, and the makers. The designer is important because they have good ideas. And the glassblowers make it possible through the skills that they have developed over many years by spending a lot of time together with the material. They are also a part of the development of the ideas from the drawing of what is possible and not. The visibility and equality when it come to the designer and maker is for me weak, both historically and in the present.

The designer is often the person that is honored through history and in the present time, and why is that so? I am not saying they shouldn't design and get a glassblower to make it. What I am saying is that they should be thankful, show respect and the equality here is important. Without glassblowers- No work to be made.

So, for them to be mentioned is the only thing I really want.

What if there are only designers left in time? Who would then make their work?

Or did we wait too long to suddenly realize it was too late to understand this and to keep the knowledge alive? Is the fame and money for a designer or a company more important than to mention and care for those craftspeople that were working hard and a big part of it. What is the value of our material and cultural heritage?

Is the glassblower just a tool without any value to be mentioned for their work?

Frida Hållander talks in her book about "*Whos hand is making*" (2019) [own translation]. She explains that it is a togetherness in making, and often a teamwork. Also, she mentions Brownsword's study about that there are crafting skills in the ceramic industry, knowledge that isn't comparable with the knowledge in the craft universities. He talks about the skill from the industry like "*They had skill dripping from their fingertips*".⁴ And that the educational craft educations also hold this tacit knowledge.

Brownsword means that the ceramic industry demonstrates skills and he compares class and status between institutions. He says there are craft skills that constitute criticism of tacit knowledge. During 8 months he filmed and documented craft and oral history from the employees at Wedgwood factory between 2003-2004.⁵

I also believe this is a good way to document the tacit knowledge and to keep it alive in time.

The same thing I believe when it comes to glassmaking. The persons from the glass factories hold so much technical knowledge and knows about what's possible and not. I feel that I also have this long background from school at Riksglasskolan. But I am questioning myself about who I am, when it is so easily accessible for an artist/designer to rent a glassblower and then get their signature onto the work. They also leave with all the authority to the piece.

⁴ Jo Dahn, "*New directions in ceramics from spectacle to trace*", Bloomsbury Academic, London, 2015, P. 65, (cited in Hållander Frida, "*Vems hand är det som gör*" P 67.)

⁵ Frida Hållander, "*Vems hand är det som gör?: en systertext om konst/hantverk, klass, feminism och om viljan att ta strid*", Konstnärliga fakulteten, Göteborgs universitet, Diss. Göteborg: Göteborgs universitet, Göteborg, 2019, <http://hdl.handle.net/2077/58486>, P 67.

That makes me question my identity as a maker. In 100 years, people might think I was a designer. And that the designers were all makers... What is the value of being a maker and a designer, if it is never totally documented in text or by the final work in a gallery space or in a museum?

Togetherness in making and signatures

As I mentioned before Frida Hållander talks about togetherness in making, and about Brownsword's studies of the ceramic industries where he talks about the tacit knowledge. A knowledge that takes years to learn and are stored in our bodies.

Another example from Frida is from Ezra Shales. How he investigates whether there is craft present in the production of a urinal by a toilet factory in Stoke-on Trent in England. In relation to this investigation he puts a perspective on how the work "*Fountain*" - a urinal that Duchamp (1887-1968) bought in 1917, turned it 90 degrees and signed with "R.Mutt" and then classified as an art work. Shales also look upon Karl Hayward who has a lot of crafting skills creating toilet seats, and how he signs them with his own identity code, a number, which makes every toilet seat unique.⁶ I am thinking about other mass-produced works in factories, or crafted work that are made for a designer or for our own created work could use this method. A stamp that referred to a place, team or factory for example.

Frida talks about an example of work she did together with another ceramic artist, and how technique and methods are an alternation between hands, even though a custom making is made up of compromises and or their mutual experiences. "*The knowledge is stored in our hands, it is the experienced hands that do [my translation]*".⁷

I am thinking about when getting something made from a glassblower, the designer brings drawings of work. And then the maker/makers develop the work through their experiences. And it could look different depending on who is sitting by the bench. Each maker has their own knowledge about techniques and experiences from before. I believe that each different maker has their own signature in making, if asking me to create something, or my classmate at Konstfack for example. Some makers could be more artistic, and some carry more experiences from the technical schools in Småland or by years spent with the material.

Ezra Shales writes in his book "*The shape of craft*" (2017) a chapter about Dale Chihuly and that his sculptures can appear airborne, but to make them it requires a lot of resources. "*Such a smoky, sweaty, multi-headed, multi-handed organization*

⁶ Frida Hållander, "*Vems hand är det som gör?: en systertext om konst/hantverk, klass, feminism och om viljan att ta strid*", Konstnärliga fakulteten, Göteborgs universitet, Diss. Göteborg : Göteborgs universitet, Göteborg, 2019, <http://hdl.handle.net/2077/58486>, P 67

⁷ Frida Hållander, "*Vems hand är det som gör?: en systertext om konst/hantverk, klass, feminism och om viljan att ta strid*", Konstnärliga fakulteten, Göteborgs universitet, Diss. Göteborg : Göteborgs universitet, Göteborg, 2019, <http://hdl.handle.net/2077/58486>, P 113.

lies unseen, offstage, behind the towering installations by Dale Chihuly that have given glass visibility and magisterial status in art museums in recent years".⁸ Chihuly's work is not made solo, he has his own skilled team making the work for him. His main maker is James Mongrain and the team is sometimes visible in photos, or if you see them working live in a studio you will know. On Instagram you can read **©Chihuly studio** and year by the created work, but not who that includes.

When I was studying at The National School for Orrefors I had an internship at Kosta and Åfors paintstudio in 2004. I remembered how we painted Ulrika Hydman Valliens tulips and faces. The thing that I noticed while being there was that the skilled painters refined Ulrikas drawings onto the glass, and when the signature was painted on the piece it was UHV for Ulrika Hydman Vallien then the signature of the painter, mine was UHV/RS. Not that we were a part of the production, but more to practice our skills for painting.

Another example of signatures is from a book- "*Orrefors: ett svenskt glasbruk*" (1984). Written by Ann Marie Herlitz- Gezelius. When she wrote this book, the glass factory was still active. She gives many good examples in the book of the makers, and the information is visible from who the makers were behind a lot of the early pieces that made Orrefors known in and outside of Sweden. I believe this whole book has many good examples that we can learn from for further documentation around glass and it's creation and makers behind it.

*"Without the people there would never have been history" [my translation]"*⁹

In the introduction of the book Ann Marie writes that Orrefors is unique in Swedish industrial history. That the company was a good combination of owners, leaders, artists and glassworkers and glass engravers who made the company world known under very modest conditions. They dared to bet on artists like Simon Gate and Edward Hald, to give them free hands- and succeeded.

Frida Hållander describes how she looks at a painting *On a Pot Bank*, Staffordshire: Apprentice 'Thrower' and his 'Baller' at Work by Pankhurst. The painting shows how a man is throwing on the ceramic wheel, while a girl preparing the clay for him. Frida means that this is also about a togetherness in making, and several hands behind¹⁰. Through the painting she looks at the perspective of the togetherness. That all production happens through a work of order, and through teams. The ones behind who does everything around the work. The girl who prepared the clay, to the one who did the "real work". What Frida means is that there is an important job that lies behind what is in front. What the painting portrays, and which is important to point out is that there is a doing behind what lies ahead. That working order is about tempo, rhythm

⁸ Ezra Shales, "*The shape of craft*", Reaktion Books, London, 2017, P 201.

⁹ Ann Marie Herlitz-Gezelius, (1984). "*Orrefors: ett svenskt glasbruk*", Atlantis, Stockholm, 1984, P 9.

¹⁰ Frida Hållander, "*Vems hand är det som gör?: en systertext om konst/hantverk, klass, feminism och om viljan att ta strid*", Konstnärliga fakulteten, Göteborgs universitet, Diss. Göteborg : Göteborgs universitet, Göteborg, 2019, <http://hdl.handle.net/2077/58486>, P 114.

and to keep pace with additional hands. And keeping the pace meant that you are not alone in the work, but it is a rational work.¹¹

This makes me think about for example a glass process where there are several steps and techniques. A graal glass for example which includes a longer process, where the designer makes a drawing, the glassblower and assistants first make the glass blank with colored blown layers on top of another. Then an engraver spends several hours to make the pattern through the layers. It can be everything from 5-20 hours or more. Then they bring it back to the glass hot-shop to heat it up slowly again and to gather glass on top to blow it out. Maybe there are 1-2 persons helping in the hotshop by making the graal. Then they bring the piece to a person who coldworks and polishes the bottom of the glass so it can stand straight. After such a long process it has been probably several hands to make the idea into realization. And I have seen artists/ designers that only mention themselves after this process. Not even the place where the glass was made. Or they might mention something on social media, but not in the gallery space where it was exhibited and sold. And maybe the gallery owners didn't know this either, but if they did, they could help to ask for the right background information, and make more PR.

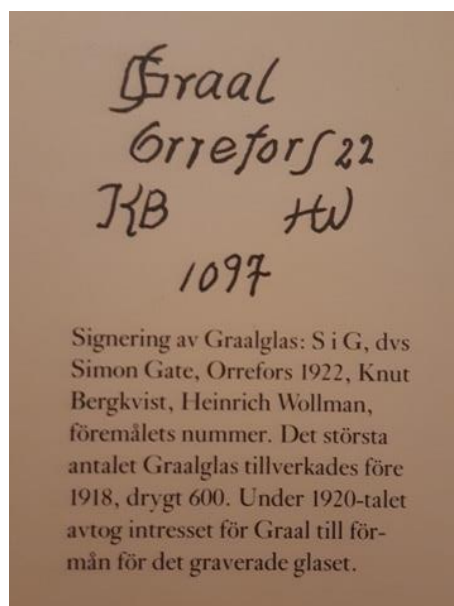


Image 24. Ann Marie, Herlitz-Gezelius, "Orrefors: ett svenskt glasbruk", Stockholm, Atlantis, 1984, P 43.

¹¹ Frida Hållander, "Vems hand är det som gör?: en systertext om konst/hantverk, klass, feminism och om viljan att ta strid", Konstnärliga fakulteten, Göteborgs universitet, Diss. Göteborg : Göteborgs universitet, Göteborg, 2019, <http://hdl.handle.net/2077/58486>, P 117-118.

The National Museum, Smålands museum

Shouldn't a glassblower be mentioned behind an engraved piece that was a part of making Orrefors world famous in the Paris Exhibition in 1925? Edward Hald & Simon Gate were often the designers- But who were the glassblowers of all these blown shapes? And why is this not mentioned in The National Museum of Stockholm in the exhibition "*Swedish Grace*" or in "*Orrefors Skatter*" exhibition at Swedens glassmuseum in Växjö but on a webpage online.¹²
(More in Appendix P 49).

I wanted to take some photos to show you how it is displayed:



Image 25. Simon Gate (designer), "*Paris cup*," glass, own photograph, The National Museum; Swedish Grace, Stockholm, 1922.

The "Paris cup" donated to the city of Paris from the city of Stockholm in 1922. It was engraved during 450 hours of work by Abels, Diessner and Rydh. In Orrefors: ett svenskt glasbruk (1984) they write that it was drawn by Simon Gate and made by Knut and Gustaf Bergqvist.¹³

¹² Vas Vitreum; Scandinavian design handmade in Sweden, "Heritage", <http://www.vasvitreum.se/heritage>, [14 jan 2023].

¹³ Ann Marie, Herlitz-Gezelius, "*Orrefors: ett svenskt glasbruk*", Atlantis, Stockholm, 1984, P 48.

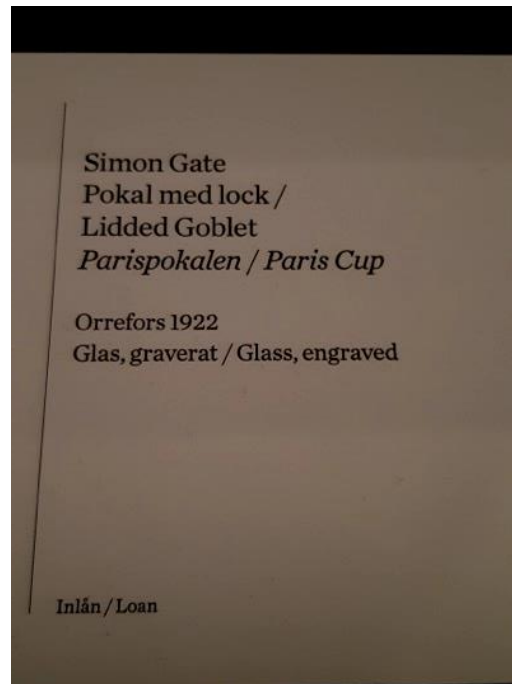


Image 26. “Paris cup”, Text label, The National Museum, own photograph, Stockholm, [April 2022].
(See Image 25).



Image 27. Simon Gate (designer), Rune Pettersson (engraver), “Bacchus Procession”, 1925/1978 – Edward Hald (designer), Börje Eriksson (engraver), “Girls Playing Ball”, own photograph, “Orrefors skatter”, Smålands museum, Växjö, 1920/1998, [March 2022].

Present example of PR

I have been following a famous artist in Sweden for a while, where some things like make-up, clothes and other brands seem more important to tag than the makers behind her glass pieces. She claims by a sculpted glass piece that she made it by saying:

“New sculpture by moi”. (More in Appendix P 48).

Artists and designers that hire labor of glass could help the makers and the glass industries by being more honest about the process. If all designers could help by mentioning the glassblowers, show the process, and tag the persons/the place etc. we might reach the younger generation to visit the glassfactories or to make them buy handmade glass. It could also create an understanding of all the underlying layers of production. That could also make the glassmakers behind the work to get even more work, or for them to be exhibited in the same gallery space. I believe that the more we spread information the better.

Artists that are relevant to my interest and practice

Mierle Laderman Ukeles

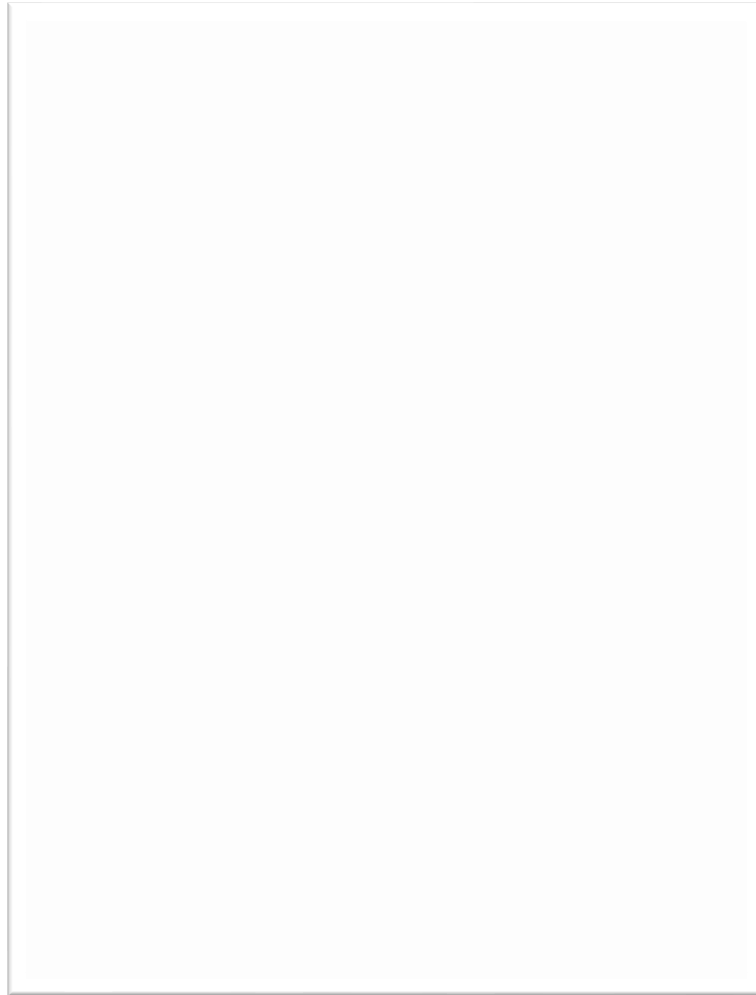


Image 28. Mierle Laderman Ukeles, *"Touch Sanitation"*, 1968, Bronx, NY, USA, https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/eascfa/about/feminist_art_base/mierle-laderman-ukeles, [19 Jan 2023].

"I'm not here to watch you, to study you, to analyze you, to judge you. I'm here to be with you: all the shifts, all the seasons, to walk out the whole City with you." I face each worker, shake hands, and say: "Thank you for keeping NYC alive." / Performance Duration: 11 months, at least 1 to 2 8-hour/per day work shifts. With 8,500 sanitation workers. / Courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York.¹⁴

¹⁴ Brooklyn Museum, *"Mierle Laderman Ukeles"*, https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/eascfa/about/feminist_art_base/mierle-laderman-ukeles, [26 May 2022].

Mierle Laderman Ukeles is a New York City- based artist, known for feminist and service-oriented artworks, and she often relates to process-based work in conceptual art and maintenance. Her work really touches me in the way of how she cares. She wanted to lift forward the public invisible workers and to honor them for their work. The fact that there is work that we more or less take for granted but can't live without. Mierle is unveiling the daily labor and maintenance that is normally unseen. She claims that her working will be her work, *Manifesto of Maintenance Art* in 1969.¹⁵ **(More in Appendix P. 49).**

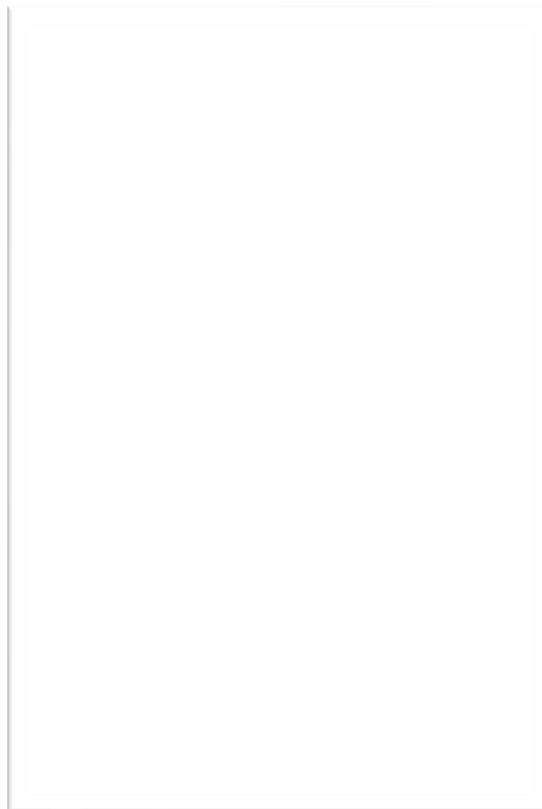


Image 29. "*Maintenance Art*", Mierle Laderman Ukeles, Queens museum, 2018, <https://arch.ethz.ch/en/news-und-veranstaltungen/deanstalk/2018FS/mierle-laderman-ukeles.html>, [17 Jan 2023].

¹⁵ Weronika Trojanska, "*Maintenance Art- Mierle Laderman Ukeles at the Queens museum in New York*", https://www.metropolism.com/en/reviews/29924_mierle_laderman_ukeles, [17 Jan 2023].

Olafur Eliasson

A great inspiration for me in the art scene is Olafur Eliasson. I find a lot of the work inspiring. He also has a big team working for him, that is not visible but valuable. Anyway I find the work that I see inspiring for my own work and interests.



Image 30. "*Your uncertain shadow (colour)*", Olafur Eliasson, Photo by María del Pilar García Ayensa, <https://images-prod.dazeddigital.com/1147/azure/dazed-prod/1270/2/1272024.jpg> ,Vienna, 2010. [17 jan 2023].

For me his work is an experience in space, Olafur wants the viewer to be integrated in his work or a part of the installation, a co-producer of the work.

It is relevant to my own work because I am interested in integrating light and shadows in my work.

(More in Appendix P 50).

Labor lurking under the surface of glass

Discussion between the visible and invisible

Processes for the final work and presentation,

The fact that there is work behind the surface of glass and the anonymity of the maker interests me.

I have been experimenting with the projector and glass. In a box with several small glass shapes (image 23), in a room with projection onto podiums and glass (image 13+14). I like how the light from the projector also creates the shadows and reflections, refractions into the room. I've been thinking about how I project the video onto my installations. Both clear, but also blurred. To try out so that the viewer will get different focus. When the video is blurry, you focus more onto the glass and reflections, or both. And when the video is clear, the glass tends to disappear more. This balance interests me a lot.

I have also projected a video of myself onto mirrors, blowing glass in a whole covered black suit. By this I wanted to reference to the anonymity of the glassblowers. The mirrors shoot the reflections onto the wall of the white sea. (p. 65).

As I have been progressing. I have also started to use the glass as a lens in front of the video. This becomes very interesting because it creates a big reflection onto the wall, where there is movement and you can't really see what's going on beneath this surface. If the glass is clear, the color of the video decides what colors the reflection becomes. (See Image 31-34).

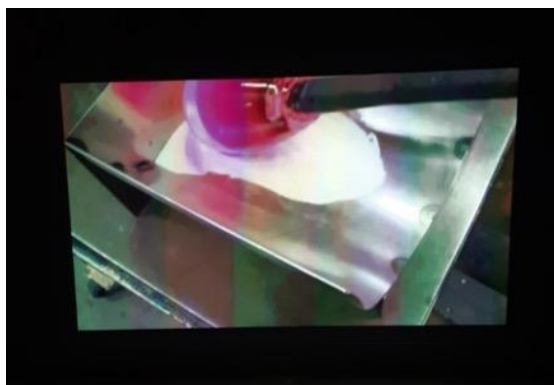


Image 31. Rosita Ståhl, Video still of the refracted reflection on the wall, experiment, Konstfack, 2022.
See reflection (Image 32).



Image 32. Rosita Ståhl, experiments with the glass as a lens, Konstfack, 2022.

In the beginning of December 2022, we had an exercise in exhibition setup with MA2 and Filippa Arrias. I tried my projection with the glass in front of the lens which made a reflection that I had tested before. A lot of the students were impressed and thought I had captured my vision and topic well with the invisible moving labor behind the glass. The only thing that visiting artist Katarina Elvén thought was that I need to add text or a title to make the viewers understand. I like the fact that the glass reflection becomes a memory from the piece.

It is like sculpting with light which creates different formations through colors and movements.

The way it is filmed, the different environments- cold colors, into more warmth through the glass furnace, gloryhole and from the glass itself. As I am wanting to make an installation in a room at school I want and need to already add things. I am a bit tired of white pedestal work. And when you abandon that to focus on several objects, images and experiences it is called an Installation. With its sights, smells, and general ephemeral character.¹⁶

In *“Understanding Installation Art”* (2003) Rosenthal talks about Enchantments and Impersonations as belonging to a type called “filled space installation”, where the filled space installations are easier to redo because the parts aren’t cohering with the space in a significant way. But where work in Interventions and rapprochements are because they are more “site specific”. The filled space installation is not likely to include the surroundings, but the site-specific installation is.

¹⁶ Mark Rosenthal, *“Understanding Installation Art: from Duchamp to Holzer”*, Prestel, Munich, 2003. P 27.



Image 33. Rosita Ståhl, Installation, Glass, projector, video of myself blowing glass, D1, Konstfack, 2022.

In this course I found out that if I place the projector on the wall high up, you get the reflection higher, but also it makes the viewer look for the source more. I discovered it also works in a room with daylight (without the lamps), it makes it more invisible. Although I like to work in the mysterious dark room more. If I place the work on the floor, I get the reflections from the piece on the ground.

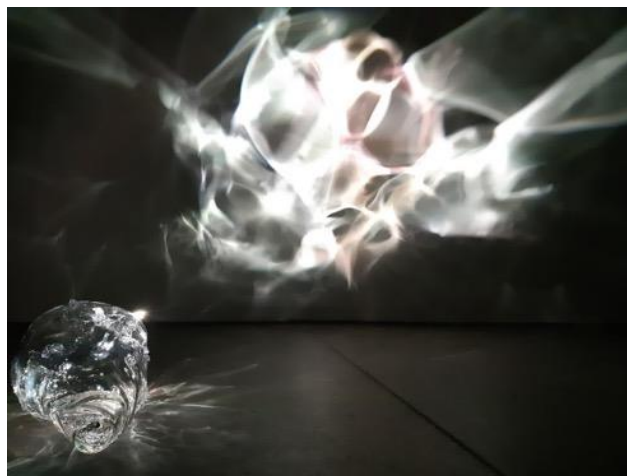


Image 34. Rosita Ståhl, Experiment, Konstfack, 2022.

I also played with how I placed the glass in front of the projector. Here (Image 32-34) I placed it sideways. But if I place it by the opening of the glass, I create a little window where you can see some more clear movements of the making in the video. But I like it to be more unseen, or to play with these different stages of visibility. As I have experimented before with a video and projector in a distance from the glass, I also want to incorporate this into the room. In front of my hour glasses that will be a part of the installation. I want to activate them by making some standing still, but at least one that could spin around. To integrate the viewer with the glass, light and reflections by casting the light around in the room. This process is very frustrating because I am not a smith, and I think it is hard to understand the material. But I am trying my best to make a structure for it.

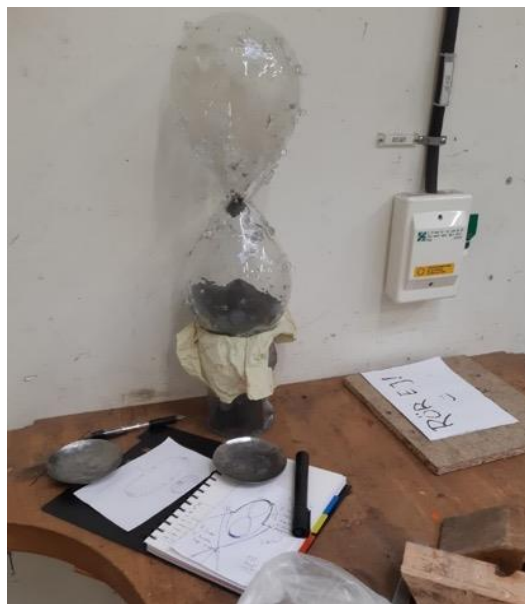


Image 35. Rosita Ståhl, Process hourglass with sand, metalshop, Konstfack, 2022.

I was thinking of the endless things to put into the hourglass, water, glass grains and sand to mention some. But I think I keep the sand in the hourglass because that reminds me more about real hour glasses and the sand represents the origin from what glass is. Or they might be having different insides, or just an emptiness.

By putting them in a distance from the projection I want to play with light and dark. Where I video myself in the black full covered costume in a darker room. To more capture the movements of the glass moving around and onto the glass to create the reflections. To activate them in their transparency through the video and glass. I need to think about how I video for different effects.

In the book *“Material och materialitet”* (2004) there is a saying by Ando that:

“The true character of light is not derived purely from light itself, but requires the introduction of darkness to assert itself in all its majesty, power and brilliance”.¹⁷

And it is just the darkness I like to work in the most because I find it more colorful and breathtaking. To make my message clear I need to use video, sound or text (title) somehow where I explain my work. I also might use some objects from the hotshop, or to use burnt newspaper to cover the walls or floor with to add the smell.



Image 36. Rosita Ståhl, process hour glass, Konstfack, 2022.

The hourglass process is quite fun to do. The harder thing is to blow them by free hand and to cold work them with the exact dimensions, and it is also being a challenge for me which I enjoy.

¹⁷ Ando, Tadao, *“Apertures That Summon in the Light”*, Architectural Design, 1997, nr 3-4, P 26-28. (cited in Engfors Christina (red.), *“Material and materialitet”*, Arkitekturmuseet, Stockholm, 2004. P 54.)

Conclusion

- ***How can I use my glass practice to raise discussions about labor, material and maker behind the work of glass in a visible/invisible state and through/with the properties of glass?***

In this paper I wanted to discuss labor and I did find important information through my research. I found that there are other persons researching the similar topic, Frida Hållander and Ezra Shales.

My intentions were to make installations in-between visibility/invisibility. But also to experiment with the glass properties and reflections/shadows. I found out in my first project "Invisible labor of craft" (P 24-26) that I could tell a story through video and projection, and the light from the projector created a moving image along with the light and created reflections and shadows. An exciting discovery that realized a lot of my ideas and it has followed my work and ideas ever since.

My intention is to evoke senses, to start discussions about the field of craft and glass and its labor behind the surface. Depending on where you look you see different visibility of labor in my installations. I experimented with the fragmented aesthetics, the blurry image of making, to a clearer image. I worked in a black covered suite projected onto mirrors and then I created a filter by placing the glass Infront of the lens of the projector. I made a lot of artists think about giving more credit to other makers. And saw an improvement here.

From a more visible state- to a total invisible which inspires me the most, along with the anonymity. I find that more people ask and gets curious if the image isn't totally clear. And for me I find it important to engage with the viewer to start discussions.

I find that my topics are very relevant and a lot of designers, galleries and museums might not think about this. I believe it is not too late, but if we wait too long the information might disappear by time.

To start questioning how things look in a critical way is the only way for it to have a chance to change. If no one question things, it will stay like it always was. That is why it is so good to be an artist, and to have the power to raise topics and start discussions.

At this time of writing my work is still a work in progress, and it might change a bit before presentation, depending on my discoveries and choices of this process.

In the future my work will progress by continuing to talk about this topic, to have presentations for the public, to exhibit my work in galleries and to use my findings with glass and video projections into public spaces. I will collect materials by making video and sound recordings.

I believe that we need to give and take, to mention the makers in text and orally, and to now improve the documentation of glass.

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Image 1 Ståhl, Rosita, "*Preserve*", found glass, engraved words, 1 ripped newspaper, vita havet, Konstfack, Stockholm, 2021.

Image 2 Herbert, Megan, "*The flying fruitbowl*", 2023, <https://theflyingfruitbowl.co.uk/2022/02/05/megan-herbert/4>, [17 jan 2023].

Image 3+4 Inside Orrefors glassfactory, birdpoop, fieldtrip, Orrefors, 2022.

Image 5 Dead pigeon, Orrefors glassfactory, fieldtrip, Orrefors, 2022.

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Image 8 Ståhl, Rosita, "*The eternal*", detail installation; Glass, video, light and sound, Konstfack, Stockholm, 2022.

Image 9 Ståhl, Rosita, "*Mountains at night*", blown and sculpted glass, Photo Lars Lundberg, Gothenburg, 2020.

Image 10 Ståhl, Rosita, "*Minnet av glas*" ("The memory of glass"), Installation, Boiler room, Photo Lars Lundberg, Konstpedemin, Gothenburg, 2021. ("Microverse", degree show, Artistic development program, Gothenburg School of Art).

Image 11 Ståhl, Rosita, "*Uterus*", Glass mountains, body, light, Photo reversed, Gothenburg School of Art, Gothenburg, 2020.

Image 12 Ståhl, Rosita, "*Aura of me and glass*", Photo, Páll Ágúst Jónsson. Aura photography, Bollebygd, 2020.

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Image 22 Ståhl, Rosita, *"Invisible labor of craft"*, Detail of Peter Kuchinke behind the glass installation, white wall paint on newspapers that is crumpled and ripped apart to create cracks, Konstfack, 2021.

Image 23 Ståhl, Rosita, *"Invisible labor of craft"*, Installation, Seminar Street, Konstfack, 2021.

Image 24 Herlitz-Gezelius, Ann Marie, *"Orrefors: ett svenskt glasbruk"*, Stockholm, Atlantis, 1984, P 43.

Image 25 Gate Simon (designer), *"Paris cup"*, own photograph, glass, The National Museum, Stockholm, 1922. (30 April 2022.)

Image 26 *"Paris cup"*, Text label, The National Museum, own photograph, Stockholm, [30 April 2022.]

Image 27 Gate Simon (designer), Pettersson Rune (engraver), *"Bacchus Procession"*, 1925/1978 – Hald Edward (designer), Eriksson Börje (engraver), *"Girls Playing Ball"*, own photograph, "Orrefors skatter", Smålands museum, Växjö, 1920/1998, [March 2022.]

Image 28 Laderman Ukeles, Mierle, *"touch sanitation"*, 1968, https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/eascfa/about/feminist_art_base/mierle-laderman-ukeles, [26 May 2022.]

Image 29 Laderman Ukeles, Mierle, *"Maintenance Art"*, Queens museum, 2018, <https://arch.ethz.ch/en/news-und-veranstaltungen/deanstalk/2018FS/mierle-laderman-ukeles.html>, [17 Jan 2023.]

Image 30 DAZED, Eliasson, Olafur, *"Olafur Eliasson wants you to see, hear, touch, smell & taste his art"*, <https://images-prod.dazeddigital.com/1147/azure/dazed-prod/1270/2/1272024.jpg>, Photo by María del Pilar García Ayensa, 2010, [26 May 2022.]

Image 31 Ståhl, Rosita, Video still of the refracted reflection on the wall, experiment, Konstfack, 2022.

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Image 42 Ståhl, Rosita, "*Labor lurking under the surface of glass*", Aluminum plate with sound from me working in the glass studio, glass shards and vibrations- detail and part of Installation, S8, Spring exhibition, Konstfack, May 2023.

Image 43 Ståhl, Rosita, "*Labor lurking under the surface of glass*", shadow- detail and part of Installation, S8, Spring exhibition, Konstfack, May 2023.

Image 44 Ståhl, Rosita, "*De manu mea*", Konstfack, 2022.

Image 45 Ståhl, Rosita, "*De manu mea*", Konstfack, 2022.

Image 46 Ståhl, Rosita, "*De manu mea*", Exhibition Hallwylska museét with glasakademin, 2022.

Image 47 Ståhl, Rosita, "*Shattered Image*", Installation, martin&servera cage-trolley for transporting goods, mirrors, copper thread, painted newspaper black onto one side, gold spray-painted casted plaster casting from my own hand holding a burnt rolled newspaper- DN KULTUR, projector, video of myself blowing glass in black suit, sound- recordings, "Hello it is the designer", Vita Havet, Konstfack during Sthlm Craft Week, Current obsession- social club, in the theme "*Changing power structures*", Konstfack, 2022.

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Appendix

Personal Reflection

Here I am sitting in the reflection of a glass piece and mirror in my own installation. My own feelings while spending time in the room were that I felt an excitement. I didn't want to leave the room, just sit and watch the video in the background onto the pieces, look at the podiums, the glass, the movements and the shadows. It was like I was hypnotized by my own installation. Others were also very inspired and said they felt up in the air, they became happy or even sad because it was so beautiful. The feelings of others are nothing I can control, since we all carry our own feelings and experience from before that might evoke differently with each and everyone.

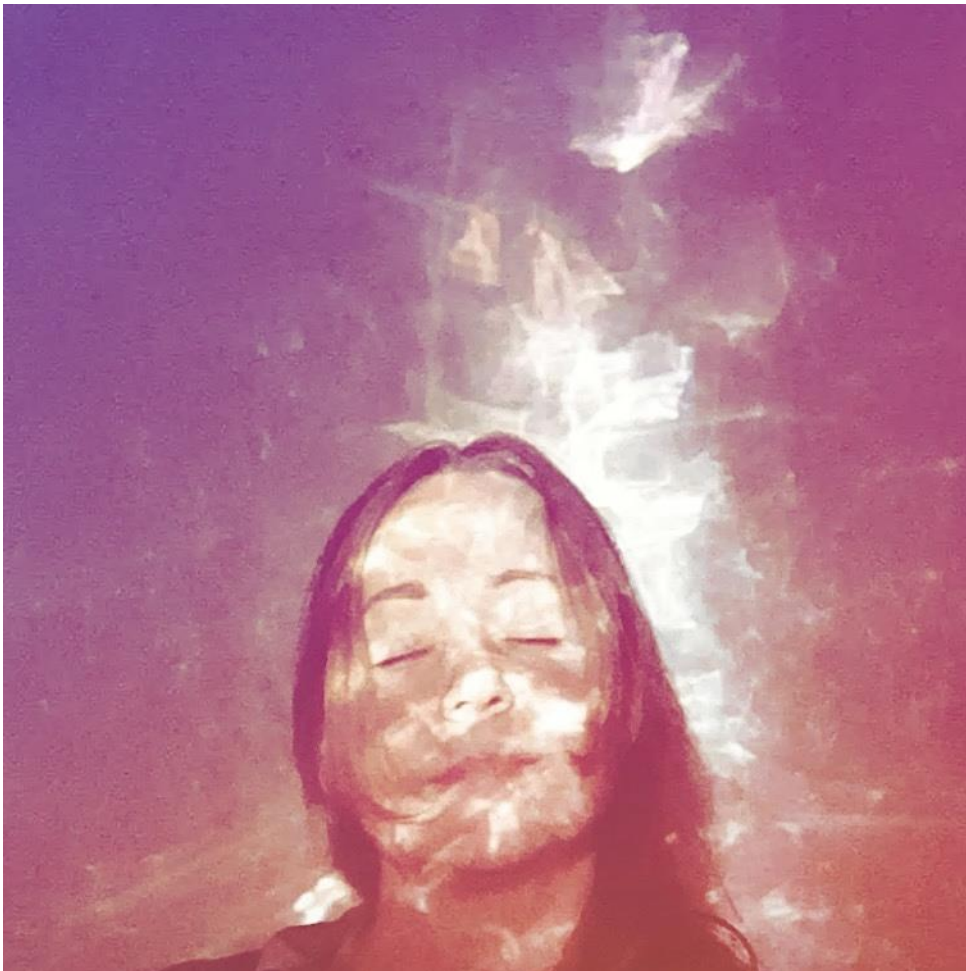


Image 37. *"The eternal"*, Rosita Ståhl, Myself in reflection of glass, detail and part of Installation, S8, Konstfack, 24 march 2022.

“New sculpture by Moi”. (From p. 33)

The reality here is that the team in Orranäs created this after her design. Amy Krüger who is a friend of mine sculpted this together with the team in Orrefors. Amy went to Kosta glass school the same time as I went to Orrefors glass school. When I saw this I had to comment on the instagram post by saying:

“So pretty!! Good design and skilled craftpersons who made it possible to create this through their craft knowledge at @orranasglasbruk in Orrefors. According to me the craftmakers should be honored and be lifted in the light, and if not in light, they should at least be mentioned by every post so that the viewers want to go down and visit the few glassfactories that we have left to see how skilled they are. I am a glassblower myself taught the craft in Orrefors. This is Swedens cultural heritage, and therefore important that the craftpersons is not forgotten about”.

I would want to see a text more like:> **This is my new design” Black and Gold”. Made by the skilled glassblowers and sculptors at @Orranasglasbruk, Thank you.**

Or; > **Thank you sculptor @amy.kruger.glass and (assistants) @Orranasglasbruk in Orrefors to make my design come into reality into this lovely torso in black and gold.**

In a message on facebook on the 29th of April 2022 I wrote to Amy and asked her to be sure she made the black torso, and she said YES. And she agreed for me to have an interview with her later. After writing and making a lot of comments onto the designers Instagram posts, she finally made some more PR when she went back to Orranäs the 1st of November in 2022. She tagged both the makers and the place on Instagram and in stories and made a video of the process. This made me happy because I felt I had made a difference. I also invited and talked to the VD for Orranäs glasbruk Magnus Strandman at Konstfack this Autumn. I showed him some earlier examples and talked about how glassblowers can disappear from time and history if they aren't mentioned. He later sent me a link on instagram for their latest collaborator and designer Alexander Stutterheim. In this article he raises both the place and the maker behind his pieces.¹⁸

¹⁸ Designbase; Glass med sans for mote, “Alexander Stutterheim designer for orranäs glassverk”, 6 Sept 2022, <http://designbase.no/glass-med-sans-mote>, [19 Jan, 2023].

The National Museum, Smålands museum (From P 31-32)

On the webpage I found that there were five master glassblowers that made the blown pieces for the world-famous exhibition and won The Grand Prix Price: Gustav Augustsson, Viktor Jakobsson, Knut and Gustaf Bergqvist and the Master engraver for the patterns- Gustaf Abels.

Where and when should we mention or reference? Isn't it important to reference it all in a museum's collection?

I find that there are and has been hierarchies in the field of glass and who gets the credits behind a created work. Some famous designers put themselves forward instead of the makers. I believe we should be clear of where the shapes come from to documented history.

What if our museums around the world exhibited work without any labels of information.

Mierle Laderman Ukeles (From P 34-35)

When she became a mother she felt like she had to choose between motherhood and Art. And it was by this stage she started to think of all the workers out there that make so much, but never gets credit for it.

This is related to my work since I care a lot about the glassblowers in history and our present time, for example those who worked at Orrefors glass factory. I believe that there is important to mention the work and workers. To value the work that they do that is so important. Her work "*Maintenance Art*" is an arch with gloves, usually gloves are something we wear to protect our hands with when doing heavy and bodily work. And here she takes the gloves and making an installation from it with labels of the owners and area of work. This by itself makes me think a lot about who's gloves it is. I can understand that it is gloves from work, but it makes me curious to know more. It is like a memory from the work that was made. Something that we can't see in the museum space.

We use our hands to make work, our hands are an important tool to be able to work at all. She honors the unseen by using elements from the work like a pathway. The unseen is the same way I think when it comes to the makers and labor behind glass where we see the end result, but most often not the parts of the process.

We also need hands to be able to blow and shape glass, a glassblower, assistants, someone to coldwork the glass. We need both to have innovative ideas and to be good at making.

Olafur Eliasson
(From P 36)

The way he works with nature, light phenomenon's to art installations inspires me. And how he gets the public eye to interact with the work physically and spatially. The viewer stays in the space to explore the work and becomes a part of it, and sometimes the viewers interact with each other in the space.

Here I see a body in the space (see image on P 36). There are several light sources pointing on the viewer. The viewer is the vessel in space and becomes a part of it. It makes the viewers want to move and make silly actions, or maybe they are just standing still in the light being so fascinated by how it all is made. They might even take a photo of themselves, or of their children to remember and to share this experience.

This for me evokes senses and could start discussions after the work is made. The vessel could be the person, my glass, or both standing on that scene of installation.

Acknowledgements

Craft tutors and students in my class of 2021-2023. Thank you for your help and for believing in me.

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Simon Klenell, My opponent for the exam.
Myself for working so hard and putting a lot of time and soul into what I create.

Reflection of examination, final Installation and spring exhibition

○ What worked well, what do you think could be improved?

Examination- Overall I think it went well. It was a very intense period in school with installing and to look at the classmate's presentations at the same time as making my own. I have never really liked to speak in front of a crowd- I think I am more of a one-to-one person in talks and conversations. When I was younger, I had a really hard time to do presentations in school, I always got to be in smaller crowds. In high school I forced myself to do it, and after time I became a bit better at it.

Because my topic about Orrefors is so sensitive to me, I started to cry every time I practised alone at home. And when I did it on the examination, I also almost started to cry but I pushed myself through and some students said they thought that made the whole presentation even stronger. They understand now how important my topics is that I am bringing up.

My opponent Simon Klenell did a good job and was very professional. I almost felt that he got touched about my project as well. He asked me about my text, why it is so critical. I explained that I think it is important to bring these things up, so the craft doesn't die out. That we honour the knowledge and makers to get a better understanding of how it is.

I think overall the conversation was good. He said he didn't understand how I got from that critical text into this beautiful installation. I explained that I had a lot of criticism before and chose to do it more poetic this time.

Simon thought the installation was very well planned and he didn't have anything to say that was negative.

I think I wanted to have a bit more discussion about the installation, how to continue with my work, or something to bring with me in my continued work further on. And how to improve our current situation with how to credit the makers. The time really passed by fast, it felt like it was only us two in the room.

I will try to trust my intensions and intuition when it comes to making the final installation. I often get very sad, stressed and depressed in the end of a process. I doubt myself a lot and I think it is never good enough. I can get stuck on details, and focus a lot on that, but in some way, I also think this is a strength, because of the perfect result in the final presentation. I wished that we got a statement from the tutors and professors to bring with us as a + and – evaluation of the actual craft/work being made.

○ What did you learn from the examination?

I learned that all hard work pays off. That I spend all my time in school, going into my glass world 200%. I also learned to take risks, to make a lot of experiments to find interesting results. I learned that I can do more than I think and that I put a lot of pressure on top of my shoulders. A lot of students liked my work, after my first exam installation a lot of students and teachers stopped me in school to give me lots of nice comments, they were very impressed and had never seen anything like it. This makes me very happy.

○ What kind of discussions came up during spring exhibition?

I was by my installation all the time, some days I only left for an hour to eat, or I even ate outside of my room. For me it is very important to meet my audience, to be there to show the way in, or to meet up after their experience, to hear if they have some thoughts or questions.

I had a little book that I took notes in after I talked to the visitors, some comments that came up was; (P.53).

"A universe, thank you for the experience".

"Many Layers, a lot of thinking into the work".

"I don't understand how this all works".

"Is the light that pops out pre-recorded?".

"The glass is projected- when it passes the shadows a whole new image is created".

"You are so smart".

"This is exactly what I was thinking of doing, I never figured it out, but you did".

Cilla Robach on Instagram: "At last, Rosita Ståhl's installation glass and craft, about time, process and materiality".

"Beautiful, really cool".

"Really interesting to hear you talk more about the project and work".

"You have really succeeded; I get so much energy and inspiration of this place".

"You are touching emotions in what you show".

"Did you blow all this glass? - Woman from DN- that also mentioned me in DN with a photo and that I wanted to honour all the glassworkers throughout history".

"Magical".

"A ritual, ooh scary".

"This is more than Craft, this is Art".

"You have a big potential here".

"I wish this was my work"- Student.

"You could start a whole new religion with this".

"What are your plans now?"- "I want to exhibit in bigger rooms for larger audiences".

"Are you into the commercial gallery or art gallery"- "I think I am into Art Galleries"- or both.

"You should have a chair in there so old women like me can sit down and look longer, From the little I saw it was beautiful with the furnace and glass that stood there".

"Nice".

"Beautiful and I can get a lot of feelings, you should exhibit at Smålands museum in Växjö".

"What have you done Rosita???"

"You are my new role model" "My new idol".

"It is like universe, time and space".

"Rosita is a glassblower and Combines glass tradition with newer expressions into an inspiring and cool way I think" -Gertrud Alfredsson, painter.

"Is this to honour the glass?".

"You just want to see more; you don't want to quit".

"You should talk more about this, and you will".

"I am always so stressed, and I pass by everything, but here I want to stay".

"You have created a whole world in your installation".

"You all are so good in the Craft class; Now I start to cry"- Sara Isaksson From.

"The Craft students is the best in the whole exhibition".

"Someone asked me if I did the installation, I wished but then told them it was you"- student.

"The sound is important in this work".

"It is like aliens"

"Look mum, I can follow the glowing ball with my finger".

A mum to her child, - "it is time to go home"- "Noooo I don't want to, I want to look more at this, wooww!!!" – "We could come here another day", "No I want to see more noowwww!!". This made me giggle a lot.

"Scary with the sound".

Some persons just passed the room because I had a black curtain outside the door opening, I told them to step inside. Some just stuck their head inside to look. Some persons stayed in the room for 3-5 seconds, some stayed for 15-20 minutes because they liked it so much, like a meditation or a spiritual thing to look at.

I think you need to have time to explore my work, it is not something to spend short time with. Some persons got irritated with other visitors holding up the curtain letting the light inside from the corridor, destroying their experience.

I was also guarding a bit, at the opening there was a kid running inside my room without parents nearby, I stopped him to show where to stand- behind the sand and the glass.

It was interesting to see how people approached my room both from standing inside and outside. Almost everyone showed respect towards my work, and I am thankful for that.

○ How did all this contribute to your understanding of your practice?

I think I can agree on all the feedback I've got; I really like the fact that someone saw the glass as the sun- the sun that turns slow, circulates in the room, to somehow trying to get the hourglasses alive again.

I can use the feedback as inspiration to other works.

I could feel sometimes that some persons didn't give my work the time it deserves, but I believe that is just how stressed people are, and I know myself how I also sometimes look fast on some works because it is a lot to take in when several works exhibited at the same time.

○ What happens next?

I feel happy, excited, sad, empty. Time flies... and I haven't really had the time to calm down to rest and to understand what I just did.

I am applying for things, I get a lot of No's, but I hope I get some YES answers soon.

I will stay in Stockholm, hold your horses, Me?!!! Really!?? I don't even like Stockholm. I know. But I thought since class is exhibiting in Craft Week this autumn, I should stay, also to give "Stockholm a chance" to be here after school to explore what the capitol has to offer. I want to explore, mingle, meet other artists, go to openings etc.

I will meet with a gallery owner next week, and maybe that will give an exhibition in the future.

I will share a studio space in Gustavsberg with another glass artist. And hopefully I can blow glass there or other places.

I think I need to find a job and apply for a working grant and a project grant. I hope I will get that. My plan is to go back to Småland to make a project there by the left behind glass factories as well as making work to sell.

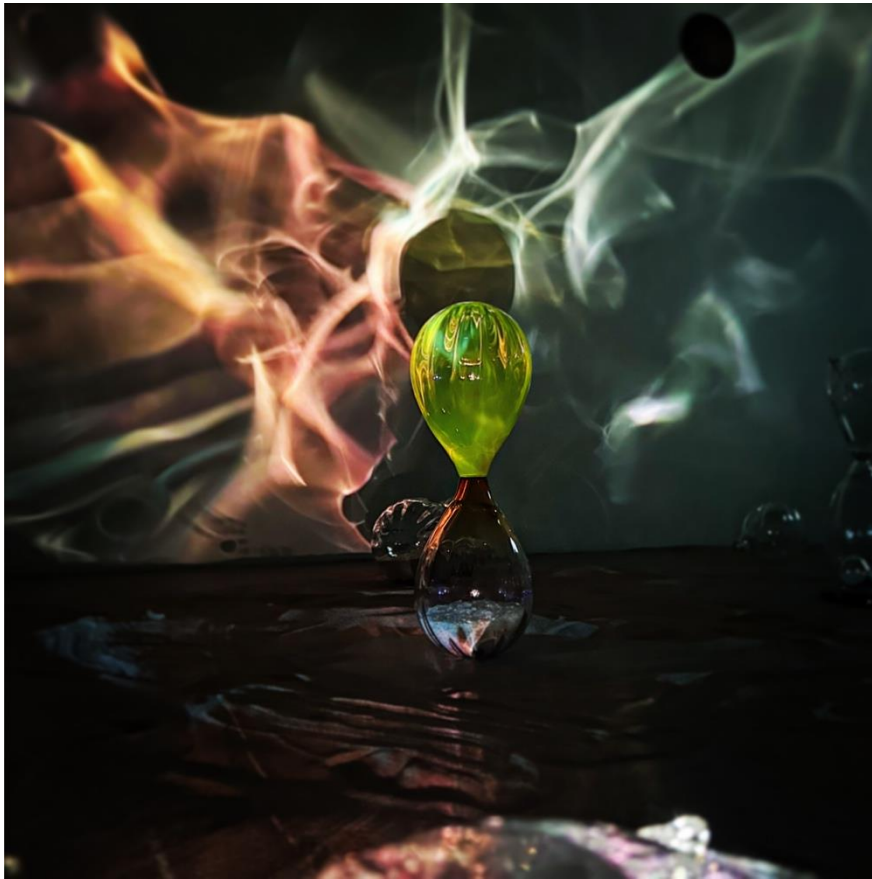


Image 38. *"Labor lurking under the surface of glass"*, Rosita Ståhl, detail and part of Installation, S8, Spring exhibition, Konstfack, May 2023.



Image 39. *"Labor lurking under the surface of glass"*, Rosita Ståhl, Overview of Installation, S8, Spring exhibition, Konstfack, May 2023.



Image 40. *"Labor lurking under the surface of glass"*, Rosita Ståhl, Overview of Installation, S3, Examination exhibition, Konstfack, March 2023.



Image 41. *"Labor lurking under the surface of glass"*, Rosita Ståhl, detail and part of Installation, S8, Spring exhibition, Konstfack, May 2023.



Image 42. *"Labor lurking under the surface of glass"*, Rosita Ståhl, detail and part of Installation, S8, Spring exhibition, Konstfack, May 2023.

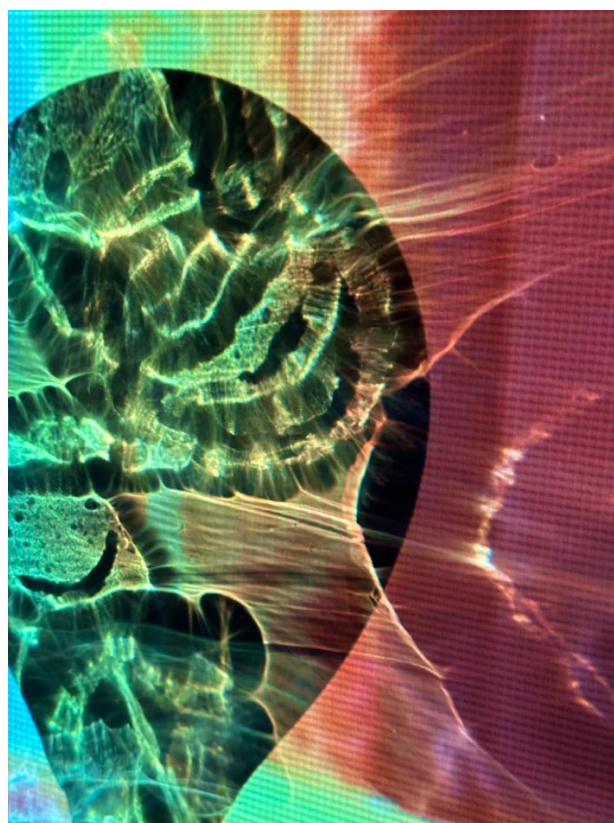


Image 43. *"Labor lurking under the surface of glass"*, Rosita Ståhl, detail and part of Installation, S8, Spring exhibition, Konstfack, May 2023.

Positive and negative responses of my work

Blowing glass in the black whole covered dress- Making up scenarios about the designer/maker and recording my voice.

Current obsession exhibition at Konstfack, theme “changing power structures” during sthlm craft week 2022. (Image P 65).

- In “social club” I presented my work. One of the curators thanked me for doing this work. The importance of the underlying layers of labor. I was asked to bring a question with me for the public. The question was: - Is the glassblowers always visible and mentioned behind the work? And the curator answered NO they are not. Other discussions were about someone having an exhibition with wool, where they included the sheep into the exhibition, to show the source of where the information and material came from.

Artist talk

- I exhibited one work with a print of my hand onto the glass along with a piece with my signature big on one side (see P 62-64). Thinking about what my hand and signature is worth in 100 years. Will I then be compared or confused to a designer that got something made from someone else hands?
- I got asked from a designer not to talk about my work during our artist talk because it could steal the focus of the exhibition. My inspiration came from the Art Nouveau period when Gallé got so famous from designing the layered glass. And they signed his name onto the pieces. I talked about the different layers of the glass and the process, that there are often several hands behind the work. And I want the work to be better documented in the museum, gallery space by text and in social media.

Social media and responses on my work (in short)

- Along with me having the artist talk in an exhibition and making the recordings of my own voice I’ve got a lot of negative responses. Questions like:
- How was your childhood? were you raised a certain way to make this kind of work?, How do you really feel etc.
- Are you never going to quit, you are incredible (in a bad meaning).

Some designers took my work personally; they claimed that I wanted to destroy the business for my colleagues. When I in fact made this work to have a change out there for the better.

The positive reactions were equal to the negative ones. Younger glass makers from Riksglasskolan in Småland contacted me. Saying this was such a good work, that it

is so important that I raise these kinds of topics. They said they want to be visible, mentioned and remembered in the future if creating work for a designer.

One designer from Konstfack contacted me to say that I did an important job. She wanted to know how to go along with her blown glass pieces and asked me for advice.

I said she could mention at least the place where the glass is made. Even better is to mention and tag the glassblower and assistants that helped.

Several glass artists on Instagram have now started to tag place (Hot-shop, factory, company) along with the makers.

One glass artist who makes some work and get help with some has started to make that information visible in the posts. Also when getting help with silvering work and with coldworking. By mentioning others when having exhibition in NY they become visible, the gallery and other customers can look them up- And maybe they also get to exhibit in NY.

Another girl that is a glass designer and maker contacted me and she said I am strong to be able to handle such difficult topic that I am rising. But she said that now finally someone does it. The discussions and talks about the designer/makers visibility, and who gets the credit has long been a topic that a lot of makers has talked about.

I have also seen that some has started to mention Simon Holm which is a coldworker working at The Glass Factory in Boda. He is one of a very few that does coldworking and finish other artists works and is not very visible but so valuable.

Some makers and glassblowers have started to tag the work they made for designers. If it doesn't go the other way around the makers can at least make that visible.

Visits and Interviews

I traveled to Orrefors Riksglasskola two times during this paper. I had discussions with the teachers about my topic at Konstfack. No one said it was a bad thing, they seemed happier about this work being made.

Interviewed two glassblowers- Christer Wedell and Juhani Karppinen. that worked among other glassblowers, factories and at Orrefors. They told me about their most memorable and best memory from the time there. It was when they got to join a designer they made work for to New York. Their worst memory was when Orrefors glass factory closed in 2012.

I traveled to Växjö to meet up with Björn Arfvidsson which works in the archive of Kulturparken Småland. I had an interview with him, he agreed that there should be more visibility of the makers.

I donated 2 glassmountains to their permanent collection. I wrote a background story which is now in their archive. By the work it is also documented like this:

“Mountains at night” designed and created by Rosita Ståhl.

I am happy that my work is documented like this for the future. To know I am both the designer and maker of all the steps in the process.

Digitaltmuseum, Kulturparken Småland/Smålands museum, 6 jan 2023.

<https://digitaltmuseum.org/search?q=Rosita%20st%C3%A5hl&aq=topic:22skulpturer%22%20owner?:%22S-KPS%22&sv=table>

I met up with Gunnel Holmér which is a Swedish writer and museum antiquarian and glass historian in the autumn of 2022. We were in contact before by phone and we talked about my interest to make the labor more visible. She thought it was good that someone else wants to rise these topics. She is very interested in lifting the persons behind the work of glass she said. Together with her and a Finnish researcher Hannu Rastas. We traveled together to the shutdown Rosdala Glasbruk, then to Bergdala glassfactory to see the 2 employee's work in the hotshop.

We talked about the makers visibility and that you can take the importance of the process further back than the glassblowers. Who are for example the persons who make the raw materials for glass? Who make the ceramic pots for glass furnaces, glass colors that we use etc. This is important to even be able to make glass at all. We agreed upon that it is important with the knowledge of making glass and the glass techniques. The persons who package the glass is important also, but the knowledge for making glass is more vulnerable if it disappears in time and dies out. Gunnel said this is important to make visible so the craft doesn't go to death.

Some glassblowers might not want to be visible, because they are used to the old way of working and thinking. But I believe that at least the company should be mentioned if getting something produced from someone else. To show that there is other sources behind what's created.

I talked to a teacher I had in Orrefors on my facebook chat 8th of January 2023. I asked him how many glassfactories there is now that manufacture by hand? He answered that he didn't know what classifies a factory anymore, because of the minimalistic number of persons that works there.

He says that:

Målerås has 5 in the hot-shop.

Bergdala 2 persons.

Skrufs Glasbruk 2 persons.

Orranäs ca 3-4 persons, and some renting time there.

Kosta Boda ca 40.

Rejmyre 8-9.

The Glass Factory, Boda- ca 3 hired, 2 apprentices, 1 freelancer, and others renting time.

A lot of the workers are in an older age. There will soon be a need to refill with the younger generation.

Once upon a time there was 100's of glass factories in Småland.

During my studies at Konstfack there has also been a lot of changes- a pandemic, war in Ukraine which also increased the energy costs and inflation with costs that the few glass studios and factories are struggling with right now. Which is a poor development for our cultural heritage. By this written moment, June 19th 2023 I am also sad to inform that Orranäs glass factory burned down to the ground the 12th of June. I really hope that they will rebuild it.

Improvements and what we can gain in a give and take situation

If we see a post on Instagram where a glassblower tag their assistants, we might also hire them to help out assisting for the work. The information could help in so many ways. Both the economic aspects to hire and pay someone, and to understand what's out there in the market.

We can make better documentation by:

Museums, galleries- find the whole background story- fill in papers that asks for makers/designers behind the piece for their labels.

Make a contract between the glass studio and designer- To have them mention the place, and or glassblowers and assistants in social media and or/museum/exhibition space when getting the authority to the work.

To make a stamp for glass that refers to a certain place, group of makers.

To sign the glass with the place, year made, and glassblower/Team and (assistants), or a short signature that stands for several.

To post images onto social media of the process and makers, and or in PR materials for exhibition/gallery space.

Document it digital on webpages for the specific Glass studios, who they make/have made work for and collaborated with. And the same onto the designer's digital platforms.

Talk orally about the work and the background of it with the public that engage with the work- explain the whole process, not only the techniques, but the persons you got help from/places and companies.



Image 44, "*De manu mea*", Rosita Ståhl, Konstfack 2022.



Image 45. "De manu mea", Rosita Ståhl, Konstfack 2022.



Image 46, "*De manu mea*", Rosita Ståhl, Exhibition Hallwylska museét, glasakademin, 2022.



Image 47. *"Shattered Image"*, Rosita Ståhl, Installation, martin&servera cage-trolley for transporting goods, mirrors, copper thread, painted newspaper onto one side, gold spray-painted casted plaster casting from my own hand holding a burnt rolled newspaper- DN kultur, projector, video of myself blowing glass in black suit, sound- recordings, Vita Havet, during Sthlm Craft Week, Current obsession- social club, in the theme *"Changing power structures"*, Konstfack, 2022.

Links with publicity in newspapers during my Master:

DN- https://www.dn.se/kultur/experiment-och-tradition-mixas-pa-konstfack/?fbclid=IwAR333vDkFM4zw4J4jsPzIz2dovdpHT2sqJmuSLxE1eb2Qfg_sKj7DaL5hQE

Torslanda- Öckerö Tidningen- <https://e.tidningen.se/.../torslanda.../70qpDQxa>

GP Article- http://www.e-pages.dk/goteborgsposten/4213/article/1796335/38/1/render/?token=6f0ff1b31d0c7c33bb4fb2d424f0cfc8&vl_app_id=sv.goteborgsposten.areader&vl_app_version=4.19.0&vl_platform=android&fbclid=IwAR3BaaPNUdX5ck22tniJcr_8uORXL0cRTgLVdvzhV0RhBEOfEFilhUlliu4

Video GP- <https://ljsp.lwcdn.com/api/video/embed.jsp?id=a1cebf81-83ed-4a40-9911-dfed7e228685&pi=undefined&fbclid=IwAR0OwKhIBusgCviOXtyy-X6CXH2xtKRkQG1zEvLMPvvMPI3F-40zblloeGgQ>