

Stine Bidstrup, Lene Bødker, Frida Fjellman, Hanna Hansdotter, and Maria Koshenkova
Summer Group Show

June 20 – August 16, 2024

Opening Reception: June 20, 6 - 8 pm

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HB381 is pleased to announce its summer group show, an exhibition by five contemporary female artists working in glass. In hot shops and studios across Denmark and Sweden, these sculptors have cultivated a distinct facility with the techniques of blown glass, cast molten forms, and etched and chiseled surfaces. Glass functions as a multivalent substance that transmutes opaque sand into translucent imagery at once recognizable yet elusive; in their hands, this rich medium conveys enigma, utopian histories, baroque sensibilities, and bodily fragility.

The mold-blown glass works of Stine Bidstrup and Frida Fjellman glint mysteriously, refracting and trapping light within their jagged, hard-edged geometries. Their faceted forms speak of soil and stones, recalling crystalline minerals forged deep beneath the earth's surface. Bidstrup's works are architectural in nature, their opaque columns and nebulous linear webs functioning much like scale models of buildings, perhaps grafted from blueprints or jumbled elevation diagrams. In their complex arrangement of parts and pattern, each sculpture contains a densely-layered cosmos. Inspired by the earlier work of twentieth-century utopian thinkers like Paul Scheerbart and Bruno Taut, Bidstrup's sculptures gesture at unrealized visions of urban planning and collective models for living.

Fjellman's suspended *Riche* is composed of fifteen glass prisms which hang languorously overhead. Her sculptural chandeliers are often lit internally or clustered around a light fixture; at other times, they compose glimmering installations arrayed across a room. Her work emerges from the same design vocabularies as palatial ballrooms and delicately set jewelry but joins these with elements of the Nordic landscape: its translucent colors and the angular forms found in exposed stone and sheets of ice.

Hanna Hansdotter, Lene Bødker, and Maria Koshenkova's sculptures take advantage of the fluidity of molten glass to appear lifelike, biotic, and amorphous. Hansdotter's sculptural vessels contain billowing folds that swell and curve in on themselves, transforming from each angle. Their high-gloss, matte, and metallic surfaces distort their surroundings; the result of blown glass partially confined within iron frames, they are at once beautiful and unnerving.

In contrast, Koshenkova produces sculptures that abstractly visualize the aftermath of harm. They explore the redemptive possibilities of the grotesque, that literary form of tragedy that explores human experiences of grief, pain, endurance, and recuperation. Koshenkova relates her works to body parts — a dashed heart, damaged liver, distended intestines — to process the psychological effects of war and family grief.

Bødker's work embodies aspects of mythology and nature: a cauterized stump pruned of its limbs stands stoically erect; an emerald snake with Edenic undertones writhes in space; and the gothic branches and boughs of trees curl into serpentine coils. Bødker's chiseled stippling interrupts the smooth surfaces of cast glass with staccato marks, peppering her sculptures' translucent surfaces and turning them opaque. There is a stillness here as one might find in a fragment of Hellenistic statuary retrieved after many years in a museum's storeroom.

Regardless of their subject, Bødker's works contain the power to materialize myths and fable in ambiguous yet evocative iconography.

As glass technicians, skilled artisans, and thought-provoking artists, these five women have powerfully transformed their medium in inventive and unsettling ways. The works included here return us to the hallucinatory and enigmatic potential of glass as a tool for mystifying the scopic and interrogating the appearance of reality. Through their eyes, we glimpse a shifting vision of the alchemy of glass ranging across themes of myth, futurity, excess, and transformation.