

# LOTHAR BÖTTCHER

*Glass Artist · Sculptor · Curator · Educator*

Born 1973, Pretoria, South Africa · Lives and works in Pretoria, South Africa  
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## PROFILE

Lothar Böttcher is a South African glass artist of international standing whose practice bridges master-level cold working with contemporary sculptural inquiry. His work is held in permanent collections across several continents — including the Corning Museum of Glass (USA), Glasmuseum Frauenau (Germany), Glasmuseum Lette (Germany), Glasmuseum Hadamar (Germany), Pretoria Art Museum (South Africa), the ABSA Art Collection (South Africa), and the International Biennale of Glass Collection (Bulgaria) — placing him among a small number of artists working in glass who command museum-level recognition globally.

Inducted into the Homo Faber Guide — the definitive international register of master artisans — Böttcher holds the German Glasveredlermeister qualification (Glasfachschule Zwiesel, 2019), the highest professional accreditation in glass cold working. He is the founding Director and Chair of the Moya African Glass Network, a Board Member of the Glass Art Society (USA), and a founding member of the Lathe Riders, the only international collective dedicated exclusively to cold-working technique. He also serves on the board of the Association of Arts, Pretoria.

Represented by galleries in South Africa, Germany, and the USA, Böttcher has exhibited in Paris, Venice, Sofia, Tokyo, Washington DC, Düsseldorf, and beyond. In 2024 he won 2nd Prize at the prestigious glasstec International Trade Fair (Düsseldorf) and represented South Africa at the Glass Cutting World Cup (Czech Republic). His work was featured in *New Glass Review* 45, published by the Corning Museum of Glass in 2025.

## ARTIST STATEMENT

My practice is rooted in the human condition of making. Craftsmanship — learning, refining, and expanding technical knowledge — forms its foundation. Glass, with its limitless possibilities, allows me to translate personal dilemmas, lived experiences, and universal questions into sculptural form.

I predominantly work glass in its cold state, carving, cutting, and polishing the material in a sculptural manner. The process is slow, physical and irreversible. There are no corrections — only decisions. The result reveals itself in the end, only after the final polish, when the work and viewer meet for the first time. That search for the unknown is not a limitation. It is where the meaning lives.

My work sits at the intersection of two long-running enquiries. One reaches back into prehistoric image-making and ancient artefacts — objects and images that carry meaning over millennia, their magic intact across the chasm of time. The other is an observation of the present: how mass media and digital technology fragment, distort and overwhelm our experience of the world. My works are universal human enquiries, transcending race, religion and politics. These are not separate bodies of work. They are the same question asked from different angles.

Light is information. My sculptures take that information and convert it — bending, concentrating and fracturing light, asking to be looked at slowly. Making is catharsis. The finished work is the surprise.

## BODIES OF WORK

Böttcher's practice is organised across two bodies of work — Anima and Apparatus — which together map the full span of his enquiry: from the oldest human impulse to make, to the most contemporary anxiety about how perception has been mediated and distorted. One practice. Two bodies. The same question from opposite ends of time.

### **Anima**

The ancient enquiry. Man as maker. These works draw on prehistoric image-making, votive figures, animal sculpture and ancient relics — objects made not to communicate to an audience, but to enact something

essential about what it means to be human. Böttcher does not illustrate these sources. He participates in the same continuum. Selected series and works: Precious Beasts, Skulls.

### **Apparatus**

The contemporary enquiry. The device, the lens, the screen, the signal. These works examine how perception is constructed, mediated and distorted in the present — by mass media, digital technology and the dominant visual apparatus of our time. Light is the medium. Optical glass is the material. The result is always a surprise. Selected series: TINATV — This is not a TV, Pocket Lens, Portals.

### **TINATV — This is not a TV**

An explicit critique of broadcast culture. Works in this series appropriate the visual language of television and signal transmission — screens, antennas, channels — and subvert them through cold-worked optical glass. The title echoes Magritte's provocation while drawing on the etymology of television itself: tele (far) + vision (to see). Selected work: TINATV Antenna (2023).

### **Pocket Lens**

A meditation on the smartphone as the dominant lens through which contemporary life is experienced and filtered. Pocket Lens #1 is held in the permanent collection of the Corning Museum of Glass, New York.

### **Portals**

The most recent series within Apparatus. Where TINATV names its subject directly, Portals operates through materiality of the work itself — carved apertures, thresholds and contained spaces that invite the viewer to interact and look through rather than at. Selected works: Cave (2026), Echo Chamber (2026).

## **MUSEUM & INSTITUTIONAL COLLECTIONS**

### **South Africa**

- Pretoria Art Museum, Pretoria
- Ellerman House, Bantry Bay, Cape Town
- ABSA Art Collection, Johannesburg

### **Germany**

- Glasmuseum Frauenau, Frauenau
- Glasmuseum Lette, Ernsting Stiftung, Lette
- Glasmuseum Hadamar, Hadamar

### **USA**

- Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, NY

### **Bulgaria**

- International Biennale of Glass Collection, Tryavna

## **LEADERSHIP & PROFESSIONAL ROLES**

- Homo Faber Guide — Inducted International Master Artisan
- Moya African Glass Network — Founder, Director & Chair
- Glass Art Society (USA) — Elected Board Member
- Association of Arts, Pretoria — Board Member
- Lathe Riders — Founding Member (international cold-working collective)

## **GALLERY REPRESENTATION**

- Ebony Curated, Franschoek, South Africa
- Ark Contemporary, Rosendal, South Africa
- The Edge Glass Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- Dawid M. Ras, Cape Town, South Africa

- Schürenberg Kunsthandel, Aachen, Germany
- Chesterfield Gallery, New York, USA

## **SOLO EXHIBITIONS**

### **2025**

Artefacts (Collaborative with Caitlin Greenberg), Pretoria Art Museum

### **2023**

Changing Channels, Association of Arts, Pretoria

### **2022**

Precious Beasts, Ebony Curated, Franschhoek

## **SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS**

### **2025**

Glass Art & Design Salon, Paris, France

International Biennale of Glass, Sofia, Bulgaria

Fluid Matters, Spazio Arte Contemporanea, Venice, Italy

Grit + Wheels, Glas Leeft, Leerdam, Netherlands

Fertile Ground, Gallery2, Johannesburg

### **2024**

Glass Cutting World Cup (Representing South Africa), Světlá nad Sázavou, Czech Republic

Glass Art Competition, glasstec International Trade Fair, Düsseldorf, Germany — 2nd Prize

At the Tip of the Wheel, The Glass Factory, Boda Glasbruk, Sweden

Under the Skin, KA32 Art Space, Berlin (curated by Claudia Virginia Vitari)

Cold Perspectives, Fantom Gallery, Berlin

2nd Hadamarer Glaspreis, Glasmuseum Hadamar, Germany

Killer Queen, The Viewing Room Art Gallery, Pretoria

### **2023**

International Biennale of Glass, National Museum, Sofia, Bulgaria

Grit & Wheels, Glasmuseum Frauenau, Germany

### **2022**

New Glass Now, Toyama Glass Art Museum, Japan

Fired Up! — Celebrating Southern African Glass Art, Pretoria Art Museum

GlassTec, International Glass Fair, Düsseldorf, Germany

### **2021**

New Glass Now, Smithsonian Renwick Gallery, Washington DC, USA

## **AWARDS & PUBLICATIONS**

### **2025**

Homo Faber Guide — International Master Artisan induction

New Glass Review 45, Corning Museum of Glass, USA

Catalogue: Glass Now — African Perspectives, Association of Arts, Pretoria

### **2024**

2nd Prize, Glass Art Competition, glasstec International Trade Fair, Düsseldorf

Elected Board Member, Glass Art Society, International

### **2022**

UN International Year of Glass — Regional Coordinator for Africa  
Catalogue: Fired Up! — Celebrating Southern African Glass Art  
7 Glass Wonders — Jury Member & Coordinator, IYOG 2022  
Commission: kykNET Silwerskermfees sculpture 'Carving Light' (with documentary)

**2019**

Works acquired by Corning Museum of Glass (Pocket Lens), Glasmuseum Frauenau (Skull-Lion), Glasmuseum Lette (Dot #1)

**2018**

New Glass Now, 40th Anniversary, Corning Museum of Glass — juried publication & exhibition  
Arts & Crafts Design Award — juried online publication

**2016**

Glass Art — 112 Contemporary International Artists, Schiffer Books (Barbara Purchia & E. Ashley Rooney)  
Pretoria Art Museum permanent collection — There's an Animal in Here...

**2011**

New Glass Review 32, Corning Museum of Glass

**2010**

Bonhams South African & Modern African Art Auction — VuvuAfrica

**2007**

ABSA L'Atelier Competition — Top 10 Finalist

**2004**

FNB Vita Craft Now, Bus Factory, Newtown — Bronze Award

**2002**

Internationaler Glaskunstpreis, Rheinbach, Germany — 3rd Place  
Published in Neues Glas / New Glass Magazine

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

**2019**

Glasveredlermeister, Fachrichtung Schliff, Teil I & II, Glasfachschule Zwiesel, Germany (Master Glass Cutter)

**2000**

Glasveredler, Fachrichtung Schliff Geselle, Staatliche Glasfachschule Hadamar, Germany (Glass Cutter Journeyman)

**1992–1997**

Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria — Sculpture, Glass, Drawing, Printmaking, Photography

## **SELECTED EDUCATION, RESIDENCIES & WORKSHOPS**

**2025**

Course Leader, Carving Light, International Summer Academy, Bild-Werk Frauenau, Germany  
Grit + Wheels, Lathe Riders Symposium, Glas Leeft, Leerdam, Netherlands

**2024**

Glass Cutting World Cup participant, Světlá nad Sázavou, Czech Republic  
Construction of historical cold-working shop with traditional Swedish lathes, The Glass Factory, Boda Glasbruk, Sweden  
Lathe Riders opening demo, Glass Art Society Conference, Berlin

**2023**

Course Leader, Carving Light, Bild-Werk Frauenau, Germany  
Grit & Wheels, International Lathe Riders Symposium, Bild-Werk Frauenau  
Cold Shop Assistant, The Glass Factory, Boda Glasbruk, Sweden

**2022**

Coordinator, Fired Up! Glass Symposium, Tshwane University of Technology

Pass (it) On — Lathe Riders collaborative project with The Glass Factory, for GAS 50th Anniversary, Tacoma, USA

**2003**

Pilchuck Glass School, Stanwood, WA, USA

**2000**

Staatliche Glasfachschule Hadamar — Glass Cutter Journeyman qualification

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