



BERTIL VALLIEN

STAR MAN

SIXTY YEARS OF EXPLORING GLASS

KostaBoda

Swedish glassmaking company Kosta Boda commemorates 60 years of artistic partnership with renowned glass sculptor Bertil Vallien through a global celebration and survey of the artist's seminal work

Kosta Boda will bring Vallien's work to audiences across the world through two surveys of his multifarious and illustrious artistic output, with an exhibition slated to open in Sweden in September, followed by STARMAN, an exhibition in New York City from October 17–November 11

This fall, **Kosta Boda**—a Swedish heritage brand that has been at the forefront of technical innovation and experimentation in glass production for nearly 300 years—will commemorate the 60th anniversary of its artistic partnership with the seminal glass sculptor **Bertil Vallien** (b. 1938, Sweden) through a series of public exhibitions, events, and activations. Collectively titled Bertil Vallien - Sixty Years of Exploring Glass Art, the global celebrations will traverse venues across New York in October, beginning with a live demo, workshop and artist talk at the **Corning Museum of Glass** in Upstate New York from **October 10-11**, followed by a conversation with former New Museum Deputy Director **Karen Wong** at the **Swedish Consulate** in New York City on **October 12**, and culminating with the opening of the first survey of the artist's work in the United States in pop-up exhibition held from **October 23–November 11**, with press previews and private appointments beginning **October 17**.

At 85, Vallien is one of the most celebrated glass artists in the world. For his six decade tenure with Kosta Boda, the sculptor has transcended material limitations, pioneered new glassworking techniques, and created exceedingly popular commercial glass collections. Since the nascence of the studio glass movement—a major period of revived interest in artistic glassmaking that began in the 1960s—Vallien has invented black glass and perfected the modern method of glass sand-casting—a process where molten glass is poured into a firm sand mold—earning him an international reputation as the “father of a lost technique.” Finding success as both a conceptual artist and commercial designer, Vallien moves fluidly between delicately handcrafted stemware and monolithic, surrealist glass sculptures, his works imbued with a raw visual language that knowingly nods towards the Art Brut tradition.

The cornerstone to this celebration is **STARMAN**, a multi-venue survey of Vallien's work that will be concurrently presented in Stockholm at NK the 11th to 18th of September and at a pop-up exhibition space in Soho in N.Y.C. The exhibition's title pays homage to David Bowie, one of the musicians who inspires Vallien's storytelling. Infused with a musical essence, Vallien's glass art practice utilizes a visual language akin to musical notes, resulting in compositions filled with dark fairy tales. These works are orchestrated by a dedicated artisan team at his studio in Kosta, Sweden. This curated showcase embodies the depth of Vallien's oeuvre and his pioneering ability to elevate glasswork beyond conventional expectations.

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“Vallien's glass art is a wellspring of innovation and diverse material expressions, ranging from shamanistic transparent vessels holding colorful treasures to minimalist resting heads and science fiction landscapes portraying hidden realms,” **notes exhibition co-curator Karen Wong**. “With this STARMAN exhibition, his imaginative storytelling continues to surprise and delight, and will undoubtedly shape the legacy of Kosta Boda for the years to come.”

The show title STARMAN describes the energy and light emanating from Vallien's oeuvre, and his status as a glasswork pioneer who has elevated the medium to new heights. It also is a nod to the same-titled song by David Bowie, one of several musicians who has inspired his practice. Vallien's works are imbued with a spiritual musicality, his visual language set to its own rhythm and his artworks devised as if playing from a set of notes. The exhibition takes the public on a roving thematic journey through 5 of Vallien's career-spanning motifs. His **Resting Heads** series is benign and beautiful in its restful unconsciousness, the works inspired by Karolina Olsson, the 'sleeping beauty' who awoke from a twenty year coma as a middle-aged woman. Vallien's predilection with heads continues with the **Two Faces** series, inspired by the Roman God of dualities; one face looking to the past while the other gazes upon the future. For **Ships**, the artist conjures the powerful image of Norse ships set aflame to bury their dead with his molten glass. Vallien's **Super Eggs** showcases a dozen glass bubbles of various sizes—including eggs and watermelons—that are childlike in their airy playfulness, yet fragile and transient as life reveals itself to be, made both animate and delicate through breath given through the art of glassblowing. Finally, the artist will unveil a new, never-before-seen **Black Glass** sculpture, marking a return to his signature technique and opacity, infinite in its depths of an oceanic, midnight blue.

“Bertil Vallien's singular work as an artist and designer has made an indelible mark on Kosta Boda's legacy, and has left a lasting impact on the world of contemporary art by contributing to the advancement of glass as a medium for artistic expression” notes **CEO Emon Maasho**. “With this exhibition, Kosta Boda marks a significant milestone of its Art Glass program and signals the future for emerging glass artists in both Sweden and beyond.”

Bertil Vallien's work is collected by the following institutions: State Heritage Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia); National Museum (Stockholm, Sweden); Victoria and Albert Museum (London, England); Art Institute of Chicago (IL); National Museum of Modern Art (Kyoto, Japan); Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, NY); Powerhouse Museum (Sydney, Australia); and Museum of Fine Arts (Boston, MA).

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EXHIBITION ARTWORKS





B. Vallien

SUPER EGGS

As kids, we grew up blowing soapy bubbles to pop. It is an entertaining pastime, but also a reminder of how fragile and transient life can be. One day in the studio, Vallien playfully suggested “no casting today, let’s blow, let’s show what human breath can do with glass.” In the last thirty years, these bubbles have taken on various scales, think beans, eggs and watermelons. This Spring he organized a quasi-competition amongst his team — to see who could blow the biggest bubble, a feat that is both exacting and spontaneous. The result is this exquisite installation of a dozen eggs, characterized by additional pigment and recycled glass emphasizing an organic and modulating surface.



B. Vallien.

Super Egg (7532963), 2023

BLOWN GLASS

430 (L) x 400 (H) x 340 (W) MM

16.9 (L) x 15.75 (H) x 13.4 (W) INCHES

3.9 KG / 8.6 LBS

\$10,000



B. Vallien.

Super Egg (7532964), 2023

BLOWN GLASS

420 (L) x 360 (H) x 330 (W) MM

16.5 (L) x 14 (H) x 13 (W) INCHES

3.5 KG / 7.7 LBS

\$10,000



B. Vallien.

Super Egg (7532965), 2023

BLOWN GLASS

420 (L) x 360 (H) x 330 (W) MM

16.5 (L) x 14 (H) x 13 (W) INCHES

3.7 KG / 8 LBS

\$10,000



B. Vallien.

Super Egg (7532966), 2023

BLOWN GLASS

430 (L) x 310 (H) x 330 (W) MM

16.9 (L) x 12.2 (H) x 13 (W) INCHES

3.4 KG / 7.5 LBS

\$10,000



B. Vallien.

Super Egg (7532967), 2023

BLOWN GLASS

430 (L) x 410 (H) x 320 (W) MM

16.9 (L) x 16 (H) x 12.6 (W) INCHES

4 KG / 8.8 LBS

\$10,000



B. Vallien.

Super Egg (7532968), 2023

BLOWN GLASS

440 (L) x 550 (H) x 390 (W) MM

17.3 (L) x 21.7 (H) x 15.4 (W) INCHES

5 KG / 11 LBS

\$10,000



B. Vallien.

Super Egg (7532969), 2023

BLOWN GLASS

440 (L) x 460 (H) x 380 (W) MM

17.3 (L) x 18 (H) x 15 (W) INCHES

5.3 KG / 11.7 LBS

\$10,000



B. Valliem.

Super Egg (7532970), 2023

BLOWN GLASS

470 (L) x 390 (H) x 340 (W) MM

18.5 (L) x 15.4 (H) x 13.4 (W) INCHES

4.6 KG / 10 LBS

\$10,000



B. Vallien.

Super Egg (7532971), 2023

BLOWN GLASS

530 (L) x 500 (H) x 580 (W) MM

20.9 (L) x 19.7 (H) x 22.8 (W) INCHES

5.4 KG / 11.9 LBS

\$10,000



B. Vallien.

Super Egg (7532972), 2023

BLOWN GLASS

420 (L) x 410 (H) x 370 (W) MM

16.5 (L) x 16 (H) x 14.6 (W) INCHES

4.4 KG / 9.7 LBS

\$10,000



B. Vallien.

Super Egg (7532973), 2023

BLOWN GLASS

440 (L) x 390 (H) x 350 (W) MM

17.3 (L) x 15.4 (H) x 13.8 (W) INCHES

6 KG / 13.2 LBS

\$10,000



B. Vallien.

Super Egg (7532974), 2023

BLOWN GLASS

460 (L) x 430 (H) x 350 (W) MM

18 (L) x 17 (H) x 13.8 (W) INCHES

4.4 KG / 9.7 LBS

\$10,000



B. Vallien.

Super Egg (7532975), 2023

BLOWN GLASS

470 (L) x 450 (H) x 360 (W) MM

18.5 (L) x 17.7 (H) x 14 (W) INCHES

4.7 KG / 10.4 LBS

\$10,000



B. Valliem.

Super Egg (7532976), 2023

BLOWN GLASS

470 (L) x 460 (H) x 400 (W) MM

18.5 (L) x 18 (H) x 15.75 (W) INCHES

4.6 KG / 10 LBS

\$10,000



B. Vallien.

Super Egg (7532977), 2023

BLOWN GLASS

510 (L) x 430 (H) x 370 (W) MM

20 (L) x 17 (H) x 14.6 (W) INCHES

4.7 KG / 10.4 LBS

\$10,000



B. Vallien.

HEADS

The sleeping muse is a beloved trope — painters, sculptors throughout history have tackled the form, typically represented as female, benign, and unconscious. For Vallien, his obsession is a Swedish girl Karolina Olsson, dubbed 'sleeping beauty.' She was in a coma from 1876 to 1908 and awoke as a middle-aged woman. This mental space of hibernation is something BV has returned to time and time again in his long running series of glass heads. Some are upright, awakened from a long slumber, while others rest on their sides. The works displayed are fragile in nature, and yet their size and muted expressions suggest a gravitas of deep sleep. The heads exist in a somnambulant state, as dreams give meaning to their form. The outer layer of glass acts as a cocoon, protecting the face from outside elements.



B. Vallien.

Resting Head I, 2020

SAND CAST GLASS WITH PAINTED INCLUSIONS (MIXED MEDIA)

390 (L) x 225 (H) x 290 (W) MM

15.4 (L) x 8.9 (H) x 11.4 (W) INCHES

40 KG / 18.2 LBS

\$20,000



B. Vallien.

Resting Head II, 2023

SAND CAST GLASS WITH SAND CORE INCLUSIONS (MIXED MEDIA)

390 (L) x 225 (H) x 290 (W) MM

15.4 (L) x 8.9 (H) x 11.4 (W) INCHES

40 KG / 18.2 LBS

\$20,000



B. Vallien.

Resting Head III, 2023

SAND CAST GLASS WITH PAINTED INCLUSIONS (MIXED MEDIA)

390 (L) x 225 (H) x 290 (W) MM

15.4 (L) x 8.9 (H) x 11.4 (W) INCHES

40 KG / 18.2 LBS

\$20,000



B. Vallien.

Abstract Head XL I, 2021

CAST GLASS

150 (L) x 230 (H) x 221 (W) MM

5.9 (L) x 9 (H) x 8.7 (W) INCHES

14.4 KG / 31.75 LBS

\$10,000



B. Vallien.

Abstract Head XL II, 2021

CAST GLASS

140 (L) x 240 (H) x 200 (W) MM

5.5 (L) x 9.5 (H) x 7.9 (W) INCHES

14 KG / 30.9 LBS

\$10,000



B. Vallien

TWO FACES

Vallien's obsession with heads can be traced back to his student days when he was introduced to the mythological deity Janus — the Roman god of beginnings and endings, transitional time, and duality. Janus is often depicted with two faces, one sees the past while the other looks into the future.

In a new series of freshly casted works, the pair of double faced totems present opaqueness versus transparency. One side is encrusted with objects, some glass, some metal, a material charade giving the appearance of stone. The other plane is a glassy visage melting away to reveal the underside of crevices, an x-ray of sorts. The "neck" is defined by a corset of leather and red string, a material deviation representing the notion of being bound and unbound.



B. Vallien.

Janus Grande I, 2020

SAND CAST GLASS WITH PAINTED INCLUSIONS (MIXED MEDIA),
PAINTED SYNTHETIC MATERIAL COMPOSITES, SIKABLOCK

395 (L) x 290 (H) x 160 (W) MM

15.5 (L) x 11.4 (H) x 6.3 (W) INCHES

24.5 KG / 54 LBS

\$35,000



B. Vallien.

Janus Grande II, 2023

SAND CAST GLASS WITH PAINTED INCLUSIONS (MIXED MEDIA),
PAINTED SYNTHETIC MATERIAL COMPOSITES, SIKABLOCK

405 (L) x 295 (H) x 170 (W) MM
16 (L) x 11.6 (H) x 6.7 (W) INCHES

25 KG / 55 LBS

\$35,000



B. Vallien.

Hidden Code 1, 2023

SAND CAST GLASS, MIXED MEDIA, FOUND OBJECTS, ROTATING IRON PLATE

240 (L) x 610 (H) x 125 (W) MM

9.4 (L) x 24 (H) x 5 (W) INCHES

13.2 KG / 29 LBS

\$24,000



B. Vallien.

Hidden Code II, 2023

SAND CAST GLASS, MIXED MEDIA, FOUND OBJECTS, ROTATING IRON PLATE

200 (L) x 645 (H) x 130 (W) MM

7.9 (L) x 25.4 (H) x 5 (W) INCHES

12 KG / 26.5 LBS

\$24,000



B. Vallien

LANDSCAPES AND BLACK GLASS

Famous for incorporating the color blue in his sleep muses, Vallien stumbled upon black glass when an assistant misread his instructions of placing 2 grams of cobalt with 2000 grams. The resulting molten liquid was dark, opaque, dense — the opposite of what we expect when we think of the material qualities of glass.

In the last decades, Vallien has created a number of stunning series based on a flaw. It has allowed him to tackle the mysteries underneath the surface, most profoundly in his apocalyptic landscapes.



B. Vallien.

Ashes and Diamond, 2023

SAND CAST GLASS, FOUND OBJECTS, GOLDEN PLATE

180 (L) x 100 (H) x 135 (W) MM

7 (L) x 3.9 (H) x 5.3 (W) INCHES

3 KG / 6.6 LBS

\$15,000



B. Vallien.

Below Surface, 2023

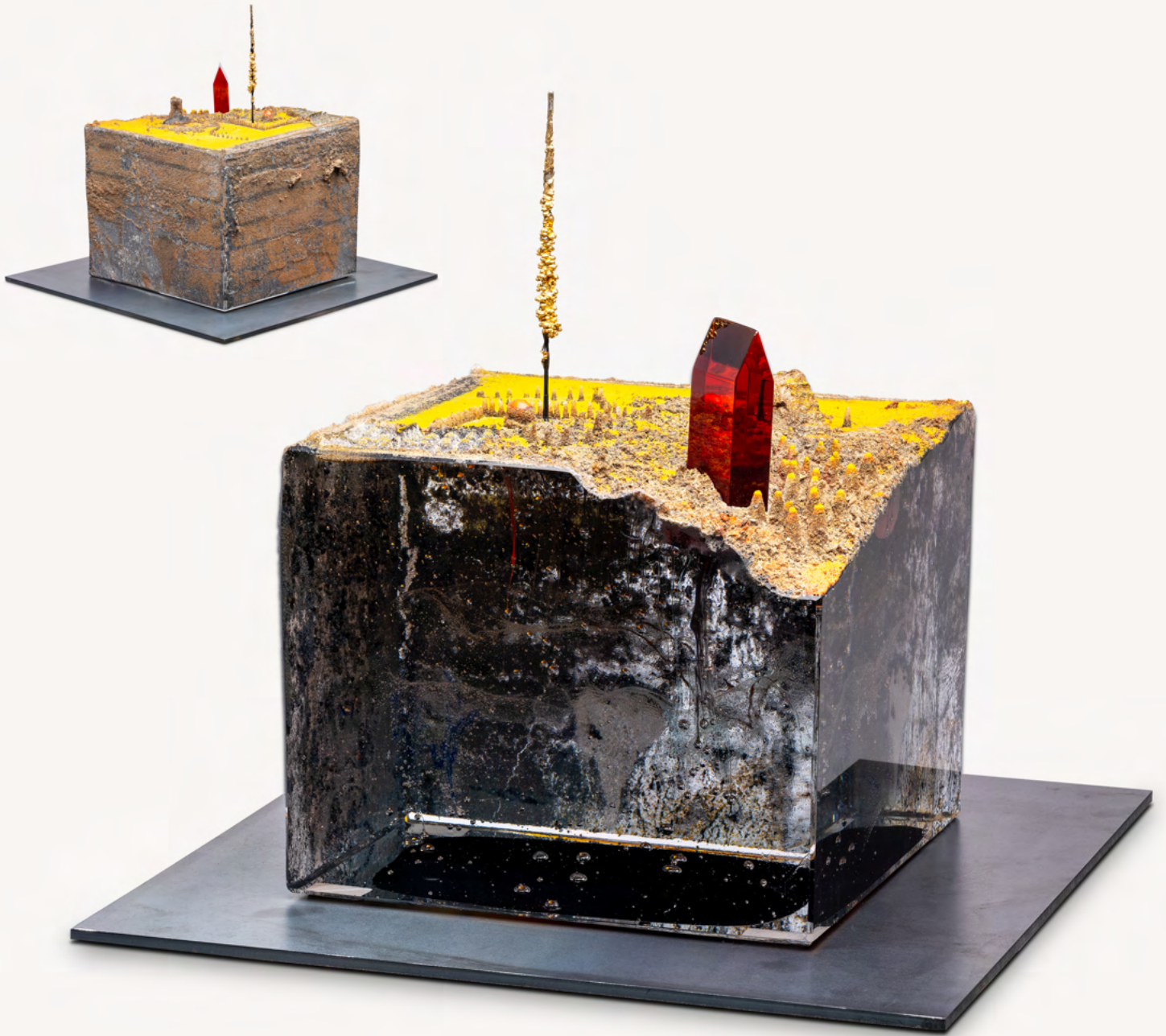
SAND CAST GLASS, SAND CLORE INCLUSIONS, FOUND OBJECTS

240 (L) x 295 (H) x 240 (W) MM

9.5 (L) x 11.6 (H) x 9.5 (W) INCHES

26 KG / 57.3 LBS

\$24,000



B. Vallien.

Signal, 2020

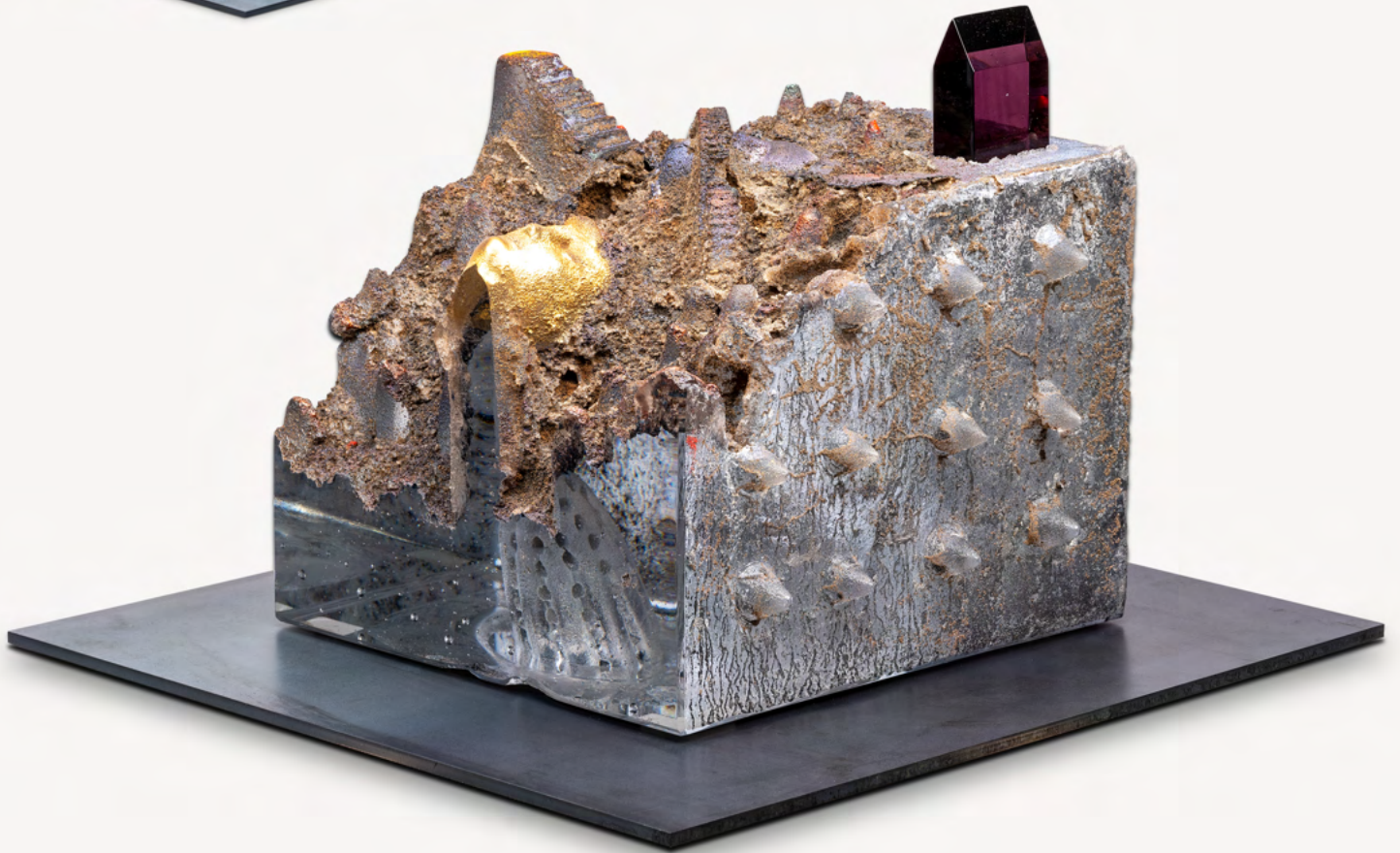
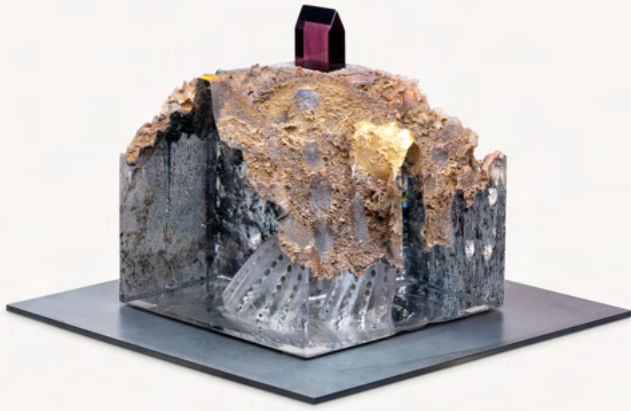
SAND CAST GLASS, MIXED MEDIA, ROTATING PLATE

225 (L) x 235 (H) x 230 (W) MM

8.9 (L) x 9.25 (H) x 9 (W) INCHES

25 KG / 55 LBS

\$24,000



B. Vallien.

The Source, 2020

SAND CAST GLASS, SAND CORE INCLUSIONS, MIXED MEDIA

225 (L) x 235 (H) x 240 (W) MM

8.9 (L) x 9.25 (H) x 9.5 (W) INCHES

23 KG / 50.7 LBS

\$24,000



B. Vallien.

Fragile Crust, 2020

SAND CAST GLASS, MIXED MEDIA

225 (L) x 270(H) x 225 (W) MM

8.9 (L) x 10.6 (H) x 8.9 (W) INCHES

26.6 KG / 58.6 LBS

\$24,000



B. Vallien.

Enactment A, 2023

SAND CAST GLASS, MIXED MEDIA, IRON STAND

610 (L) x 300 (H) x 820 (W) MM

24 (L) x 11.8 (H) x 32.3 (W) INCHES

41.5 KG / 91.5 LBS

\$70,000

Enactment B, 2023

SAND CAST GLASS, MIXED MEDIA, IRON STAND

630 (L) x 290 (H) x 820 (W) MM

24.8 (L) x 11.4 (H) x 32.3 (W) INCHES

42 KG / 92.5 LBS

\$70,000



B. Vallien.

SHIPS

It's not lost upon the artist the significance of ships in his Viking heritage. Throughout history, these armadas set sail for the purposes of war or trade. Norse literature depicts important men and women were given ship burials in which the deceased with prized possessions were set sail into the water and set ablaze by flaming arrows.

This image, a boat on fire, conjures up the captain and his crew pouring molten glass heated into the sand molds of his tapered vessels filled with emblems of life's mysteries. A decades-long creative journey, Vallien has played with scale, color, opacity — each boat an act in a long- running opera full of drama and pathos.



B. Vallien.

Builder, 2014

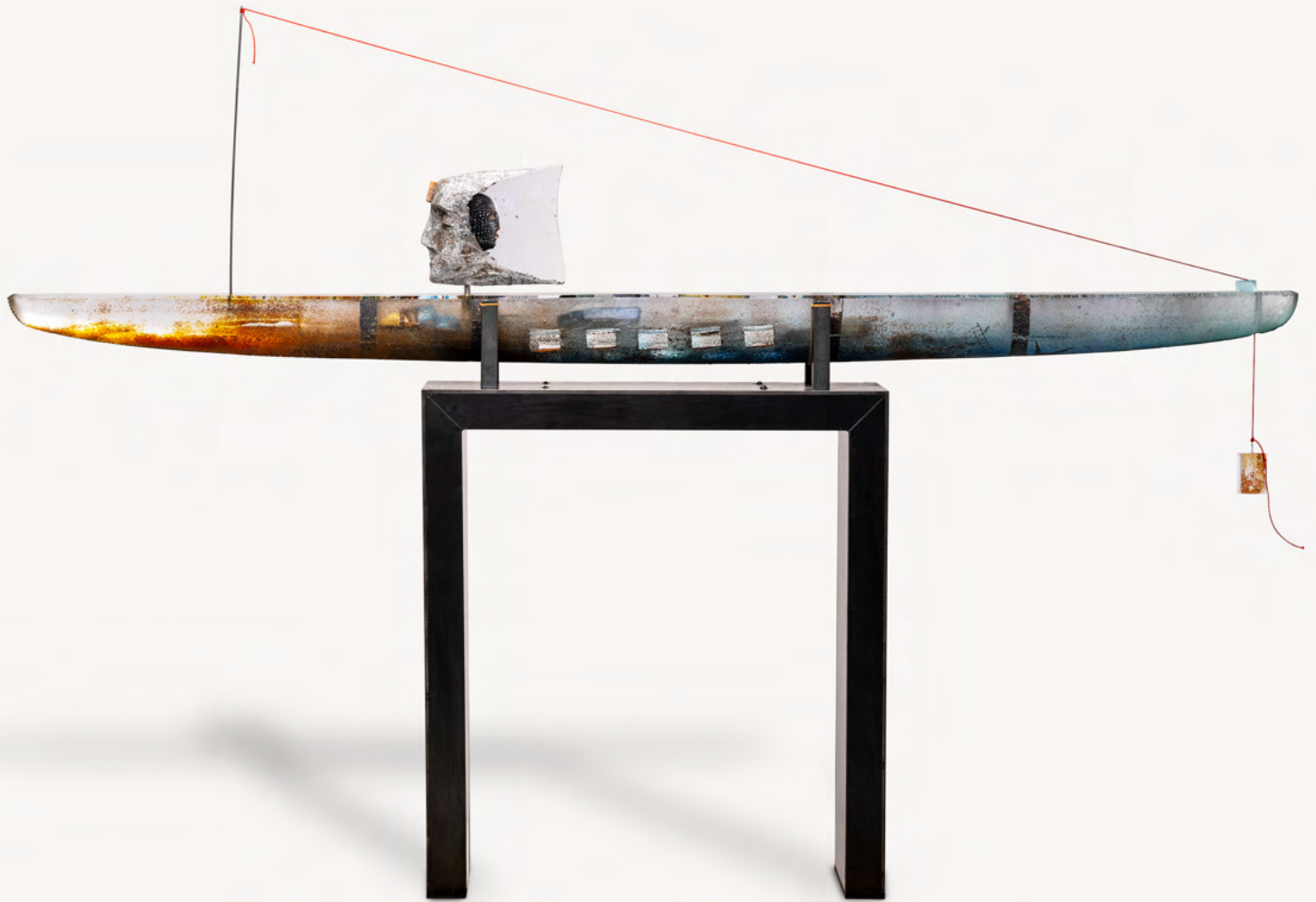
SAND CAST GLASS, SAND CORE AND PAINTED INCLUSIONS, MIXED MEDIA

1930 (L) x 95 (H) x 220 (W) MM

76 (L) x 3.75 (H) x 8.7 (W) INCHES

80 KG /176 LBS

\$80,000



B. Vallien.

Equilibrium, 2023

SAND CAST GLASS WITH PAINTED INCLUSIONS, MIXED MEDIA, IRON STAND

1970 (L) x 305 (H) x 135 (W) MM

77.5 (L) x 12 (H) x 5.3 (W) INCHES

70 KG /154 LBS

\$80,000



BERTIL VALLIEN

STAR MAN

SIXTY YEARS OF EXPLORING GLASS

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