

U P E N D I N G

E X P E C T A T I O N S

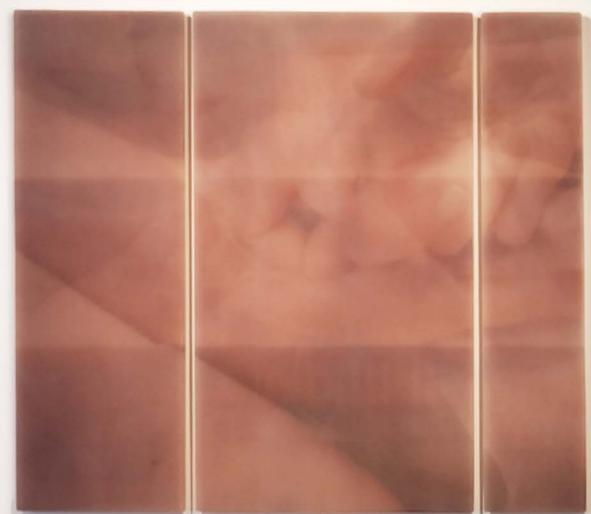
C O N T E M P O R A R Y

G L A S S

Canberra Glassworks touring exhibition 2022 - 2024



canberra glassworks



**Gabriella Bisetto**

**Annie Cattrell**

**Cobi Cockburn**

**Nadège Desgenétez**

**Mel Douglas**

**Rose-Mary Faulkner**

**Nicholas Folland**

**Kirstie Rea**

**Harriet Schwarzrock**

**Brendan Van Hek**

As the title *Upending Expectations:*

*Contemporary Glass* implies, the focus of this exhibition is on the work of artists whose experimental, innovative and at times cross-disciplinary practice, utilizes glass and its properties of light, transparency and reflection, through a diverse range of approaches.

The selection of artists has come from this strong rationale and includes nine Australian artists; Gabriella Bisetto, Cobi Cockburn, Nadège Desgenétez, Mel Douglas, Rose-Mary Faulkner, Nicholas Folland, Kirstie Rea, Harriet Schwarzrock and Brendan Van Hek along with international artist Annie Cattrell (UK).

As a chorus of individual voices, the artists in this exhibition collectively reveal the full potential of glass as a powerful and expressive medium for contemporary art that constantly serves to 'upend our expectations'.

## CURATORS NOTES

The focus of this exhibition is on the work of artists whose experimental, innovative and at times cross-disciplinary practice, utilizes glass and its properties of light, transparency and reflection through a diverse range of approaches.

As a chorus of individual voices, the ten artists in this exhibition collectively reveal the full potential of glass as a powerful and expressive medium for contemporary art that constantly serves to 'upend our expectations'.

Engaging with concepts of identity, place, transformation and the intersection of both personal and public histories, their works resonate with social and politically charged narratives.

Some explore the fragility, strength, resilience and beauty of the natural world. For others, the topography of the human body, and the physical process of using breath to produce glass forms gives meaning to both the importance of creative endeavour and the transitory nature of human existence. While other artists extend the possibilities of glass as a medium for sublime works that encourage intense visual engagement and contemplation with a rewarding meditative response for the viewer.

The inventive works in *Upending Expectations: Contemporary Glass*, individually and collectively challenge the boundaries of glass as a medium for art. Conceptually powerful and technically ambitious, they exert the capacity and relevance of glass to convey and express diversity and meaning in today's challenging world.

FRANCES LINDSAY AM

Former Deputy Director,  
National Gallery of Victoria





## UPENDING EXPECTATIONS CONTEMPORARY GLASS

An essay by FRANCES LINDSAY AM

Curator

Upending Expectations: Contemporary Glass features the work of ten Australian-based artists and the work of one artist from the UK, Annie Cattrell, who was the Stephen Proctor Visiting Fellow at the ANU Art Glass Workshop in 2017.

Annie Cattrell is a UK multi-disciplinary artist who works with a collaborative approach. Her work includes a variety of techniques and materials including traditional methods with glass, bronze and wood, but also innovative technologies such as laser scanning.

Kirstie Rea has a strong connection to the bush around Canberra where she was born, raised and lives. The Namadgi National Park especially has been a constant source for her investigation into how places evolve, interconnect and impact on memory and understanding. The overlaying of histories in the landscape plays a central role in enabling her to filter and ferment ideas.

The Adelaide-based artist, Nicholas Folland, employs as his métier, recycled household objects, in particular crystal and cut-glass objects - chandeliers, vases and bowls, that decades ago would have been the perfect gift for weddings, anniversaries and even sporting trophies. These once treasured items that in the past conveyed a certain status in suburban households, today have been largely discarded to second-hand stores. Reclaimed by Nicolas Folland these domestic items are re-purposed in his artworks and installations, and in their transformational state, convey a range of intriguing liminal narratives about history, identity, displacement, and transformation, that upend the normal sense of balance.

Gabriella Bisetto, an Adelaide-based artist, undertakes the process of manipulating molten glass with its malleable properties, then uses her breath to blow abstract glass forms that are related to the visceral shapes of bodily organs. In using her breath to create the blown form, she essentially makes 'visible' the 'invisible', while the inherent fragility of the glass, serves to reinforce the inevitability of human frailty and mortality.

Harriet Schwarzrock, who is based in Queanbeyan, N.S.W, has also been drawn to the fluid nature of blown glass, utilizing it to encapsulate heart forms that are animated with neon. The core of her intent is to provide meditation on the concept of 'interconnectivity', with each of the three works in *Upending Expectations: Contemporary Glass*, consisting of two heart shapes that are fixed together to make a whole, supporting unison, but collectively they are also linked by an organic loop of neon to form a group network.

Nadège Desgenétez who was born in France, but now lives and works in Canberra, also investigates ideas of connection, place, relationships and the importance of the hand-made in a time of mass-production. Her approach is underpinned by her respect for the makers who, over centuries, have practised the art of glass-blowing. She understands and appreciates the intense physical and technical engagement incurred when transforming molten glass into objects of beauty and inspiration.

Rose-Mary Faulkner's evocative, subtle works such as *Profile 2020*, present human forms floating in a misty realm of soft creamy tones. They utilize kiln formed glass with decal photographic images of sections of the artist's own body that have been abstracted through digital manipulation, overlapping and layered, so that the forms become both elusive and alluring.

The power and poetry of contemplative art is manifested in the works of Cobi Cockburn, who focuses on creating glass panel works with a underlying grid pattern of vertical and horizontal bands and soft muted colour. Her kiln-formed glass panels were formed by the fusing of long, hand-worked canes of glass before being cold-worked. In their intricate complexity and delicate transition of colour and transparency, they encourage and reward prolonged contemplative viewing with the discoveries that come from a heightened sense of perception.

Canberra based Mel Douglas also employs a Minimalist aesthetic, and while her practice spans a range of disciplines, from hot glass, kiln forming and coldworking, the line is always an integral element. In producing the vessels Douglas starts with drawing, capturing the essence of the form with line, as a way to capture space while creating a two dimensional/three dimensional interface.

Brendan Van Hek, who is based in Sydney, uses glass neon as one element in an ensemble of objects, that includes furniture and glass forms, as in *Skin, Temples and Motivations 2021*, where the grouping serves to amplify the visual experience that is enhanced by repeating patterns of shapes, the diagonals inherent in the glass forms and neon.





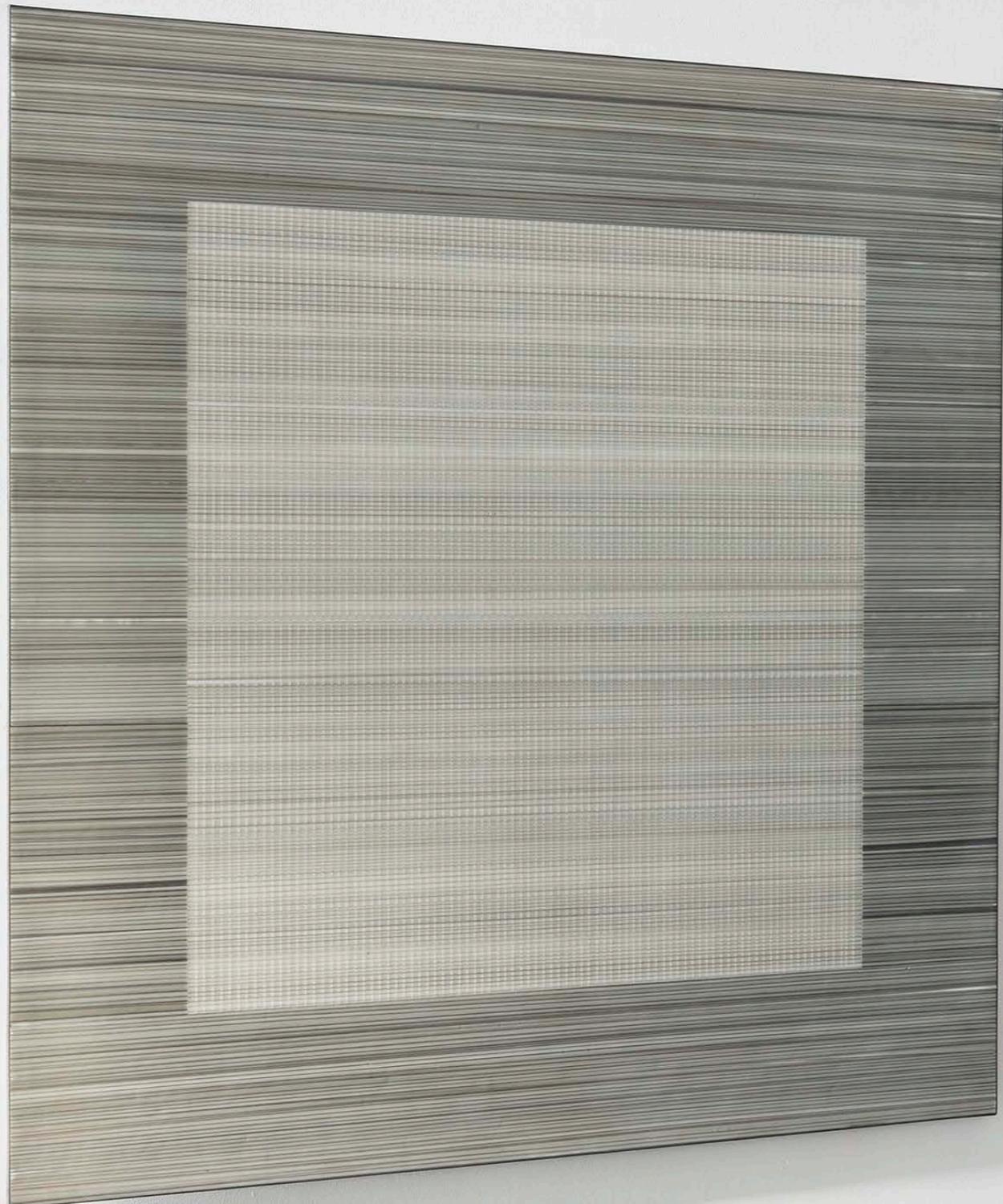
**Brendan VAN HEK**

*Skin, Temples and Motivations*

2021

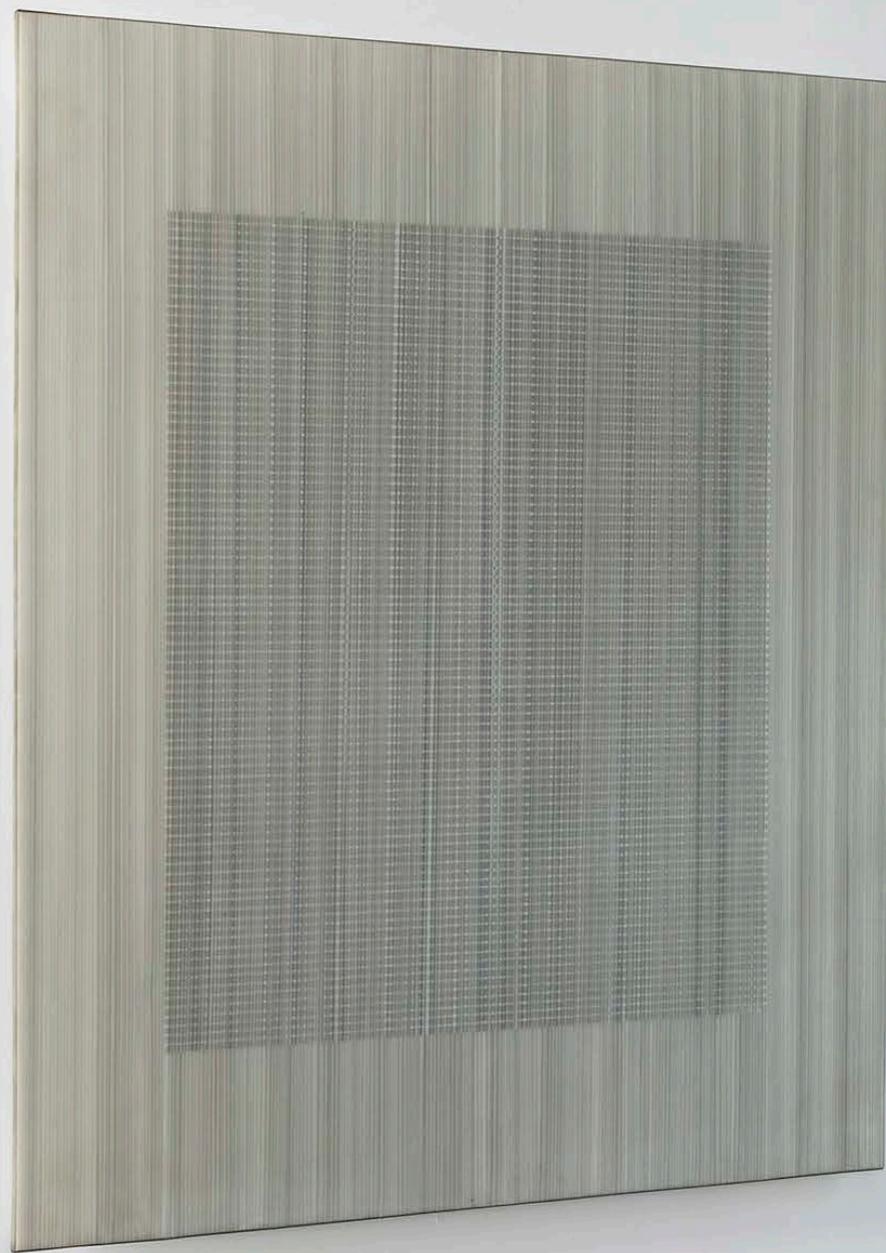
glass, steel armature, OSB board, neon





Cobi COCKBURN  
Murmuration - Charcoal  
2019  
hot formed, kiln fused and  
coldworked glass

Cobi COCKBURN  
Murmuration - Fawn  
2019  
hot formed, kiln fused and  
coldworked glass

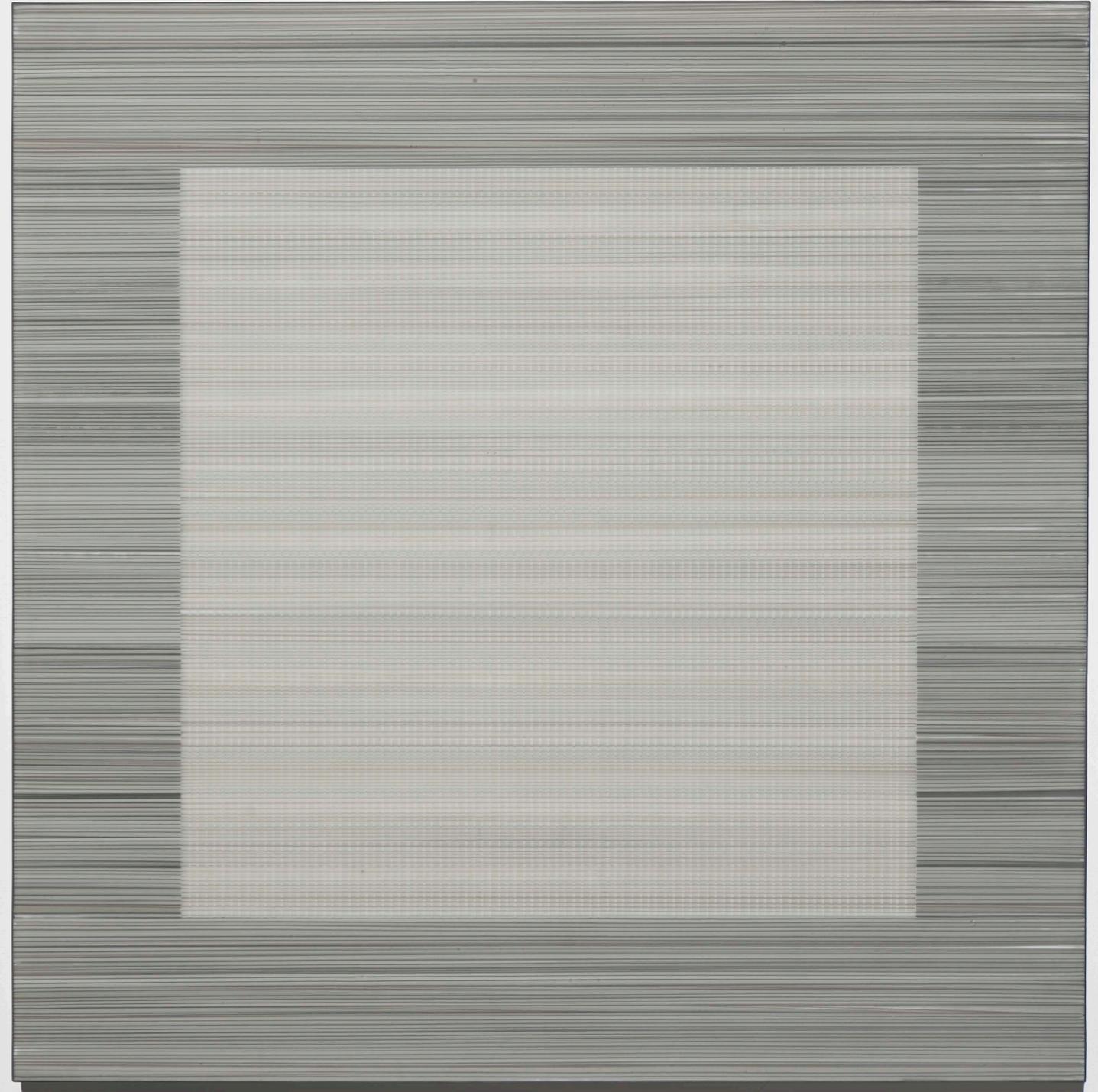


**Cobi COCKBURN**

*Murmurations - charcoal*

2022

hot-formed, kiln-fused and  
cold-worked glass

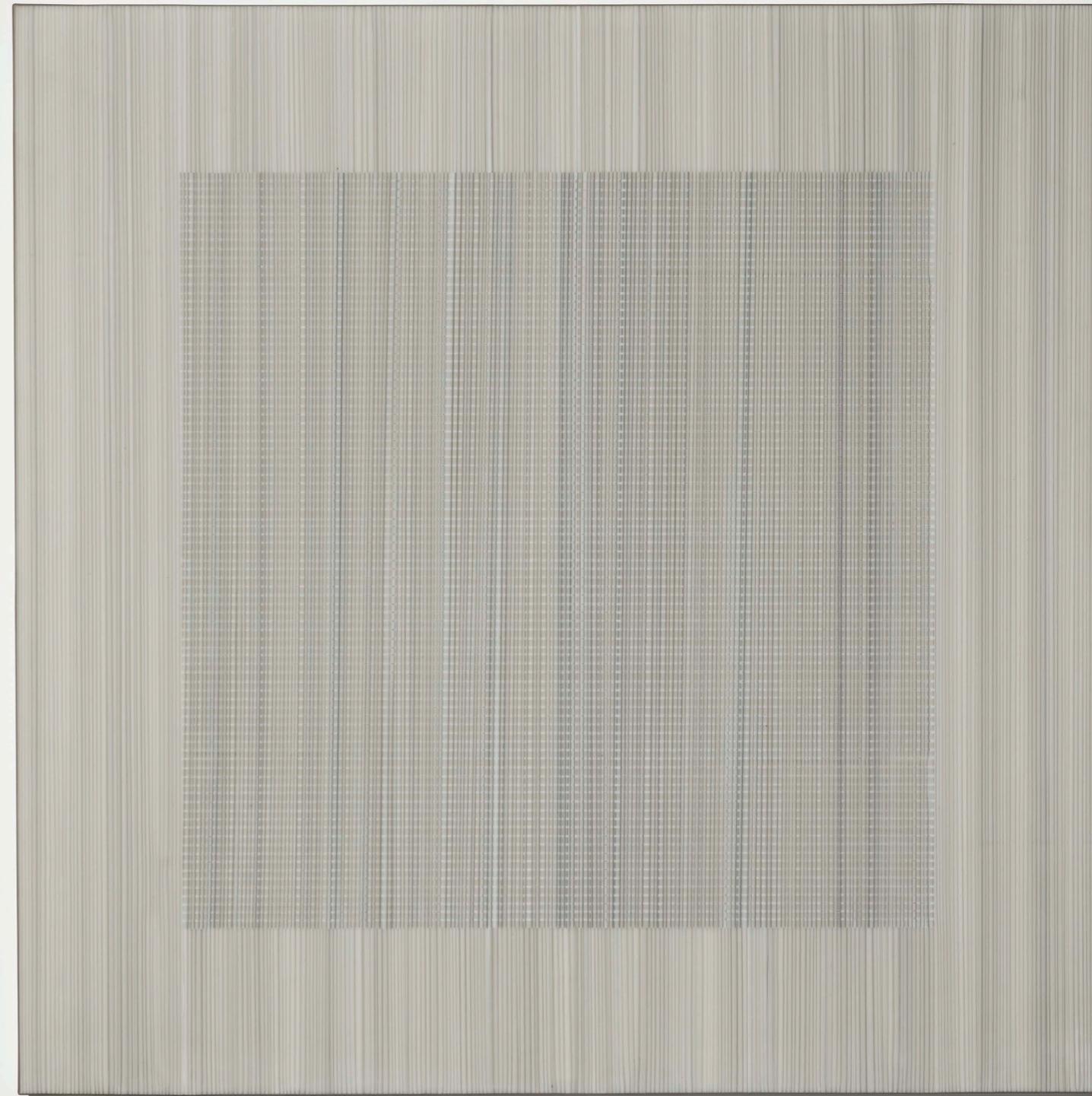


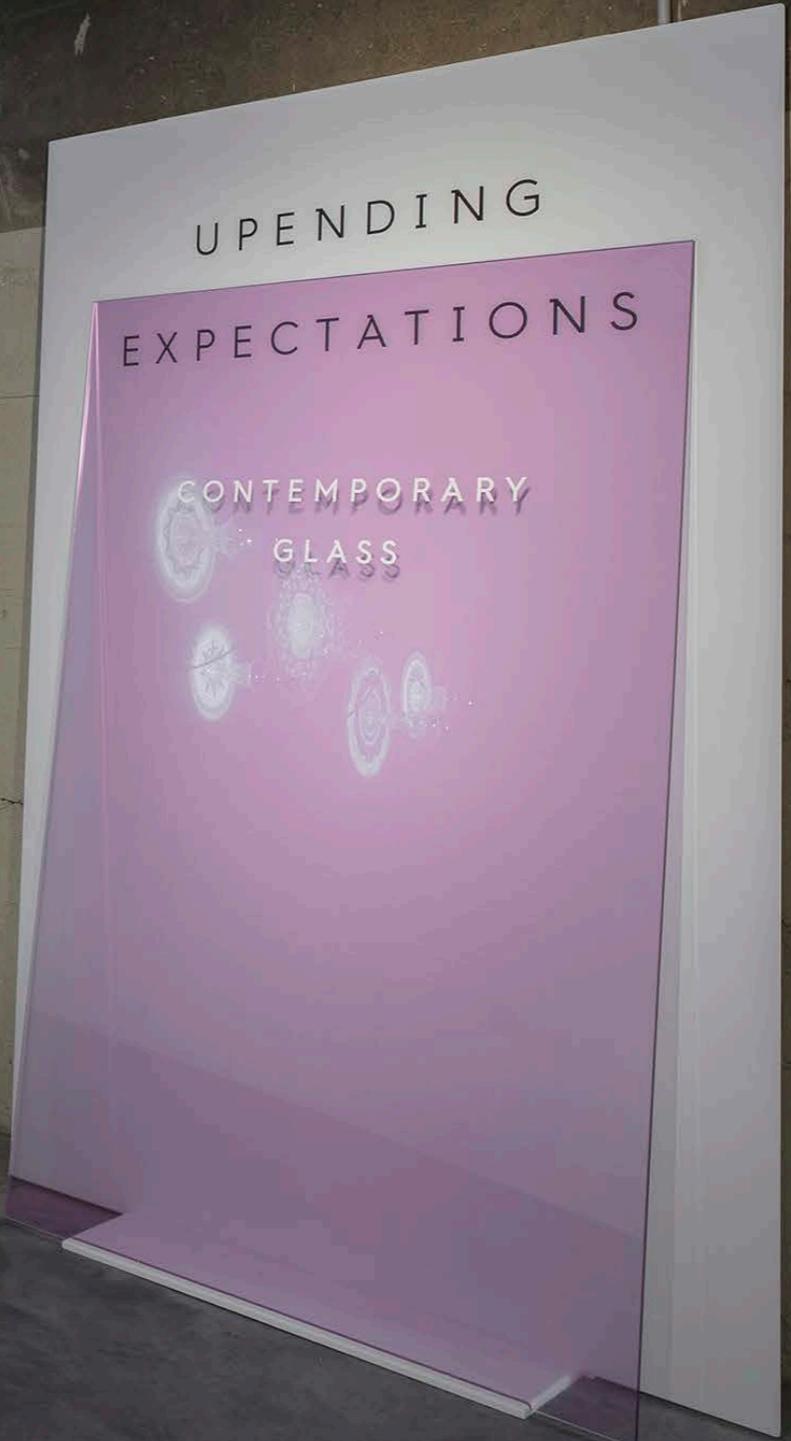
**Cobi COCKBURN**

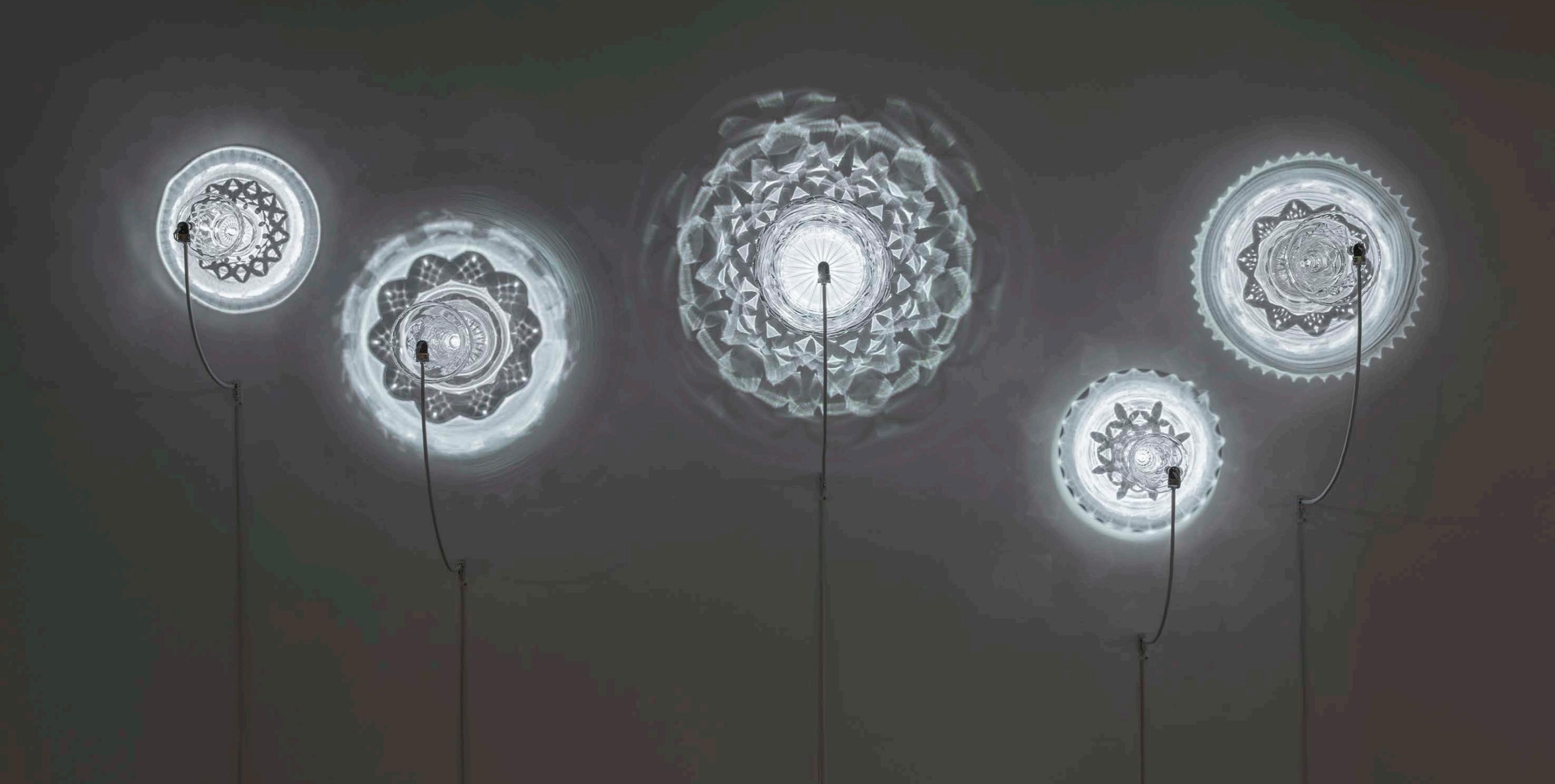
*Murmurations - fawn*

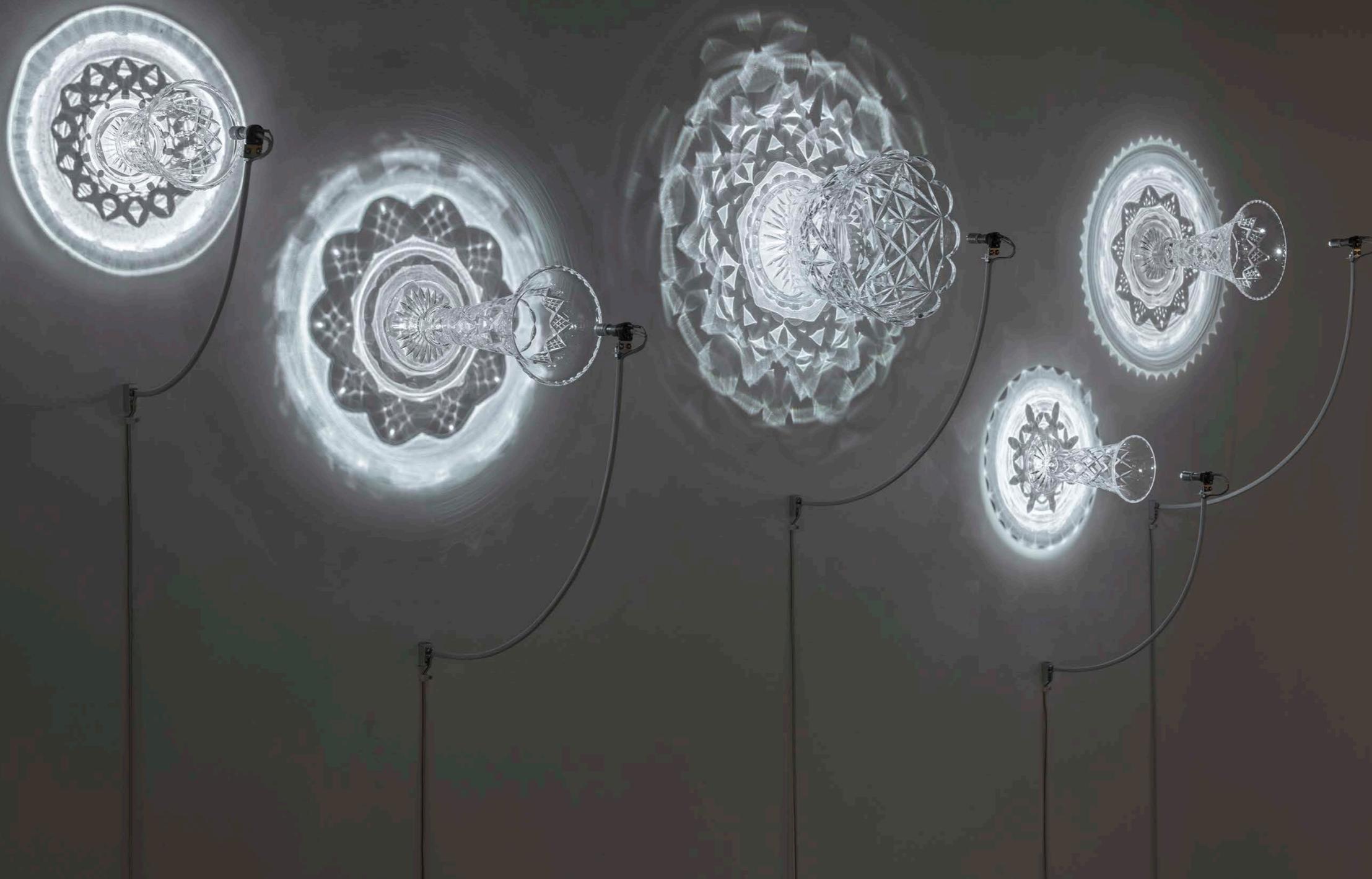
2022

hot-formed, kiln-fused and  
cold-worked glass









**Nicholas FOLLAND**

*Untitled (29-33)*

2021

found crystal glassware, 12V lighting





**Rose-Mary FAULKNER**

*Profile*

2021

kiln-formed glass, digital printed decals

UPENDING EXPECTATIONS  
CONTEMPORARY GLASS







**Gabriella BISETTO**

*Cell Structure 1#*

2021

blown glass, mirror, steel





**Gabriella BISETTO**

*Cell Structure 2#*

2021

blown glass, hot-sculpted and  
chemically bonded glass, mirror, steel





Informational card on the wall.

Informational cards on the wall.



**Annie CATTRELL**

*Capacity*

2000

flame-worked borosilicate glass







**Harriet SCHWARZROCK**

*balanced between: offset*  
2021

blown glass, neon element,  
electronics, energy



**Harriet SCHWARZROCK**

*balanced between: poise*

2021

blown glass, copper



**Harriet SCHWARZROCK**

*balanced between: indivisible*  
2021

blown glass, neon element,  
electronics, energy





**Kirstie REA**

*Complacent complicity*

2021

folded glass, rubber cement, plinth





**CHARLES  
NOTES**

Charles is a young man who is very interested in art and design. He has a passion for creating unique and meaningful pieces that reflect his own experiences and emotions. His work is often inspired by nature and the human condition, and he strives to create pieces that are both visually striking and emotionally resonant.

Charles is currently studying for a degree in Fine Art at a local university, and he has already exhibited his work in several galleries and art fairs. He is a member of the local art community and is always looking for new ways to connect with other artists and art lovers.

Charles is a talented and dedicated artist who is always pushing himself to create new and exciting pieces. He is a true professional who takes his work seriously and is committed to his craft. We are excited to have his work on display in our gallery.

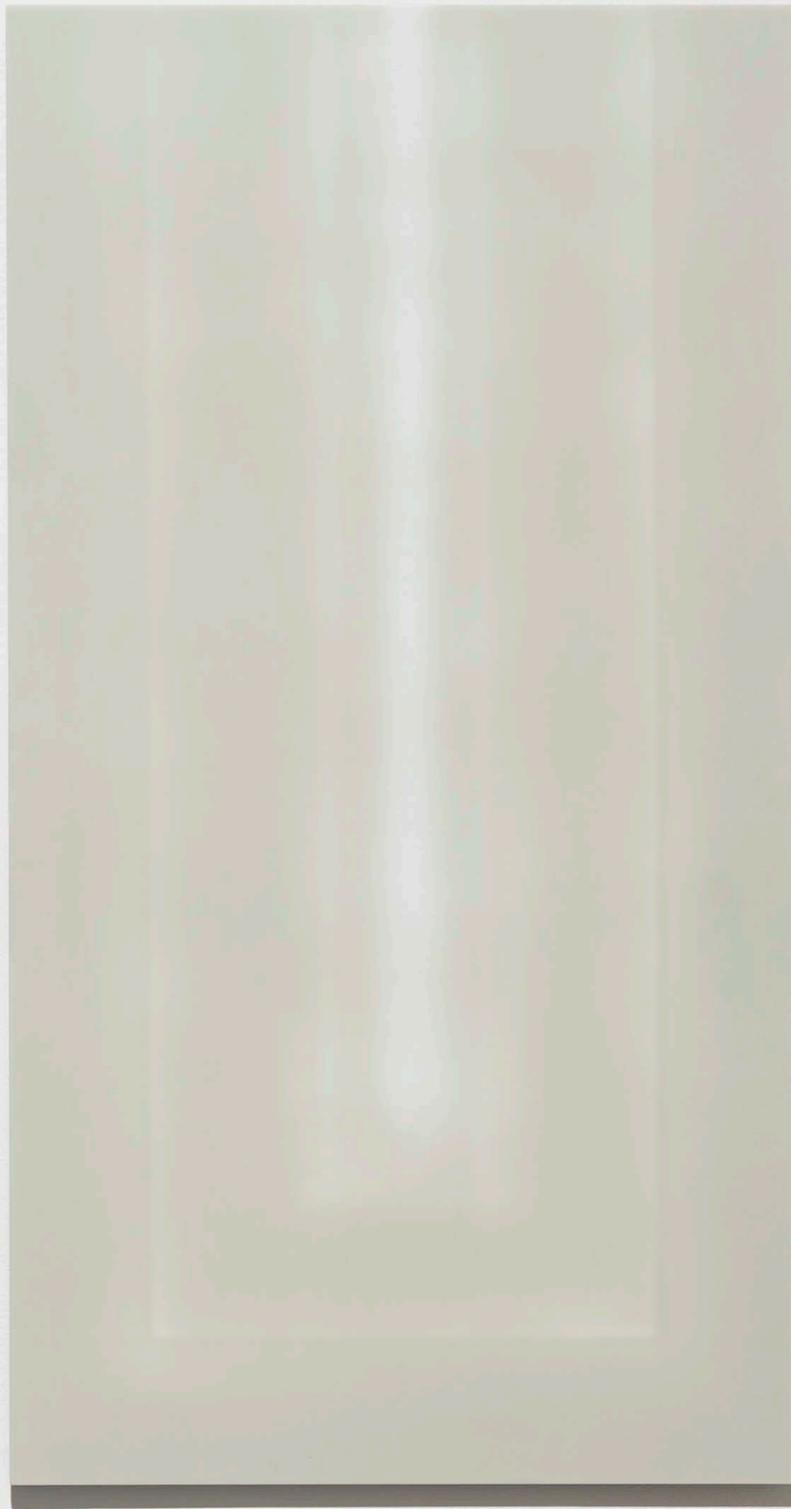
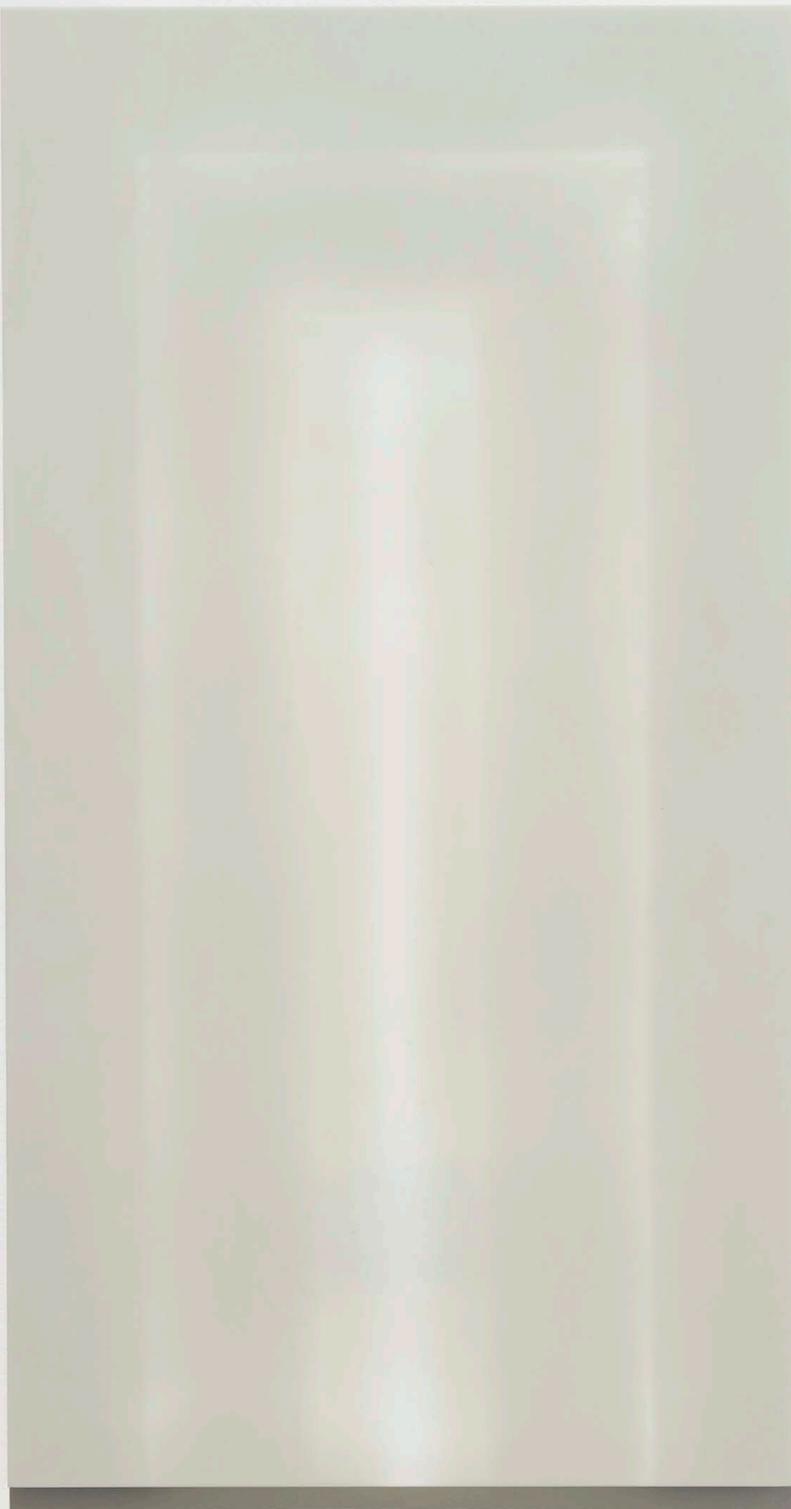
**BLANKET  
KNOWLEDGE**

Blanket is a young woman who is very interested in art and design. She has a passion for creating unique and meaningful pieces that reflect her own experiences and emotions. Her work is often inspired by nature and the human condition, and she strives to create pieces that are both visually striking and emotionally resonant.

Blanket is currently studying for a degree in Fine Art at a local university, and she has already exhibited her work in several galleries and art fairs. She is a member of the local art community and is always looking for new ways to connect with other artists and art lovers.

Blanket is a talented and dedicated artist who is always pushing herself to create new and exciting pieces. She is a true professional who takes her work seriously and is committed to her craft. We are excited to have her work on display in our gallery.





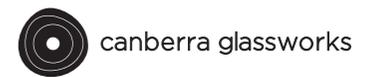
**Mei DOUGLAS**

*Lucency II*

2022

kiln-formed and cold-worked glass

UPENDING EXPECTATIONS  
CONTEMPORARY GLASS





**Nadège DESGENÉTEZ**

*Elemental Bodies #1*

2022

blown, hot-sculpted, mirrored and  
cold-worked glass, fabricated steel



**Nadège DESGENÉTEZ**

*Elemental Bodies #2*

2022

blown, hot-sculpted, mirrored  
and cold-worked glass,  
folded aluminium, stone





## GLASSWORKS ACKNOWLEDGES

Canberra Glassworks is a dynamic, professional glassmaking facility, dedicated to artists working in contemporary glass art, craft and design.

This exhibition has been supported by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, Contemporary Touring Initiative (CTI), and the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy (VACS), and the ACT Government through artsACT. Canberra Glassworks acknowledges the Gordon Darling Foundation who have provided support for the accompanying publication *Upending Expectations: Contemporary Glass*.

We acknowledge the Ngunnawal and Ngambri Peoples, the traditional custodians of the land on which Canberra Glassworks is situated. We pay our respects to all First Nations people and recognise their continuing connection to culture, land, sky and water.

Sponsored by



Photography by Brenton McGeachie and Canberra Glassworks, 2022.



canberra glassworks

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**opening hours**

Wed to Sun

10am to 4pm

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