

Project report.
Bachelor project 2024

Welcome to *Luckyland*

Lartigue Nathan (FR)

Foreword

Welcome to *Luckyland*

IN THIS PROJECT REPORT, I will present and explain the process of my final glass work at the Royal Danish Academy in the glass and ceramic professional bachelor program that I followed during three years, from 2021 to 2024.

In the glass department of Nexø, I've developed different bodies of work about a few specific notions, themes and ideas, often related to characteristics of human's intrinsic behaviours or beliefs. I started to work with these notions about 6 years ago, when my glass craft making journey started in France and I continued it here in Denmark, where I discovered a great acceptance of the risk taken of dealing with notions like Religions and Beliefs that can be such a tough subject to treat as it evokes so varied opinions and questions of liability if translated without delicacy.

On Bornholm Island, where the school is located, I learned a different way of living, highly impacted by the seasons, the sea view and, in my case, co-leaving with many people from different origins who gathered in this same school far from mainland. I saw the impact of the surrounding on my work. When I arrived into this new landscape, my work was very product-design oriented and the glass qualities used to reach functional needs.

Nowadays, my work aesthetic has been adjusted towards a craft making one, where the glass qualities are shown for what they are and used for visual and sensorial purposes. Putting the observer of the work in a position where the dialogue isn't anymore about me giving an answer to a design problem, but the piece offering of situation where the observer can explore an idea, a story, a sentiment or even an emotion to question itself and wonder.

Here you'll be discovering my latest work at the point I'm writing these lines. I am proud of it because this work might be able to create a place where people could discover my perception of a notion that is very personal to me. With this work, I hope that the observer will be feeling my love for glass and understand how I communicate thanks to it. Have a good lecture and be *Welcome to Luckyland*.

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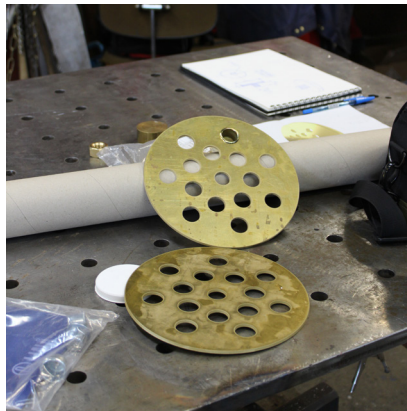
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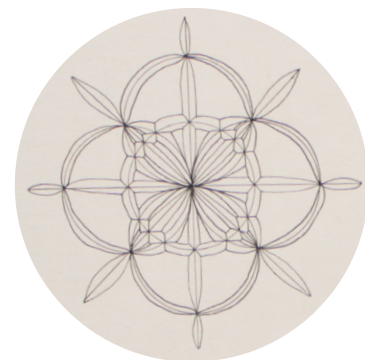
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Introduction & Problem statement

SINCE CHILDHOOD TIMES, I have loved curious, unknown, mysterious objects and symbols linked to the field of spirituality. In my work, I almost always let the influence of these ethnological details from civilisations' thoughts and beliefs get a place in my artistic creative process. Then, for my last project at the academy, I chose to work with people's beliefs once more. This time through *the superstition* prism and the notion of *the luck*.

Usually, I treat beliefs closely linked to established documentation, like the main religions are guided by their saint book(s). But here with the luck as a notion, it is a little bit different :

Superstition(s) as a term only appears by the 14th Century^A, and is described in its own definition as an irrational (supernatural) belief. There is so no proper referenced History of it. No fundamental text to study, no one to trust because of its specific position in the sphere.

Any non-superstitious person can possibly describe trusting superstitions as an act of folklore or a «lower-religion» because of its lack of structure in the current society^B (at least in the West). This low consideration is leading some superstitious people to feel less comfortable sharing their beliefs or feeling judged/laughed at due to the global History of superstitious people being discriminated for their singular thoughts.

By being superstitious myself, I wanted to express a different sensible and surprising glance on different elements of the notion of luck through glass pieces. I wished to share a new view on the luck and its symbols thanks to iconographies representing the « luck », «the fortune» into an art piece that would be use as a communication medium to help me sharing my vision of it, as a catharsis.

*How can I play with the symbols of the
luck/fortune thanks to the glass material
in order to share my affection towards
the superstitions universe ?*

Global expression and artistic choices

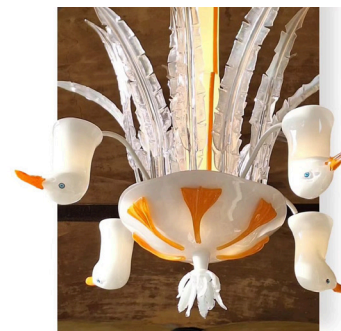
For the global expression of my work, I tended to follow a relatively classical approach into the making because of the choice of developing this bachelor project through a singular master piece : *A glass chandelier*.

I decided to work on a chandelier for various reasons, the first and most important one is that I really struggled to find a family of shapes that could work with my theme. After doing research, prototypes and drawings, I wasn't able to discover an interesting shape to work on as a support for luck & superstition as notions. The idea of the chandelier came out thanks to hazardous coincidences : Since the beginning of 2024, I have been obsessed with finding an internship place on Murano island, Venice, for my 7th semester internship.

I really want to discover the motherland of glass in Europe to learn deeply about the history and the experience of working in such a specific place for glassmakers. By doing research to go to Venice, I spent time looking at the classical and contemporary production of the current and ancient workshop and have been very interested in *the evolution of the chandelier's aesthetics*. I've been highly inspired by [Simone Cenedese](#)² or [Chris Kerr-Ayer](#)³'s works on contemporary chandeliers and candleholder for the access to adding unexpected 'crazier' elements onto a classical shape. But I did the real decision of trying to make a chandelier thanks to the new initiative of the italian glassblower [Fabiano Zanchi](#) who has been running «*express chandelier making classes*»¹ at the Benzaiten Glass Center of Lake Worth, USA. Fabiano Zanchi has shown that any glass blower could be able to create a chandelier using the authentic techniques in almost a single week of hardwork. This gave me hope and confidence to try.



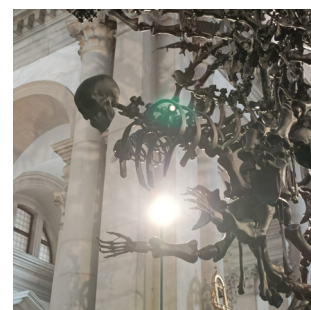
1.



2.



3.



4.

Once upon, chandeliers were the most chic symbol of wealth and classicism that glass had to offer; before falling into decline when the trend switch to more pure shapes.

Recently, chandeliers appeared back with all the glamorous notions related but by giving a place for less classical designs. Now chandeliers can also be surprising in their shapes, sizes, colours, and leave some funnier elements coming into. The pinnacle of this new era of chandeliers has been the modern interpretation of the Chinese artist and sculptor Ai Weiwei with his massive black chandelier *Memento Mori*⁴ exhibited at the Palladio's basilica in the Abbey of San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice. With his decadent design, this piece impacted and moved me thanks to its meaning and its implication in the contemporary glass scene, offering the possibility to play with those traditional, cherished codes.

With this *new approach* towards chandeliers, I had the great want of taking my try making one I could play with by adding elements dealing with the superstition & luck.

At this point, I started to imagine a chandelier that would not include any lights at the end of its branches, but symbols of luck. The point is *to propose an art piece that would create a place for the reflexion about the place of the superstition in our society.*

“ *A very baroque object, maximalistic, almost ostentatious, that would drag the attention to put the light on the theme.* ”

From now, I could begin the choice, the design and the making of the symbols.



I found a large amount of references on the theme of the luck in the illustration world (fig.a. - fig.b.). Mostly based on the univers of the cardomanca/the fortune, parts of the superstition realm that I chose to not develop in the project. But I did saved many drawings on my phone to scroll through these drawings while I was sculpting elements to get more friendly visual references like with the clovers for example.

I really appreciate translating notions and stories with the glass material and I think it is a key value of my work ; And here, I saw shapes that might be very interesting to work with within the project. Shapes such as *the great 7 symbols of luck* can be treated easily into the work because of their historical use :

As most of the people know them, (and could believe in their power) using these symbols can offer a high potential of dialogue and interaction for the observers.

They also can be represente in different ways thanks to the glass qualities. For example, I chose to make few of them is a light green tone, colour of the hope and the luck, or give some texture to other ones by pressing/scratching the surface of the glass to create volumes, textures. I made a personal transgression by choosing of the crossed fingers instead of the ladybug as one of the symbols because my glass sculpting skills where too limited to be able to make such a precise element.



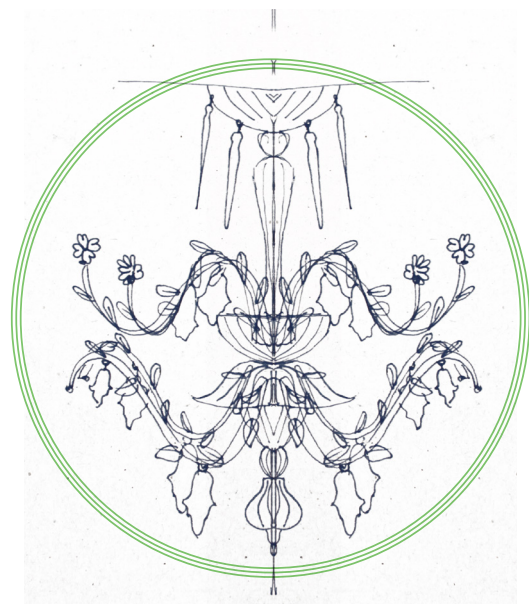
About the overall visual of the piece, I made my choice mostly from my mind. After having looked at many references of chandeliers, I get a good view on what seemed to be a pleasant balance regarding the amount of details, the diametre of the biggest parts, or the layers of glass affecting the visual

I decided to let my imagination work on what I would like to create and made few drawings of chandeliers that would work.

Some details came over and over and that's how I knew that I wanted them to be present in the final piece.

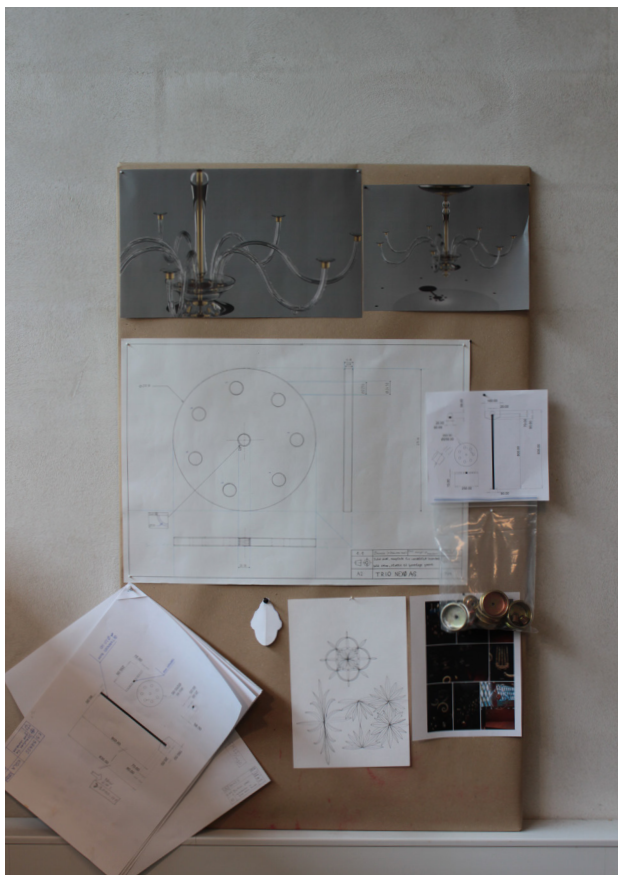


- S shaped branches to create movement
- A tall, elongated neck to leave space near the roof
- Some coldworked pending ornaments
- Sculpted leaves for a Venician homage
- Flaired out lips on the bowls to look more welcoming
- Twisted optics blurring the metal parts
- Dense cut patterns blurring the metal parts (see page 15)



In order to be able to communicate the final shape with precision, I have spent time making plans and rendering in a 3D model the chandelier in the 3D program Rhinoceros (fig.a.). In this rendering, I didn't include the lucky symbols as I wanted to use this rendering to communicate about the shape primarily. I used it as a reference point, to be sure of the proportions of each component to have a result tighten up neatly once I'd have to assemble the piece.

Some other more artistic drawings have been made to have an appreciation more alive of the final piece (fig.b.).



a.



b.

Method wise, I worked mostly like the way I've done for the precedent autonomous craft project : I made hot shaped /blown components, and then cold worked them.

I like this method because I can have much better control over the shapes and patterns, as cold work has been my main field before reaching this school. I also like the refine result given by the cold work application, I can offer more detail and fine lines doing so, and that's a key value to me.

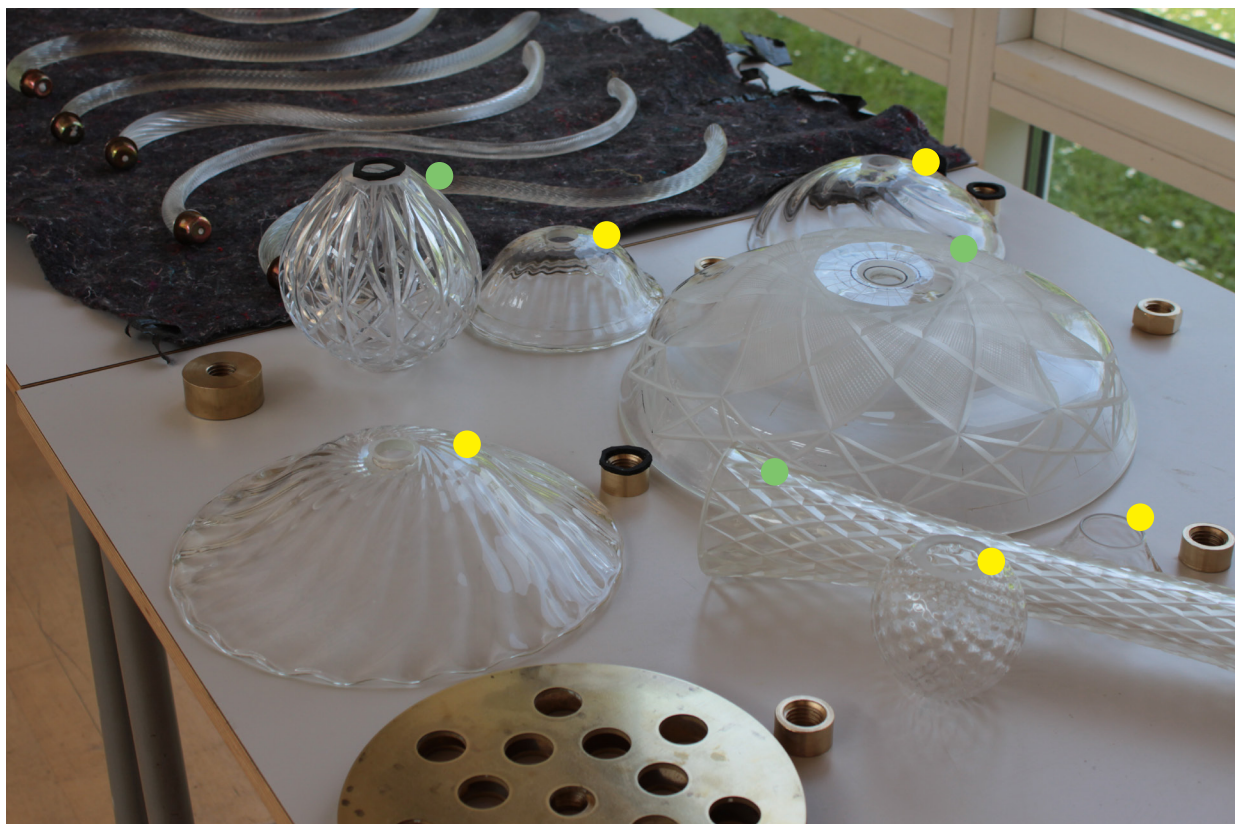
Traditionally, a glass chandelier is made all in the glass hot-shop in order to reduce the steps in the making and to bring down the production price. I took the decision to mix the surface treatments by adding coldworked patterns on the biggest elements.

The reasons were that I wanted a production more personal, using techniques that I work and feel comfortable with. Bringing wheel-cut decorations was also a way of adding a different layer of skills and another layer of lecture to the project.

Somehow, I saw the addition of cut patterns also as a way to stick to a more modern aesthetic; even if I deliberately chose classic patterns to stay in a coherent visual on the whole piece, I can see that cut glass is becoming the trend again in glass art pieces⁶, especially here in Scandinavia. The last point of using cut is its characteristic to catch and reflect light in a sharpen way than optic glass patterns.



6. Robles, Javier. *Soprano* (2024).



- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| ● Cut pattern (Coldwork) | - | 4 pieces |
| ● Optic mold pattern (Hotwork) | - | 5 pieces + branches |

Next to the drawings, the 3D models and the making of the components, I have started to think about the possible professionalisation of a such a project if it would become a future series.

I thought about the visual potential of a so easily recognizable silhouette that chandeliers are holding thanks to the movement of the branches, the proportion and the global traditional aesthetic that changed quite little for centuries.

I contacted a graphic designer^D and asked for a small simple logotype that could be used like a stamp in the design. Thanks to discussions about my project and some look at my other works or my logo, this logotype inspired by a postage stamp has been created.

I think adding extras such as this to a project can help a better visualisation of it in a professional context and adds some content around the glass parts.

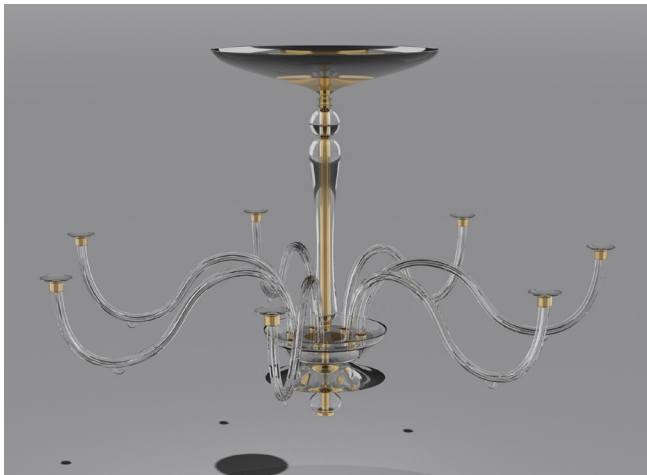


Process & techniques

As explain earlier, the making of the chandelier has started with a 3D render to have a quite clear idea of the pieces to make, their size, their movement.

Because glass is a material difficult to control fully, I knew I wasn't going to be able to create an exact replica of this 3D model. And that's for the best : otherwise it would look boring, cold, without emotions.

Perfection in glass craft making is a tricky subject, I personally think that it is technically interesting to aim for the perfection, but I also like the delicacy in the mistake, the beauty of the gesture that glass is taking by itself. I tried here to balance these notions to express myself as a craftman, and as an artist. The glass element that I made bear *unique craftsmanship traces* and I don't see it as a flaws. But coarse pieces can still be upgrades and refined, and that's what I have been looking for.



From the 3D to the first 1:1 sample



As I never already tried making most of the components of a chandelier, I spent a lot of time in the glassblowing workshop figuring out the way or making these parts.

Some parts were fairly easy to produce once the process deconstructed. Some other parts like the sculpted lucky symbols were independantly analysed and some were easier to make than other ones. Some needed colours like the Rabbit's paw as I wasn't satisfied with the result made 100% clear.

I think the most challenging part was the amount of different pieces. Many parts had to be made in seven example, one per branche; and I thought tough to replicate some of then identically.



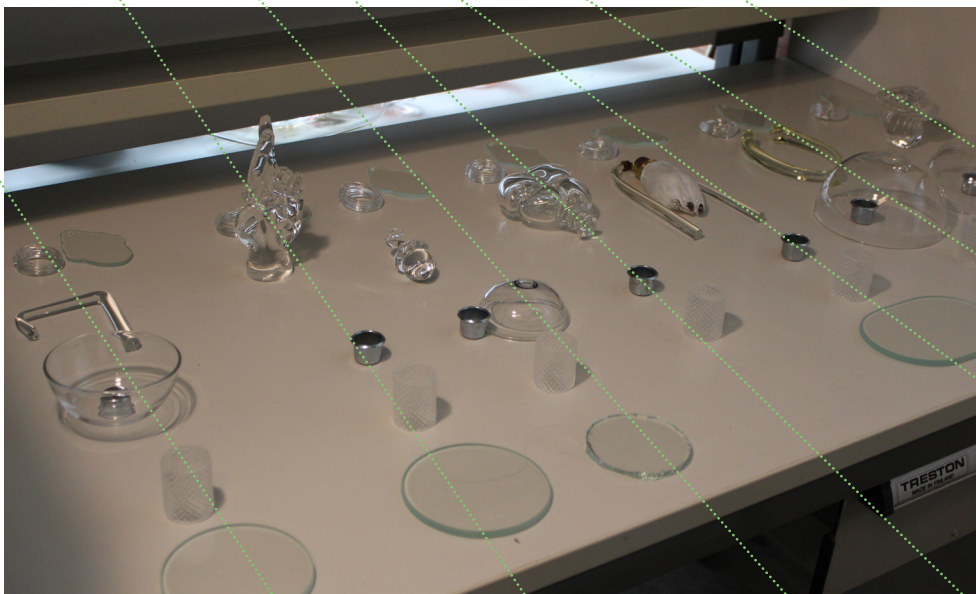
Some pieces required an assistant like the branches or the widest bowls, but the rest of the production was a one-man action.

From time to time, I spent time in the workshop alone, trying different process, different tools in order to get a diversity in the object that I could select afterwards.

At least 4 designs of branches have been made e.g. For their aesthetic, I chose to use a twisted optic-mold surface effect instead of a smooth surface in order to stick with the traditional look. Also, the twisted elements are bringing a lot of interest thanks to the movement and the light catching effect that these surfaces are owning.

My solution to the problem of the amount of pieces was to establish a line selection of each individual (fig.a.). And once I was satisfied with the globality of a line, I would not had to work more on it. That was a nice way of not getting lost in the making.

This iteration also allowed me to made a product more adapted to a potential professional application. Doing this selection also allowed me to get better at every try and to be able to produce thinner, lighter and quicker.



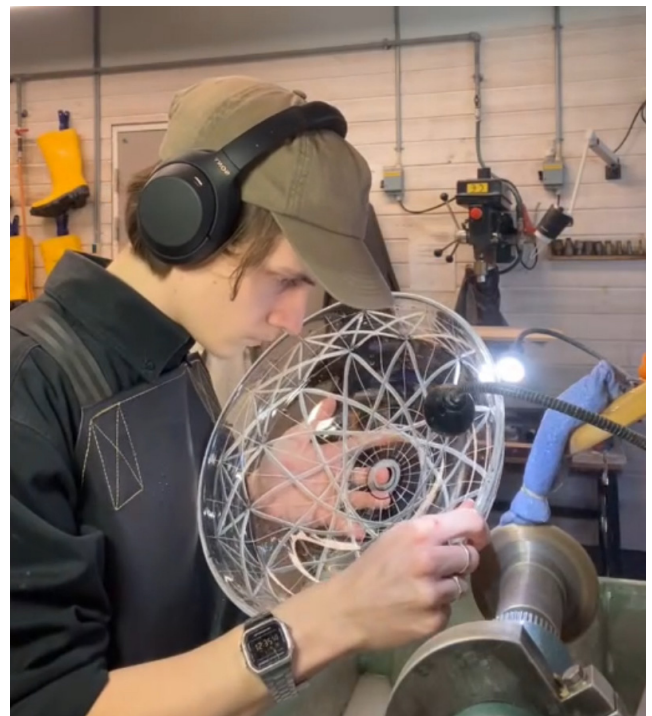
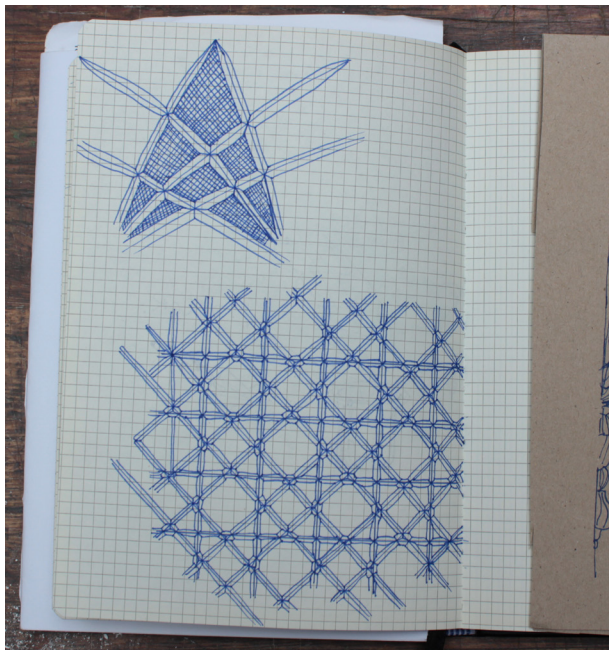
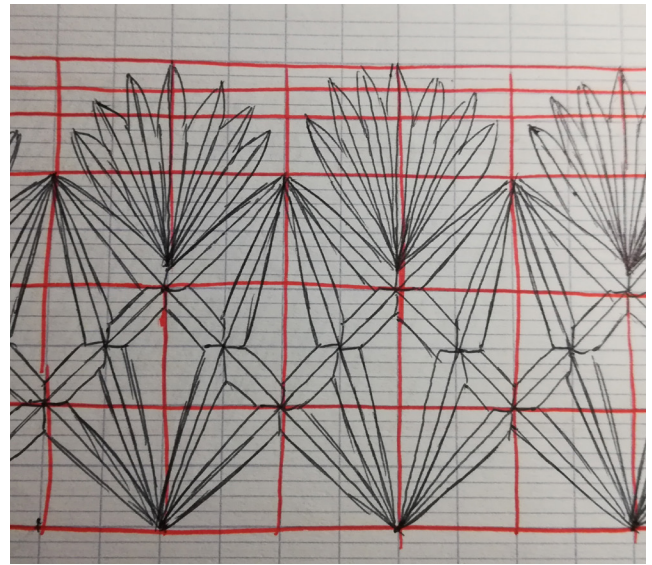
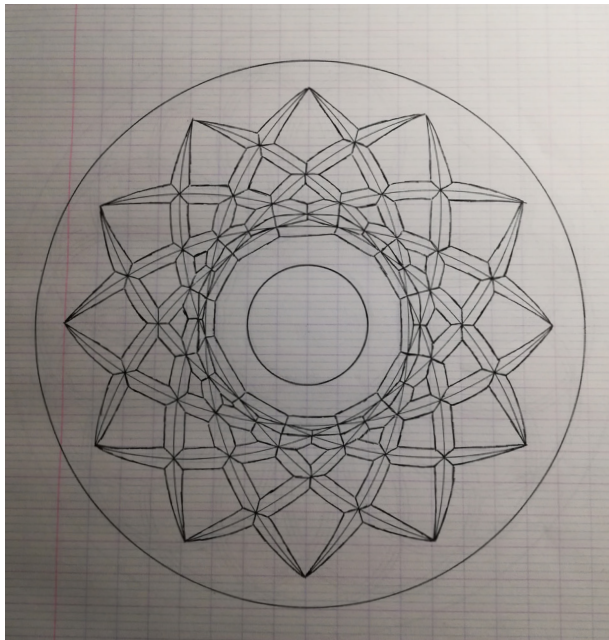
a.



Here is one of the evolution. The dimensions of the leaves were way to big first, too heavy for a chandelier, I then remade them in an afternoon. Letting the process setting down with time helped me being *more efficient in the making*.

The news leaves are evoking better the natural evolution and movement of a real leaf thanks to a different treatment of the shear cut pattern of glass added on the sides of the stem.

For the coldworked element, I stayed classic in the visuals. The goal of the pattern is mostly to *bring light & texture*, and to mask out the metal components. I replicated traditional french patterns from my old courses as a sort of homage to where I'm from.



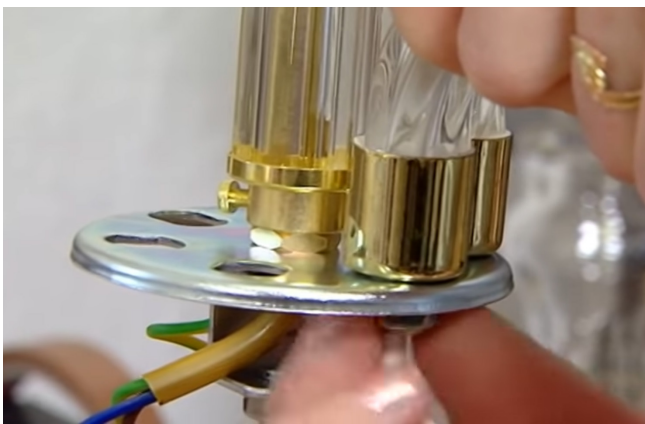
Building a chandelier

One of the biggest challenge I have faced off during the bachelor project was to actually be able to present a chandelier that looks like a chandelier, and not just a collection of non-linked glass elements.

For this work, I had to do many researches about the way of building a chandelier the easiest and most efficient way for me, as a student, on a lapse time of three months. Alternating the making of the glass pieces and looking at the literature content was a common way of working for me but including in my schedule the learning of a new craft, complexe and rigorous, has been quite a struggle and a source of stress due to the approaching deadlines. In my chandelier, I decided to follow the traditional method of assembling the glass elements thanks to small metal cups put on a round drilled metal plate (see *fig.10.-11.*).

By following the traditional method, I simplified the dimensions and, get a better access to standarised industrial metal parts that are less expensive, and easier to find on the market.

The absence of lights in my piece has been a thankful event, as I didnt had to deal with this extra field that would have start to add way to much work for a single craftman. Furthermore, the making of an object including light would have brought safety rules and might have brake my work to a very technical aspect that is not so creative. But, then, I had more freedom to design a structure that would at least, look as pleasant as possible.



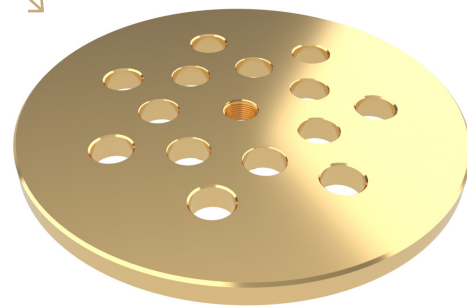
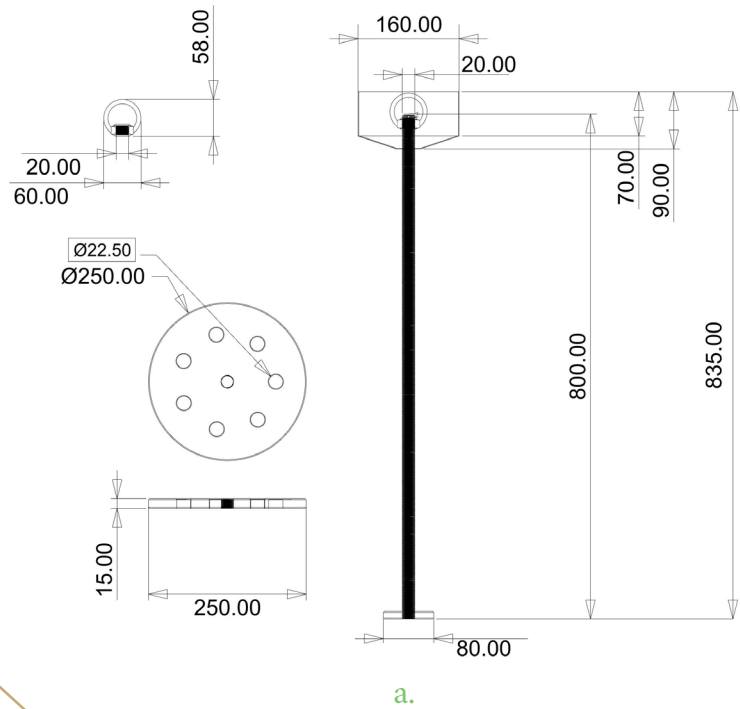
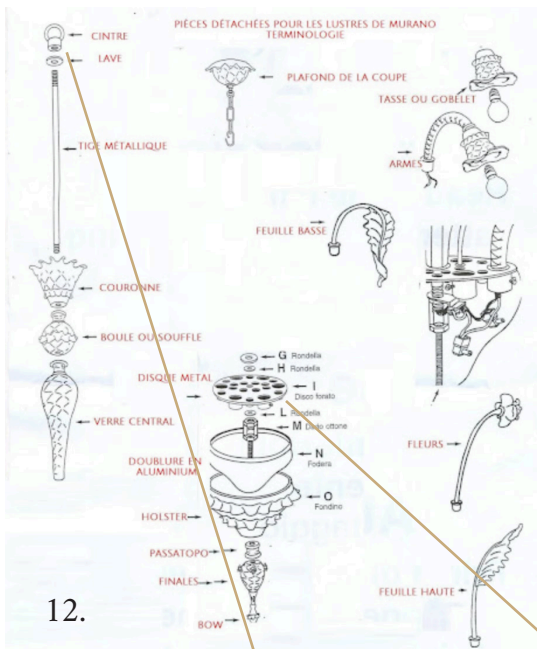
10.



11.

Indeed, even if I chose to stick to industrial pre-made dimensions, I still desired to bring personality in the structure :

The choice of the material was clear, I wanted warm tones to contrast with the coldness of transparent glass. I chose brass. Brass is a relatively affordable metal, easy to machine, and that will give a beautiful shining high lights thanks to the costics of glass.



Thanks to the long history of chandelier making, I found precise documentation about the way that it should be mounted. I inspected the essential key-components and 3D modeled elements I wanted to be personalised. At this step, I also get my final dimensions of 1 square meter maximum. I went for a chandelier of a shy size for a first one, in order to be sure to not be overwhelmed by a too optimistic production.

On the plate holding the branches, fourteen holes are holding two different sets of seven branches, like 7, the lucky number.

A collaboration with



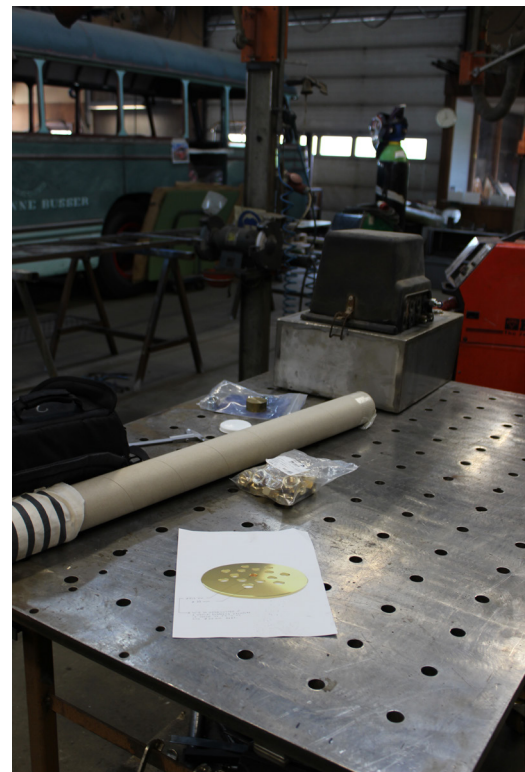
One key partner of the project is the metal workshop TRIO NEXO E A/S, based in Nexø, on Bornholm. TRIO has been helping me making possible the realisation of the brass skeleton of the chandelier.

Working with professional from the industry world is a great way to observe is a project is not too fantasmed and if it is actually realisable. With TRIO, I get some outside opinions on how I could optimise the brass structure, what price would it cost me, what difficulties I will face and how long it would take to be made.

I am very grateful for the time and the experience their team offered me to help me through this crucial task.

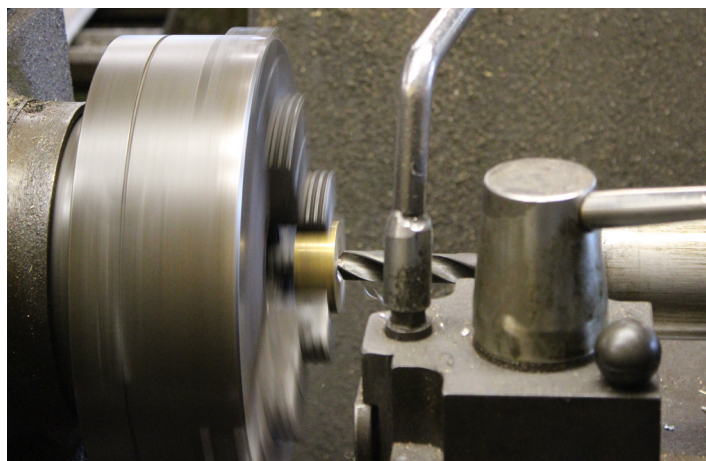
After having bought the main brass pole and a couple of brass bolts, I met them at the workshop and asked if I could take pictures of the making for keep a trace of this concentrated knowledge I glanced at.

From their words, they appreciated my coming equipped with precised drawings, 3D renders and mesurement. I did not regretted having spend so much time working on it has it allowed them to make all the parts in one afternoon.





a.



b.

a. Freshly water-cut plate.
b. Machining of the designed bottom part.

Conclusion & Finish piece

TO CONCLUDE, through the creation of this chandelier, I have explored the intricate interplay between superstition & luck, and artistic expression. By incorporating symbolic elements and using traditional and contemporary glassworking techniques, I aimed to create a piece that not only embodies my technical skills, but also invites observers to discover and engage with the themes of luck and superstition on a personal level.

The process of designing and fabricating the chandelier was both challenging and rewarding. It required careful planning, precise execution, and collaboration with skilled professionals and I learned a lot from it.

This chandelier is more than just a final project; it is a reflection of my journey as a glass student, from my early days in France to my education and experiences in Denmark. It embodies my growth, both technically and conceptually, and serves as a testament to my way of express the potential of glass as a medium in art and craft.

I hope that this work will resonate with the observers . I wish they will appreciate the beauty and the complexity of glass into my chandelier, and will appreciate the nuanced dialogue between tradition and contemporarity I desired to express. I may be interested to continue exploring the theme of the superstition in my future work, not only because of the meaning I give to it, but also because of its whole aestheric dynamic and variety of visuals.

With this work, I used traditional aesthetics and shapes to highlight a personal contemporary notion and its symbols. With my chandelier, I played with the glass qualities in order to share my affection towards the superstitions universe in a singular art piece.



Progress of work - June 1, 2024

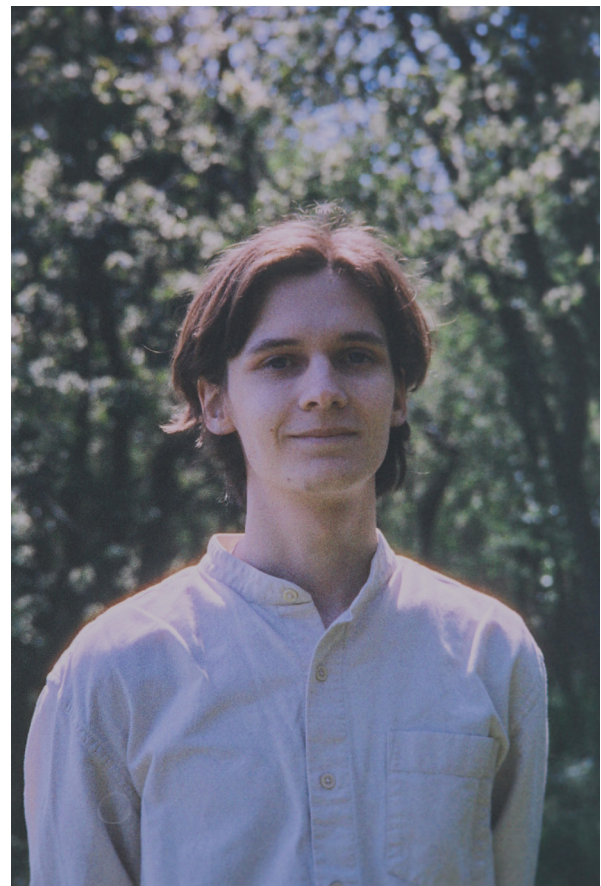
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Biography

Lartigue Nathan (born in 2000 in La Teste de Buch) is a craftsmen from France who's designing objects and installations made of glass. After having followed an education in glass cold working and glass design at the national glass school of France, he moved to the island of Bornholm in Denmark in 2021 to develop his appeal for glassblowing.

He is putting a lot of attention to the quality of having a well designed and finished production ; Considering that the technical part is essential and should be shown as an advantage in the piece's design. His works are showing clear tones, sometimes warm ones and keep simple shapes and profiles. Thanks to his products, he aims to tell stories about different notions. These notions are few, and can be for example the way that the object has been produced, or a short anecdote about a specific community.

To conclude briefly, he can be seen as a narrator using the glass material as a medium to spread informations, to pay homage. He often highlights it by saying that telling something is the only important notion in his productions ; because the piece is *what stays after*. It stays, to share something, without needing the person behind it.



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SCOMPOSIZIONE DI UN VOLO

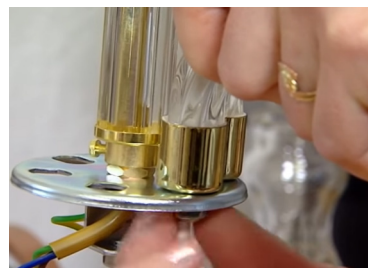
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Robles, Javier.
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Chamade collection
SaintLouisCrystal [Glass]
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Kerr-Ayer, Chris.
(2024). Filling at home [Glass]
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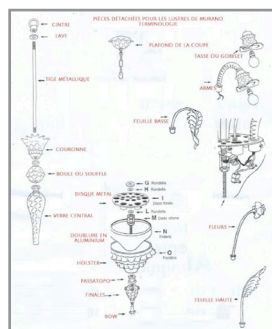
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Janssen, Saskia.
(2023). No title ♣♣♥♦
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Lustres en verre de Murano et miroirs vénitiens. (n.d.).
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