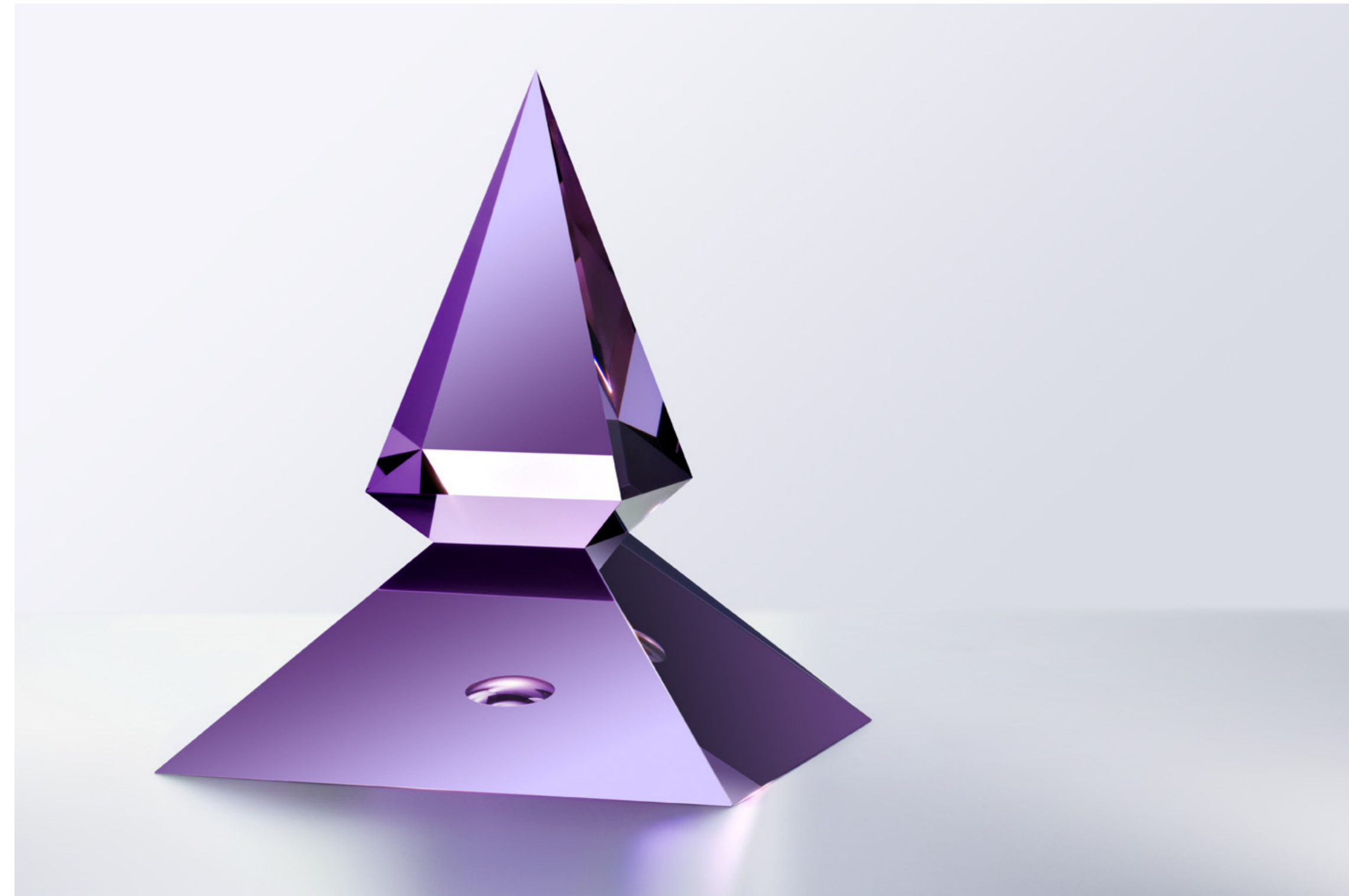


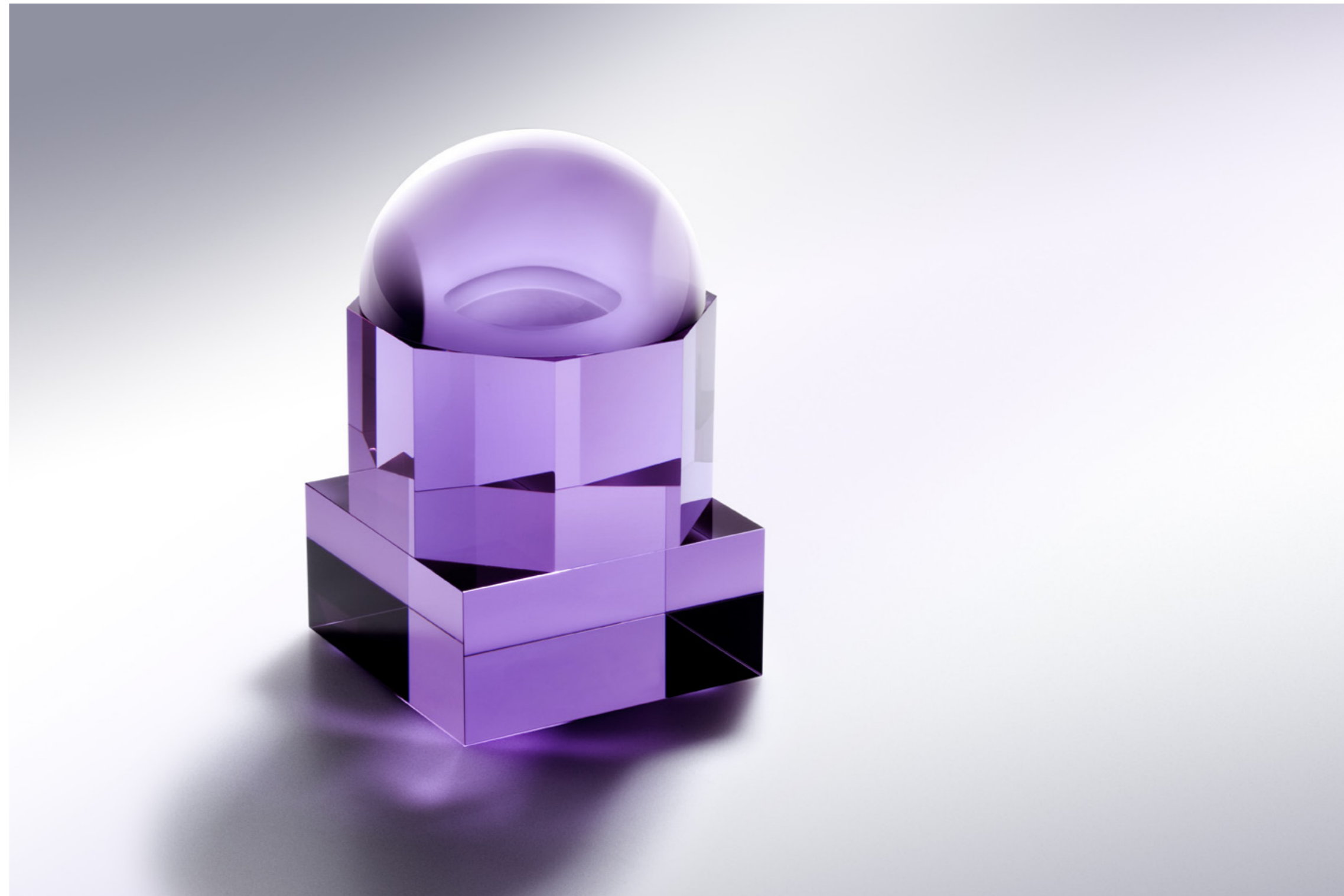
WINNIE TESCHMACHER

SPACES OF SILENCE

1 Purple Flame 28×28×32 cm



5 Three worlds 14x14x24 cm



6 Twilight Ø 25×12,5 cm



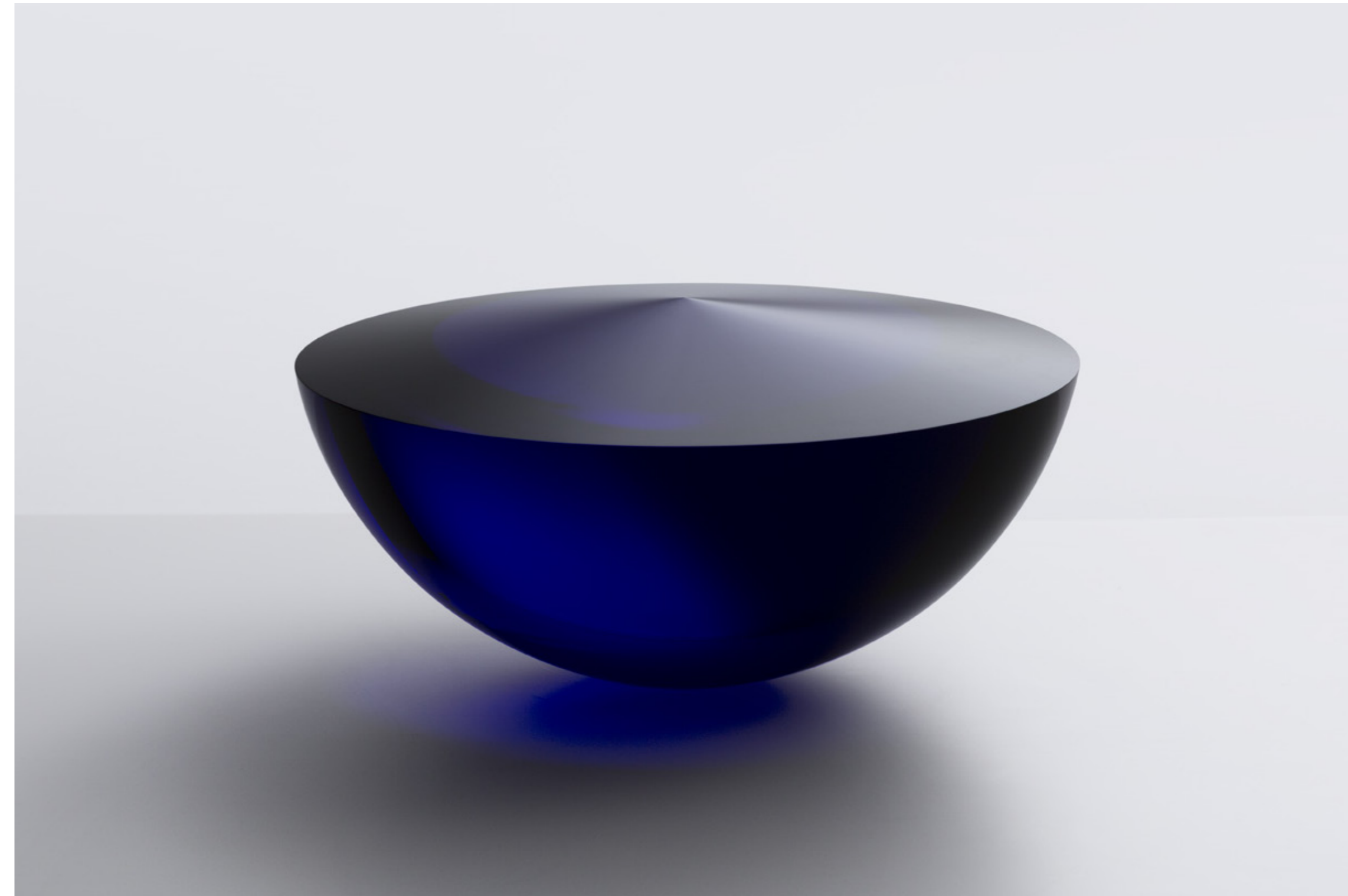
7 | I AM Ø 54x14 cm



8 Inside Outside \varnothing 60x10 cm



9 Zero Point 2 Ø 25×12,5 cm



13 Anda Ø 22,5×30 cm



14 Purification 22,5×22,5×30 cm



18 Anatta 20×20×16,5 cm



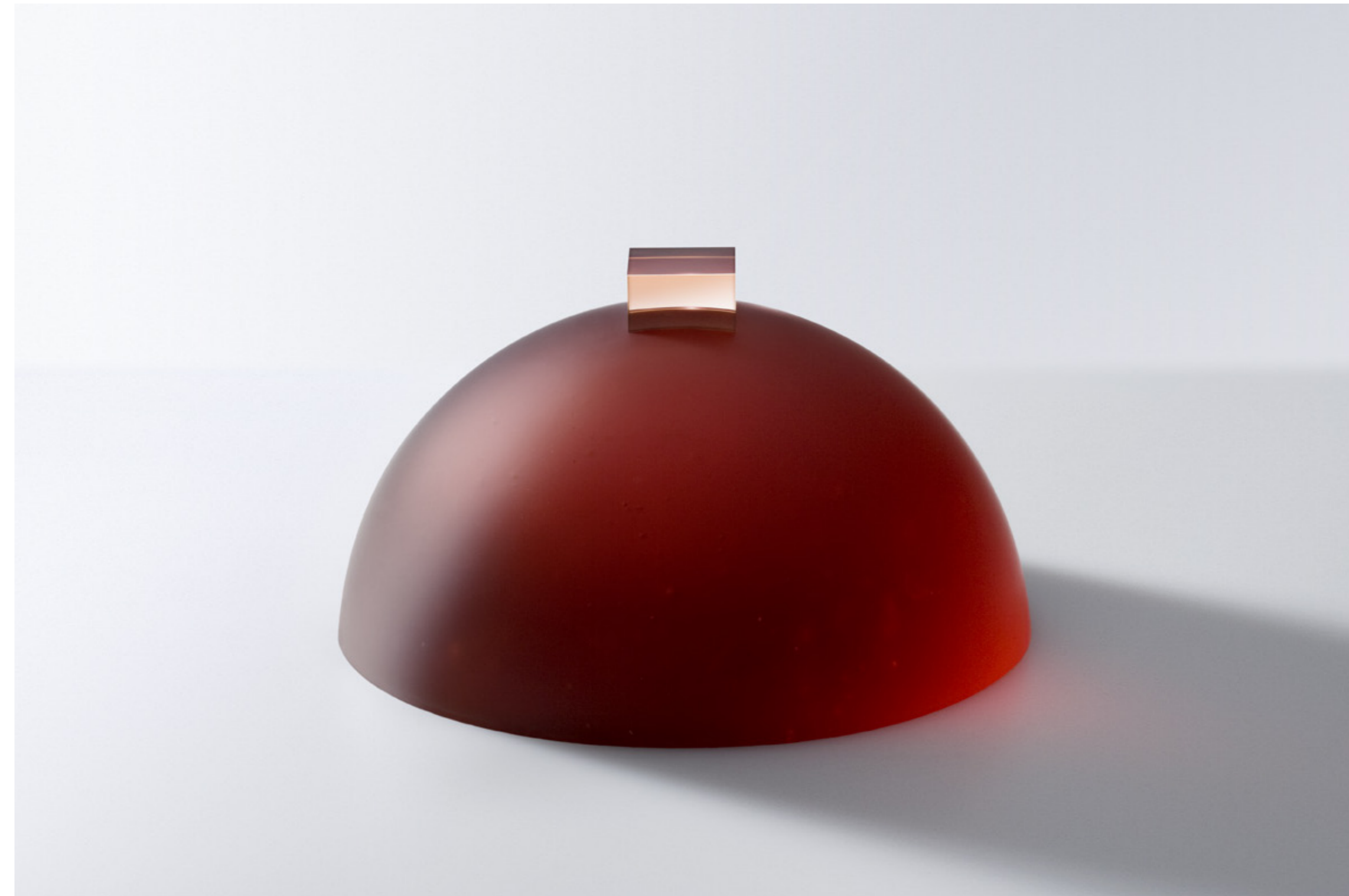
19 Cycle Of Time 25×25×7,5 cm



21 Temple Ø 20×10 cm



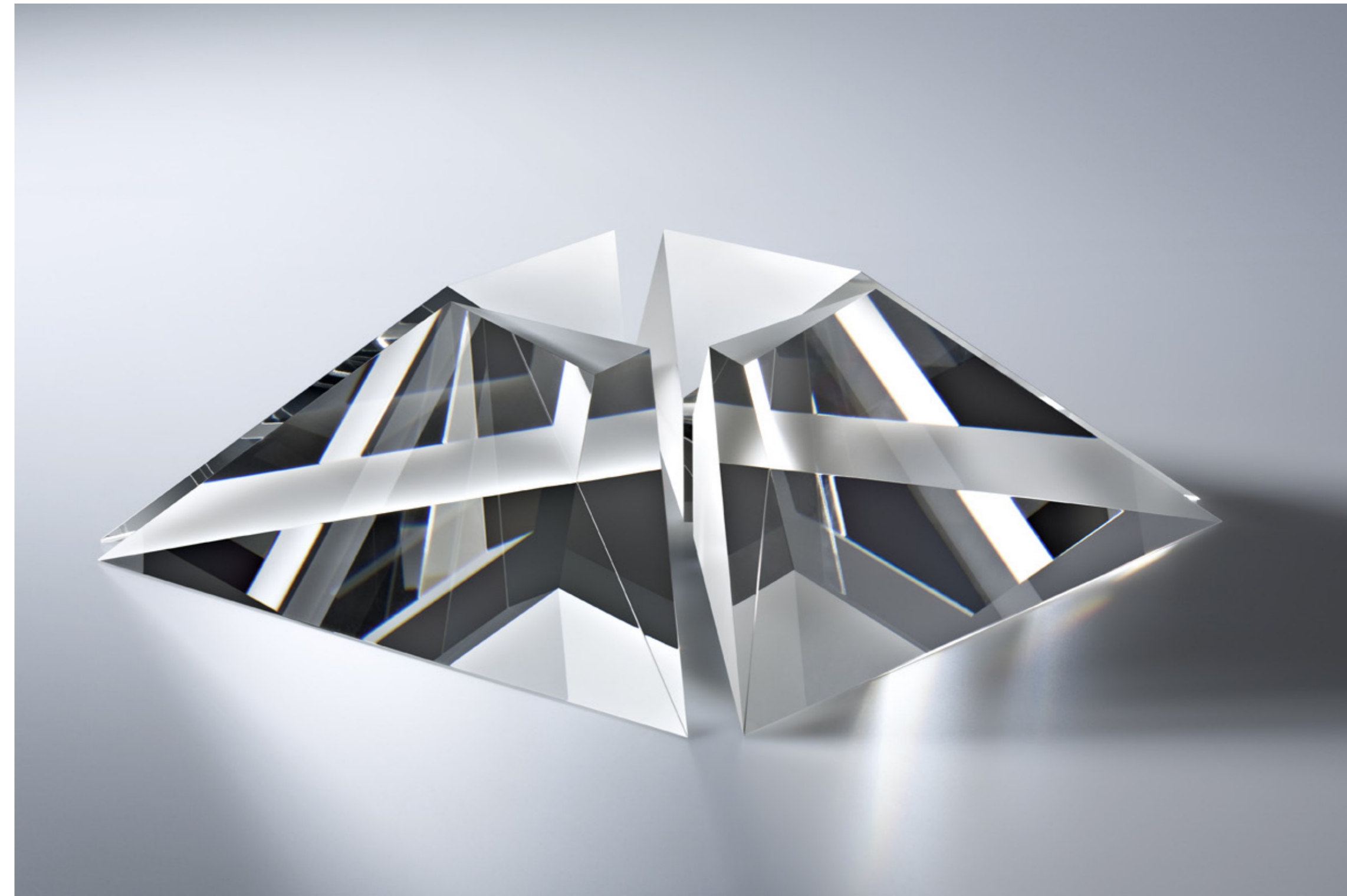
22 Mount Meru Ø 21×12 cm



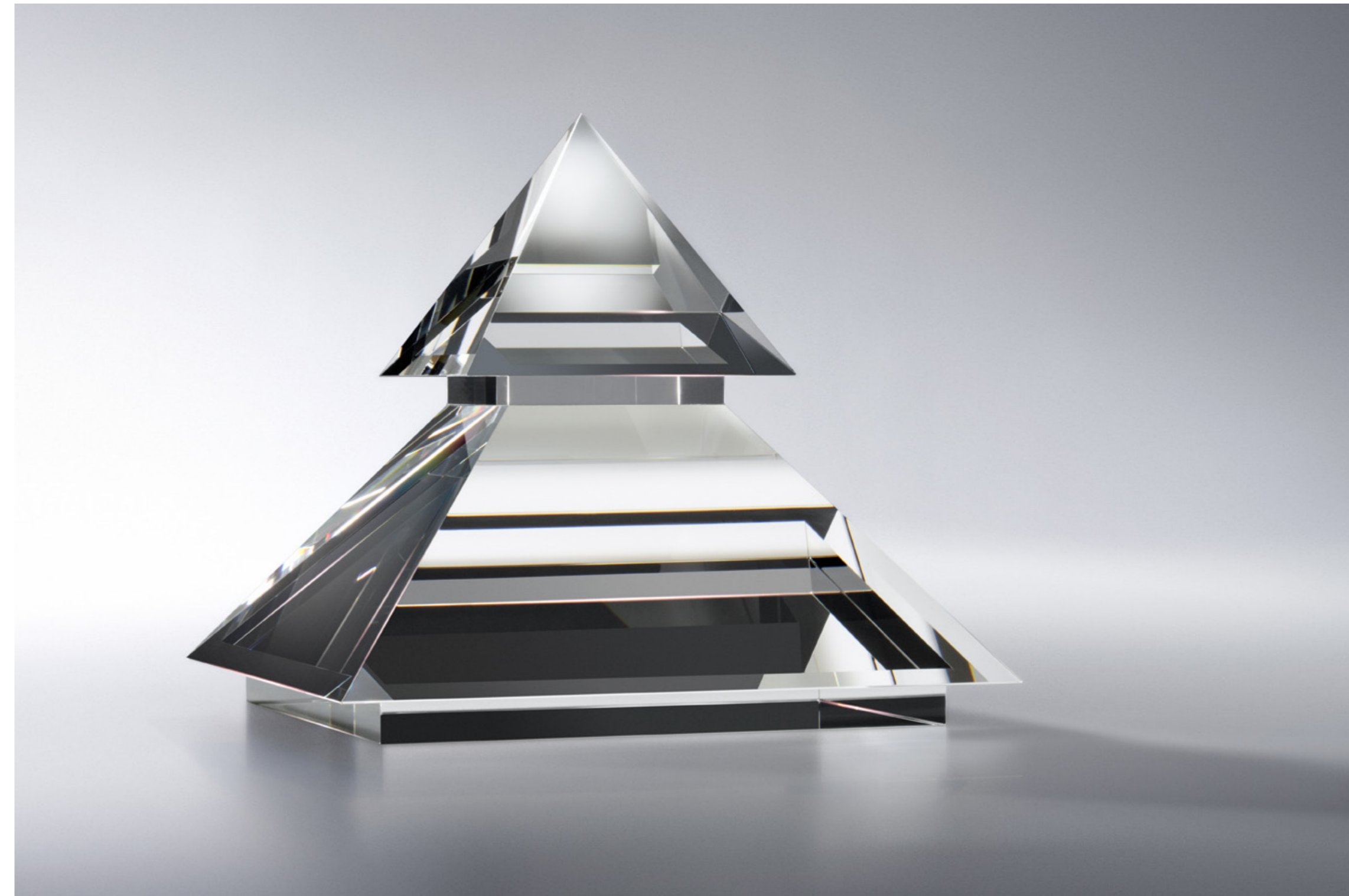
24 Meditation Ø 33×16 cm 2 delen



26 Space In Between ± 47×47×10 cm 4 delen



27 The Hidden Force 25×25×22,5 cm



30 The Eye Inside Ø 40×20 cm



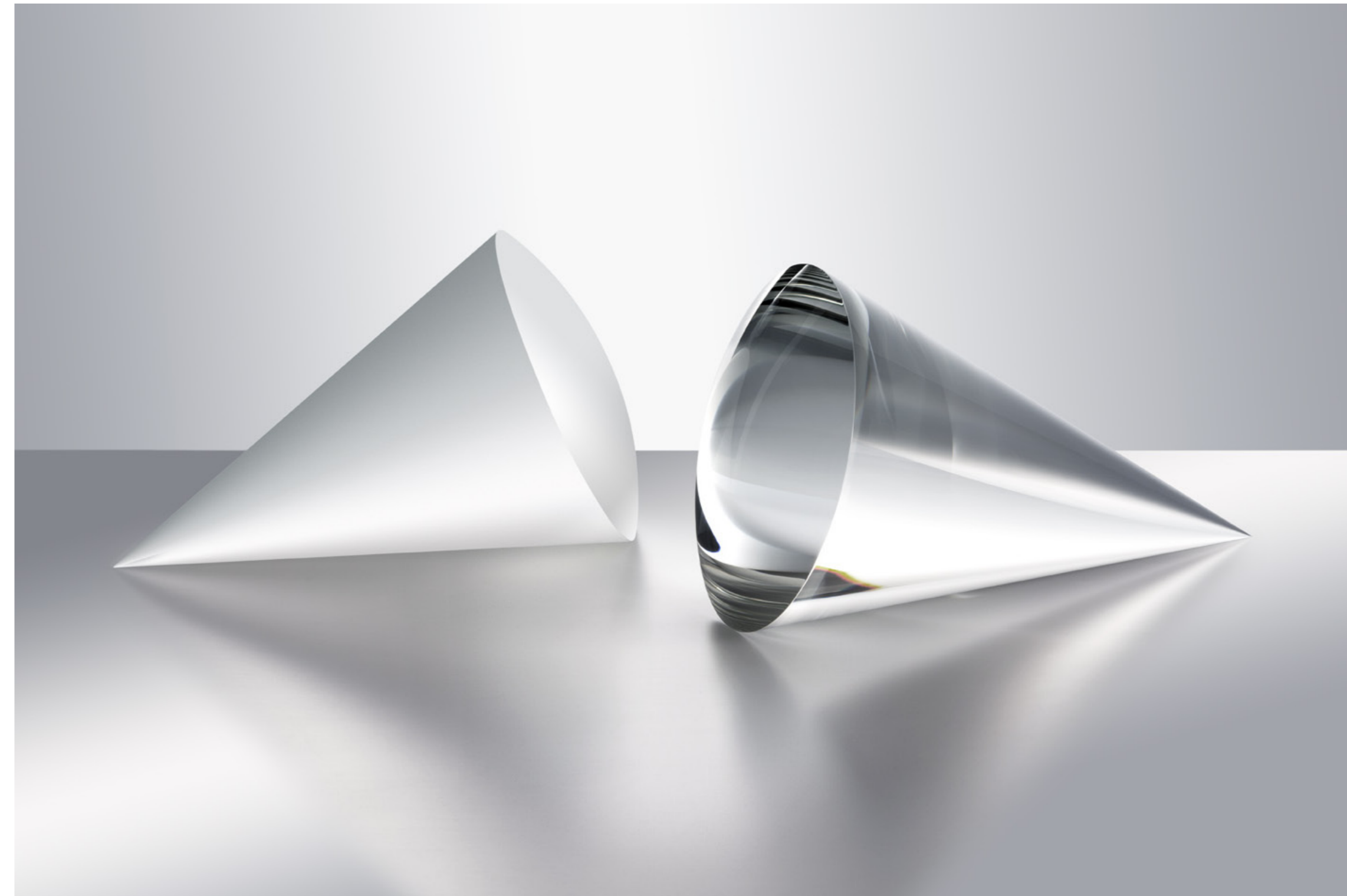
31 Enso Ø 26x7,5 cm



33 Stillen der Gedachten Ø 24×12 cm 2 delen



34 Touching The Void ∅ 20×33 cm 2 delen



35 Touching The Void 2 Ø 29x26 cm 2 delen



SCULPTURE THAT BECOMES LIGHT AND SPACE

How simple a sculpture can appear to be. As though it took no effort whatsoever to let it take shape. As though it had never been conceived and produced and had always existed, its nonexistence thus being inconceivable. *Enso* [31] is just such a sculpture. With its height of seven-and-a-half centimeters and diameter of twenty-six centimeters, you might even overlook it, were it not made with such astounding perfection. And therefore, simplicity. Winnie Teschmacher's artistic stance is reflected in *Enso*. A sculpture which looks as though it had been made without the use of hands, as though it's still a mere idea. And the more ethereal a sculpture is, the more it conceals, beneath its appearance of natural ease, the complicated process of its development. That actually seems to be a consistent pattern. Most of the artist's mental power, physical effort and patience are needed in order to bring about the opposite, in this case that natural eloquence. That's what Winnie Teschmacher does with her material: everything that was needed to create the image vanishes and dissolves into the idea expressed by it. When this is achieved, the sculpture has the appearance of having come about all at once.

A similarly deceptive simplicity characterizes *Stillen der Gedanken* [33]. This is a twofold sculpture; twin components comprise a single image. Each is nearly a

hemisphere. Their curve, seen from the bottom upward, ends just before becoming a hemisphere. It's as if the sculpture needs to keep on growing. While the rounded part is matte, the top surface remains transparent. This gives rise to a basin shape which seems to have intangible depth. These forms are completely subdued, as though they haven't been created but came about on their own. They depend on each other and complement each other, and thereby arrive at a perfect equilibrium. Height and depth, diameter and curvature correspond to each other flawlessly. Together they form one work, a sculpture that seems to hover in space despite its own mass and gives volume to light. A lens has been ground into one of the two forms; like an eye, it moves about in the matter. It seems to be asking the fundamental question: what do I see? But in her sculptures you never know exactly what you're seeing. Because the chosen form cannot be designated on the basis of anything that resembles it. Because light constantly allows the sculpture to change. Because the sculpture imperceptibly absorbs the space to which it relates. Due to the material and the technique which remain subservient to the whole. Here too, in *Stillen der Gedanken*.

How the two forms have been made is ultimately beside the point. The image transcends that issue. Technique has dissolved in the sensation of observation.

Winnie Teschmacher's relationship to the technique is a paradoxical one, to say the least. There is nothing at all natural about glass, the material with which she works. It's not a material that nature drops in your lap. It has to be made, and that alone requires specialized knowledge and skill, precision, energy and time. All this, of course, comes before any sculpture whatsoever takes shape. The technique is vital to the artist's realization of the sculpture; and once the sculpture exists, the technique matter-of-factly disappears, dissolves, as though it had never been required. That points to a complex and ostensibly conflicting relationship with the means that are so indispensable during the creation of the sculpture. How does one deal with that? To put it more precisely: how does one make craft subordinate to artistry? Winnie Teschmacher has resolved that dilemma in a nearly Renaissance manner. She seeks the solution in the age-old distinction between the technique of the craftsman and the *inventio* that belongs to the artist. Just as pupils once, when a portrait was being painted, concerned themselves with the material expression while the master took responsibility for the 'soul' of the work (the *inventio*, according to the seventeenth-century conception of art) which he portrayed in the face of the portrait subject, Winnie Teschmacher makes use of the best specialists to produce the sculpture that she has conceived and envisaged, and for which she

takes final responsibility. She does carry out the cutting and grinding, as a form of concentration, as a way of getting 'under the skin' of the work. The grinding is subtraction, subtraction to the point of discovering the image. Not too much, not too little: the process can take months. "Through time and concentration, I end up in the sculpture; and along the way I see opportunities for other sculptures." The sculpture exists once the artist discerns its existence. That is the crux of the artistic decision, and only the artist can arrive at it. In that sense the eyes are at least as important as the hands.

This is how her sculptures come about, and they become autonomous forms that make the issue of their developmental history irrelevant. Material and technique are reorganized by her and transformed into sculptural qualities. Sculpture, in her language of forms, means overcoming oppositions: full as opposed to empty, warm as opposed to cold, extrovert as opposed to withdrawn. And on a different level: becoming versus being, Yin versus Yang. These are universal, human principles that go beyond the specific and the individual. They open the door for the viewer, to whom the sculpture presents itself. Reflection is after all a matter for the observer, who continues beyond the point where technique and material stop.

FROM MATTER TO MIND Glass, the material in which Winnie Teschmacher works, is the vehicle for an idea. The form into which she shapes a sculpture must coincide with her perception. What you see is what it is. That requires observation, the intent observation of the sculpture as an autonomous object unhindered by aesthetics, function or representation. Is it beautiful, does it serve a purpose, does it depict something? Those are criteria which, in the one-dimensional day-to-day reality, can often help us determine the use of an object. A good piece of sculpture, however, has no use; but this gives it all the more meaning. And yet the artist who works in glass is often hounded by the question as to function and representation. As if a sculpture of glass needs to resemble a vase or a bowl. Winnie Teschmacher's sculptures resemble only themselves: they are completely autonomous, also in terms of their connotations.

Her sculptures aim to transcend the technique and leave the material behind. That indicates the choice of a form that allows her to become absorbed in perception. Anyone who assumes that a form is merely the concrete result of technique and material sees little. The viewer who does so decides that there is just one place and one moment for the sculpture to manifest itself. But from Winnie Teschmacher's

point of view, looking means moving, in terms of time and space. Looking means observing a piece of sculpture from every angle; looking means taking time. And the form in which the sculpture manifests itself is an essential means for achieving this. The meticulously designed form leads the viewer to an active observation that brings the sculpture in touch with the surroundings and time. Once the sculpture achieves this, it has broken free of its own material and form. Then it acquires a spiritual dimension, and the image verges on the unattainable. The eye no longer attaches itself to the form, because the work is on the way to becoming immaterial, completely transparent, and not only in a metaphorical sense. The eye, at that point, is more than a simply physical access to our brain. The eye becomes the mind's eye, which wants to see the invisible. We've then gone beyond the object whose material and form we like to designate. When the viewer is no longer asking what it is, or what it's for: that's when the object has truly become sculpture, when the object has abolished itself as it were. That leads the viewer to questions that touch on the essence of the work: where is the depth, how far does the space extend, where does the light come from? At that point the form is no longer an interim phase, a step on the way to the invisible image, to infinite nothingness.

LIGHT THAT BECOMES SPACE The sculptures of Winnie Teschmacher give shape to light. Not that light becomes tangible as a result, though it does become visible. Light surrounds the work and crystallizes in glass that has become form. Together they make each other visible: light by way of glass, glass by way of light. The glass is like the moon, not being its own source of light but an in-between stop, which captures the light of an unseen sun and passes it on to us.

Strange how the invisible becomes visible through material which is transparent in itself, at least in the hands of Winnie Teschmacher. The light that she seeks is indefinable yet omnipresent, being in and around the sculpture. That field of tension makes light a mystery to her. Without light there is no life; nor is there form without it.

Light is, to people, as water is to fish. Imagine that a fish would be given the chance to conceive of anything it would ever want: ultimately water would be the only thing that wouldn't occur to the fish. Because without it life, not to mention thinking, would be impossible. After all, the fish is totally surrounded by it and could never perceive the consequences of its absence. That's more or less how light is to us. With that awareness Winnie Teschmacher finds inspiration in the work of

James Turrell. The American artist has built his body of work on the basis of wanting to make light perceptible, yet by freeing it entirely from any object. He shapes environments in which light can be experienced as an autonomous phenomenon. Although we never know exactly what we see when looking at them, we do know what we experience: light. What Turrell does with an observatory is what Winnie Teschmacher does with her sculptures of glass.

In her view that light is indefinable, she shares a connection with the painter Jan Andriessse. He paints light, not as a form offset by shade but as an optical world unto itself, which needs only to be perceived. Light that gives rise to forms, that makes perception possible, that turns space into atmosphere; light that fills space and remains void at the same time. That kind of light is the light that Winnie Teschmacher captures in her sculptures of glass.

The sculpture *Touching the Void 2* [34] consists of two conical forms, one of polished glass and the other of matte glass. They lie next to each other on the surface, facing opposite directions. They, too, make up a single image, like dancing partners. With one our eye is drawn particularly to the exterior; the other absorbs our gaze

inward. And that's how it goes with the light as well. The one form reflects light and sends it back into the world, while the other captures light and absorbs it. That influences our perception, which turns the one cone into a concave and the other into a convex shape. The eye never entirely grasps either the form or the material, since everything dissolves in that overpowering light. Even the distinction between the objects and the surrounding space becomes fluid; where does the object end and the space begin? There is no distinction. One can sooner refer to a transitory area, between the sculpture and the environment, that allows the two to merge smoothly and imperceptibly. As though they touch each other in the light. It is the light, in fact, which has free rein and conquers the boundaries that we use to designate the objects and distinguish them from each other. How autonomous the sculpture becomes, through the effect of light.

One evening Winnie Teschmacher received a phonecall from Jan Andriessse. "Have you seen the moon tonight?" He knew who to call in order to share that sensation. Full moon: that beautiful, ephemeral light that gives the dark world a gentle glow, while its source remains unseen. On that evening, too, when the moon was full. Light wasn't being cast; it was simply there. It created soft shadows in a downy

light, just enough to let things glow. A light that's everywhere, and nowhere, not shining but prevailing.

MATHEMATICS In a sculpture by Winnie Teschmacher, our gaze has no chance to attach itself to anything. The work needs to exude perfection, have no disruptive details or defects. Nothing should distract the eye from a form that intends to be in full balance, as if it came about on its own. But nothing comes about on its own. Objects are conceived and created; and behind the apparent simplicity of the form lie, in fact, a number of principles. As is often the case with vital principles: they're there, yet we don't see them. That can be said about laws that determine structure in nature, and it remains just as true of the formal principles that provide Winnie Teschmacher's sculptures with form and meaning. After all, even an idea needs to be constructed.

There are two mathematical principles of which she makes deliberate use. The first is that of the Golden Section, the formula for the ideal ratio. This is the ratio that can be found in classical sculpture, in medieval churches and in the human finger. The Golden Section divides a line into two unequal parts, the larger being 1.618

times the size of the smaller. In terms of a finger: the tip relates, in length, to the middle of the finger, just as the middle relates to the sum of the two. The concept of the Golden Section is a design principle in our culture. This ratio is embedded in our collective awareness of beauty. Our notion of beauty is controlled by it. When we find a form pleasing, it almost always proves to be based on the rule of the Golden Section. Or on the Fibonacci series, another mathematical principle that Winnie Teschmacher likes to incorporate in her works. The Fibonacci series is a sequence of numbers, each being the sum of the two preceding ones. This organizational principle, too, can be found throughout nature, as in the distribution of seeds in a sunflower.

In many of her sculptures the ratios lead back to these two principles. *Purple Flame* [1] from 2009 is one example. The sculpture carried out in glass with a pale-purple color is the interpretation of a form often found in Indonesian mosques. Here she has transformed its round form into a square one. It is a complex image, having been constructed from a pyramid-shaped base on which a square spire has been placed. The lower part of the spire initially merges with the base and unfolds outward, then angles back and ends in a point. There are all sorts of things to be

discerned in the sculpture, but above all: everything falls into place. It is the precise use of the classical principles of the Golden Section and the Fibonacci series that give the work its coherence. All forms and lines interlock here. It is a formal context that gives free rein to the visual activity. Because the fracturing of light and the agility of the viewer's eye cause all sorts of things to happen. The spire is reflected as a hovering circle in the base, while the lens that has been ground into the bottom of the pyramid becomes an air bubble that moves freely about in the transparent mass of glass. Any movement, of light or by the viewer, causes the sculpture to change. And something else is going on: the substance of hard, solid glass is softened and perhaps even neutralized by the light directed through the lens. The glass is no longer matter, but transparency that gives the light plenty of room to move about. Thanks to mathematical principles, the light consequently puts across an idea. While their application remains invisible, they become all the more visible in the sculpture's implicit concept.

In her work Winnie Teschmacher seeks the right ratios that will give the sculpture that natural eloquence. That will raise the sculpture to a level above day-to-day reality and provide it with a more spiritual dimension. The classical principles of

scale and proportion transform the object into an idea, the individual into the universal and the transitory into something of lasting beauty.

The Pantheon, in Rome, reflects that very perfection in her view. This temple is the classical archetype of what architecture can achieve. Everything in this construction is aimed at making space and time palpable. The dome of the Pantheon is precisely half of a sphere. If the lines are extended with exactly the same curve, this gives rise to an imaginary, complete sphere meticulously calculated to end a millimeter away from the floor. When the scale is right, a part can be enough to suggest the whole. This is how the artist creates a sense of space and embracement. Then it no longer matters how big the diameter of a circle is, as long as the whole is in balance and the proportions are mathematically sound. The curve of the Pantheon's dome continues endlessly, also at the top where the opening allows for a view of the sky and for light to pour in generously. Architecture as the perfect curve that keeps the sun out of view and brings in light as a shaft of rays. This is light which has been set free of its source, light that creates forms and conquers the limits of time.

This light is timeless.

Light made visible in that classical manner is more than a physical phenomenon. It seems to be detached from time and space, released from the here and now. When light transcends physical limits in this way, it becomes meditative and intangible. And so does the sculpture that outwardly appears to be so natural. Thanks to disengaged light and fluid space.

Frits de Coninck