

**Johann Ludwig Belitski, *Untitled (Glassware)*, 1854**

This dark brown and white photograph is a salt print taken by Johann Ludwig Belitski in 1854. It features a close up of three shelves of delicately engraved crystal. There are fifteen pieces in total, a mixture of stemmed wine glasses and tumblers, a small decanter and in the centre, a lidded jar. The glassware is closely arranged on three glass shelves against a velvety dark background. Bright light from above picks out the engraved details and makes the glass glow like faceted jewels. The glassware is decorated with patterns of foliage, with grapes and vine leaves on the decanter, wheat sheaves on the jar, a cherub-like figure on one of the glasses, a sailing ship on another. Animals, people and even a small village appear on others. The stems of the glasses play with variations between round and faceted sections, while the jar stands on fat beads of glass that reflect the light like drops of water. Every glass is different, reminding us of the craft involved in pre-industrial glass-making, and creating a satisfying composition of harmony in variation.

Salted paper prints such as this one were predominantly produced from 1839 into the 1960s. A sheet of paper is coated with a solution of sodium chloride (or common salt). It is then coated with a solution of silver nitrate which makes it light sensitive. A negative is then placed on top of the paper where it can be exposed to light.