

FAKE - CHILD - SOLD - YOU - FUCK

Lukáš Novák

REFLECTION - POP - EYE - RETURN - SPHERE

Eye

In his famous work *Ways of Seeing*, John Berger attempts to illustrate that seeing is always an act of choice. Berger writes, “*The relationship between what we see and what we know is never settled.*” While Lukáš Novák has already made use of the eye as a symbol of seeing in his object *Candy Flu*, at the Kvalitář Gallery exhibition the metaphor of the eye becomes a dominant element. The direction of the viewer’s gaze is determined by the gallery space. Likewise, to a certain extent, the space guides the viewer as to where they should direct their eyes.

Return

If we look at Novák’s designer work genealogically, we discover that the way in which he often approaches his work is through a return to old techniques now used only sporadically. He first used this principle in the cycle *Ultra Fragile*, where he worked with an embossing roll technique writing a typographical message into liquid glass. Novák’s mirrors in turn build on the glorious tradition of Murano glass while connecting to the visual theme of race cars. Perhaps the artist’s most remarkable return was when he drew attention to an old glass technique using lithyalin in his collection of vases, *Lost and Found*. Although in recent years there has been an explosion of new technologies in the design field, they often lack deeper meaning, making Novák’s principle of transforming archival techniques all the more desirable.

Sphere

The sphere is everything, the ultimate shape in our universe. There is no more perfect shape than the sphere, so perfect it’s seemingly primitive, a quality contributing to its double-edged nature. Novák works with the principle of the sphere along these same lines, sometimes using it as an individual element, sometimes doubled, or placed on top of one another. In the context of applied art, especially glass, the sphere has often fulfilled the role of a light source because it can spread a beam of light in a diffuse way. And indeed, all natural light comes from a sphere.

Pop

Novák’s characteristic style often contains simple semantic keywords based on relatively simple associations. However, this simplicity is interrupted by mutual combinatorics and the plethora of ways these keywords can be combined. Gesture-related typography is the flagship of pop art, but also so-called “low” culture, which nevertheless often contains perfect products. Novák is deeply interested in this boundary as well as hugely sophisticated in finding new syntheses in this area.

Reflection

In Novák's work we can find repeated returns to traditional glass techniques in the production of mirrors. The mirror in turn is a metaphor of reflection, doubling, self-observation and entry into a parallel world. The world's oldest mirror is the water's surface, whereas the first human-made mirrors, polished obsidian plates, date back to 6000 B.C. Since their creation in the Middle Ages in Venice and the adjacent islands of Murano and Burano, glass mirrors have not stopped evolving. Novák has repeatedly used a flat-surface mirror (*Just Winners!*), but also often works with convex surface mirrors, changing the incident reality and diverging perspective (*Erb, Monster Beads*). Similarly, French philosopher Jacques Derrida compares mirroring with the basic principle of artistic vision since mimetic reflection is itself the ability to reflect- that is, to see differently.