

Through the Looking Glass

Exhibition of works by Marco Bagnoli & Vladimír Škoda

Curator: Miroslava Hajek

Organizer: galerie Cermak Eisenkraft, cermakeisenkraft.com

Project authors: Miroslava Hajek, Vladimír Škoda, Marco Bagnoli, Tomáš Zapletal, Renata Vávrová

Location: galerie Cermak_Eisenkraft, SmetanaQ house, Smetanovo nábřeží 4, Praha 1

Duration: until 26 September 2021

Catalogue launch and meeting with the artists: 7 September 2021, at 6.30 p.m.

The exhibition is held under the auspices of the Italian Cultural Institute and the French Institute in Prague. The exhibition catalogue has been made possible thanks to a financial contribution from the State Fund for Culture of the Czech Republic.

The Cermak Eisenkraft Gallery, located on the premises of the pop-up SmetanaQ gallery, continues its series of unique projects with *Through the Looking Glass*, an exhibition of works by two world-renowned contemporary artists, Marco Bagnoli (Italy) and Vladimír Škoda (Czech Republic / France).

In their work, they both deal with similar themes, mainly the idea of space-time and its reflection. The results of their effort, despite having several common features, are different. The instrument that unites and simultaneously makes their work different, is the way they use reflective surfaces. The relationship between their visual search could be interpreted as a meeting between two parallel memory tracks that at a certain point recognize each other and cross paths, despite not having been aware of each other before. However, it is interesting to note that the two artists began to use the reflecting surface almost at the same time, at the end of the 1980s, both getting there with different characteristic properties as their starting points. What unites them, though, is that they embarked on their journey through alchemy, not through kinetic art.

In his pursuit, Marco Bagnoli tries to uncover and reveal that what otherwise remains unobserved. His art helps us to recognize the complex relationships between the various possibilities of reality compared to how we can understand it. Through the medium of the mirrored dish, Bagnoli creates sequences of reciprocal reflections. The projections make magically appear memory-like shards of visions. Bagnoli's main theme, however, remains his concept of space in relation to time.

Vladimír Škoda blends in his work the emotionality of manual activity with technology and scientific aesthetics. His use of mirrored surfaces strives to surpass the limits of human perception by exploring the possibilities of visualizing the invisible; searching for that which connects us to the set of parallel universes penetrating the multiple infinities of microcosm and macrocosm. His work approaches the question of our relationship with space, with movement, with the relativity of time.

Seeing the works of Marco Bagnoli and Vladimír Škoda together in one space, discovering and comparing their creative paths, convinces us not only of their importance for the history of art but it also makes us understand the importance of aesthetic investigation of the visual arts for better understanding of the universe, placing it on an equal level with science.

(excerpt from the text by Miroslava Hajek)

Cermak Eisenkraft



Marco Bagnoli (1949, Empoli). After a scientific education culminating with a degree in chemistry, he began to make art in the 1970s. Important international exhibitions include the Venice Biennale (1982, 1986, 1997); documenta, Kassel (1982, 1992); and Sonsbeek, Arnhem (1986). He has also held solo exhibitions at prestigious institutions such as De Appel, Amsterdam (1980, 1984); Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, Geneva (1985); Musée Saint-Pierre art contemporain, Lyon (1987); Magasin, Centre National d'Art Contemporain, Grenoble (1991); Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rivoli, Turin (1992); Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci, Prato (1995); IVAM, Centre del Carme, Valencia (2000); Czech Museum of Fine Arts, Prague (2009); and Madre, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Donnaregina, Naples (2015).

In 1981, he created a major installation in the Villa Medicea La Ferdinanda, Artimino, and he followed this project with works made in dialogue with historically and spiritually significant architecture in Florence, including the Pazzi

Chapel (1984); the Octagonal Hall at the Fortezza da Basso (1989); the Abbey of San Miniato al Monte (1992, 1994, 2012, 2018–2019); Forte di Belvedere (2003, 2017); Boboli Gardens (2013); and Stazione Leopolda (2014).

In May 2017, Bagnoli opened his Atelier Marco Bagnoli in Montelupo Fiorentino, a multifunctional space conceived as a "total work of art" showing his works from 1972 to the present.

Since 1976, he has created numerous permanent installations, including works for the Palazzo Durini and Piantagione Paradise in Bolognano, Pescara; *Ascolta il flauto di canna* (Listen to the Cane Flute) (1985–2007) and *Dacché sia notte, entra* (Since It Is Night, Enter) (2007) for the park of Villa La Magia in Quarrata; *Amore e Psiche* (Cupid and Psyche) (2010); Parco Mediceo, Pratolino, Vaglia; *Immacolata concezione* (Immaculate Conception) (2011), ChiantiBanca, Piazza Duomo, Florence; and the fountain *L'anello mancante alla catena che non c'è* (The missing link to the chain that does not exist) (1989–2017), Piazza Ciardi, Prato.

For the celebrations of its millennium (1018–2018), the Abbey of San Miniato al Monte commissioned Bagnoli to create *Janua Coeli*, an installation of works inside and outside the basilica. In 2018, Germano Celant published the monograph *Marco Bagnoli* (Skira, Milan) with previously unpublished texts by the artist.

In June 2020, his restored fountain *Cinquantasei nomi* (Fifty-Six Names) (1999–2000) was re-installed at the entrance to the Castello di Rivoli and his sculpture *Come figura d'arciere* (As a Figure of an Archer) (1993–2019) was installed at Leonardo da Vinci–Fiumicino airport in Rome.

His work can be found in many private and public collections: MAC, Lyon; Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci, Prato; GAM, Turin, Castello di Rivoli, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin; Collezione Longo, CAMUSAC, Cassino; Fattoria di Montellori, Fucecchio; Garrison Art Center and Magazzino Italian Art, New York; and Museum Madre, Naples.



Vladimír Škoda (1942, Prague) lives and works in Paris. Ever since childhood, Škoda has had a positive relationship with mathematics and physics. He was trained as a turner-miller and also took an interest in drawing and painting. In 1968, he left Czechoslovakia for France, where he studied at the *École des Arts Décoratifs* in Grenoble (1968–1969) and later studied in César's atelier at the *École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts* in Paris (1970–1972), where he began to devote himself to sculpture. From 1973 to 1975 he stayed at the Villa Medici in Rome, where he created a series of sculptures made of iron wire. In 1975, he created his first works in a smithy, a process that led to his creation of monumental sculptures in the late 1970s. After his first solo

exhibitions at the Primo Piano gallery in Rome (1975) and gallery BLU in Milan (1975), he created the monumental sculpture *Horizontal – Vertical* for the *Situation 1* symposium in Regensburg (1979). After this, he began to exhibit throughout Europe.

After the solo exhibition *de l'intérieur* (from the interior) at the Musée d'Art Moderne in Paris (1987) and after much practice as a blacksmith in 1988, Škoda began to make use of the perfect sphere in his work. He further worked the surface of his spheres by cutting grooves into them or damascening, drilling, and polishing them. His first spherical polished mirror sculpture dates from 1991. After being inspired by the permanent motion of the pendulum in 1994, the following year he presented his first sculpture on this topic, *Hommage à Foucault* (Homage to Foucault) (1994–1995) at the exhibition *Constellations* at Prague's Rudolfinum Gallery. The installation *Kora* (1995–1996) represents the best of the dynamics and technique of the pendulum's motion (it is the first time he used a polished concave mirror), as does *badria*, which he showed at the exhibitions *Cosmos: du romantisme à l'avant-garde*, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Montreal (1999), and *Cosmos*, Palazzo Grassi, Venice (2000). In 1999, he created his first in a series of vibrating and revolving mirrors titled *Miroirs du temps* (Mirrors of Time), which he presented, among other places, at exhibitions curated by Miroslava Hajek: *Specchio del tempo*, Spoleto (2006); *Fourth Dimension*, Trade Fair Palace, National Gallery Prague (2007); and *Johannes Kepler – Mysterium Cosmographicum*, Museum Kampa, Prague (2018).

In his work with metals, Škoda uses a variety of processes and techniques such as interference, magnetism, and polarity. In 2001, he created the interactive sculpture *Sphères*, and his many years of experimentation with perforated steel produced a series of works titled *Sphères de ciel – ciel de Sphères* (Spheres of Heaven – Heaven of Spheres), created for the Domaine de Peyrassol Sculpture Park in the south of France (2006), the Fondation Clément in Martinique (2018), and FIAC, Jardin des Tuileries in Paris (2018). In 2010, he was inspired by optical and chromatic aberrations to create a series of photographs with the same title. In 2020, he created a monumental sculpture titled *Pointillées aborigènes* for the Opale Foundation in Lens, Switzerland. In 2019, Paris-based Art Absolument published the book *Vladimir Skoda* about his work from the 1980s to the present.

Vladimír Škoda's work can be found in a number of public and private collections: Centre Pompidou, Paris; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; CNAP, Paris; Musée d'Art moderne et contemporain, Strasbourg; Musée Cantini, Marseille; National Gallery Prague; Prague City Gallery (GHMP); Museum Kampa, Prague; GASK, Kutná Hora; SDK – Galerie Neue Meister, Dresden.

The exhibition is accompanied by a Czech-English catalogue with texts by the following authors

Miroslava Hajek (* 1947, Brno) is an exhibition curator and art historian with a focus on modern and contemporary art who has lived in Novara, Italy, since 1969. She graduated from the School of Applied Arts in Brno and studied art history at the Faculty of Arts of Masaryk University in Brno (1965–1969). She was a member of the avant-garde art group *Brněnská bohéma*. In 1969, during a scholarship stay in Italy, she was politically convicted in her absence and rehabilitated only after 1989. She founded and managed the cultural centre UXA– Studio d'arte contemporanea in Novara, between 1970–2000. She was systematically interested in the work of artists using new technologies and new media (Bruno Munari, Franco Vaccari, Gianni Colombo, Jean Tinguley, François Morellet, Joseph Beuys), colour theory in abstract and concrete art, new figuration, visual poetry, and sculpture (Karl Prantl, Marco Bagnoli, Vladimír Škoda). In Italy, she presented the work of many Czech and Slovak artists in solo and group exhibitions (Jiří Kolář, Milan Knížák, Václav Bošтік, Miloslav Moucha, Jan Mladovský, Pavol Binder, Dalibor Chatrný, Adriana Šimotová, Běla Kolářová). In 1992 she curated the exhibition of modern Czechoslovak art in Florence. In Czech Republic, she collaborated with the Klatovy - Klenová Gallery, in the late 1990s and with the Czech Museum of Fine Arts (GASK), after 2000. In her work, she seeks the connections in European art of the 20th century, primarily between Eastern and Western Europe, especially in futurism, kinetic art and in the works using new technologies.

Jean-Pierre Luminet (* 1951, Cavailon). French scientist, astrophysicist, writer and poet, specializing in black holes, in the history of cosmology and in particular in the emergence of the concept of the Big Bang. He is an emeritus research director at the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), a member of the Laboratoire d'Astrophysique de Marseille (Marseille Astrophysics Laboratory) (LAM), Laboratoire Univers et Théories (Laboratory for the Universe and Theory) (LUTH) of the Paris Observatory and a visiting scientist at the Theoretical Physics Center (CPT) in Marseille. He has been awarded several prizes on account of his work in pure research and science communication. In 1979, he created the first "image" of a black hole with an accretion disk. In 1982, along with physicist Brandon Carter, he introduced the concept of a Tidal disruption event (TDE), the destruction of a star passing in the vicinity of a supermassive black hole. In 1995, with his colleague Marc Lachièze-Rey, he coined the technical term "Cosmic Topology" for describing the shape of space. The asteroid n° 5523 *Luminet*, discovered in 1991 at Palomar Observatory, was named after him. He has published many scientific books and his professional theories about cosmic phenomena have achieved world fame. He serves also on the editorial board of *Inference: The International Review of Science*. He is interested in the relations between science and art and has collaborated with various artists on the concept of works and texts inspired by scientific discoveries.

Zdislav Šíma (* 1947, Prague). Astrologer and writer. His scientific interest was focused on the binary stars and more later he was engaged in the problems of the gravitational fields of the planets of the Solar system. Now he focuses on the satellite geodesy and the history of astronomy in the Department of Galaxies and Planetary Systems of the Astronomical Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague. Since 1990 he is responsible for the astronomical specification of the old astronomical clock of Prague and its function and is engaged in the reconstruction of sundials (Břevnov Monastery, Prague; Parliament building, Prague; Zlatá koruna Monastery). He also dealt with sextants from the period of Tycho Brahe. Minor planet n° 29 477 *Zdikšíma*, discovered in 1997 at Klet' observatory, is called after him. He was a member of the International Geoid Service – Special Working group on the GSFC/DMA Model Evaluation (1995-2004) and of the Czech National Astronomical Committee which is representative of IAU (International Astronomical Union) in the Czech Republic (1994–1998). He is currently a member of Special

Commission SC3 *Fundamental Constants* (SCFC) of the IAG/IUGG, *Inter-Commission Committee on Planetary Geodesy* of the IAG/IUGG and of Società Astronomica Italiana (Italian Astronomical Society). He is a frequent media contributor, and the National Library in Prague published his book *Astronomie a Klementinum* (Astronomy and the Clementinum), in 2001.

Links

Marco Bagnoli is represented by the following galleries:

Studio Trisorio, Naples
Galleria Giorgio Persano, Turin
Galleria Christian Stein, Milan and Pero

Vladimír Škoda is represented by the following galleries:

Cermak Eisenkraft gallery, Prague
Galerie Catherine Issert, St. Paul de Vence
Galerie Wittenbrink, Munich
Galerie Hoffmann, Friedberg

cermakeisenkraft.com
[instagram.com/cermak_eisenkraft/](https://www.instagram.com/cermak_eisenkraft/)
smetanaq.cz

miroslavahajek.org
marcobagnoli.it
vladimirskoda.fr
[wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Pierre Luminet](https://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Pierre_Luminet)
galaxy.asu.cas.cz/~sima/

About the gallery

The Cermak Eisenkraft Gallery was established in 2014 with the ambition to become a major player in the field of post-war and contemporary Czech art as well as world art. Founders Tomáš Zapletal and David Železný, are independently active in the Czech art market, and have as their main goal and ambition the creation of a trustworthy, reputable and internationally important institution. An institution that engages with creatively demanding art work, and which contributes to the promotion and expansion of the art market in the Czech Republic. The CE Foundation, now in its second year supports both Czech and foreign artists in their activities and actively cooperates with the gallery. For example, the foundation has supported the following artists: Magdalena Jetelová, Milan Kunc, Vladimír Škoda, Jiří Černický, Šimon Brejcha, Martin Velíšek, František Matoušek among others.

Currently, the gallery owns two exhibition venues in Prague:

- . Cermak Eisenkraft gallery, Národní 9, Praha 1
- . Cermak Eisenkraft POP UP gallery, 3rd floor of the SmetanaQ house, Smetanovo nábřeží 4, Praha 1

Cermak Eisenkraft



Entry to SmetanaQ is free throughout the duration of the exhibition.

High resolution photographs on request: office@cermakeisenkraft.com

About the exhibition venue

Location History

The apartment building in a Classical style was built on the right bank of the Vltava in the years of 1846 –1847, and was developed from a project undertaken by the architect Bernhard Grueber. The ferryman's lodge No. 334 was on the site of the present house—the number being transferred to the new house and retained until today. The South side the house is bordered by a small bay of the river. It therefore slopes on this side according to its plan of design. Originally the bay was used as a river port for local masonry. After the development of the wharf, the bay eventually disappeared and Lažanský Palace is today in its place where you find the Faculty of Cinema and Television AMU. While the building was originally designed as a residential building, gradually through several renovations and transformations, it has in the twentieth century become an office building. Among the owners of the house were V.J. Rott, a Prague shipping company (Pražská paroplavební společnost), and the Czech Air Traffic Control Directorate (Řízení letového provozu ČR).

New life in the house on Smetanovo nabreží (Smetana quay)

In 2013, the building was damaged by a strong gas explosion in Divadelní Street nearby. The original owner secured the house with extensive repairs, and then subsequently sold it. At the moment, part of the waterfront house, Smetana Quay, has been completely rebuilt. Its opposite side, giving out into Divadelní Street is still inaccessible and, for reasons of stability, it is difficult to know at this time when it will be possible to fully use the second part of the house. The cultural vision of the current building combines galleries and conference venues, young designers and shops in the lower part, while also facilitating gourmet coffee and extended refreshments at Café & Bistro SmetanaQ.

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Project Partners



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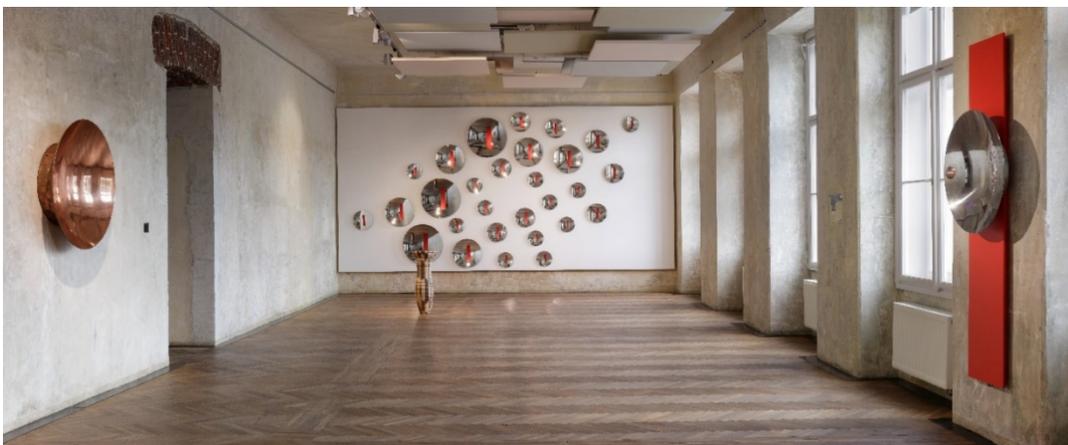
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Exhibition view



A look into the installation of Vladimír Škoda's works in the Cermak Eisenkraft gallery,
photo Martin Polák



A look into the installation of works by Marco Bagnoli in the Cermak Eisenkraft gallery,
photo Martin Polák