

LE STANZE DEL VETRO
A Fondazione Giorgio Cini and Pentagram Stiftung project

Venice, Island of San Giorgio Maggiore
14 May – 26 November 2023

Bohemian Glass: The Great Masters

Curated by Caterina Tognon and Sylva Petrová

The next exhibition at LE STANZE DEL VETRO will be dedicated to the Bohemian glass and its use after the Second World War

Together with the works by six trailblazing artists of contemporary Bohemian glass sculpture, a selection of photographs by Josef Sudek from the Glass Labyrinth series will also be exhibited



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The forthcoming exhibition organized by LE STANZE DEL VETRO will be ***Bohemian Glass: The Great Masters***, curated by **Caterina Tognon** and **Sylva Petrová**, which will run on the Island of San Giorgio Maggiore **from 14 May to 26 November 2023**.

The exhibition will recount the emancipation of Bohemian glass from its traditional categorization as applied and decorative art, as well as its use in the creation of influential abstract sculptural works in Bohemia (now the Czech Republic) after the Second World War.

At the end of the Second World War, the troubled political, social and economic conditions in Czechoslovakia, which lasted until the fall of the socialist regime in 1989, prompted numerous artists to devote their research to glass craftsmanship. These works, designed by artists and crafted in furnaces by local skilled makers, were presented by the Czechoslovak Communist government at international events such as Expos, Biennials and Triennials.

Following the Communist Party's seizure of power in 1948 and the imposition in Czechoslovakia of an aesthetic model based on socialist realism, a large group of artists devoted themselves instead to studying the characteristics and potential of glass as a *medium*. They applied innovative technological procedures, newly developed shapes and, above all, contemporary artistic concepts to glass: this new art form would play an extremely significant role in Bohemia throughout the 20th century.

The exhibition *Bohemian Glass: The Great Masters* will focus on the works of **six artists** who were trailblazers in contemporary sculpture. Born in Bohemia in the first decades of the last century, they were the first to study and use glass to create sculptures, stained-glass windows, architectural structures, installations, and site-specific works. They also pointed many younger generations towards this medium through an intense educational activity in professional schools and art academies.

The exhibition will open with works, crafted by great Bohemian glass masters using Venetian techniques, by **Miluše Roubíčková** (Prague 1922-2015 Kamenický Šenov) and **René Roubíček** (Prague 1922-2018). The incredible chromatic richness of this blown glass best

represents the work of the two artists – a couple in their private life, yet independent in their artistic output.

A characteristic narrative trait of Roubíčková's production is a representation of the female world in art that is far ahead of its time: through bouquets of flowers, trays of pastries, balls of coloured wool and jam jars, all rigorously made of glass, she presents what society at the time expected the female world to be like.

Roubíček's informal glass pieces are an expression of vitality and serenity, but at the same time they portray the great strength of spirit with which the artist faced a painful and difficult life during the years of the communist regime.

The exhibition will also present the work of **Václav Cigler** (Vsetín 1929). His late-1960s designs of visionary installations and architecture would later lead him to create sophisticated optic crystal works of great impact in terms of purity and minimalism.

The exhibition will then feature the works by **Vladimír Kopecký** (Svojanov 1931). Strongly performative in his work, he is known for his use of transparent industrial glass as a “canvas” for abstract paintings of great chromatic breadth.

Special attention is devoted to the couple **Stanislav Libenský** (Sezemice 1921-2002 Železný Brod) and **Jaroslava Brychtová** (Železný Brod 1924-2020 Jablonec nad Nisou), who from the 1940s devoted themselves to research and experimentation with glass *casting* or *open-mould casting*, while at the same time teaching at the Academy of Applied Arts in Prague.

Significantly, the *casting* method was to become synonymous with modern Czechoslovakian glass. For over sixty years, Libenský and Brychtová investigated its technical possibilities and came up with works that were majestic in size, as well as remarkable in their purity of colour and transparency.

The exhibition will close with photographs by **Josef Sudek** (Kolín 1896-1976 Prague) from the ‘Glass Labyrinth’ series, taken within the exhibition ‘Contemporary Bohemian Glass’ which was held in Prague in 1970 at the time of the 5th congress of the AIHV – the Association Internationale pour l'Histoire du Verre. By sharing his remarkable point of view, Sudek – often referred to as “the poet of Prague” – re-interprets the intrinsic relationship between glass and light in the works from this important, historic exhibition.

In anticipation of the exhibition, we would like to remind you that the **online bookshop** of LE STANZE DEL VETRO at www.lestanzedelvetro.org is always open with a wide selection of specialist books for glass lovers. You can also purchase a selection of DVDs and catalogues from former exhibitions at LE STANZE DEL VETRO at a special price.

To keep up to date with the latest news, we recommend following its social media profiles (@lestanzedelvetro) and subscribing to the monthly newsletter via the website.

Information:

Production:	Fondazione Giorgio Cini and Pentagram Stiftung
Title:	<i>Bohemian Glass: The Great Masters</i>
Curators:	Caterina Tognon and Sylva Petrová
Dates:	14 May – 26 November 2023
Opening hours:	10 am – 7 pm, closed on Wednesdays
Venue:	LE STANZE DEL VETRO, Fondazione Giorgio Cini
Address:	Island of San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice
Tickets:	free entry

Catalogue: Skira
Info: info@lestanzedelvetro.org, info@cini.it
Website: www.lestanzedelvetro.org, www.cini.it

Getting there:

Visitors to the Island of San Giorgio Maggiore can take the Actv 2-line *vaporetto* to the San Giorgio stop from:

San Zaccaria (journey time of approx. 3 minutes)
Train Station (journey time of approx. 45 minutes)
Piazzale Roma (journey time of approx. 40 minutes)
Tronchetto (journey time of approx. 35 minutes)

For further information:

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