

CARRARA TABLES AND MUSEUM PIECES - Jasper Morrison

This show ? Fifteen black resin pieces, fifteen white resin pieces, thirty pieces in all, that when displayed become the « museum pieces » of the title.

Where is Jasper Morrison going with this gesture of enclosure ? Is he shifting the territory of his pieces, here, «museum pieces» ? Does it mean that his pieces are leaving expected territory and that he has suspended their use through this movement of enclosure, put function on hold to make them pieces to be looked at exclusively ?

The second gesture, their making, abolishes all possible use, some pieces are solid or single blocks, others give the impression that here, too, something is awry, when others seem to retain the promise of use.

We could start by describing the first ones by calling them vases with blocked necks, but we must go further, these vases are solid, their function is not merely suspended due to the display case, they can have no function.

A bowl ? We can just about use the term receptacle, even though we would be hard pressed to find an element that could be contained in it, the impression of a suspended use, a distant functionality returns.

A jewellery box, a receptacle for medicine? We could perhaps associate them with archaeological pieces, cosmetic accessories for Ugaritic women, but the container and its lid are one.

Exhibition:
from September 9th
Until October 14th 2006
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Opening reception :
Thursday 9th September 2006
from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Open Tuesday to Saturday
from 11a.m. to 7p.m.
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What will these thirty pieces, enclosed in display cases, become exactly ? Pieces to show, to look at of course. These museum pieces resemble Morandi's work in places, perhaps they are objects from Chirico's metaphysical period, perhaps also, they remind us that the painter used to say he could only capture certain objects when « surprised by certain arrangements of objects » and that the whole mystery of the question was, for him, contained in that word : « surprise ». So with these pieces, a new understanding of objects, seen up close, from afar, but always enclosed in a display case, what have they become ? Can we possibly envisage a return to Jasper Morrison's archetypal figures, objects finally rid of all formality ?

These museum pieces behave like the shadows of the objects they represent, the resin "shadifies" the object and in so doing the pieces lose a dimension, I want to say they enter the second dimension ; the resin "shadifies" the object to force it, displayed, to render the white and black resin obsolescent giving the impression of a dis-incarnated object.

These museum pieces lose a dimension in « shadifying » themselves, from a distance and in a display case they no longer appear to have only two dimensions, they are but are a merely plastic representation. These museum pieces no longer call for the gesture or the promise of happiness, nor the atmospheric effect of the super normal , the manifestation of a little everyday happiness taken quickly like a sip of wine from his old glass.

A design lesson to strongly remind us of the level of commitment of Jasper Morrison ? It could be a part of the answer given by this exhibition ; put a stop to the excesses of today, the designer disguised as an artist moving masked through a gallery disguised as a museum. Jasper Morrison's anger, born from his irritation faced with the artistic posing of some ? Here, he effectively installs the deadly « wall » whose pitfall he denounces but whose design he wishes to keep : Every thing but the walls is, after all, the title of his book.

A little index for Jasper Morrison

Super Normal : « Some time ago, I found some old hand-made wine glasses in a junk shop. At first I was taken with their shape, but later on, as I used them every day, they became much more than just pretty shapes ; I noticed their presence in a totally different way. To the extent that if I use other glasses, I feel like something is missing from the table. When I use them again, the atmosphere comes back and each sip of wine is a pleasure, even if the wine itself isn't that great... This wine glass is the sign that indicates something that is beyond normal as it transcends normality. There is nothing false in the normal of course, but... » Domus, April, 2006.

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Looking for Atmosphere

« I think in general the most exciting thing for me is how people live and what they live with, and the influence objects have on everyday atmosphere, and that's what gives me the impulse to do new things and to try to get them right.» « Perhaps my instinct is to suppress Form by trying to seek out more archetypal forms because that procedure very effectively suppresses the formal part of an object. When you look at an object, if the overriding impression you get is that it's something you never saw before, then probably that's Form speaking louder than everything..»

Jasper Morrison in conversation with Charles Arthur Boyer and Federica Zanco, Dis Voir, 1999.

The unimportance of form...

« The designer is often seen as a giver of form to an industry whose technological expertise will allow production. Like most things its not that simple and in this case there can be no text-book approach to a particular problem, solutions are always arrived at in unexpected ways. Occasionally a form will arrive, either through hard analysis or, more satisfyingly, intuition and chance. Restricting the probability of finding appropriate form to these two unreliable sources is a mistake.

Its a fact that the physical appearance of an object is to most people most of that object's presence, but perhaps too much importance is attached to it. If we thought form less important we might develop a sensibility for other qualities in an object. Designing in a way that allows other aspects of an object's make-up to propose its form may be a step in the right direction.

«The unimportance of form », Ottagano, 100 May 1991