

Jiří Staněk: Brightness

19. 10. 2022 – 14. 1. 2023

Curator: Jiří Dušek

Exhibition architecture: Jakub Němec

Fait Gallery PREVIEW

The Eye, its Brain, our Universe and Jiří Staněk's Wavefronts

Sight is a miraculous organ and clearly the most important human sense. Through it we receive up to eighty percent of information about the world around us. It is an amazing result of evolution which has brought it to near-perfection over tens of millions of years. Its marvellous anatomy, the intricate processing of the captured image, the interaction between the eyes and the brain - we still have only very vague ideas about all this.

Yet the wondrousness of our world goes even further... A stream of visible light, i.e. light which the human eye can perceive, sometimes acts like a staccato of the individual elements and sometimes like a wave, and not only at the level of the imperceptible microworld but also in our own eyes. The passage of light through the cornea, lens and the vitreous body is defined by the laws of geometrical optics. And we know that it only takes a few dozen individual photons to irritate the light-sensitive cells - cones and rods.

We don't know why our eyes get flooded with tears as a result of an emotional outburst. We don't know why nature has endowed us with the sclera that enables us to communicate without words. We don't know why the sensitivity of our eyes - unlike many other living organisms - is so limited. We don't know why and how the human brain can organise so well the chaos our eyes record. We don't actually see reality, the perceived world is not real. Everything is a stream of photons that is somehow interpreted by our brain - everything exists only in our imagination.

Jiří Staněk also took the path of visualization of waves and elements. His grids of paper installations are in fact macroscopic wavefronts that change appearance with the viewing angle of an astonished viewer. On closer inspection, they resemble detailed views of the surface of the Sun. The surface is structured by granulation, i.e. peaks of upward currents several hundred degrees warmer than the surrounding environment, which transfer energy from the inner areas towards the surface.

Thanks to this, the visible part of the Sun is heated to the temperature of five and a half thousand degrees Celsius. Thanks to this, life on planet Earth has been possible for four billion years. Thanks to this, the eye that has hatched from the brains of our ancient ancestors can perceive its own universe. Thanks to the imagination of the artist Jiří Staněk and the visitors, the *Brightness* exhibition exists.

Text: Jiří Dušek