

Glass works as Phenomena

No other materials split into existence and appearance so much as glass. You see the most extreme examples of this split in the cases of windowpanes and mirrors. You look out of the window, and you look at yourself in the mirror. In either case, you don't see the glass itself; the glass itself disappears to do its duty. There exists the glass, but it does not appear as itself. Here the existence and the appearance are definitively separated from each other.

Transmitting and reflecting light ----- it is one of the most important properties of glass as material. And perhaps between the perfect transmission and the perfect regulated reflection, glass can be seen and recognized as it is, to present itself. In keeping a certain balance of transmitting and reflecting light, glass gets its appearance as glass and shows us its existence.

But what does ((appearance as glass)) mean? How glass appears when we notice ((existence of glass)) ? In ordinary materials and objects other than glass, their appearances refer to their existences for certain. Their appearances correspond with their existences. The occidental epistemology has defined cognition as coincidence of subject with object: to accomplish right cognition, we should take or see things as they are. But what does ((seeing glass as it is)) mean? Perhaps no one can ever imagine a piece of glass that has one stable ((appearance)) corresponding to its existence. I suppose ((appearing as it is)) of the glass means that it appears variously changing its appearances every time according to its surroundings with light included and the positions of its viewers. In another words, as opposed to the ordinary materials and objects whose appearances converge to their own existences ((as they are)), appearances of glass fail to converge, playing with one another and continuously slipping off, not to attain its existence. Such plays and movements of appearances as do not attain its existence, we might say, give notice of the existence of glass at a meta-level.

Toshio IEZUMI makes his pieces out of these properties of the material, by using the techniques of carving, grinding and polishing the laminated glass. In his works, transmission, reflection and refraction of light play an important part. He brings forth its appearances out of glass and makes them play with one another — I'm not speaking exactly, for he does not produce neither ((appearances)) nor ((plays of appearances)) themselves. What he actually does is to laminate glass plates into a mass, and then to carve, grind and polish it. Through these process a ground and polished mass of laminated glass is made. There must be some ((arrangement)) made by him in this mass(perhaps it is very important for him, and he writes about it in this catalog.) But until we see it, no ((appearances)), no ((plays of appearances))

brought about Our ((seeing it)), to be exact, our ((looking around it)) with our eyes and heads and bodies moving, which necessarily ought to be a kind of action at a certain place in a certain surrounding conditions, makes glass show its existence as glass. This act completes his works. His works cannot be in themselves (an sich). Participation of viewers and that of surroundings are necessary for his works to be accomplished. His works do not complete in themselves as ((object)) over there, but get completed dynamically between properly treated masses of glass and viewers. Viewers are made to take part in his works.

For example, people often talk of the ((depth (or profundity))) about Toshio IEZUMI's works. The ((depth (or profundity))), which phenomenology has willingly considered, do not make sense out of all relation to a certain viewer situated in a certain place: the ((length)) can be objective, but the ((depth (or profundity))) cannot. So that a piece may have ((depth (or profundity))), there should be a viewer who looks in it. In this sense, the ((depth (or profundity))) in glass works is a kind of phenomenon. It is different from that of painting in perspective founded on a fixed viewpoint of its author.

Strictly speaking, we can see same things in every ((work of art)). But considering that glass has a property of ((spilt into appearance and existence)) (or vague correspondence of them), and that Toshio IEZUMI founds his works on such property of this material, it's natural that his works assume further character of phenomenon

MORITA Aki

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