

CZECH CENTER

ČESKÉ CENTRUM

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press release

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**The participation of the Czech Republic in the ICFF international fair, New York, 2010 and in the gallery of the Czech Center NY.**

May 15 – 18, 2010  
Jacob K. Javits Convention center  
New York, NY 1001

May 17 – June 11, 2010  
Czech Center NY  
321 East 73rd Street  
New York, NY 10021

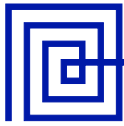
### **Opening exhibiton at the Czech Center NY on Monday 17 at 6:30pm**

• At this year's event, the ICFF international fair will once again critically evaluate the ability of Czech firms to attract public attention through their products' technical execution and quality of materials and their inventive approach to design. Represented are both large, time-honoured companies with a decades-long history and emerging, loosely-associated groupings of designers-producers. Based in various towns and cities throughout the Czech Republic, the exhibiting firms seek inspiration in local tradition, while embracing the opportunity to participate in the global market.

The history of the TON company that has the oldest tradition among the companies presented dates back to the mid-19th century. In 1861, Michael Thonet founded in Moravia a number of factories that produced his celebrated bentwood chairs. These items, still manufactured using the original technology, continue to enjoy commercial success to this day. TON ranks with the world's most accomplished seating-product manufacturers, exporting its articles to countries of the European Union, the United States, Japan and Australia. At the ICFF, the company presents a new collection of chairs named *Stockholm*, produced after the design of the Danish designer Mads K. Johansen. The Moser company based in the spa resort of Karlovy Vary has recently celebrated its 150th anniversary. The Moser trademark epitomizes the exquisite quality of its internationally-acclaimed luxury drinking sets and decorative objects, executed in both clear and coloured crystal. During the 20th century, Moser collaborated with prominent Czech designers and continues to take pride in fashioning limited editions of glass objects designed by renowned Czech artists of all generations, among them René



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Roubíček and Jiří Šuhajek. At the ICFF, the company is presenting a new collection by the name *Fresh*, composed of works by the young and middle generations of designers, including Olgoj Chorchoj, Jan Čtvrtník, Rony Plesl and others. The noted glassworks in Světlá nad Sázavou, specializing in machine-cut crystal, has renewed its production under the trade name Bohemia Machine. At the ICFF, the firm is showing a collection of glass with simple optical patterns created by young designers. After the fall of the Communist regime, Jiří Belda re-launched in North Bohemia the family establishment founded in the early 20th century. Now named Belda Factory, the firm has become the most accomplished Czech producer of modern fashion jewellery, which experiments with uncustomary materials, such as steel, titanium and plastics. Belda Factory creates small jewellery sets in partnership with young and middle generations of designers, including artists such as Filip Streit and the internationally-acclaimed architect Eva Jiříčná.

- The Brno-based companies A.M.O.S. design and ATEH lighting went into business shortly after the Velvet Revolution. Initially, the firms engaged in the importation and sales of lighting fixtures produced by major foreign manufacturers, but later added their own products. A.M.O.S. design supplies furniture and lighting, specializing in new materials such as Corian and collaborating mainly with the designer and architect Vladimír Ambroz. ATEH lighting produces both standard and unconventional lighting fixtures. In cooperation with DIVAN Studio, the firm has executed the new product lines *Flower* and *Engine*.

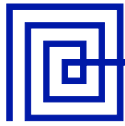
- The Process cabinet-making company has been successfully collaborating with the youngest generation of designers, for example, Lucie Koldová – a fresh graduate of the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague. Koldová was awarded the Discovery of the Year prize by the Academy of Design of the Czech Republic for her furniture collection designed for Process, which is also being shown at this year's ICFF. The furniture and interior accessories manufactured by Ardeco Interiér are characterized by superior-quality wood and excellent workmanship. On view at ICFF is its unique *Toscha Square Table*.

The following Czech design studios, established in the early years of the 21st century and based on the close partnership of designers, producers and wholesalers, have already gained an international reputation. With its headquarters in the Moravian town of Mikulov, Studio Piršč, founded in 2005, specializes in the manufacture of limited editions of porcelain sets. Marked by unusual techniques, the porcelain products comprise original tableware, vases and even porcelain wallpaper, all invariably imprinted with a distinctly personal, humorous and poetic style rendered by their designer Daniel Piršč. The Prague-based Studio Qubus Design operates its own shop and manufactures unconventional interior accessories. These items, chiefly designed by Jakub Berdych and Maxim Velčovský, are imbued with a conceptual and often ironic play on the meanings and functions of objects and materials.

Among the companies that have emerged only recently in the Czech Republic are firms specializing in the production and sales of hand-made glass. Space CZ is an establishment striving to combine time-proven glassmaking techniques employed in the country over many centuries with designs created by prominent contemporary Czech



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artists. The company sells its products under the trademark VERREUM. The artworks made by Lasvit are intended to highlight the emotional impact of glass in indoor and outdoor spaces. Young designers, including Jitka Skuhrová, Daniel Jaček, Alena Matějková and Lene Bosket, create for Lasvit collectors' ensembles, lighting sets and glass sculptures that decorate many interiors throughout the world. The Marubi company boasts a distinctive type of merchandise – massive stone vases distinguished by superb craftsmanship. On view at this year's ICFF is the representative exhibition project called *Křehký* (Fragile), organized by the Profil Media agency. The glass and porcelain objects created by European designers (e.g. Alfred Haberli, the Belarussian artist Natassia Aleinikova, the Polish design studio *Kompott*) are intended to evoke the emotional landscape of the home under the title "The Micro-World of Joy". It was at last year's ICFF in New York that the *Křehký* thematic collection was granted an award.

- The array of Czech companies presented at ICFF in New York offers a glimpse at the country's traditional and innovative production, and the designers' inventive spirit. Two decades after the collapse of Communism in Czechoslovakia, design is beginning to play an important and stimulating role in diverse spheres of public life. Among the most prestigious events are the annual week-long *Designblok* festival, organized by the Profil Media agency since 1998, which has become one of the largest European shows of the kind. The Academy of Design was founded on the initiative of Designblok's organizers, which has been granting the Czech Grand Design Award each year since 2006. Activities in the field of design are monitored on the web sites DesignGuide.cz and Czech Design.cz, and in the periodicals *Dolce Vita*, *Blok*, *Okolo* and *H.O.M.E.*

Iva Knobloch

- Curator, Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague

**Organizing institution: The Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic**

**Installation: Expo s.r.o.**

**In collaboration with: The Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague**



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