



Together-vase. Photo: Jani Kaila

Glass innovation through product design and art

Designer and artist Markku Salo began his career working on glass in 1983 when he joined the Nuutajärvi glassworks, the oldest glass factory in Finland still in operation. Today, Salo has his own workshop and gallery at the Nuutajärvi Glass Village, where all his work, from art to serial production, is still made by handcraft glassblowing techniques.

By Nia Kajastie

Markku Salo's design roots lie in a free form of art, which he began developing at the Art Institute of Kankaanpää. Soon afterwards he moved on to study industrial design at the University of Art and Design Helsinki (current Aalto University), a course that also touched upon applied art.

"You can actually detect these influences in my current work. I do serial production, as well as art and unique pieces," explains Salo. "It all comes down to my basic phi-

losophy, a certain survival technique, where I alternate between industrial design and art. While applied art is made for people with the end user in focus, and with plenty of conditions brought about by ergonomic and production-related matters; with art, on the other hand, you cannot think about anybody else. You won't be able to make so-called good art if you're bowing to the wishes of others. Basically I have to be clear in my mind what I am aiming to make: art, design or a product."

After finishing his industrial design degree, Salo began working for Finnish electronics company Salora, designing televisions and hi-fi equipment. But once a design position opened up at Nuutajärvi glassworks, he began his enduring relationship with glass, a path he has yet to stray from.

"The factory was still run according to the discipline of Kaj Franck [a leading figure in Finnish design], and we worked on glass



Stars, Stars. Photo: Muotohuone Oy



It Winds. Photo: Timo Kauppila



DIVA-series, champagne glass (hollow). Photo: Timo Kauppila

through serial production. It was a great way of being introduced to glass the hard way as there are plenty of boundary conditions, technical limitations and challenges within product design. I became well acquainted with glass as a material," Salo says.

Later on he returned to his artistic roots by designing as part of a small work group, and ten years ago he was among the founders of Lasikompania (Glass-company) and a designers and glass blowers' workshop at Nuutajärvi; he has continued on a similar path ever since. While the well-known Iittala factory at Nuutajärvi will be closing at the beginning of next year, the 220-year-old glassworks will continue to thrive as a lively glass village, with the help of the Glasscompany and the workshops.

From serial production to art projects
Salo's work available for sale at Gallery Markku Salo includes both unique pieces, as well as serial work under the Markku Salo Design trademark. In addition to the creation of a larger series of products, he also makes small batches of some of his work, including his Dogs collection. The Dogs, a theme he has returned to time and again, are now made of glass and metal and produced in a limited, signed 100-piece series.

Markku Salo was also recently chosen to create a two-storey artwork for the lobby of Tampere University Hospital's new building. In this large two-year project, he will be working together with the architect to create the best possible piece for the space available. While Salo is concentrating more on his artistic projects, his long-

running Diiva glassware series will also be supplemented with a new size, a dessert cup, this autumn.

Galleria Markku Salo
Nuutajärvi Glass Village
Pruukinraitti
31160 Nuutajärvi

The gallery is open upon agreement, as well as publicly for a couple of days yearly, and the dates are announced on Markku Salo's web page.

For more information and details for retailers, please visit:
www.markkusalo.com

Also visit Nuutajärvi Glass Village's own website:
www.nuutajarvi.fi



Crown Jewels. Photo: Muotohuone Oy



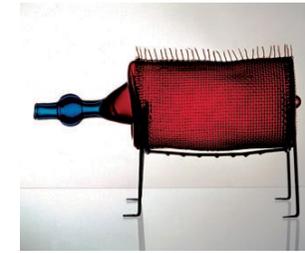
Maiden Dancing on Water. Photo: Muotohuone Oy



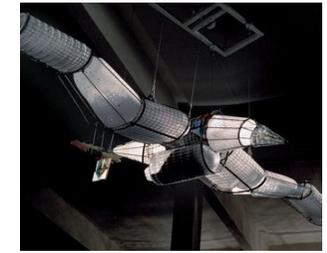
Inari-bottles. Photo: Timo Kauppila



Net Bottles. Photo: Timo Kauppila



Red Dog. Photo: Timo Kauppila



Danger of Frost. Photo: Timo Kauppila