

Vienna Contemporary 2022

8. – 11. September 2022

Kursalon Wien

1010 Wien, Johannesgasse 33

Zone 1 Z06

Julia Belova

Julia Belova's artistic practice deals with the aesthetics of the Baroque period, giving it a contemporary expression and addressing themes such as hedonism, sexuality, physicality, eroticism, but also religiosity. The playful, sculptural creations made of porcelain and wax represent certain role models or social movements. They point to the underlying conflict of societal positions versus subjective authenticity, bringing into play important issues for women\* and the LGBTQ+ community.

A magnificent chandelier hangs from the booth in true absolutist fashion, yellow snakes coiling from the chandelier, its outgrowths of yellow wax acting as a light source. By slowly burning the candles, the work would gradually dwindle, thematizing transience. In terms of content, however, the multiple snake metaphors point to the plurality of faces of evil. The choice of materials also reveals connections to the Baroque. At that time, porcelain experienced a high point primarily in the design of figurines, decorative objects, and tableware. Julia Belova, on the other hand, incorporates porcelain into the contemporary context and in her artistic practice uses the texture of the material to create imitations. The hard porcelain simulates a soft, flowing form characterized by sweeping movement and sumptuous rhythm, illustrating dualisms that were also ubiquitous in the Baroque period.

The symbolism of the snake is an archetype in cultural history, although its meaning or metaphor varies widely. In Christian mythology, it is depicted as a man-eating beast, messenger of the underworld or devilish temptress in the Fall, reprehensible and demonic, whereas in other cultural circles it evokes positive connotations. In the Hindu and Buddhist traditions of the Indian subcontinent, for example, the serpent is regarded as the patron saint of water and clouds, and in ancient Greece as a healer.

The comments on the exhibition presentation are based on a text by Paula Marschalek on the exhibition "Snakes have many faces" by Julia Belova as part of Sothebys Quarterly 2022.

**Julia Belova** ( \* 1991 in Tver, Russia) lives and works in Vienna and St Petersburg

since 2016 Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

2019 exchange semester - Royal Institute of Art Stockholm

2015 Specialized diploma in ceramics at the Academy of Design and Fine Arts of A.L. Stieglitz in St. Petersburg, Russia

#### List of works Vienna Contemporary Zone 1

1. "Creeping Cross", 2022, porcelain, glaze, 30 x 22 cm
2. "Burning heart I", 2022, porcelain, glaze, 10 x 9 cm
3. "Burning heart II", 2022, porcelain, glaze, 9x 8 cm
4. "Chandelier with yellow Snakes", 2021, porcelain, glaze, wax, 50 x 50 x 50 cm
5. "Chandelier with blue Snakes", 2022, porcelain, glaze, wax, 25 x 25 x 25 cm
6. "Large menorah with lilac snakes", porcelain, glaze, wax, 90 x 70 x 35 cm

Translated with [www.DeepL.com/Translator](http://www.DeepL.com/Translator) (free version)



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