

Victor Berezovsky

b.1974

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What is the relationship between art and everyday experience? Modernist art sought to exist in a pure realm, independent from the material world. In *Routines*, Victor Berezovsky joins the contemporary challenge to this idea by forcefully grounding art and art-making within everyday tasks and experiences.

Five locally made plates, painted on then fired by Berezovsky, hold sketchy drawings that track the routines of everyday living in a domestic environment. The banal subject matter is just one way this work speaks of ordinary, everyday rituals and gestures. The humble plates more readily belong in the kitchen sink or on the dinner table than in an art gallery. The muddy brown-black colours are those of household dirt and grime.

Philip Clairmont made art that is stuck in the interior spaces of the artist's house and head. He used the real world as a starting point, as something to be transformed or transcended through the act of painting. Berezovsky makes no such claims to visionary power, but he uses art to channel and capture the sights, smells and sounds of real experience. *Routines* insists that art's power comes from its responsiveness to the ebb and flow of the material world, to what is occurring around and between us.

Other works by Berezovsky invoke rather than picture these domestic rituals. Intensely personal items like towels and sheets are marked and stained, providing traces of the intimate routines of sleeping, washing and cleaning that are enacted upon them.

Berezovsky's practice connects to the use of found or recycled materials in contemporary sculpture, an approach started with the notorious Readymades of Marcel Duchamp. There is an element of assemblage in this bringing together of disparate materials and forms. The painting of domestic objects also embraces folk art traditions; 'everyday' art made by 'everyday' artists.

Berezovsky's art goes beyond the simple documentation of the real. He sucks a range of ideas, materials and creative energies from this flow between art and life, and then throws objects back into the world in variously augmented forms.

In his public works, Berezovsky reverses *Routine's* flow of everyday life into art. Instead of taking humble, everyday objects into the gallery, he transports the pristine forms of the gallery out onto the street. *Junction* (2007) was a large black and white abstract painting, temporarily sited on a central Wellington rooftop. Here, abstraction was forced to become part of the material world, rather than somehow existing autonomously. *Junction* slotted easily into this urban environment, playing on the way advertisers and designers have long lifted the forms and languages of high art for everyday purposes.

Plates come with the association of food and nourishment. *Routines* plays on this symbolism. It serves up a clear message – that creative nourishment can be found in the rituals and experiences of the everyday.

Aaron Lister

Artist website:

www.victorberezovsky.co.nz

Galleries and museums:

www.marynewtongallery.com

Web search:

Philip Clairmont

Marcel Duchamp's Readymades

