

NIKA ZUPANC

Grabs headlines – with her non-conformist works and infectious, unrestrained demeanour

You'd be forgiven if you presumed the creator of some of these provocative products is a tough-looking taskmaster. Instead, you meet a stunner with carefully defined features. Nika Zupanc is unafraid and unapologetic. Why would she go by the pseudonym, "Ordinary Life disturbed by Nika Zupanc"? She explains, "In my works, I deal with everyday subjects that practically, and ironically, personify mediocrity, boredom, and the cliched role of women in society. I hope to push the limits of aesthetics and twist pre-defined meanings." She lives, works and dreams in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Like the vibrant city itself, which is full of surprises, characterised by a unique fusion of complementing contrasts, her work starts from feminine archetypes, transforming the ordinary into the fabulous.

We know a nonconformist when we see one. With Nika, we knew it the minute we saw her work at Superstudio Piu, at the Milan fair this year. Perhaps the little girl in us never grew up or maybe we just love a dose of fantasy. Whatever the reason, the black polka dotted, Doll House with its chimney and billowing smoke hosting her exhibition, "I Will Buy Flowers Myself," got us excited like no other. So, when was the last time someone bought her some flowers? "I just got some pretty ones from my best friend at the opening in Ljubljana, a few days ago. I'm always happy when I get them but I also love to buy them for others," she trails off. As if on cue, she chimes back, "If I could be a fragrance, I would pick Tuscany Leather from Tom Ford." Now, what is a product, if it doesn't charm you? From Mrs Dalloway, Scarlett, Alexander to Konstantin Beta, Tapisserie and Unfaithful – her work is out to seduce you. And it's not an awkward romance.

Excited about her collaboration with design majors, Moroso and Moooi, she says, "I seek inspiration from the most ordinary things, which initially seem unimportant, cliches, memories..." The more you speak to Nika, the more you realise that she's just as free-spirited, as she is determined – believing in love at first sight, taking pride in being Pisces, passionately practicing yoga and not to mention, being obsessive about her treasured pair of Yves Saint Laurent shoes with embroidered flowers. ♦

Pragnya Rao

"I SEEK INSPIRATION FROM THE MOST ORDINARY THINGS...CLICHES, MEMORIES...."

Left, from **Top The Doll House**, an installation at **Salone del Mobile** this year, housed her exhibition, "I Will Buy The Flowers Myself"

Mrs Dalloway, for Gorenje, is a mini hot plate that looks like a fashion accessory

Tapisserie and Phonique for Gorenje, finished in black lacquer combines high-end minimalism with a touch of Goth

Nika Zupanc, Slovenia
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