

**LIGHT – PRISM**  
**VADIM KOSMATSCHOF**

In the project series devoted to light and its separation into the colors of the spectrum, Kosmatschof/Veech have created two works that show different ways of working with the “material” water. The project “Rainbow” was designed, in a first version, for a competition at the Universität Trier in 1986. When the sun is shining, water is pumped by means of solar energy into an arc-shaped form, from which it is ejected through fine spray jets, thereby generating water vapor and an attendant “rainbow”. An alternative version provides for a pneumatic structure, which – again, only when the sun shines on it, and powered by energy obtained by means of photovoltaic technology – slowly inflates to its full form. In the evenings, the structure shrinks back to its initial form. – “Spiral” works with similar effects. This object also originates from an entry in a competition and was originally designed for the main square in Wiesbaden. A large spiral form made of polished stainless steel lies in a pool of water. The progressively increasing radius of its coils results in an open cone shape, into which water vapor is blown. The sun’s radiation causes the colors of the spectrum to appear; if there is a light wind, the colorful clouds sway to and fro.

By integrating the elements of water and light into their kinetic solar sculptures, Kosmatschof/Veech show what a broad range of formal possibilities object art can have, even when limited to a few elementary forms of energy. The inclusion of wind and weather energies is done under controlled conditions; by no means do the artists use chance as a form-generating factor. The influences of the weather can only affect the artwork within a precisely planned scope.



In this project series, Kosmatschhof/Veech also show, however, how human beings can playfully reverse the forces of nature into their opposites: the “Rainbow” only rains if the weather is sunny – and in bad weather it reminds the beholder, through its inactive form alone, that rainbows only occur when the sun reappears. This can give rise to far-reaching associations and speculations: what if it were possible to be this creative with all natural forces, even the destructive ones? Essentially these projects demonstrate an optimistic viewpoint with respect to uncontrollable forces of this type: if we cannot influence certain things, we should at least be able to elicit positive side effects from them for the benefit of all. Moreover, the series shows – in spite of the technology involved – a certain aestheticization of nature that is reminiscent of Romantic paradigms. Here, too, the insignificant human being marvels at the great wonders of nature – but with a difference, because between Romanticism and the present lies modernism, which has given art new instruments of reception. The powerless wonder of the beholder has been replaced by an almost interactive relationship in which technological aids enable reciprocal relations between human beings and nature. These dialogues are the actual content of the solar sculptures by Kosmatschhof/Veech: human beings are in the keeping of the cosmos, but no longer lost.

