



Berman

JOEL BERMAN GLASS STUDIOS LTD

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Nortel unveils Berman's glass sculpture

Glass artist Joel Berman uses a combination of old world craftsmanship and information age precision technology to create a signature sculpture for international digital network giant Nortel.

In the lobby of Nortel Network's Atlanta headquarters hangs a perspectival glass sculpture consisting of panels of colored glass which makes oblique reference to both the mission of the company and its corporate logo. Designed by Vancouver based artist Joel Berman, the sculpture changes continuously depending upon the viewpoint of the perceiver. From a direct view, looking at the sides of the 100??? vertical panels, the piece appears light, almost transparent. But observed from a slight angle, the installation begins to take on a distinct three dimensionality, revealing brilliant colors which bloom into a retina-searing red and glowing cobalt blue when seen from an acute angle.

The colors were chosen in collaboration with Karen League of HOK Architects in Atlanta. The bold red at the top of the sculpture suggests the connectivity of Nortel's worldwide networks. HOK have also used this symbol of the red "live-wire" signal in a line pattern embedded in the terrazzo lobby floor. As the panels progress toward the bottom, the Nortel company color blue is subtly added into the mix, taking over completely on the lower section.

Although much of the firm's work is designed using sophisticated three dimensional modeling on a computer, such deft and skillful gradation of color in a fluctuating pattern can only be achieved by the hand of a master craftsman. In Berman's studio that task falls to Nenad Starbac a native of Sarajevo. Holding degrees in both industrial design and art restoration, Starbac is well practiced at negotiating the proper balance between the exacting science of design and an innate sense for blending colors in painting - combining new world digital production with old world artisanship.

In spite of the presence of taugth cables and precision-cut glass, connected by a rigid spine, the sculpture has a flowing, sinuous and elegant quality. In addition to the curved edge of the individual glass panels, the composition consists of a meandering cut line, inspired by the swooping arcs of Nortel's logo, traveling from left to right along a curved vertebrae. The repeating curve motif contributes a softening effect which invites the eye to follow along the sculpture's arcs and smooth transitions, vertically and horizontally from red to blue and back again.