BOK-MARKS

Neoavantgárd és posztkonceptuális pozíciók a magyar művészetben az 1960-as évektől napjainkig Neo-avantgarde and post-conceptual positions in Hungarian art from the Sixties to the present

Bak Imre / Erdély Miklós / Hajas Tibor / Jovánovics György / Kaszás Tamás / Keserű Ilona / Kis Varsó / Kokesch Ádám / Major János / Maurer Dóra / Ősz Gábor / Société Réaliste / Szabó Dezső / Szalay Péter / TNPU/IPUT (St. Turba Tamás) / Tót Endre / Várnai Gyula /

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2013 szeptember 20–28 kedd-péntek 12–18 szombat 10–13 1055 Budapest Balaton utca 4

acb / www.acbgaleria.hu **Kisterem** / www.kisterem.hu **Vintage** / www.vintage.hu





concept: acb, Kisterem, Vintage

19-28 September 2013

The aim of this exhibition realized through the collaboration of three galleries of contemporary art is to present the most defining artistic positions of Hungarian neo-avantgarde and post-conceptual art from the seventies until today. Miklós Erdély, Tibor Hajas, György Jovánovics, Dóra Maurer, Tamás St. Auby and Endre Tót are prominent figures of the unofficial art scene of the '70s and '80s. In their own time, their works remained almost completely unknown to the wider public – they worked in isolation, the significance of their art could only be recognized by a few fellow artists, professionals and friends. Their exhibitions, if they were allowed to have them at all, appeared in alternative spaces and were often immediately banned.

Even today, the art of the neo-avantgarde generation – whose significance is now known and recognized in professional circles as a result of partial processing – only lives on in its effects on the art of post-regime change generations. Explicit or hidden references to their predecessors from the '70s or '80s have appeared in the practice of such artists working within the paradigm of post-conceptual art, as Little Warsaw, Ádám Kokesch and Gyula Várnai, among others.

The exhibition, through the displayed works and by marking significant points of orientation, seeks to delineate a narrative whose main objective is to outline the character and directions of Hungarian contemporary art in the past few decades and the present, along the lines of the local tradition that developed as of the late '60s, as well as approaches based on local knowledge – intellectual and visual paradigms. Rather than a linear history of evolution, this narrative is a construct that attempts – based on, and looking back from, the defining artistic positions of Hungarian contemporary art in the 2010s – to bring together historical threads that have, directly or indirectly, played a central role in the various strategies and perspectives of Hungarian contemporary art.



Exhibitied Works:

BAK Imre

Splendid IV, 1970, 130x170 cm, acrylic on canvas, Private collection, Budapest, Kisterem Fire In Water, 1972, ink, paper, 60x40cm, Vintage Galéria Going up the Mountain, 1973, ink, paper, 50x70cm, Vintage Galéria Ancient Motif, 1977, acrylic on canvas, 130x150 cm, private collection Circle-Cross, 1979, acrylic, wood fibre, 120x120, cm private collection

ERDÉLY Miklós

Evening Action, 1969, 88x294 mm, silver gelatin, Kisterem Metafora I, 1972, each 120x165 mm, silver gelatin, Kisterem Metafora II, 1972, each 90x120 mm, silver gelatin, Kisterem Metafora III, 1972, each 90x120 mm, silver gelatin, Kisterem

Work photo to the "Time Travel" (V), before 1976, 49x59 cm, silver gelatin, Somlói–Spengler Collection, Budapest, Kisterem Work photo to the "Time Travel" (III.), 1976, 59,5x50 cm, silver gelatin, Somlói–Spengler Collection, Budapest, Kisterem Roll, 1980, silver print, 45x65x5cm, Vintage Galéria

Time Closure I, around 1986, 50x70 cm, photo, collage, Somlói-Spengler Collection, Budapest, Kisterem

HAJAS Tibor

Flesh Painting I-II, 1978, silver print, 18x24cm, fotó: Vető János, Vintage Galéria Surface Torture, 1978, silver print, 21x30cm. fotó: Vető János, Vintage Galéria

JOVÁNOVICS György

Petit Polichinelle, 1966, 34 cm, plaster, Courtesy of the Artist, Kisterem Fore-Curtain to the ECSTATIC MARIONETTE, 1979, 130x130 cm, plaster, Courtesy of the Artist, Kisterem

KASZÁS Tamás

Future-ex, 2010, 140x52x110 cm, layered wood, willow shoot, Kisterem

KESERÜ Ilona

Painting No. IV. 1965, 63x125 cm, oil, oil pastel, enamel on woodfiber, Courtesy of the Artist, Kisterem Study No. 1 (Homage to Vasarely), 1967, 70x110 cm, oil, enamel on canvas, Private collection, Budapest, Kisterem Approach!!, 1969, 120x170x4 cm, oil, embossed canvas, Kolozsváry Collection, Győr, Kisterem

LITTLE WARSAW

Re-function, 2009, 50 cm, light metal, Kisterem

KOKESCH Ádám

Untitled, 2010, 32x25x13 cm, acrylic on plexi, glas, plastic, metal stand, Kisterem *Untitled*, 2011, 25x19x20 cm, acrylic on plexi, plastic, vacuum holder, Kisterem *Untitled*, 2013, 32x25x13 cm, acrylic on plexi, plastic, painted plywood, Kisterem

MAJOR János

Self Observation, 1963, etching, 61 x 41 cm, private collection

Technical drawing, 1965, etching, 61 x 41,5 cm, private collection

The Memory of Móric Scharf, 1965-66, etching, 60,7 x 42 cm, private collection

Tombstone of Louis Cubist, 1971, photo (from 1969),4 page Concept Booklet, page 1 20x30 cm, private collection

MAURER Dóra

Magic Square, 1972, acrylic, branches, ink on panel, 90x62cm, Vintage Galéria Hidden Structures 1–4, 1977–81, graphit, paper, 65x51cm, Vintage Galéria 5 out of 4, 1979, acrylic on panels, 190x240cm, Küllői Péter gyűjteménye Sevet Twists I–VI, 1979/2011, silver prints, 20x20cm, ed5, Somlói Zsolt és Spengler Katalin gyűjteménye KALAH, 1981, 35mm film, 12min, light box with 35mm films, 80x60cm, Vintage Galéria

ŐSZ Gábor

The Colours of black-and-white, 2009, colour digital print on backlit film, 56x59cm each, ed5, Vintage Galéria

SOCIÉTÉ RÉALISTE

A Gift from Birobidzhan, 2011, cast iron, 130 x 75 x 30 cm, acb Gallery Infinite Dollar, 2011, varnished forex, 130 x 75 x 30 cm, acb Gallery

SZABÓ Dezső

Sky Views XII/VI-VIII, 2002, C-print, 40x60cm, ed5, Petrányi Zsolt gyűjteménye

SZALAY Péter

SLANG 01 (Ricochet), 2013, jemmy, tablespoon, 60x30x20 cm, acb Gallery

ST.AUBY Tamás

Visual Poem No 20, 1967, mixed technique, 85x22 cm, Irokéz Collection Czechoslovak Radio, 1968, 1969, mixed technique, 17x12x7 cm, Collection of Hella Pados Sandwich, 1969, paint, woodboard, 31x17x8 cm, private collection Southeast Radius, 1972, visual poem (paper, copper sulfate, sac), 31x21 cm, private collection Biochemistry's influence on Our Father, 1983, oil on fibreboard, 53x83 cm, Irokéz Collection

TÓT Endre

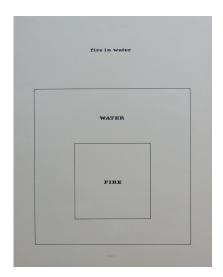
Im fed up with painting, 1972, oil on canvas, 90 x 90 cm, acb Gallery *JOYs 1-3*, 1972/75, collage, 70 x 100 cm/piece, acb Gallery *TOTal Zeros 1-6*, 1972/75, enamel plate, 22x 17 cm/ piece, AX Collection

VÁRNAI Gyula

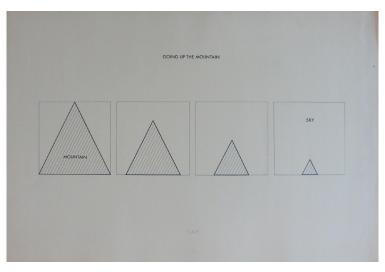
Philophony, 1999, sound installation (2 reel-to-reel tape recorders, 2 pairs of speakers, a human voice repeating 'One' on one of the tapes, 'Two' on the other), 160x120x30 cm, Szűcs Collection

BAK Imre (1939)

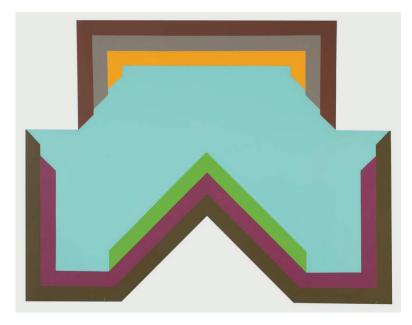
Studied at the Painting Faculty of the Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts from 1958-63. In 1968-69 participated in the IPARTERV exhibitions. From 1966, he produced his first hard edge paintings. Between 1970-79, his conceptual works produced with photography, text and offset collages, examine the plane and the physical nature of space. In 1971, awarded a scholarship and exhibition at the Folkwang Museum in Essen (with György Jovánovics). His first solo show opened in the Műcsarnok/Kunsthalle Budapest in 1977, and in 1986 he showed in the Hungarian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale (with Ákos Birkás, Károly Kelemen, István Nádler).



Fire In Water, 1972 ink, paper, 60 x 40 cm Vintage Galéria

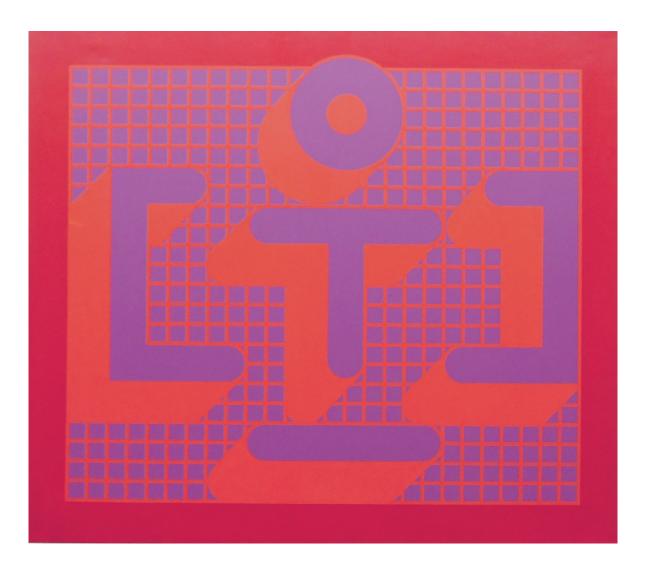


Going Up the Mountain, 1973 ink, paper, $70 \times 50 \text{ cm}$ Vintage Galéria



Splendid IV, 1970 acrylic on canvas, 130 x 170 cm Private collection, Budapest Kisterem

In the seventies, following his conceptual period, Bak returned to painting. Aside from the lessons learned from his own hard-edge works of the late sixties, he was also influenced by signal art. Traces of folk art, among other traditions, are also apparent in his use of motifs. The shapes and signs in his paintings form a system, expressing certain spatial, dynamic, atmospheric and emotional contents. The semiotic approach – which, at that time, permeated cultural anthropological research as well – is also characteristic of Bak's research of signs and forms in folk art. It was the constructive nature and the compositional methods of folk art – the juxtaposition of symmetry, motifs and colours as equivalent elements – that influenced Imre Bak the most.



Ancient Motif, 1977 acrylic on canvas, 130x150 cm private collection

Imre Bak, pointing past the traditional use of materials, produced his first cut-out, varnished wood paintings in 1969. These works represent a transition between painting and object, as a logical consequence of the artist's earlier endeavours of objectifying the artwork (switching to acrylic paint and shaped canvases). In the second half of the seventies, following his return to the medium of painting and also utilising the experience gained from his research in semiotics and form, Bak's variously shaped paintings transformed into plastic signs. One of the most important – and undoubtedly most emblematic – works from this period is *Circle-Cross*, which indicates the presence of the third dimension not only in its medium, but also in the axonometric, quasi-sculptural formulation of the symbol.



Circle-Cross, 1979 acrylic, wood fibre, 120x120 cm private collection

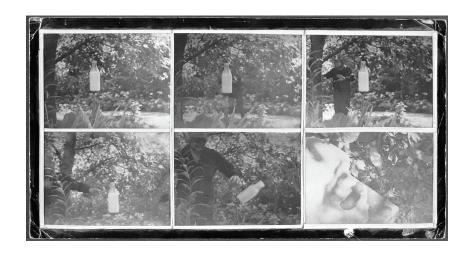
ERDÉLY Miklós (1928–1986)

Miklós Erdély was a prominent and unparalleled figure of the period preceding the political changes, a prohibited, or barely tolerated artist, as well as architect, writer, poet, filmmaker and the leader of a number of art courses between 1975 and 1986. One of the aims of his activity in art pedagogy, by his own admission, was to "produce the milieu in which it is worth working at all." Hungarian artist, teacher, theorist, filmmaker, was an important catalyst on the unofficial Hungarian art scene during the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s. From 1962 Erdély lived with his family at Buda in a house which he later rebuilt, and which was a venue for artistic events and a meeting-place for artists in the 1960s and later. These included for example Tamás Szentjóby (1944) and Gábor Altorjay (1944), the authors of the "first Happening in Hungary". Erdély became interested in many of the developements of the time, such as happenings and the work of the Fluxus group, he himself, however, felt greater affinity with conceptual art and took part in the late 1960s and early 1970s in a number of avant-garde exhibitions and programs with his conceptual 'textual actions' and series of photographs accompanied by texts.

Erdély made these three photos in the seventies, which comprise the most enigmatic series of his photographic works ranked as conceptual art. Enigmatic, not only with respect to the subject portrayed, but also because he never declared the intention of these works, and up to the present day, no one has carried out a complex analysis of them. To our knowledge, during the period they were made, these works were never shown at exhibition.



Metafora I, 1972 silver gelatin, each 120 x 165 mm Kisterem



Metafora II, 1972 each 90 x 120 mm, silver gelatin Kisterem



Metafora III, 1972 each 90 x 120 mm, silver gelatin Kisterem

ERDÉLY Miklós (1928–1986)

Architect, filmmaker, writer, artist. One of the most multifaceted personalities of Hungarian Neo-Avantgarde art. In his theoretical writings, he was engaged with possibilities for new expression in the various artistic branches, with artistic activities themselves, and with the notion of art. In the mid-1970s, he organised two exhibitions at the Young Artists' Club, Möbius, and Montage. From 1975, he led the Creativity Exercises art circle, in part, together with Dóra Maurer, and then in 1977, he launched FAFEJ (Fantasy-Developing Exercises), and in 1978, the INDIGO (Interdisciplinary Thinking) course, which became a school of moulding individuality among a new generation of artists. His first retrospective show was at the Óbuda Gallery in 1986.



Roll, 1980 silver print, 45 x 65 x5 cm Vintage Galéria

HAJAS Tibor (1946-1980)

Action and performance artist, poet. Hajas, starting out from the Budapest underground community, paired his early conceptual artworks inspired by Fluxus, and actions (Letter to my Friend in Paris, 1975) with texts. In 1976, shot his film entitled Öndivatbemutató (Self-Fashion Show) in Budapest's Moszkva Square, in which passers-by addressed in a random mode stand before the camera as models of themselves. From 1978, in his performances exclusively for the camera – recorded by János Vető, his own body becomes the medium. In these theatrical, yet extremely ritualistic actions, he researched his own mental and physical limits. His retrospective exhibition was arranged at the Anderson Gallery (Richmond, VA, USA) in 1990 (Nightmare Works: Tibor Hajas), and at the Ludwig Museum Budapest in 2005 (Kényszerleszállás/Crash Landing).





Flesh Painting, 1978 silver print, 18 x 24 cm each fotó: VETŐ János Vintage Galéria



Surface Torture, 1978 silver print, 21 x 30 cm fotó: VETŐ János Vintage Galéria

JOVÁNOVICS György (1939)

"The artist of an invisible ecstasy" - these words could identify the innermost character of Jovánovics's art. At the same time he has also thrown light upon that profound and mysterious power that pervades all the work. Behind the glistening layers of plaster there lies a complex texture of thoughts, feelings, and associations, and at their meeting points or "collision" emerge, in the wake of gentle earth-quakes and softly rolling waves, new orders of thoughts, feelings, and associations. In the inner depth of every work there quivers the glow of an almost unnoticeable, invisible ecstasy, whose subsiding waves imperceptibly yet boldly shape the surface of the composition. The uniqueness of Jovánovics's works may be attributed to those nearly inconceivable dimensions opening up beneath the surface of the works that are dimensions of different ages and cultures

The first piece of Jovánovics's great relief period was made in 1979 (Fore-Curtain to the Ecstatic Marionette). This work is a kind of introduction to the later years, a "fore- curtain," suggestively recalling the works of the previous period. In it we see the return of drapery, an old theme, but this time without figure or object, solitary and isolated. From here on this will be the theme, form, and subject matter of his reliefs. In the case of the Fore-Curtain that suppressed, literally concealed movement, the drama of the muted folds of the drapery, which are to be the source of mystery in the later works can be apprehended as something more simple and unfinished. The material is more solid, and only the finely wrought, sensitive line of the cast edges betray the fragile and vulnerable world underneath.



Fore-Curtain to the ECSTATIC MARIONETTE, 1972 plaster, $130 \times 130 \text{ cm}$ Kisterem

KASZÁS Tamás (1976)

Kaszás usually creates complex projects, inspired by theoretical researches, using traditional and new media as well. Mixing poetic images with useful inventions in his exhibiting practice autonomous art pieces appear mostly with special constellations in the frame of large installations (visual aid constructions – as he calls them). His projects generally based on social questions and spiritual science. Keywords as collectivity, collapse and survival, living in nature, self sustainability and autonomy, theory vs practice, folk science, home made homes, cargo cult, fictional anthropology, visual aid, etc. might give an idea about his most important topics.

The Future-ex refers to the artist's keyword "cargo cult", which is a religious practice that has appeared in many traditional tribal societies in the wake of interaction with technologically advanced cultures. The cult focuses on obtaining the material wealth (the "cargo") of the advanced culture through magic and religious rituals and practices. These cultural differences are not exclusively the result of geographical separation but also being placed at another time-line. The artist designed a fictive anthropological object that could have been made out of nostalgia by a neo-primitive society after the collapse of our modern society.



Future-ex, 1972 140 x 52 x 110 cm layered wood, willow shoot Kisterem

Ilona Keserü (*1933 Pécs)

One of the most important members of the Neo-avantgarde artist generation starting in the early 1960s.

Her first, childhood master was Ferenc Martyn, former member of Abstraction Création (Paris), subsequently settling in Pécs, whose pictures made in the spirit of European Non-Figurative Art and whose mentoring and guidance influenced Keserü's art fundamentally. During the period of Socialist Realism, to mature in proximity to abstract works of art, or even to see the birth of abstract images at all, was one of the most defining moments of exceptional force on Keserü's career.

The Martyn type of alternative training was for a time in a conflictual relation with the Academy of Fine Arts in Budapest, where though Keserü learned and acquired everything eminently, the bound, figurative system of the fifties was alien to her temperament and nature. She wanted something more, and something radically different.

It is her sojourn in Italy in 1962-63 that brings inner, intellectual liberation, where Keserü first encounters fresh, contemporary artworks – for instance, the drawings of Cy Twombly, and the canvases of Alfredo Burri. The distance, and the discovery and rekindling of elementary devices, like drawing, lead her back to the unbroken terrain prior to her "training". The period between 1964-69 when these works are born, is a brief and important period in her oeuvre. The colour and the sudden, concentrated gestures break out from Keserü like an unexpected, passionately new material, recording the motions of her hand and bringing a message from some deeper and more personal strata. She is now excited by the birth of the picture-process and she measures out the feasibility of the forms brought to the surface with drawings (dishevelled circles, interwoven organic forms) on a larger space. In the compositions based on the materiality of explosive colour and angry/soft touches that are handled with control, the painting, as simultaneity and processivity of action, appears. Keserü exercised control by numbering her paintings from one to ten, like an experiment accompanied by incalculable consequencess and unexpected results, and the entire "action" is endowed with high stakes. From the series, Nos. I, II, III, IV, VIII, and X were realised, i.e., six pieces in total.

Painting No. 4 (1965) is thus also the recording of a state, in which she always stops the implosions of pastel, chalk, pencil traces and colour and shepherds her few repetitive motifs – circles, figure-eights, beanlike forms – in a determined direction. In the course of painting, forms appearing with the power of gesture and becoming independent precipitated, later forming into signs of rich meaning.

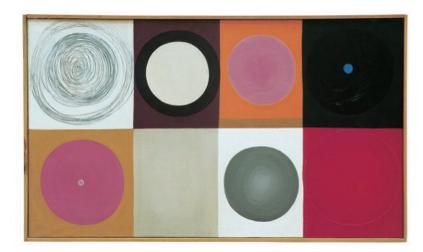
The differenciated terrain of the survey of arrangement and gestures is the pair of pictures painted in homage to Vasarely (Study 1 and 2, 1967). Alongside the passion, we willingly mention the control: Keserü here surveys, sets the forms that have broken to the surface – now not in the fever of gesture, and adjusts them to each other.

What can the honour of Vasarely mean in this work? Between 1955 and 1965, Victor Vasarely engaged with the infinite permutations of a few basic colours and geometric forms, which on the one hand were the further thinking of the function of ornament – and on the other hand, it was precisely this that opened the way to the various applications of optical illusionism. It would be rash to state that Keserü was not interested in optics or illusionism – spearately or together - because in the 1980s, this was an emphasised and concentrated area in the After- Image cycle – but in this phase, the composition was much rather occupied with the assessment of her own visual empire: a literal survey. Neverthless, in Vasarely, Keserü was interested not in the optical illusionism, but in the logic of his visual thinking, and not the surface vibration, but the structure leads back to her own, real, saturated set of forms – and in another cycle, to the questions around folklore and ornament. The encased form, which she found to analyse, is not new: already in the 15th century, those folded, portable sample books of regular square divisions, were also in use among wandering painters, serving as "reference material". Keserü also produces an extract from her set of forms that is the most her own, the most fought for: the circle. There are antitypes for some of the numbered paintings, there are those that released from that, show newer formations - and with this, the desire for referentiality arises for the first time in Keserü. Here is the colour transition, the circle rendered decorative, which is here a target, there centrifugal eddying, or an excuse for the clash of colours, or the universality of monochrome. Only the tangle does not comply with analytic treatment of the gesture under control. These forms appeared as concrete actions, as processes written into one another, when the numbered pictures were made. With Keserü's emphasis, thinking about the object became plastic; the alignment and the functioning opened new dimensions, and with the analysis, the forms' internal rendering resulted in a new level: sign-creation. Such found symbols that could easily stand instead of the pictures/ impressions substituting real things. Much space is given to the analysis and concretisation because this leads - in part - to the new period indicating the Tombstone series, unfolding in the course of 1967. It is common knowledge, and a fairly cliché fact, that Keserü, on an occasion in the Balaton highlands, in the Balatonudvar cemetary, recognised in the form of an early 19th century heart-shaped tombstone, the motif that would determine her painterly instincts until now. Keserü heightened it, and purifying feelings and nostalgia from their obscure medium, contemplated it in objective lucidity, and recreated it in countless versions. The Double Form (1969) is one of the earliest of these forms turned symbol, a sculptural configuration grown monumental.

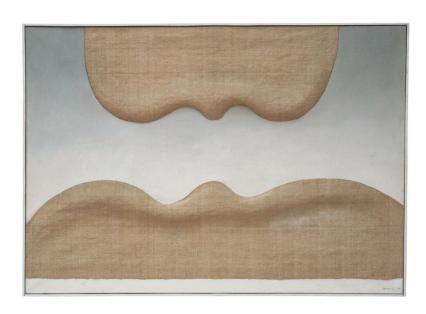
Ilona Keserü (*1933 Pécs)



Painting No 4, 1965 oil, oil pastel, enamel on woodfiber 63 x 125 cm Courtesy of the Artist Kisterem



Study No. 1 (Homage to Vasarely), 1967 oil, enamel on canvas $70 \times 110 \text{ cm}$ Private collection, Budapest Kisterem



Approach II, 1969 oil, embossed canvas 120 x 170 x 4 cm Courtesy of the Artist Kisterem

LITTLE WARSAW

András Gálik (1970) and Bálint Havas (1971), who had spent their childhood of the 70's and 80's in communist Hungary, began their collaboration in the late 1990's. Since then they call themselves Little Warsaw. The focus of their work is a visual language that deals with the collective consciousness or sub- consciousness of the (Hungarian) society and the role of the artist himself in contemporary society.

Little Warsaw creates ambiguous situations by reflecting upon specific cultural traditions and examining them through unexpected art interventions, which are often perceived as a provocation by the public. They analyses the possibility of historical memory and the development of a collective consciousness, often with its tragic-comical consequences. Their work is widely presented throughout Europe and in the United States in highly estimated institutions such as the Stedelijk Museum - Amsterdam, the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, the GFZK – Leipzig, or the Apex Art Gallery in New York. A most recent publication is available on Little Warsaw at the MIT book: Art After Conceptual Art.



Re-Function, 2009 light metal, 50 cm Kisterem

KOKESCH Ádám (1973)

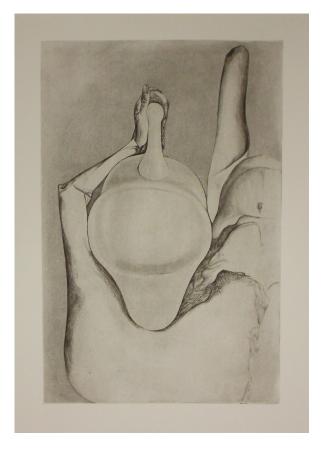
Graduated from the Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts, from Dóra Maurer's interdisciplinary painting class. The question addressed by his art is the assignment of forms and functions to each other. His objects – at the mercy of the visitors' palpating visual interpretation – move on their orbit of interpretation, and so they do not completely erase their origin as they are born. The artist's mainly plexi- and wood-based objects and the way they are exhibited, invokes a kind of laboratory situation and function. Nevertheless the forms, and the attached symbols and qualities "only" imitate function, their aim is not to make the exhibition's visitors believe what they see: namely the exhibited pieces would actually be capable of real scientific measurements, or in this case, floating.



Untitled, 2010
32x25x13 cm, acrylic on plexi, glas, plastic, metal stand
Kisterem

MAJOR János (1934-2008)

This piece is among Major's first elaboration of a motif he continued throughout his life, the iconic self portrait that is at the same time brutal and humorous, expressing feelings of stigmatization, isolation, sexual longing and humiliation. Here the artist is looking down at his own body, while holding a ceramic bedpan under his armpit, the handle of the pan suggests a penis that is gently held in the hand.



Self Observation, 1963 etching, 61 x 41 cm private collection



Technical drawing, 1965 etching, 61 x 41,5 cm private collection

As the title indicates, this image of a lamp with a broken light bulb is inspired by product illustration etchings of turn of the century product catalogues, which were drawn in excruciating detail. The hyperrealism of the industrial product is juxtaposed to images that evoke decaying bodies, bones and other flesh like substances.

Móric Scharf, was the key witness in the first "modern" anti-Semitic trial in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, in 1882 in the village of Tiszaeszlar. The 13 year old Móric was coerced into bearing false testimony against his father and his coreligionists. The work shows the psychological process of Móric's moral and spiritual deformation: "The tragic figure of the child who rejects his parents suggested to me the idea that I focus on the deformation of the soul, in such a way that allusions to the horrors of the nazi regime are juxtaposed – as they would be in Scharf Móric's mind – with provocative images evoking disgust and antipathy." Major thus represents Móric as the quintessential victim of totalitarianism, with whom anything can be done and who can be made to do anything. He usually referred to this etching as his 'masterwork', it was certainly one in its ability to provoke, its publication in a catalogue, along with "Kike (Biboldo) washing himself" promptly ended his career as an officially tolerated artist.



The Memory of Móric Scharf, 1965-66 etching, 60,7 x 42 cm private collection

MAJOR János (1934-2008)

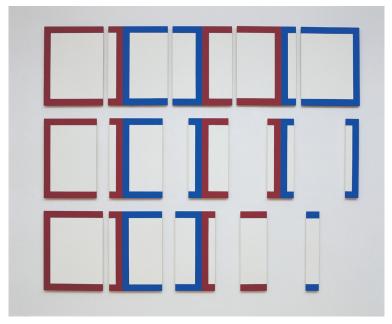
In their 2007 installation piece entitled Consumables, the artist collective Little Warsaw reflected on how János Major was the invisible man of the Ipartery-generation and, at the same time, a figure indispensable to the Hungarian neo-avantgarde's group identity. But how did Major achieve this paradoxical status? Judging by the quality of his work, at the beginning of his career Major was one of the most talented and ambitious of the graphic artists of his generation. In the post 1956 era, graphic arts had come to have a special status in Hungary with prominent stars and large scale exhibitions (it was also an area in which experimentation was tolerated). Major elaborated an unusual style, a masterful blending of visually and emotionally oppositional elements, using techniques and symbols from the renaissance through pop art, by the way of surrealism and realism with a particular penchant for the grotesque. But it was more the subject matter: the artist as existentialist anti-hero living in a totalitarian reality and cursed with a "Jewish complex" that drew the attention of the cultural censors. In 1970 Major's work caused enough of a scandal, when it appeared in the Ipartery II exhibition's catalogue, to still find mention in a secret police memorandum in 1972. The censors had labeled his work 'pornographic" and "inciting to racial hatred". The charge of anti-Semitism so outraged Major, a Holocaust survivor himself, that he sent his response to several officials (including György Aczél) and subsequently exhibited versions of these letters as concept art pieces. It was not simply Hungarian anti-Semitism that was a taboo subject at the time but the probing of issues of individual identity, the quest for critical self- knowledge, went completely against the grain of the totalitarian mindset. While never wanting to get involved in politics and less enthusiastic about "aping the West" than some of his contemporaries, through his artistic production Major bore witness and voiced an unyielding moral protest against totalitarianism that resonated with the radicalism of the neo-avantgarde.



Tombstone of Louis Cubist, 1971 photo (from 1969) 4 page Concept Booklet page 1 20x30 cm private collection

MAURER Dóra (1937)

Absolved her studies in 1961 at the Painting and Graphic Faculties of the Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts. Between 1975-77, she led the study circle Creativity Practices at Ganz-Mávag with Miklós Erdély. Alongside her own creative praxis, her pedagogical and organisational/curatorial work are important. She is active in a number of genres and media. Aside from paintings, she produces graphic work, photography, film and installations. Her series that employ geometry, colour theory and various theories of perception are at once playful experiments and scientific observations.



5 out of 4, 1979 acrylic on panels, 190 x 240 cm Küllői Péter gyűjteménye



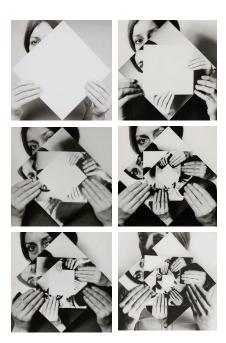
Hidden Structures I-IV, 1977-81 graphite, paper, 65 x 51 cm Vintage Galéria



KALAH, 1981 light box with 35mm films, 80x60cm Vintage Galéria



Magic Square, 1972 acrylic, branches, ink on panel, 90x62cm Vintage Galéria



Seven Twists I-VI, 1979/2011 silver prints, 20 x 20 cm each, ed5 Somlói Zsolt és Spengler Katalin gyűjteménye

ŐSZ Gábor (1962)

Studied in the Painting Faculty at the Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts, and continued with post-graduate training at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam. Lives and works in Amsterdam. His conceptual photo and video works investigate the fundamental characteristics of the medium. In the course of the Liquid Horizon (1999-2002) project, he used the World War II concrete bunkers of the Atlantic Wall as a camera obscura. This work was the beginning of his series in which he uses edifices as camera obscurae – which he calls collectively "Camera Architectura". In his The Colours of Black and White (2009) and Blow-Up (2010) series, with the manipulation of the space, he is engaged by the representational questions of the photographic image.



A fekete-fehér színei The Colours of black-and-white, 2009 colour digital print on backlit film, 56x59cm each, ed5 Vintage Galéria

SOCIÉTÉ RÉALISTE (founded in 2004)

The Paris--based artist--cooperative examines the representational techniques of power, using the methodology of the social sciences. Rather than looking at direct power propaganda, their investigations explore less obvious domains, such as architecture, consciousness of history, typography, and even mapmaking. Their descriptive works register – or juxtapose – facts, use the representational techniques of the present and recent past, offering correlations in the form of documentation, graphs, and other visual aids. Their critical attitude assumes shape in their choice of topics, through which they reflect on numerous aspects of the historical, political, and economic conditions of the contemporary world.

The infinity symbol is a result of an evolution of the Latin language. In Imperial Latin the concept of "great non--quantifiable number" was transcribed by the capital cursive letters CIC. With the evolution of handwriting techniques, in the upper Middle Ages, Latin scribes converted to uncial scripts and ligatured the CIC into ∞, by a natural gesture of the wrist. Also, it is said that the American dollar sign is derived from a glyph engraved on 8--reales Mexican coins. However, opinions differ as to whether the sign represented a crossed out 8 or the Pillars of Hercules united by the royal ribbon bearing the phrase "Plus Ultra". The breaking of the complete circularity of the barred 8 or the ribbon linking the worlds and opening the oceanic door to infinity would transform the signinto \$.



Infinite Dollar, 2011 varnished forex, 130 x 75 x 30 cm acb Gallery

SOCIÉTÉ RÉALISTE (founded in 2004)

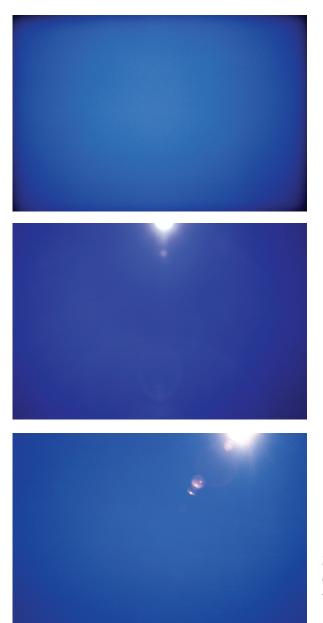
Jewish territory (oblast) in eastern Siberia, close to the Chinese border, with the capital city of Birobidzhan. A group of Bauhaus architects travelled to the place to plan the modernist extension of the city, but the sudden outbreak of the war has thwarted the completion of the construction. This manhole cover displays the map of the existing city encircled by the envisaged extension. Its medium also refers to Chandigarh, an iconic landmark in the history of urban planning, the first planned city in India after its independence, where even manhole covers were designed by Le Corbusier. In 2011 the international press reported that dealers have made thousands selling furniture from the city after buying the pieces from officials unaware of their artistic worth. The work is a representation of modernistic ideas and modernization efforts existed in the history of the former communist region.



A Gift from Birobidzhan, 2011 cast iron, 130 x 75 x 30 cm acb Gallery

SZABÓ Dezső (1967)

Studied between 1990-97 at the Painting Faculty of the Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts. After his early monochrome paintings, his interest turned to photography. He records the scenes of air and natural disasters (Black Box, 1999), various natural phenomena (Tornado, 2001), enigmatic locations (Location, 2000), and deep-sea photography, on his small film camera, modelled from still photos extracted from television programmes, for the most part. With the re-creation of the scene and the image, Szabó questions the mechanisms of the functioning of images and their contemporary status. The self-annihilating logic of the maquette and the chosen subject matter indicates a kind of extreme in the modelling of the scene in his Time-Bomb series (2008).



Sky Views VI-VIII, 2002 C-prints, 40 x 60 cm each, ed5 Vintage galéria

SZALAY Péter (1981)

Although Péter Szalay has earned his degree in sculpture, he works with such varied media as object, installation, lightbox, performance, and video. His works are often operable machines made of simple materials and found objects, or their components. In his art, he successfully combines DIY aesthetics known from Eastern European conceptual and neo--conceptual art with the latest advances in technology.

In Szalay's essentially intellectual works, there is always emphasis on the meaning--making function of material realization (operation, use of materials), which constitutes an important dimension of interpretation. The thematic of his works is extraordinarily multifaceted, ranging from marvelling at the metaphysical essence of simple physical phenomena to reflecting on the social, cultural and artistic phenomena of the present. His critical attitude is revealed by the ironic tone that often appears in his works, sometimes in the form of language games, at other times as visual games or gags.



SLANG 01 (Ricochet), 2013 jemmy, tablespoon, 60x30x20 cm acb Gallery

ST.AUBY Tamás / IPUT / Tamás ST.TURBA (1944)

Tamás St. Auby (also known as Szentjóby, Stjauby, Emmy / Emily Grant, St. Aubsky, T. Taub etc.) was initially a poet and cartoonist before becoming a "neo--Socialist Realist". In summer 1966, together with Gábor Altorjay, he organised the first happening in Budapest, The Lunch – In memoriam Batu Kán and thus gained a record with the Hungarian secret service under the code name "Schwitters". In 1968, he founded the International Parallel Union of Telecommunication (IPUT), of which he is now superintendent. In 1969, he organised the first Fluxus concert in Budapest. In 1965 St.Auby created his first intermedial objects. These works' realization was originated from Duchamp's ready--made concept, but at the same time was influenced by the approach of Fluxus and of Conceptual art.



Sandwich, 1969 paint, woodboard, 31x17x8 cm private collection



Visual Poem No 20, 1967 mixed technique, 85x22 cm Irokéz Collection

Tamás St. Auby had exceptional role in introducing and propagating intermedial thinking and such phenomenons intermitting non--traditional media, as happening, fluxus, actionism, actionist cinema. As creator of 'non-- art--artistic' products striving to the critic--based transformation of art and life, and as organizator and transactor of key events (exhibitions, reading events, flux--concerts) St. Auby was a determinative personality of the Hungarian neo-- avantgarde from the mid--1960's. He began writing tradition--oriented poetry in 1963 and later on as a member of the Dull Poets' Circle, participates in competitions of poetry about subjects of current politics. From the mid 1960's he started to create visual poems in the spirit of Fluxus.

Of all the events of 1968, Hungarian neo--avantgarde art was most influenced by the occupation of Czechoslovakia, which followed Prague Spring. Tamás St. Auby heard about the march of the "friendly, socialist countries" into Czechoslovakia by listening to a portable radio. The civilian population used tactical opposition against the occupying forces: they turned traffic signs to mislead the foreign troops. On another occasion, when radio listening was prohibited by the authorities, people walked the streets with bricks wrapped in newspaper. Patrolling forces confiscated a number of such "brick radios" throughout the country. In 1969, inspired by such resourcefulness on the part of the common folk, Tamás St. Auby marked the edges of a brick with lines of sulphur. The fluxus object entitled Czechoslovak Radio 1968 is a defining piece of the artist's oeuvre. It can be regarded as an anti--war monument offered to the people, while its limitless reproducibility attests to the practice of non-art art, which till today remains a unique characteristic of St. Auby's art.



Czechoslovak Radio, 1968, 1969 mixed technique, 17x12x7 cm Collection of Hella Pados

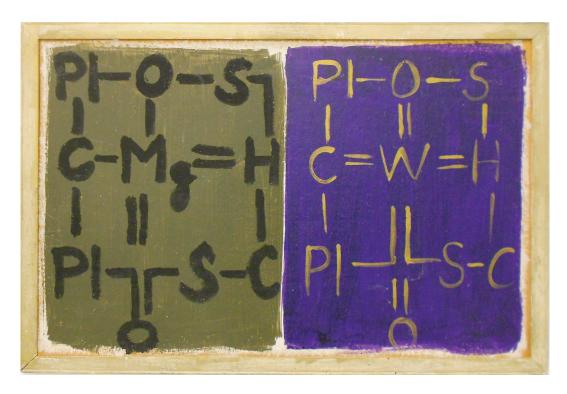


Southeast Radius, 1972 visual poem (paper, copper sulfate, sac), 31x21 cm private collection

At the meeting point of fluxus and conceptualism, his intermedial objects, which reflect the physical nature of matter, bring together incredibly complex contents, from alchemical implications to the actionist possibilities inherent in static objects. The combination of organic objects, as well as organizing them into interactions and a unique system of relationships, serve to produce a radically new quality or connection: "Sulphur is the material that Szentjóby uses (as of 1969) in the most consistent manner, not only in objects, but also in poems and actions, adding or combining other materials with it: coal, blood, tobacco, spirits, cottage cheese, honey, wafer, copper sulphate, water, (magnetic) iron, salt, sperm, gauze, ambergris, reed, (fire extinguishing) foam, pasta, and mercury. He formulates a native language that has little to do with even the most modern material use in painting or sculpture. While in the latter case, it is the physical properties of materials – such as colour and facture – that prevail, in Szentjóby's usage, it is their chemical – and even more: alchemical – characteristics that are emphasized." (1978)

ST.AUBY Tamás / IPUT / Tamás ST.TURBA (1944)

Alchemy entered the imagination in connection to a higher plane of existence (as counterpoint of the art and society of the status quo) via Béla Hamvas philosopher's work in the sixties, after Szentjóby (as of 1963) read and distributed, along with Gábor Altorjay and others, Hamvas' manuscripts that have been banned from publication. The nature of physical materials and their relation to the spiritual world appeared in various ways in St.Auby's art, as in the case of this painting. It depicts the bond formulas of two chemical compounds. Through the chemical signals some basic elements can be identified, and in the middle of the two colour fields there are two elements which can be linked with the light: the Magnesium as the material used to use for flash light, and Wolfram which is used for the filaments in light bulbs. Through their presence in a very scientific way and with a materialistic approach they still hold a spiritual content suggested both by the title of the work and the artistic practice of St.Auby.



Biochemistry's influence on Our Father, 1983 oil on fibreboard, 53x83 cm Irokéz Collection

TÓT Endre (1937)

Graduated at the Academy of Arts and Crafts in 1965 Endre Tót began painting his first informel paintings in 1962. In the sixties he also experienced with calligraphic images, collages, tint--drawings -- he arrived to minimal art around 1968-1970. In 1968-69 participated in the IPARTERV exhibitions. In 1971-72, radical changes came to his art, and he began his carreer as a conceptual artist. He published an artist book, 'My Unpainted Canvases' in 1971 in Budapest, and he gave up painting with this particular artwork for decades.



I'm fed up with painting, 1972 oil on canvas, 90 x 90 cm acb Gallery

"My Joys" are a reflection of the dictatorial conditions of the 70s. With my absurd euphoria of joys I responded to the censorship, the closed world and the oppression that could be felt – although it worked with subtle tools and was almost invisible – in all areas of life. (...)But I wasn't a politically committed artist. I reacted to those times I had to live in in a very indirect way. With humour, ease and in some ways with philosophy."

Tot made his first joy piece in 1971, and continued to make the JOY series in various media – from rubber stamps to a writing on the Berlin wall during the whole 1970's.



JOYs 1-3, 1972/75 collage, 70 x 100 cm/piece acb Gallery

The first manifestation of Nothing, which became apparent in various visual patterns in the art of Endre Tót was the usage of the zero typographical character in 1971. His first 'Zer0' piece was created from a dialogue of an unknown American drama, in which he overtyped the original text with zeros. 'Zero language', sometimes contain identifiable text-details and image forms, it can be interpreted by all spoken language. Though it could mean the inability of communication, it rather creates a universal language. Zeroes, nulls and nothing's typographical characters also show up in Tót's mail art activity, therefore in the 70's he was mentioned in the mail art scene on the nickname 'Mr. 000'.



TOTal Zeros 1-6, 1972/75 enamel plate, 22x 17 cm/ piece AX Collection

VÁRNAI Gyula (1956)

Gyula Várnai is a characteristic and influential artist of Hungarian neo--conceptual art. Before he started working as an artist in the early 1990's, he studied mathematics, physics and music. The starting point for Várnai's investigations, which he carries out in diverse media, is usually a very simple, everyday situation or thing. His objects and images (projections) are characterized by a reduced set of tools, a simple layout, pairing and omission. His installations and object--collages tend to consist of various objects of use. His assemblages are marked by a conceptual and poetic quality, and an air of meticulous DIY. The creation and destruction of illusion, and the mutual references between signs, texts and objects, are also hallmarks of his activity. Several of his works centre on some physical phenomenon, and are charged with philosophy and humour. Várnai often deals with epistemological questions, the possibility of understanding the world is one of the fundamental issues that his works grapple with. His is an aesthetic of refuse, of the recycling of objects and situations found.



Philophony,1999 sound installation (2 reel-to-reel tape recorders, 2 pairs of speakers, a human voice repeating 'One' on one of the tapes, 'Two' on the other)160x120x30 cm Szűcs Collection



Founded in 2003, acb Gallery's mission is to represent progressive contemporary art in Hungary and internationally. The young and mid-generation artists represented by the gallery share the characteristics of conceptual principles, regardless to media they work in. The gallery's aim to be a link between contemporary art and its audience. To give a platform for artists for presenting their work in a professionally supported context and to give a platform for collectors, professionals and the broader audience to get connected with the art represented by the gallery. Besides the solo shows of gallery artists group shows also have a great importance in acb Gallery's program. Our group shows are often organized by invited curators to embrace or represent a medium, a tendency or a current phenomenon in contemporary art. To share and acquaint our approach, to get our artists more recognized and being put into various contexts, our exhibitions are often accompanied by programs as panel discussions and guided tours as well as with printed publications on an artist or a show published by the gallery. Being aspired to a more firm presence in the international art scene acb Gallery tries to establish its position by applying to and participating at highly ranked international art fairs with strong, curated presentations. Alongside domestic and international representation of contemporary artists, acb Gallery supports and initiates projects that aim to re-think the conventional routines of the art world to improve the position of contemporary art within Hungarian culture. In 2013 the gallery has opened an additional new space under the name acb Attachment which doubles the number of exhibitions per year.



1053 Budapest, Képíró utca 5. T+36309601015

Kisterem has opened when the artmarket within Hungary had become more open to all kind of artforms to collect: to show and sell all type of media works, not only traditional ones and not only by Hungarian but also by international artists.

Margit Valko owner of Kisterem followed the activities of the Hungarian avantgarde underground artscene from the 80-ies when during her studies she turned toward contemporary art. However these artworks were hardly accessible then for a broader public and it was hardly to imagine than, that those artworks could become part of public or private collections. Some of them did, but many of them got lost or damaged. Now besides doing a gallery program with very recent artworks, Kisterem occasionally shows works that could be traced up from this period: like the photographic works and drawings of Miklós Erdély, the early plaster pieces by György Jovánovics or early paintings by Ilona Keserü.

Kisterem, is trying to introduce these artists also outside Hungary and so its main effort is to participate on international artfair: Kisterem is a regular exhibitor at Basel Liste, is doing it's second edition of FIAC, and last year also participated at Frieze.

Further Kisterem is hosting shows of foreign artists in Budapest: Just very recently we had a very successful show of young contemporary Czech art in cooperation with huntkastner gallery from Prague. This show had been followed by an exhibiton of young generation of Polish artist from the selection of BWA gallery Warsaw.



WWW.VINTAGE.HU

Vintage Gallery is a fine art gallery founded 1996 in Budapest, focusing on the medium of photography. Vintage exhibits and represents Hungarian as well as international artists and photographers in a fine art context. The gallery program focuses on the modernism in photography 1919-1939 (André Kertész, László Moholy-Nagy, or Martin Munkacsi), conceptual art 1965-1989 (artists of the Hungarian neo-avantgarde: Miklós Erdély, Tibor Hajas, or Dóra Maurer) and a younger generation of contemporary artists using new media (Gábor Ő sz, Dezső Szabó). We aspire with the exhibition and publication programme of Vintage to be an active participant in both the Hungarian and international professional discourse.