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Abstract Hungary

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Künstlerhaus
Halle für Kunst & Medien
Burgring 2, Graz, Austria
Di–So 10–18h, Do 10–20h

www.km-k.at

Imre Bak, Sári Ember, János Fajó,
Andreas Fogarasi, Péter Tamás Halász,
György Jovánovics, Tamás Kaszás,
Zsófia Keresztes, Ilona Keserü Ilona,
Adrian Kiss, Ádám Kokesch,
Tamás Komoróczy, László Lakner,
Little Warsaw, Mira Dalma Makai,
Dóra Maurer, István Nádler,
Márton Nemes, Péter Puklus,
Klára Rudas, Gergő Szinyova,
Zsolt Tibor, Ádám Ulbert, Júlia Vécsei

Curators:

Sandro Droschl, Áron Fenyvesi

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With "Abstract Hungary" the Künstlerhaus, Halle für Kunst & Medien (KM–Graz) is presenting twenty-four Hungarian artists of different generations whose artistic practice is devoted to current variations of abstract art. The exhibition represents a further development of the narrative blueprint for the much-discussed concept of abstraction. It will feature both established and new artists, some of whom are exhibiting their work for the first time in Austria. On two floors indoors and in a sculpture in public space, art by younger and middle generations enter into a dialogue with pioneers from the 1960s whose oeuvres have remained relevant to the present-day production of art.

Internationally known key figures such as László Moholy-Nagy, Victor Vasarely, Simon Hantaï, and Lajos Kassák make us aware that abstract art in Hungary has a long and complicated history that has continued to develop throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. For a long time, abstract art was regarded as a practice that received no special recognition.

Contemporary abstract art is inspired by a critical approach to the supposed universality of a visual vocabulary, which, among other things, can be perceived as a kind of universal art relieved of the burden of local context. In Hungary today abstract artists strive for a timeless, enduring perspective of art that is rooted in the knowledge of its long history. The younger generation's lively, relatively

instinctual works tend to distance themselves from a minimalist approach as they open up to a variety of directions from trash aesthetics to the boundaries of figurative art. Taken altogether, it's possible to discern in them a reflective stance toward the current wave of international attention focused on abstract art.

The term "abstract" plays an overriding role in the show, in the sense that it represents an open-minded, productive attitude that transcends the ostensible practice of formalism. The term also encompasses an art historical, discursive dimension that sheds some critical light on the factor of time, while also regarding the participating artists as a connective element. In a period of ambivalent political, social, economic, and technological spheres, abstract art interprets things beyond the local. This approach plays with the concept of an independent international language, underscoring its strength as a binding element that surpasses language barriers. To this extent, the exhibition is not about representing the country. Rather, it takes today's complicated and confusing local and international environments as its starting point in order to contrast via proposals and drafts—"abstracts" with future potential—updated and living traditions with a stance that overcomes the classic idea of the nation. Moving beyond the specific interest in the Hungarian art scene, the exhibition's title could also be interpreted as an interchangeable, "abstract"

concept, in the sense that it represents a productive, empty space for potential contemporary international developments in art and society. Ultimately, the title also brings into question the concept of "abstract art," a term that is overburdened with art historical weight; at best it could be made productive again, as an effective structural aspect of the chain of arguments alluded to here.

The thematic exhibition emphasizes the diverse approaches and understandings of abstract art, from the instinctive and conceptual ideas to the referential and perspectival ones. Without wanting to create an overview with the aid of lexical, chronological, or taxonomic methods, the exhibition demonstrates the complexities of abstract art, which range from the radical geometrical references of the 1960s to the coherent development that continues to this day, despite all of the interruptions and variations.

The Künstlerhaus has invited numerous artists who carry on the legacy of the quiet modernism of abstract art—the neo-avant-garde that was established in the late 1960s. The artists of this generation, such as Imre Bak, János Fajó, György Jovánovics, Ilona Keserü Ilona, and Dóra Maurer, who have recently received increased attention, will present their works from recent years. Other important artists in the show represent New Conceptualism, a movement from the 1990s that includes Andreas Fogarasi, Ádám Kokesch, Tamás Komóroczy, and the art collective

Little Warsaw. The youngest generation of Hungarian artists, born in the 1980s and 1990s, such as Sári Ember, Zsófia Kersztes, Klára Rudas, and Gergő Szinyova, are part of the local dialogue and shed new light on current directions in abstract art—most certainly influenced by the conceptual inclusion of the global discourse.

The exhibition “Abstract Hungary” encompasses painting, sculpture, installations, ceramics, photography, and video. The show also incorporates Tamás Kászas’s piece “Stage Monument” (2017), a sculptural and performative intervention in the public space that refers to the historical concepts of Lajos Kassák. This installation will function as both a site for performances and workshops, as well as a meeting point for passersby in the city park, who will be able to use this public space as a stage for their own individual purposes.

A catalogue and a program of events will accompany the exhibition.

Abstract Hungary List of Works

1

Imre Bak Mégis, 2014

Acrylic on canvas,
140 × 210 cm
courtesy the artist
and acb Gallery, Budapest

Imre Bak (*1939, Budapest) graduated as a painter from the Academy of Fine Arts in Budapest. Among his early main influences we find the local avant-garde tradition of Lajos Kassák or his professor Dezső Korniss. Bak participated in the Iparterv group exhibitions in 1968/69, which forecast the influence of his generation, supplying the main narrative of contemporary Hungarian art for a long time. Bak's early works were dedicated to pure geometry and minimalism, at times mixed with more conceptual artistic periods. From the 1970s onward he was one of the few artists who was creating a hybrid style that bridged the local avant-garde traditions and the main western narratives of contemporary painting. After an inspiring postmodern phase in the 1990s, his paintings then played with the geometry of architectural or landscapes. A large geometrical work is shown in this exhibition, highlighting his newest artistic direction, which is returning to a kind of painting structured more through shapes and colors. In his recent paintings Bak creates horizontal and vertical networks, rather than spatial depth. Bak's oeuvre is drawing a new wave of attention and is characterized by the rational, calm, solid, and permanent.

2

Sári Ember Head of Marble, 2017

Two-part, marble object:
110 × 70 × 2 cm; iron structure:
70 × 50 × 40 cm

Sári Ember Head in Yellow, 2017

Iron, silk, 110 × 70 × 60 cm

Sári Ember Head in Silver, 2017

Aluminum, 160 × 35 cm

Sári Ember Boy at the River, 2017

C-print, 40 × 50 cm

Sári Ember Bust with River, 2016

Paper collage, 13 × 10.5 cm

Sári Ember Arch with Stone, 2016

Paper collage, 19.5 × 15 cm

Sári Ember Head, Pink, 2016

Paper collage, 12.5 × 10.5 cm

Sári Ember Study of Head in Yellow, 2016

Paper collage, 12.5 × 10.5 cm

Sári Ember Head on Stone, 2016

Paper collage, 18 × 14.2 cm
courtesy the artist
and Molnár Ani Gallery, Budapest

Sári Ember (*1985, São Paulo) graduated with a degree in photography from the Moholy-Nagy University of Arts and Design in Budapest. Recently, her interest has been drawn toward more abstract images and the creation of hybrid images through the examination and consequent deconstruction of such classic photographic genres as portraiture. She even partially abandoned her anthropological approach toward photography for the sake of her investigations into this topic. Ember displays a series of unframed paper collages and C-prints with a group of small-scale sculptures made of different materials. The key focus of this series of works is on pushing the boundary conditions of the shape of a face to abstract limits. She purposefully employs silhouettes to examine the relationships and boundaries between the image and the spatial object. Ember occupies a strong position on the borderline of anthropomorphic abstraction, deriving her inspiration from the process of producing photographs without a camera.

3

János Fajó Circle III, 2003

Oil on wood,
diameter 152 cm × 8 cm

János Fajó Open Forms, 2009

Oil on wood, 122 × 122 cm

János Fajó Arch Pair I, 2005

Mahogany, 64 × 16 × 7.5 cm

János Fajó Arch Pair II, 2005

Mahogany, 65 × 14 × 6 cm

János Fajó
Ellipse II, 2005

Bronze, 18 × 43 × 6.5 cm

János Fajó
Curves, 2015

Wood, 19 × 11 × 9 cm

János Fajó
**Ellipse with Interior
 Forms, 1979-1997**

Marble, 19.5 × 11 cm

János Fajó
Sponge and Circle, 1999

Marble, 30 × 16.5 × 5.7 cm

János Fajó
Yin-Yang, 1999

Marble, 33 × 16.5 × 7.5 cm

courtesy the artist

János Fajó (*1937, Orosháza) graduated from the University of Applied Arts in Budapest as a decorative painter, but always considered Lajos Kassák as his true master. Since the 1960s Fajó has consequently pursued a new geometrical agenda condensed from the previous geometrical and constructivist traditions. Besides painting, he also creates small- and large-scale sculptures. In the 1970s Fajó worked closely together with Imre Bak, Ilona Keserü Ilona and István Nádler in the so called "Pest Workshop." As a workshop leader he was very much involved in the pioneering use of silkscreen technology. Later he founded a free school on his own. In the context of this exhibition Fajó's comprehensive and broad oeuvre is represented by small handmade sculptural works alongside minimalist and a geometrically shaped canvas.

4

Andreas Fogarasi
Vasarely Go Home, 2011

Two-channel video installation, 60 min., with German and English subtitles; two objects: acrylic glass, C-prints, each ca. 148.5 × 115 × 40 cm, C-prints on wall, each 30 × 45 cm

courtesy the artist
 and Georg Kargl Fine Arts, Vienna
<http://vasarelygohome.gfzk.de/>

Andreas Fogarasi (*1977, Vienna) studied architecture and fine arts in Vienna. He uses forms of display reminiscent of minimalism and conceptual art to explore questions of space and representation. Between a documentary and a sculptural practice, he critically analyses the aestheticization and economization of urban space and the roles of architecture and the cultural field in contemporary society. Incorporating video, sculpture, and installation in wide-sweeping, discursive networks, Fogarasi confronts the viewer with fault lines in historiography. Fogarasi's project is a documentary interview video and a set of sculpture-installations that incorporates original press photos of a twin event that took place in 1969 in Budapest. Victor Vasarely had a large retrospective exhibition at Műcsarnok in Budapest. While Hungarian neo-avant-garde art of that time was at best tolerated, Vasarely's exhibition was an immense public event. So the show was met with high expectations and criticism alike from the local art scene. During the opening the artist János Major conducted a discrete one-person protest—he carried a small sign reading "Vasarely Go Home," that he showed from time to time to people in the crowd.

5

Péter Tamás Halász
Supremacy 1, 2016

Painted sheet metal, hot plates, steel, heat pipe, 80 × 52 × 10 cm

Péter Tamás Halász
Supremacy 2, 2016

Painted sheet metal, hot plates, steel, heat pipe, 80 × 64 × 10 cm

Péter Tamás Halász
Supremacy 3, 2016

Painted sheet metal, hot plates, steel, heat pipe, 95 × 52 × 10 cm

Péter Tamás Halász
Supremacy 4, 2016

Painted sheet metal, hot plates, steel, heat pipe, 68 × 52 × 10 cm

Péter Tamás Halász
Supremacy, 2016

Video, 4:23 min.

courtesy the artist
 and acb Gallery, Budapest

Péter Tamás Halász (*1969, Budapest) graduated with a degree in painting from the University of Fine Arts in Budapest. His installative works often include the medium of light, focusing on issues such as environmentalism, sustainability, and recycling. In Halász's works strong and core conceptual ideas, extreme industrial design, and sensuality encounter each other. The impact of his operational objects lies in the interplay between their form and functionality. Assembled out of familiar components of domestic appliances, leaving their function unidentifiable and simply based on their appearance, the surfaces created display some well-known Supremacist compositions by Malevich. A point of reference that may

help in understanding the function of the objects is provided by thermographic images. In these images different temperatures manifest as different colors, revealing not only the function of the objects, but also the acronyms hidden beneath their surfaces. Through these acronyms, which are more or less well-known English abbreviations for institutions and concepts, the artist addresses such ideas, phenomena, and problems as human rights, wealth and poverty, and environmental pollution.

6

György Jovánovics
P.A.K.S. 1., 2004

Plaster, 140 × 100 cm

György Jovánovics
P.A.K.S. 3., 2004

Plaster, 140 × 100 cm

courtesy Eszter and Tamás Jovánovics

György Jovánovics (*1939, Budapest) trained as a sculptor in Budapest, also studying in Vienna and Paris. He became one of the dominant voices of his neo-avant-garde generation as he participated in the Iparterv group exhibitions in 1968/69. In the early stage of his career his works were influenced by Pop Art and Arte Povera; his choice of plaster as his favorite material reflects this position. In later stages of his career Jovánovics articulated his artistic interests in reliefs, since his work has both a hybrid image and a plastic character. He experimented with photography and different media and became increasingly dedicated to investigating the phenomenon of light. His more recent works from the "P.A.K.S." series highlight this interest. On

the other hand, his works can also resemble maps or architectural sections viewed from above. These assemblages of geometrical pieces create different layers of surfaces that overlap each other, creating depth from the radiance of light that constantly alternates between reality and illusion.

7

Tamás Kaszás
Stage Monument, 2017

Wood, plexiglass,
500 × 700 × 350 cm

courtesy the artist

Tamás Kaszás (*1976, Duanú-jváros) graduated from the Inter-media Department of the University of Fine Arts in Budapest. He often works in different artistic collaborations based on co-authorship, such as the Ex Artists Collective or the Randomroutines. Kaszás creates complex projects with a selection of useful and functional objects, inspired by a mixture of poetic and symbolic images. Kaszás tries to pursue an economic and ecologic art practice by using cheap and recycled materials and techniques easily available to everyone. His outdoor public space installation, "Stage Monument," is based on an unrealized idea of Lajos Kassák, one of the most important, trail-blazing figures of the Hungarian avant-garde. This installation will function as both a site for performances and workshops, as well as a meeting point for passersby in the city park, who will be able to use this public space as a stage for their own individual purposes.

8

Zsófia Keresztes
From a Trustworthy
Source, 2016

Acrylic, iPhone boxes, Styrofoam,
thread, 123 × 60 × 5 cm

Zsófia Keresztes
Smells Like 9 Pieces, 2016

Acrylic, soap, Styrofoam,
120 × 120 × 7 cm

Zsófia Keresztes
Empty Reliquary
Circa, 2015/2016

Acrylic, glass, iPad box, soap,
25 × 20 × 6 cm

courtesy the artist and Erika Deák Gallery, Budapest

Zsófia Keresztes (*1985, Budapest) graduated from the University of Fine Arts in Budapest as a painter, moving early on in her career toward an object-based production of art. Her installative objects tend to start from the field of expanded painting and are of a vulnerable, ephemeral, fragile quality, based on the materials of paper, textile, and plastic foam. She draws her inspiration from trash aesthetics and object fetishism, operating with topics connected to consumer culture, digital culture, subcultures, mythology, horror, and cannibalism. Keresztes's dream-like objects are tenants of her private, mythological, artistic universe, wherein surreal elements are layered on top of each other. The selection of works on show is composed of seemingly abstract, minimal, and monochromatic pieces of her latest works, including borderline figurative elements that are actual compilations of figures, plants, and found objects. One thematic inspiration is connected to HOLYLAND, a free WLAN connection accessible only in her kitchen.

9

Ilona Keserü Ilona
Cangiante Hangok, 2011

Oil on canvas,
 100 × 140 × 4 cm

courtesy the artist
 and Kisterem, Budapest

Ilona Keserü Ilona (*1933, Pécs) studied at the Painting and Fresco Departments at the Hungarian University of Fine Arts, and was also influenced by the non-figurative artist and sculptor Ferenc Martyn. She was the only female exhibitor at the Iparterv exhibitions in 1968/1969, where she was linked to the earlier generation of the Hungarian avant-garde, such as the European School. At that time she was experimenting with constantly rotating, circular gestures. In 1967 she discovered heart-shaped gravestones in a cemetery, which she later used as a main motif. In her paintings she basically transformed found objects into a gestural form. Throughout her career Keserü has been keen on experimenting with colors and larger, gesture-based, non-figurative paintings. Her recent painting on display plays with the Cangiante colors and color shifting, which Michelangelo used in the Sistine Chapel. The base of this phenomenon is that color values placed next to each other intensify themselves and each other, although it is not about pairing complementary colors with each other. Her painting is constituted of linear color gestures, which are distant relatives of her previous linear, wave-like and heart-shaped forms.

10

Adrian Kiss
Sylvania, 2013

Concrete blocks, fluorescent lights,
 laminated wood on metal structure,
 400 × 340 × 260 cm

Adrian Kiss
Leather Towel, 2015

Leather, sponge, quilted leather,
 100 × 108 × 2 cm

courtesy Horizont Gallery, Budapest

Adrian Kiss (*1990, Miercurea Ciuc) graduated from the Central Saint Martin's College of Art & Design in London. The works of Kiss tend to appear as timeless artifacts with an occult profile. His works often contain elements that are seemingly hypermodern or have a strong futuristic design influence, mixed with organic materials, evoking on the one hand a certain kind of archaism. Kiss likes to work on a relatively big scale, using industrial and minimalist aesthetics. The installation entitled "Sylvania" is a huge, edgy, abstract form, a distant relative of popular non-figurative design elements. Its hybrid structure incorporates old furniture surfaces as pictorial panels, referring to the kind of futurist mysticism and ritualism associated with old furniture still present in many Eastern European households. With its basic, strictly symmetrical systems, the raw and deliberately industrial installation bears resemblances to an alien or ancient civilization. In addition the delicate piece "Leather Towel" is presented next to the sculptural work.

11

Adam Kokesch
Untitled, 2013

Acrylic, plexiglass, wood,
 neon tube, stand, electronic devices,
 160 × 80 × 80 cm

Adam Kokesch
Untitled, 2015

Acrylic, wood, plaster, monitors,
 ø 60 cm

Adam Kokesch
Untitled, 2015

Variable materials and dimensions

courtesy the artist
 and Kisterem, Budapest

Ádám Kokesch (*1973, Budapest) graduated from the University of Fine Arts in Budapest, where he was a student of the painter Dóra Maurer. Kokesch developed his visual language based on the technique of reverse painting on acrylic glass, which he combines with particular spatial situations and materials associated with science and technology to produce what resemble props from unidentifiable laboratories. In his artistic practice Kokesch reflects on utopian modernism through design references, mixing the tradition of abstract painting with pictograms. In this way Kokesch creates flexible perceptual situations, as he constantly makes the audience question automatic patterns of perception associated with functional aesthetics. Visually speaking, the works on display can be characterized as a portable meteorite, a transparent flag with a surface made of lenses, and as constellation of acrylic glass works on a tripod, referring to architectural models or some sort of measuring equipment. Taken together, they all might evoke allusions to activities connected to space, activated through his precise sculptural work.

12

Tamás KomóroczyA History of the World
in 100 Objects – The New
Ozymandias, 2016

HD video, sound, 14 min.

Tamás KomóroczyGegenstand ed Wesen
(Objet es essence), 2017Burnt clay, glazed ceramic,
mirrored plexiglass, stainless steel,
plate, telephone cable, woodcourtesy the artist
and acb Gallery, Budapest

Tamás Komóroczy (*1963, Békéscsaba) graduated from the Hungarian University of Fine Arts as a painter, studying mural painting afterwards. He is one of the founding members of the Újlak Group, which was an influential group in the early 1990s. Komóroczy was an early pioneer in the new wave of video art, and also experimented with photography and patterns on tapestries. Constantly renewing his practice, he recently took on mimetics and virology as new core themes. He avoids categorization and uniformity, although he has begun to overpaint graphic works of his with airbrush, and he also creates instinctive pottery. We get a glimpse into his video oeuvre through a piece inspired by the Ozymandias sonnet by the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley. Shelley's fictitious desert is the imaginary location of the video, in which Komóroczy rendered and collected images from different sources, highlighting some orientation points from the broad and timeless cultural aspects of his visual language and interest. Komóroczy also plays with instinctive meta-structures, displaying objects in a vitrine that look as if they could be from a crime scene investigation, yet are musealized items at the same time.

13

László LaknerOhne Titel (Untitled) 1990Oil on canvas,
200 × 150 cmLászló LaknerOhne Titel (Untitled) 2017Oil on canvas,
200 × 150 cm

courtesy the artist

László Lakner (*1936, Budapest) has been a key figure of Hungarian art ever since he started his career at the end of the 1950s. He is widely known as a figurative painter who drew inspiration from figurative surrealism in the early stages of his career. With his participation in the Documenta 6 he also had encounters with the dominant western narratives of art, which otherwise were hardly accessible beyond the Iron Curtain. Influenced by Pop Art in the 1960s, Lakner took an overwhelmingly photo-realist and hyperrealist stand. Lakner always has been dedicated to the experiment; in the 1970s he created conceptual works, which in later stages took on the appearance of abstract paintings. Also his interest in writing, written letters, and his work with books has deep roots in his practice going back to this time. The exhibition presents a new painting created as a pendant to an earlier work depicting letters, which might stand as a concrete poem or a painting. The letters in his paintings become true painting material, although letters functionally participate in different types of cognitive mechanisms.

14

Little WarsawReliance, 2017Painted wood,
34 × 34 × 34 cmLittle WarsawSighting, 2017Relief print,
61.2 × 73.2 cmLittle WarsawArmor, 2016

Iron, 136.5 × 136.5 cm

courtesy the artists
and Kisterem, Budapest

Little Warsaw is an artistic duo founded in 1999 by András Gálik (*1970, Budapest) and Bálint Havas (*1970, Budapest). Little Warsaw is an entity that often works with conceptualist Situationism and the recontextualization of objects and histories, while maintaining interest in stories, storylines, and storytelling itself. Little Warsaw also focuses on group dynamics and is monitoring the present and recently past local artistic context in Hungary. Highlights from Little Warsaw's first phase of artistic activity were monumental projects dealing with the medium of sculpture—in public space, as well—and how history manifests itself through these objects, in conjunction with organizing art events and creating space for dialogues. More recently their practice has leaned toward more ephemeral, performative forms—for example, a piece based on a novel they wrote. Little Warsaw's ambiguous and enigmatic conceptual objects tend to become meta-abstract within the framework of this exhibition, as they have a more referential connection to abstraction.

15

Mira Dalma MakaiCells and Tendrils I, 2017

Glazed ceramic, 35 × 20 × 20 cm

Mira Dalma MakaiCells and Tendrils II, 2017

Glazed ceramic, 45 × 30 × 25 cm

Mira Dalma MakaiBlue-Rosa, 2014

Lithograph, 50 × 35 cm

Mira Dalma MakaiRosa Triangles, 2014

Lithograph, 50 × 35 cm

courtesy the artist

Mira Dalma Makai (*1990, Budapest) studied printmaking at the University of Fine Arts in Budapest, graduated in 2016, and won the Esterházy Art Award in 2015. Her artistic practice is dedicated to contemporary ceramics. She approaches glazed ceramics as a field of expanded abstract painting. Her ceramics are instinctive forms, which tend to be compared to unidentifiable corals or deep-sea organisms, partly due to the intense and fluorescent color of the works, and to their small, precious character. Makai also produces a sort of straight forward, peculiar, gestural, abstract painting whose intensity of color and clear strokes allow viewers to simply imagine its prior motivation. Makai also combines ceramics with paintings, which she approaches with the same intensive color palettes and non-figurative, gesture-based drive, bringing her closer to a more general intervention in a kind of organic, abstract narrative.

16

Dóra MaurerOverlappings 47, 2012Acrylic on canvas, wood,
117 × 124 cmDóra MaurerKalah, 198035mm, color, 10 min.; camera:
András Klausz, music: Zoltán Jeney,
production: Pannonia Filmstudio,
Budapestcourtesy the artist
and Vintage Galéria, Budapest

Dóra Maurer (*1937, Budapest) studied at the Hungarian University of Fine Arts. She has been acknowledged as one of the key figures of the Hungarian neo-avant-garde, and has become an important teacher for ensuing generations of Hungarian artists. Many of the artists in the present show were students in her painting class. After an early stage of figurative graphics, Maurer's artistic practice in the late 1960s shifted its focus to a visual language, which is shaped by geometrical grammar, system, and methods. Throughout her long career she has continued to explore the effect of color and color perception on geometric forms. Her conceptual interest also manifests in photo- and video-based works of the 1970s and highlights processes based on a compositional logic determined by formal rules, and later altered by dynamic changes, the real terrain of Maurer's art. In the show she exhibits the earlier 35mm film "Kalah," which is based on an ancient Arabic mathematical game, that functions as a generative, dynamic system of color experiments, and the recent painting, "Overlappings 47" which might reflect the relation of colors and shapes and even the exhibition itself.

17

István NádlerNo. 7., 2014Acrylic on canvas,
200 × 150 cmIstván NádlerNo. 11., 2014Acrylic on canvas,
200 × 150 cm
courtesy the artist
and Kisterem, Budapest

István Nádler (*1938, Visegrád) graduated with a degree in painting from the Academy of Fine Arts in Budapest in the 1960s. He is one of the most important representatives of the neo-avant-garde movement and Hard Edge painting. Like many of his fellow exhibitors, he was part of the legendary Iparterv group, which was essential because it signaled a breakthrough of a new generation of Hungarian artists, some of whom were practicing new, geometrical, abstract painting. Nádler's scholarship at the Museum Folkwang in Essen in 1972 also gave a direction to his career. In the 1970s he worked closely together with Imre Bak and János Fajó on establishing a new visual agenda, which aimed at reforming the broader, local visual culture. In a later stage of his career he initiated a new abstract painting agenda that relied much more on expressive and calligraphic gestural painting, mixed with strong colors, in the 1990s and 2000s. His works from 2014, which can be seen in the show, present strong, black, vertical, spiraling, abstract painting gestures.

18

Márton NemesTemporaryImages01, 2017

Acrylic, cargo strap, Molino canvas, offset print, wood, 127 × 97 cm

Márton NemesTemporaryImages02, 2017

Acrylic, cargo strap, Molino canvas, offset print, wood, 127 × 102 cm
courtesy the artist
and Erika Deák Gallery, Budapest

Márton Nemes (*1986, Székesfehérvár) studied at the Department of Painting at the Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts. He arrived at abstraction after a figurative painting phase, where he took inspiration from architectural structures and rhythms. His paintings are characterized by continuous experimentation, the extension of the genre's boundaries, and the pursuit of new, formal solutions. His recent series involve painting on commercial posters, intervening in them with painterly techniques. His intense color palette and his affinity toward strong but minimalist gestures characterize his works. Nemes has abandoned iridescent and expressive paintings in his most recent series, which he also shows in the exhibition. He creates mobile object paintings, which are held together by strong ligaments and could be reorganized in a different format for another exhibition or display context.

19

Péter Puklus0012 Tree, 2012, Bakonykúti

Analogue print on baryta paper; processed with ReAnalog negative, 36 × 24.7 cm

Péter Puklus0019 Nude Dancing with Cardboard Sheets IV., 2014, Budapest

Analogue print on baryta paper; processed with ReAnalog negative, 36 × 24.7 cm

Péter Puklus0051 Plastic Façon, 2011, Budapest

Analogue print on color paper; processed with ReAnalog negative, 36 × 24.7 cm

Péter Puklus0392 Statue of Liberty II., 2014, Budapest

Analogue print on color paper; processed with ReAnalog negative, 36 × 24.7 cm

Péter Puklus1191 Golden Decadence, 2013, Budapest

Analogue print on color paper; processed with ReAnalog negative, 36 × 24.7 cm

Péter Puklus2394 Blue Blocks on Yellow Background, 2015, Budapest

Analogue print on color paper; processed with ReAnalog negative, 36 × 24.7 cm

Péter Puklus4588 Studio Situation on Gray Background, 2014, Budapest

Analogue print on color paper; processed with ReAnalog negative, 36 × 53.6 cm

Péter Puklus6961 Man Holding a Wooden Stick, 2013, Berlin

Analogue print on baryta paper; processed with ReAnalog negative, 36 × 24.7 cm

Péter Puklus6966 Monument (Blue), 2013, Budapest

Analogue print on color paper; processed with ReAnalog negative, 36 × 24.7 cm

Péter Puklus8069 Pyramid, 2013, Budapest

Analogue print on color paper; processed with ReAnalog negative, 36 × 24.7 cm

Péter Puklus3458_3469 Thunder, 2014, Budapest

Analogue print on color paper; processed with ReAnalog negative, 36 × 53.6 cm

Péter PuklusMaquette of a Monument Symbolizing the Liberation IV., 2014

Wooden sculpture, 25 × 28 × 66 cm

Péter Puklus
Monument (Black), 2015

Wooden sculpture,
 13 × 13 × 40 cm

Courtesy the artist
 and Robert Morat Gallery, Berlin;
 Conrads Gallery, Düsseldorf

Péter Puklus (*1980, Cluj Napoca) graduated with a degree in photography from the Moholy-Nagy University of Arts and Design in Budapest. Apart from his artistic practice, he publishes photo books. Always present in his works is the core topic of the photographic gaze, which over time has become more complex and hybrid. Puklus is one of the few Hungarian photographers who explore intersections and dialogical situations involving sculpture, objects, installations, and photography. Storytelling and constructing meta-narratives also play a substantial role in the group of works on display in the present exhibition. The photos from his most recent series, "The Epic Love Story of a Warrior," include studio setups and abstract and instinctive constellations of objects that play with modernist and abstract references, such as figurative nudes, which allude to historical and classic references.

Klára Rudas
Untitled, 2016

Oil on paper, 32 × 24 cm

Klára Rudas
Untitled, 2016

Oil on paper, 48 × 36 cm

Klára Rudas
Untitled, 2017

Unique technique, 48 × 36 cm

courtesy the artist
 and Knoll Gallery, Budapest

Klára Rudas (*1983, Budapest) graduated with a degree in painting from the University of Fine Arts in Budapest. Her core intention is to use abstraction, not as a style, but as a tool and a method. Her interest lies in exploring potential ways to rechannel the avant-garde into contemporary art and how we should relate to it in general. Her works are constellations of pieces of different sizes and materials; she often works on paper and creates small-scale series. Rudas's art could be described as smart abstraction, since she uses a lot of historical references in her work, which are, on the other hand, not only context sensitive, but sensitive in their materiality and appearance as well. The three works on paper in the show view distinct and precise options of relationships among them, and perhaps even beyond.

Gergő Szinyova
AABCIEOC1552017, 2017

Acrylic, airbrush, Chinese ink,
 enamel, oil on canvas, 195 × 130 cm

Gergő Szinyova
AABCIEOC1752017, 2017

Acrylic, airbrush, Chinese ink,
 enamel, oil on canvas, 195 × 130 cm

Gergő Szinyova
AABCIEOC1952017, 2017

Acrylic, airbrush, Chinese ink,
 enamel, oil on canvas, 195 × 130 cm
 courtesy the artist

Gergő Szinyova (*1986, Budapest) graduated from the painting department of the Hungarian University of Fine Arts. In many ways Szinyova's painting practice can be linked to minimalism, post-geometry, and gestural painting. He is also interested in graphic formats and fanzine publishing. In some cases he also happens to approach painting in an expansive way, using the reverse of a painting or extending gestures from his canvases out onto exhibition walls. Szinyova is a key figure in the new wave of young Hungarian abstract painters. The main topic and core of his recent painting practice reflects on the transmission of manual and analog information. Szinyova confronts the uniqueness of a painterly gesture with the infinite reproduction potential of our digital age. His new meta-monochrome paintings on display are different in scale. Upon closer look, one realizes that the seemingly all-black paintings contain an image within an image. Szinyova creates this very painterly black surface by using various kinds of paints, such as acrylic, enamel, ink, oil, and airbrush. Together, they create a different quality of the color black, which appear as post-minimalist gesture in his paintings.

22

Zsolt Tibor

build your own
kingdom, 2014

Acrylic, color pencil, graphite,
gouache, oil pastel on paper,
150 × 125 cm

Zsolt Tibor

domesticity haiku II, 2016

Acrylic, graphite, gouache
on paper, 152 × 136 cm

Zsolt Tibor

secret frog
architecture, 2016

Graphite, chalk on paper,
156 × 126 cm

courtesy Private Collection, Vienna

Zsolt Tibor (*1973, Budapest) graduated from the Painting Department at the Hungarian University of Fine Arts. He currently lives and works in Vienna. He's one of the few Hungarian artists to consciously choose large-scale drawing as a primary medium, rather than painting. A more spontaneous, raw, and fluid medium, drawing constitutes the perfect terrain for a seemingly new, abstract approach. In his previous works Tibor mixed the visual universe of modernist references evoking architectural planning and engineering, with a more flexible, gestural style featuring many private mythological elements. Since he is obsessed with collecting objects, he also experiments with installative displays, resulting in two-dimensional works that are combined with objects and projections. Within the framework of the exhibition Tibor shows works exhibiting his recent, abstract artistic tools: non-linear narrative and repetition in a purposely unfinished pictorialism.

23

Ádám Ulbert

Toad Edifice / Phantom
Senses 1, 2016

Pencil, polyurethane, watercolor,
30 × 42 cm

Ádám Ulbert

Toad Edifice / Phantom
Senses 2, 2016

Pencil, polyurethane, watercolor,
21 × 30 cm

Ádám Ulbert

Toad Edifice / Phantom
Senses 3, 2016

Pencil, polyurethane, watercolor,
21 × 30 cm

Ádám Ulbert

Toad Edifice / Phantom
Senses 4, 2016

Epoxy, rubber, steel,
45 × 45 × 215 cm

Ádám Ulbert

Toad Edifice / Phantom
Senses 5, 2016

Epoxy, rubber, steel,
45 × 45 × 215 cm

Ádám Ulbert

Nostalgia, 2013

Video, 5:31 min., color, sound
courtesy the artist

Ádám Ulbert (*1984, Budapest) is currently artist-in-residence at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam; he also holds a MFA from the Sandberg Institute in Amsterdam and a BA from the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design in Budapest. Ulbert's cycle of works on exhibit consists of watercolors, plastic objects, and a short animated video that reflects on the process of the creation of the watercolors. The core of this complex series is the goal of achieving a technical and formal homogeneity of the separate pieces. He is searching for fundamental forms that can be identified undeniably as forms, even though an identity or narrative cannot be automatically attributed to them, aside from their "formlessness." The aim is to perform archeological and psychoanalytical research into the primary state of forms. The works on display highlight an artistic program that truly reflects new, abstract tendencies that investigate different material qualities and intersections of media. His video, "Nostalgia," is a poetic earlier work, in which the artist himself plays the role of the Pan of Marfa reciting Ovid amid the works of Donald Judd, which appear decontextualized as universal ruins of modernity.

24

Júlia Vécsei**Playground, 2013**

10 iron objects,
each 55 × 27 × 22 cm

courtesy the artist
and Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna
(Artist-in-Residence Program)

Júlia Vécsei (*1976, Budapest) graduated from the Intermedia Department at the University of Fine Arts in Budapest. Her oeuvre includes video works and computer-based art, although in past years her practice has been based on analog and very minimalistic drawings and watercolors. In the series of objects displayed she uses special, abstract typography to transform the word "PLAYGROUND" into a variety of small-scale metal objects. Her approach is very enigmatic and depends on symbolic meta-narratives, but her way of dealing with those topics through a very minimalist approach, as well as the way she conceptually peels off many referential layers of objects and phenomena bring her closer to abstract practices in general. With its multiple versions of installment the work creates a reference to the show's thematic approach, which is searching for some obvious and some hidden relationships in the Hungarian art scene by mixing up and bringing together a different group of objects and artists.

Events

June 29, 2017, 6 p.m.

Ludwig Múzeum – Museum
of Contemporary Art
Komor Marcell u. 1. 1095 Budapest
www.ludwigmuseum.hu

Discussion with Sári Ember,
Dóra Maurer, István Nádler,
Márton Nemes, Gergő Szinyova;
Gábor Rieder (moderator)
Introduction: Sandro Droschl,
Áron Fenyvesi

July 6, 2017, 6 p.m.

Künstlerhaus, Halle für Kunst &
Medien (KM– Graz)

Performance on the installative
outdoor stage
"Stage Monument" Tamás Kaszás

Real Hungary –

The Esterházy Art Prize

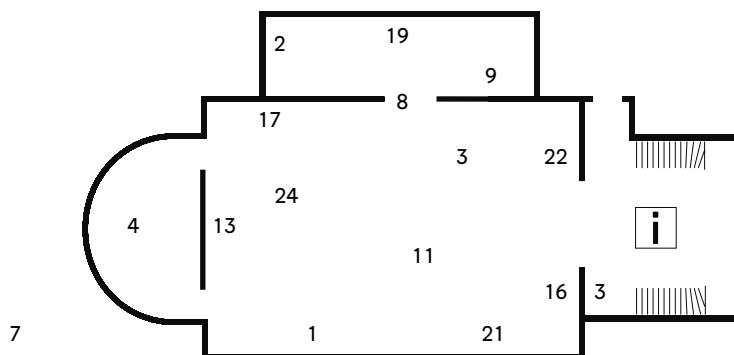
June 28 – Oct 10, 2017

Collegium Hungaricum Vienna,
Hollandstrasse 4, 1020 Vienna

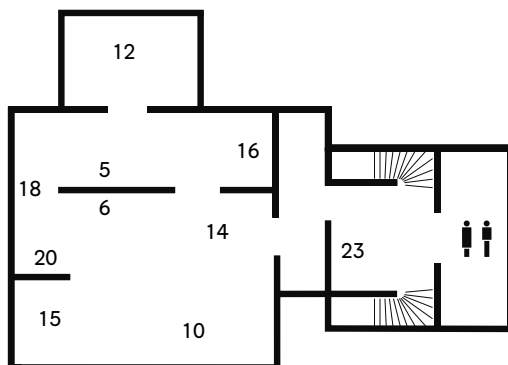
Parallel to the "Abstract Hungary"
exhibition, the Collegium Hungaricum
in Vienna will present the show "Real
Hungary." Through the current works
of Esterházy prizewinners from the years
2009 to 2015, the show documents
the tendencies found in the tradition of
Hungarian realism, with reference to
select artists as partners in a dialogue.

For more on the program of events,
please see www.km-k.at

A Erdgeschoss / ground floor



C Untergeschoss / basement floor



1 Imre Bak
2 Sári Ember
3 János Fajó
4 Andreas Fogarasi
5 Péter Tamás Halász
6 György Jovánovics
7 Tamás Kaszás
8 Zsófia Keresztes

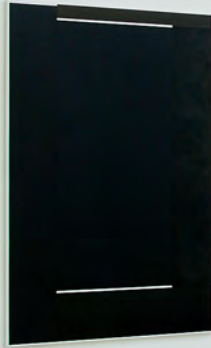
9 Ilona Keserü Ilona
10 Adrian Kiss
11 Ádám Kokesch
12 Tamás Komoróczy
13 László Lakner
14 Little Warsaw
15 Mira Dalma Makai
16 Dóra Maurer

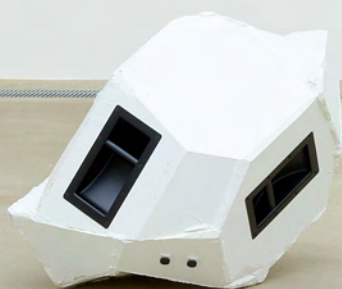
17 István Nádler
18 Márton Nemes
19 Péter Puklus
20 Klára Rudas
21 Gergő Szinyova
22 Zsolt Tibor
23 Ádám Ulbert
24 Júlia Vécsei

24 06 —
07 09 2017

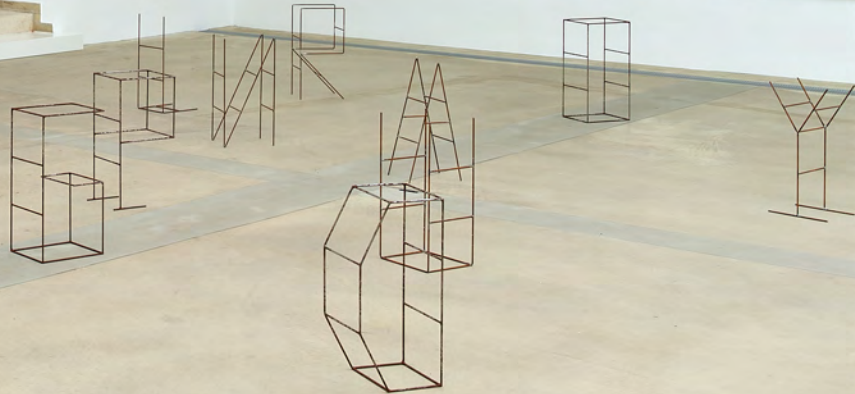
Abstract Hungary

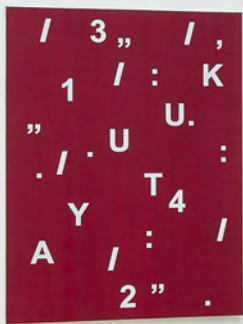












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