Vera MOLNAR
RÁKÓCZY Gizella
SZÍJ Kamilla
31 May –16 June

The next exhibition of the Vintage Galéria allows a glimpse into various segments of three artistic oeuvres shaped along the lines of repetitions, displacements and mathematical patterns.

In 1971, Gizella Rákóczy completed her studies in the Painting Programme of the Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts, as a student of Géza Fónyi. The spectacle-based period in her painting reflects the influence of her teacher, who passed away in 1972. For a brief time beginning in 1976, she created collages. From the time of its foundation, she was an active member of Miklós Erdély's mosaic workshop (MURUS). We can encounter many of her mural works (which she both designed and created) in certain architectural spaces in Kaposvár, Salgótarján and Miskolc. In 1976, in connection to an old Scottish tombstone motif, she began focusing on the graphic, logical, and mathematical organization of four-arm spirals. Taking the four-arm spiral as her departure point, she created a combinatory system that is applicable to the language of painting. For two decades, her paper-based tempera paintings and silkscreen prints reflected the mathematical aspects of this system. After 1988, she began using watercolour rather than tempera to create her paintings (still based on the principles of the four-arm spiral). Aided by this subtly transparent material, she created visual structures grounded in superimpositions and interferences, which were interrelated in accordance with the formula of Fibonacci's linear, recursively defined sequence. As of 2000, in parallel to her gridded aquarelle structures, she turned to the motif of the Cretan Style Labyrinth and began her theoretical, mathematical and painting-related research on the topic.

Rákóczy's works featured at this exhibition were created in 1998-99, which marked a significant period in the artist's painting career in that she finalized her text on the system theory of four-arm spirals, and, utilizing mathematical regularities, she developed her painting method – which result in the translucently shimmering aquarelle layers – to perfection. Her paper – written (in both Hungarian and English) to mathematical standards in a crystal clear fashion and supplemented by explanatory figures – was published in the catalogue accompanying Gizella Rákóczy's solo exhibition entitled Four-arm Spirals, which was held at Műcsarnok/Kunsthalle Budapest in 1999.

Vera Molnar has a lifelong commitment to creating mathematically themed artwork series. After graduating the Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts in Budapest, she continued her studies at the Sorbonne in Paris. Following her early cubist and abstract period, as of the late '60s, she began researching the possibilities of computer-based art. Between 1974 and 1976, she developed the so called "Molnar program", which she utilized in creating her early, unique, one-off computer graphics. The work method employed in creating the series – usually by computer, sometimes manually – is defined by two main characteristics: Molnar always works with parameters she can alter only to a minimal extent and she utilizes various systematic procedures on their own, without any variation. In terms of motifs, she almost always starts off with simple geometric shapes (square or rectangle), which are then gradually distorted by her algorithms into shifts and displacements – into arithmetic disorder. From the very beginning of her artistic activities, she has been interested in systems and in rendering those systems visible. In realizing her visual systems, she seeks utmost graphic precision, while concentrating on the systematic representability of computer-generated variations. It is only on rare occasions that she opts to manually map – to draw by hand – the geometric happenings taking place on the surfaces.

Kamilla Szíj's conceptual drawing-fields are just as characterized by stringent discipline as Vera Molnar's works. She began her studies in Offenbach am Main, Germany and completed her education in 2016 when she graduated from the DLA Programme of the Hungarian University of Fine Arts. Kamilla Szíj's body of graphic work, which spans over decades, is incredibly consistent: her art is characterized by a reduced use of tools, materials and colours, as well as the banishment of narrative and, more often than not, acentric and additive composition. Her monochrome, conceptual graphic works, which are constructed from minimal motifs, are often created with a single (graphite) pencil. The surfaces produced by using reduced forms and traditional techniques are characterized by a combination of unique graphics solutions and printmaking methods. In her works, a few basic motifs wander – from time to time, from surface to surface. On the infinite horizontal and vertical surfaces of the drawings – which sometimes end in rolls – waves often operate as interferences constructed in opposition to the direction of the image field. In addition to basic geometric shapes (circle, oval, square), lines – which can be straight, broken, wavy, long, short or even densely woven – are also given special emphasis. There is simultaneous figurativity and abstraction. The large-scale drawings, constructed from tiny lines with Spartan discipline, are woven like "carpets of lines" into connected, coherent systems. From this fabric of wreathing and swirling lines, here and there, spheres, surging waves and broken lines emerge.

Mónika Zsikla

VERA MOLNAR
100 Squares I-XII, 1987
silkscreen print, 32x25 cm, 1/1

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KAMILLA SZÍJ
Untitled, 2017
paper, graphite, 150x150cm

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Untitled, 2017
paper, graphite, 150x150cm

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GIZELLA RÁKÓCZY
SE I, 1998-99
watercolor, paper, 62.5x62.5cm

GIZELLA RÁKÓCZY
ZE I, 1998-99
watercolor, paper, 62.5x62.5cm

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GIZELLA RÁKÓCZY
SA I-IV, 1998-99
watercolor, paper, 62.5x62.5cm each