

TÜRK Péter

multiple appearances

2 march –26 march 2021

Vision plays an emphasized role in Péter Türk's oeuvre. From the 1970s onwards, he became interested in the psychology of vision and started researching the optical and psychological connections of imaging modes. He developed special imaging techniques, intertwining analytical, abstract-logical thinking based on scientific cognition and empirical experimentation depending on visual perception. Around 1974, Türk began working primarily with photographs, and in the following decade photography became dominant in his work. Vintage Galéria's current exhibition presents a selection of his works created during this period.

Péter Türk's oeuvre is characterised by thinking in terms of structures and series. His process of creation typically took place step by step on the basis of pre-planned operations. At the same time, when creating his works in a conceptual manner, he also integrated the emotional and psychic process of creation into his methods. The changes that took place according to the rules defined by Türk led to the formation of patterns. The elements and forms of these patterns could be rearranged and modified by the subjective perception, sensation and interpretation arising from the experience of the process. In the 1970s, Türk observed the fact, that we always look at a particular image differently, and the more times we see it, the more we are likely to attribute different meanings to it.

Since 1983, Türk has been developing new types of images called *psychograms* and *phenomena*. To make the psychograms, he placed a perforated sheet of cardboard between the photographic paper and the negative. He traced the movement of his eyes by moving the perforated paper, creating images with the light transmitted through this mask. Previously he also experimented with drawings to track the movement of his eyes. In case of these works, his starting point was an imagined square, on which he marked the positions of his gaze jumping back and forth with pencil strokes ([Untitled], second half of 1970s). He also developed the image type called phenomena using the psychogram-technique, when he projected the psychograms of several negatives on the same paper (*Phenomena. From the Psychograms of the Same Five Negatives* [1–4], 1983–1986).

At first, Türk realized these works on a smaller scale, then he got the opportunity to create larger works due to his solo exhibition titled *Psychograms, Phenomena*, held in 1987 at the Budapest Galéria Józsefvárosi Kiállítóterme [Józsefváros Exhibition Hall of the Budapest Gallery]. The creation of the works was preceded by a long preparation lasting up to months. Türk first collected images and produced negatives of them, referring to this as the "collection of forms". He also often laid the foundations for the interpretation of his works by writing texts explaining them. "These specks, selected by the mask, are the basic elements of my pictures. They are optical units that are familiar and pleasing to my eyes. They are such minute picture clippings of "reality" that almost *nothing* can be seen in them. They are richly varied, and they can build any sort of a new totality without any single part surpassing the other. *Anything* can arise from them." – stated Türk in the catalogue of his solo exhibition in 1987.

He pointed out that instead of the whole images, only certain details of the original negatives became part of the new works depending on where and for how long the light transmitted by the mask reached the paper. Through the optical, chemical, mechanical processes and the transparency of the negatives, certain details and some indicators of intentionality were disguised, while others got highlighted. The system of forms reduced to darker and lighter specks and the hiatus of forms made the creative forces and the recipient's perspective visible at the same time. The alternating tendencies and different approaches of twentieth-century art were projected and united in these works, simultaneously thematizing the questions of the reproducibility of optical phenomena and the synchronously sensual and conceptual nature of images. Despite the technical solutions, the works also carry the marks of the hand of the artist, and despite the regulated methods, they reflect subjective and personal decisions.

Türk similarly reduced his tools and established a specific sequence of operations when creating his series titled *Something from Phosphene Marks* [1–18] (1987). At the end of this period, he developed a new imaging technique by painting phosphene marks on A/3-size coated papers with a slow-drying, translucent glue. Phosphenes are the phenomena of seeing circular-, spiral-, and square-shaped spots of light with closed eyes, about which Türk has read in a contemporary scientific article back then. Following his gaze, he dabbed the then-invisible marks with a ball of cotton wool dipped in brownish-red pigments, evoking hitherto hidden forms. He did not compose when applying the pigments, he just let the appearing marks of the two different structures to collide and unite.

Türk came up with an *ars poetica* prevalent almost to his entire oeuvre in 1976, when creating his work titled *Formula (al is not visible)*. On the surface of the work he placed small cuboids with photographs and texts on them. The sentences were: "all is not visible", "a bird flew by", "multiple appearances" and "the leaves have moved." Türk captured the changing images of leaves as the camera passed them, then put red dots on them marking the movement of his eyes. He varied the sentences as almost mathematical operations, changing and mixing their order line by line. With other words formulated by Türk thirty years later, but also prevalent to his whole artistic practice covering decades: "The cumulation or complexity of entities incorporates the simplicity of existence."

Literature: *Psychograms, Phenomena* (ed. BEKE László – PETERNÁK Miklós). Exhibition catalogue. Budapest Galéria, Budapest, 1987.; *TÜRK Péter (1943-2015): all is not visible* (ed. ANDRÁSI Gábor – NÁRAI Szilvia – SZÁZADOS László – SZIPÓCS Krisztina). Exhibition catalogue. Ludwig Museum – Museum of Contemporary Art, Budapest, 2018.

RÁTKAI Zsófia

TÜRK Péter (1943-2015) visual artist. In 1969, he became a member of the Szürenon group, then an important participant in the Hungarian neo-avantgarde scene. In 1970, he took part in the *R-Exhibition*, held at the University of Technology (Budapest), and was an exhibitor at György Galántai's Balatonboglár Chapel between 1970 and 1972. In 1976, he participated in the exhibition titled *Exposition. Photo/Art* (Hatvany Lajos Museum, Hatvan). He participated in many international group shows (e.g. *Időhíd – Zeitbrücke*, Museum Moderner Kunst, Passau, 2001; *Tolerance in Art*, Danubiana – Meulensteen Art Museum, Bratislava, 2009). His works can be found in the collections of Kunsthalles Praha (Praha), the Ludwig Museum - Museum of Contemporary Art (Budapest), and the Hungarian National Gallery (Budapest), among others. A narrower audience always held his oeuvre embracing over four decades in high esteem, but the wider public could only encounter his work for the first time in 2018 at his retrospective exhibition at the Ludwig Museum Budapest titled *all is not visible*.

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Phenomena [1–4], D/5, D/34, D/14, D/7, 1983–1985
paper, silver gelatine print, 80x80 cm each, TP170

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Phenomena. From the Psychograms of the Same Five Negatives [1–4], A/53, A/15, A/22, A/36, 1983–1986
paper, silver gelatine print; 80x80 cm each, TP169

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[Untitled], second half of 1970s
wood, resin based paint, coloured pencil, 70,5x50x4,5 cm, TP164

Formula (all is not visible), 1976
wood, resin based paint, paper, relief printing, silver gelatine prints, 70,5x50x4,5 cm, TP149

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Something from Phosphene Marks [1–18], 1987
coated paper, glue, pigment, 35x24,8 cm each, TP189