

Harm van den Dorpel & Vera Molnár

ANGLES MORTS

September 6 – November 2, 2024

In the upcoming exhibition 'Angles Morts', **LOHAUS SOMINSKY** is showing new works by the artist Harm van den Dorpel in combination with works by Vera Molnar, who is known for her pioneering work in computer and generative art. The exhibition presents the result of an impressive exploration of Harm van den Dorpel's artistic engagement with the roots of generative art.

Since 2019, Harm van den Dorpel has dedicated himself to researching artists such as Anni Albers, Vera Molnár, Charlotte Posenenske and Tauba Auerbach, who are known for their work with two-dimensional grid patterns. This research is part of his endeavour to explore his own roots in generative art and to identify his influences.

It should be noted that the artists listed are all women. In his research, Van den Dorpel recognises a dominance of female artists in the field of generative art. He considers a historical connection between the systematic arrangement of recurring elements in grid patterns and the craft of weaving, an activity traditionally dominated by women.

In his work, the artist explores the complexity of works by female artists such as Anni Albers. While it would have been technically easy to programme an algorithm that replicated her triangle patterns, it turned out that randomly placing the triangles did not achieve the desired aesthetic effect. Van den Dorpel realised that Albers must have formulated clear rules in her head, which she applied algorithmically to each cell of the grid. This realisation led to a deep respect for the invisible structures and thought processes hidden in the works of Albers and other female generative artists.

Unlike Albers, Vera Molnár worked with computer technology, but it was very limited, had no screens and provided only simple outputs that she had to manually translate into physical objects. These processes were labour intensive and resulted in small imperfections, which Van den Dorpel particularly appreciates.

The artist uses modern algorithms and a plotter to imitate and further develop the aesthetics and methodology of his role models. A plotter is a specialised printer that creates precise technical drawings and graphics by moving pens or markers across the paper on an X-Y axis. Unlike conventional printers, which apply ink in lines from top to bottom, the plotter draws lines in different directions. This process gives the work an organic quality that goes beyond the precision of digital prints. The plotter draws lines in all directions and through the slow, mechanical movement creates unique and unrepeatable results that bring a human unpredictability to the digital works.

His interest in the methods of these artists led van den Dorpel to question and optimise his own processes. Despite his technological tools, he seeks a connection to the artisanal and intellectual approaches of his predecessors. The exhibition 'Angles Morts' offers a deep insight into these complex interactions between historical influences and modern technologies.

A recurring theme in van den Dorpel's practice is the instability of the digital medium, where any specific idea or form of expression is difficult to grasp. This instability avoids a fixed, definitive statement and emphasises an open system. Reflecting on the historical role of women in computational art and their often overlooked contributions, van den Dorpel honours the rigorous and visionary work of these pioneers.

'Angles Morts' invites visitors to explore these complex and profound relationships.