

Exhibition Title: Deep Inside in the Safest Place

Artist: Mónika Kárándi & Erin M. Riley

Curator: Péter Bencze

Venue: Longtermhandstand, Budapest

Duration: 31 January – 15 March 2025

Tags: @monikakarandi @erinmriley @longtermhandstand @everybodyneedsart

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Text: Péter Bencze

Deep Inside in the Safest Place

Longtermhandstand is proud to present the duo exhibition of Brooklyn-based artist Erin M. Riley and Hungarian painter Mónika Kárándi. This showcase highlights the striking contrast between two distinct artistic approaches, not only in their chosen mediums—Riley’s handwoven tapestries and Kárándi’s contemporary painted landscapes—but also in their exploration of the individual versus the collective. Erin M. Riley’s meticulously crafted, large-scale woven works unravel the intimate, erotic, and psychologically raw terrain of personal history, relationships, trauma, and resilience. Using a collage-like process, she weaves together moments from personal archives, internet imagery, and media clippings to construct deeply personal yet universally resonant narratives. Her work lays bare the complexities of the female experience, exposing how trauma etches itself into the psyche and body. Each tapestry acts as a vessel of memory, inviting viewers into a space of vulnerability and self-examination. Mónika Kárándi, in contrast, expands the notion of identity through collective transformation. Her painted landscapes explore the body’s extension beyond its physical boundaries, merging it with the natural world. Inspired by the ancient desert plant *Welwitschia Mirabilis*—an organism that has endured for millennia—her figures stretch, tangle, and intertwine like tendrils reaching for both sky and earth. These hair-like, morphing forms embody endurance, resilience, and the longing for connection. Kárándi’s work blurs the line between human and plant life, suggesting a profound interdependence between individual existence and the greater forces of nature. As she describes, “Even if I did separate them, they would again and again long to merge with each other.” Through Riley’s deeply introspective, singular narratives and Kárándi’s expansive, interconnected visions, "Deep Inside in the Safest Place" invites us to consider the interplay between isolation and unity, fragmentation and continuity, trauma and survival. In this dynamic juxtaposition, the exhibition offers a meditation on endurance—both personal and collective—and the fluid boundaries that shape our identities over time.

Péter Bencze