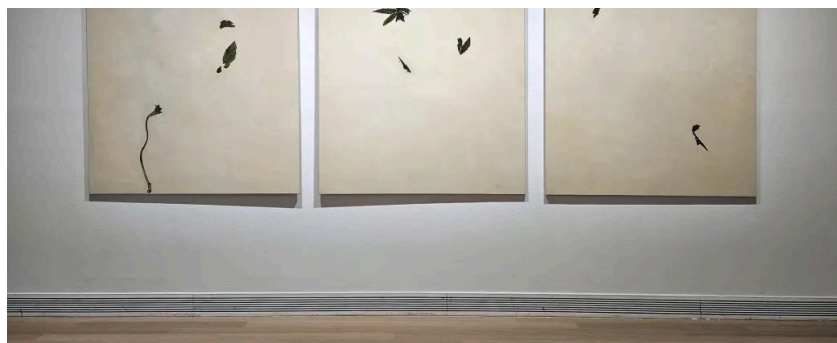


EXPOSITION LUDWIG MUSEUM, BUDAPEST, JUSQU'AU 14 AVRIL 2024.

Au Ludwig Museum de Budapest, l'hommage à Vera Molnar est l'occasion d'un tour d'horizon artistique des pratiques numériques des années 1960 à aujourd'hui.

La Stiftung für Kunst und Kultur s'est associée au collectionneur Josef Broich pour organiser une exposition intitulée *À la recherche de Vera Molnar*, artiste qui aurait été centenaire cette année, au Ludwig Museum de Budapest. Les deux commissaires, Richard Castelli et Zsófia Máté, y confrontent l'œuvre de cette pionnière en art numérique aux créations d'artistes de différentes générations qui lui rendent hommage. En suggérant le profil de la Sainte-Victoire à l'huile et en triptyque, c'est un hommage à l'hommage que propose l'artiste émergeant aurèce vettier : hommage à Vera Molnar qui elle-même s'intéressa au sujet que Cézanne a tenté d'épuiser. Avec les technologies de son temps, aurèce vettier a entraîné un modèle d'intelligence artificielle (IA) à l'aide d'un herbier en guise de jeu de données, puis il a sollicité le savoir-faire d'un peintre qu'il a littéralement astreint à la représentation de ces fragments d'images générés par IA. Vera Molnar, dans son intérêt pour l'histoire de l'art, était coutumière de ces va-et-vient, comme elle le fit en se focalisant sur le carré magique que Dürer avait représenté dans sa *Mélancolie* renaissante. Des siècles plus tard, les membres du collectif u2p050 se sont à leur tour intéressés à l'étrange combinatoire de ce carré en concevant algorithmiquement la monumentale sculpture, sonore et lumineuse,

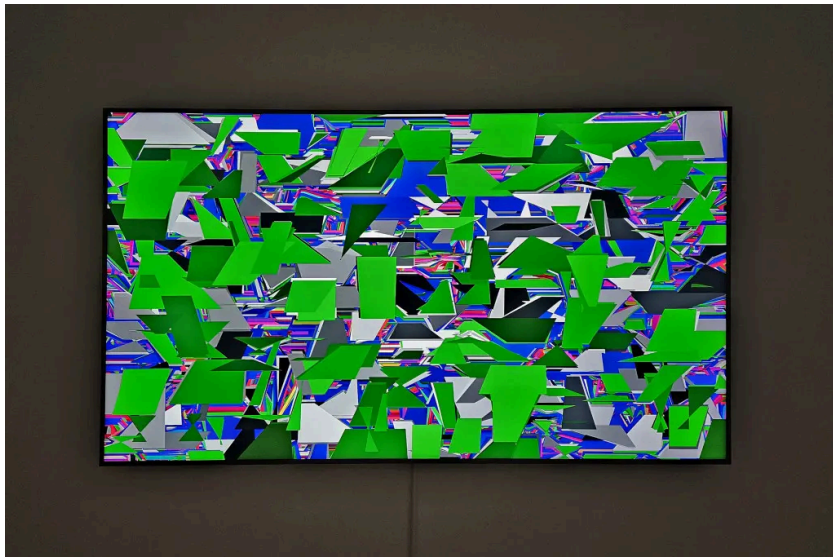


aurèle vettier, "Tribute to Vera Molnar – Triptych",
2022

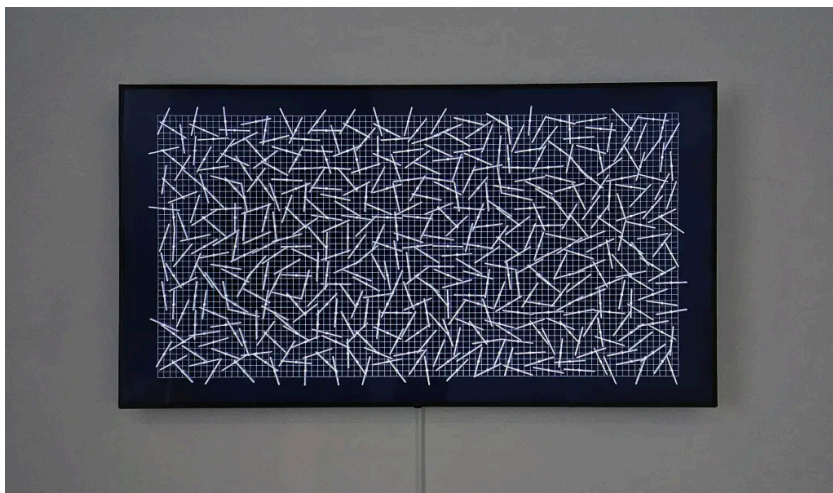
LÂCHER PRISE

Une telle exposition a le mérite d'évoquer 60 années d'histoire des pratiques numériques en art, et plus particulièrement génératives. Le doyen de cette exposition est Frieder Nake qui, rompu à la mathématique, codait déjà ses créations dans les années 1960, époque à laquelle la visualisation était loin d'être instantanée. Il fallait alors être d'une infinie patience ou, peut-être, accepter la sérendipité inhérente à l'usage des ordinateurs. À propos de son *Hommage à Molnar* (2021), Frieder Nake s'avoue incapable d'anticiper les évolutions des formes ou des couleurs de son œuvre, résolument générative. De son côté, Antoine Schmitt admet aussi ne pas toujours comprendre ce que font les modules autonomes de son *100 Squares Ensemble* (2023). L'artiste a codé un élément pour qu'il rythme les 99 autres, tout en acceptant de ne pas savoir lequel : il ne connaît de sa pièce optique et cinétique que son état à l'instant de son initialisation.

Ce genre de lâcher prise est fréquent chez les artistes de l'art génératif récemment popularisé par le crypto art. Parmi les autres œuvres présentées sur écran, citons celle de Casey Reas. Entièrement noire



Frieder Nake, "Hommage à Molnar", 2021



Casey Reas, "Hommage à Molnar", 2023

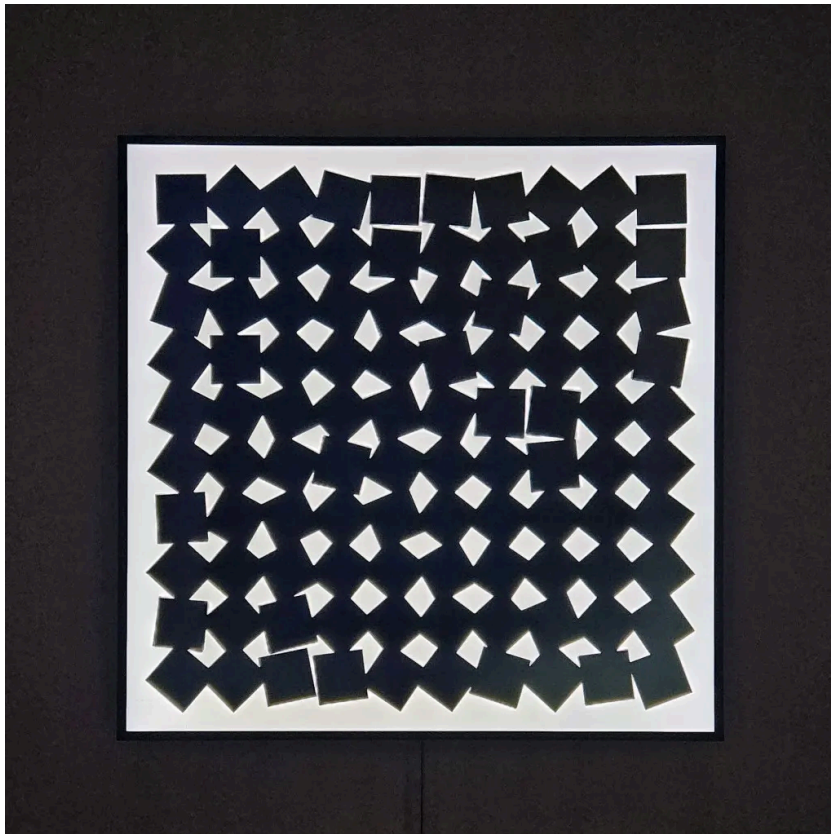
À LA FRONTIÈRE

Cette exposition hommage à Vera Molnar est également l'occasion d'investiguer une communauté qui s'est longtemps cherchée, entre numérique et art, à la frontière du marché qui considère enfin ses créations. De la même façon que Vera Molnar utilisait la grille – donc la notion de

numériques depuis les années 1960.

Avec Tamiko Thiel and /p et leur dispositif participatif de réalité augmentée *Vera Plastica* (2023), c'est plus directement la question de la répétition qui est abordée. Ici, l'objet des répétitions est le modèle 3D d'une bouteille en plastique conférant un caractère écologique à cette pièce "jouable". Les pratiques numériques n'échappent pas à la pénétration du politique dans l'art, bien que ce ne soit pas l'enjeu principal d'une telle exposition davantage axée sur la contemplation des algorithmes dans le champ de l'art.

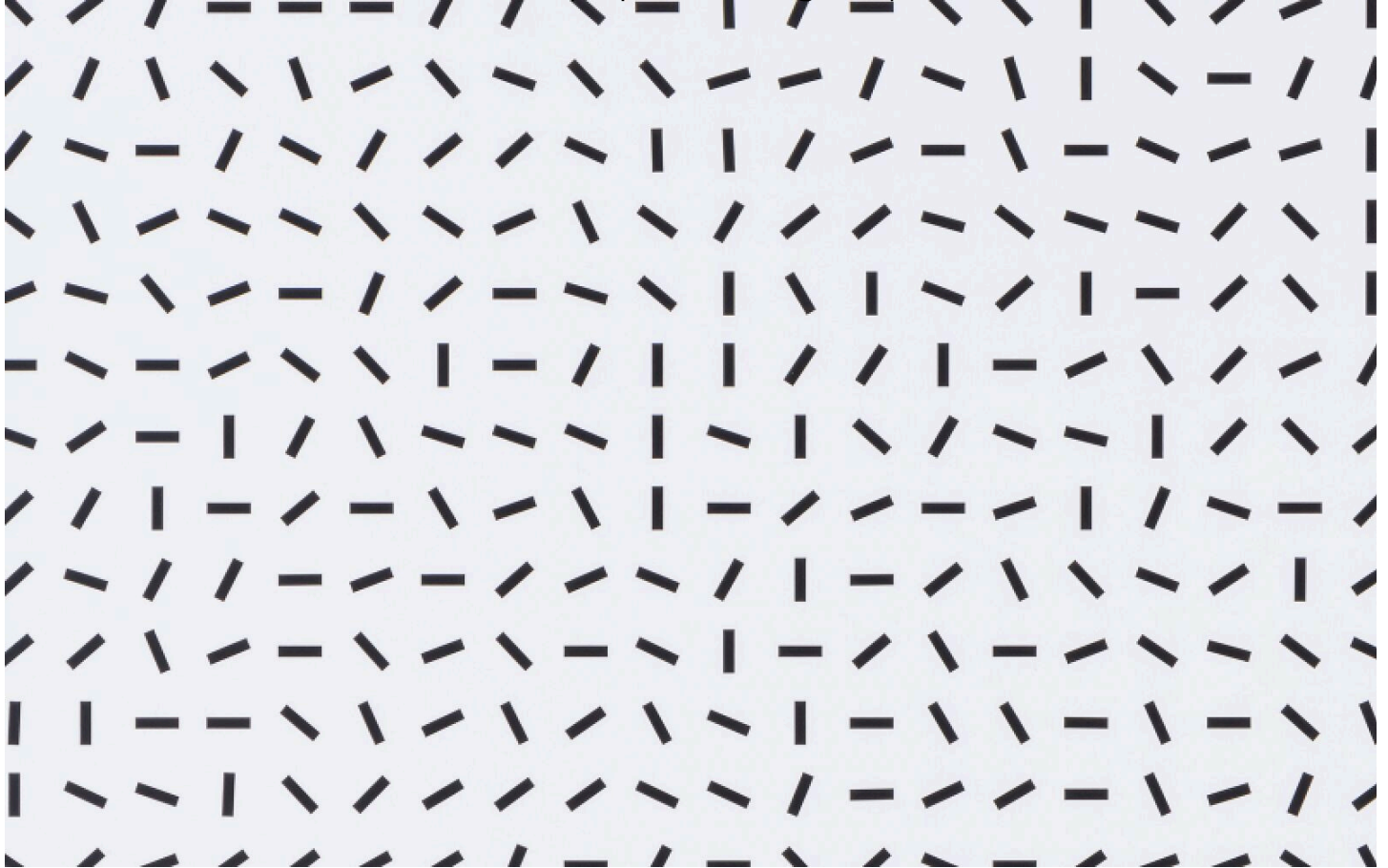
Dominique Moulon



Antoine Schmitt, "100 Squares Ensemble", 2023

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April 4, 2024(<https://clotmag.com/2024/04/04>)

**'À la recherche de Vera Molnar', a heartfelt
homage to the pioneering computer artist**

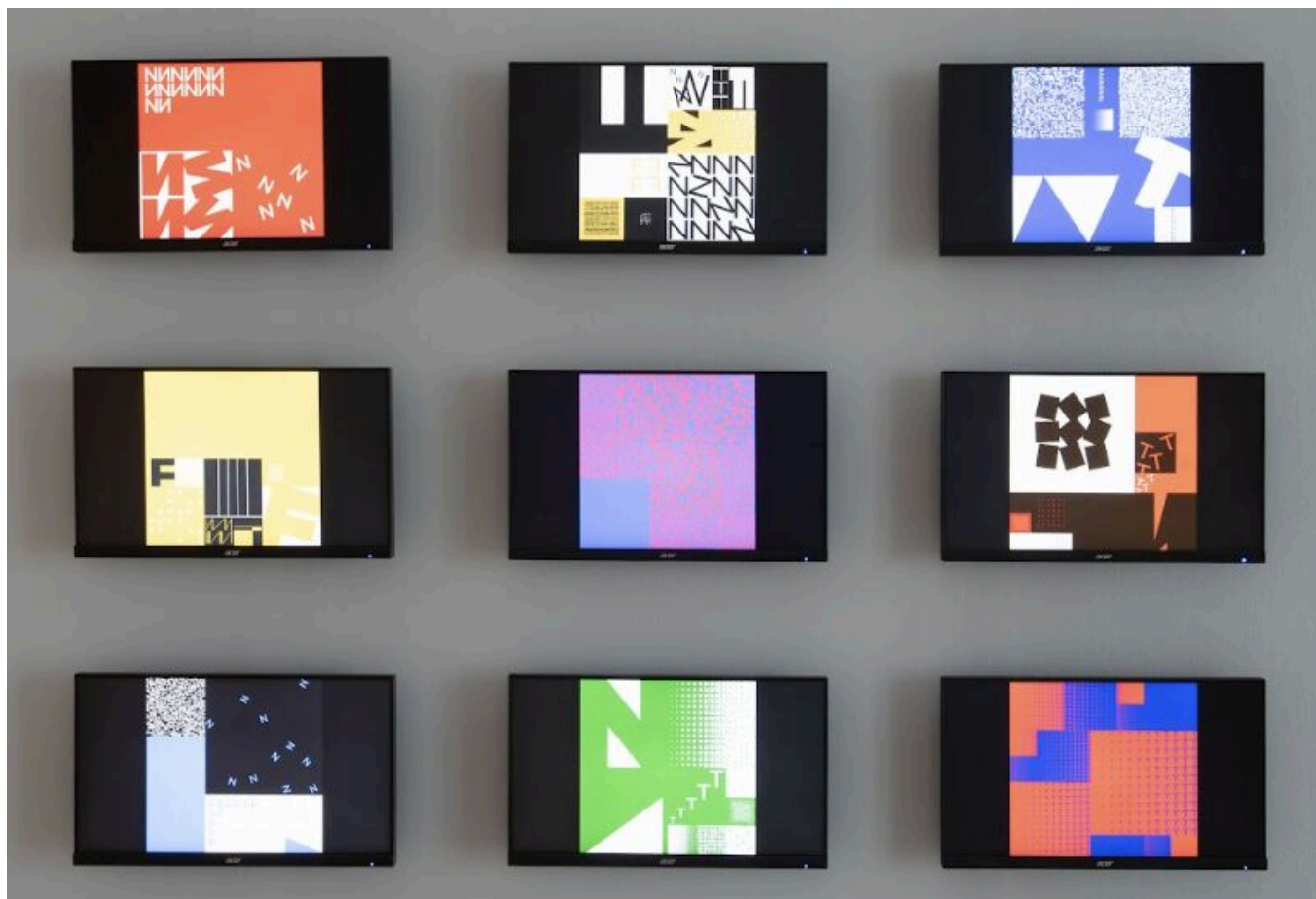
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Text by Juliette Wallace

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Themes and Variations 21; 324; 294; 7; 293; 113; 285; 213; 112, Vera MOLNAR (2023). NFTs (In collaboration with Martin Grasser), installation view (2024). © Ludwig Museum. Photo credit: József ROSTA.

Remaining true to her 1% disorder practice, the seminal 20th-century computer artist **Vera Molnar** died just one month before her 100th birthday. Before her passing, she and two curators – the established multi-media producer and curator **Richard Castelli** and Budapest's current **Ludwig Museum** on-sight curator, **Zsofia Máté** – had begun what was to be a celebration of Molnar's extensive career.

It was also to be an opportunity for the artist to meet fifteen of her proteges from the contemporary generative/computer art scene. The eventualities that took place at the end of 2023 meant that Molnar would no longer be able to participate

in person. This changed everything for the curators

What was at first envision
of Budapest became a joy
An homage, as Vera herself
resulting travelling exhibit
simple and does justice to

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in her hometown
at artist's memory.
an artist. The
is beautiful and

Perched on the Danube River, the Ludwig Museum is a modern temple of art. In keeping with the lofty museums of the turn of the century that presented the viewing of art as a spiritual experience, the Ludwig's slick, dominating yet peaceful presence makes one aware that they are entering a space divided from the everyday, where big exhibitions by big artists take place.

Founded as a museum proper in 1991, the Ludwig Museum's remit is works of the mid to late 20th-century and contemporary 21st-century artists. Being one of the city's primary art spaces it is a fitting place for a homegrown Budapest artist (spanning across both centuries) of such calibre as Vera Molnar. *It was important for us to show Hungarians themselves Vera's work. Compared to the rest of the Western world, the Hungarian population is not so familiar with her art,* Zsafia Máté explains.

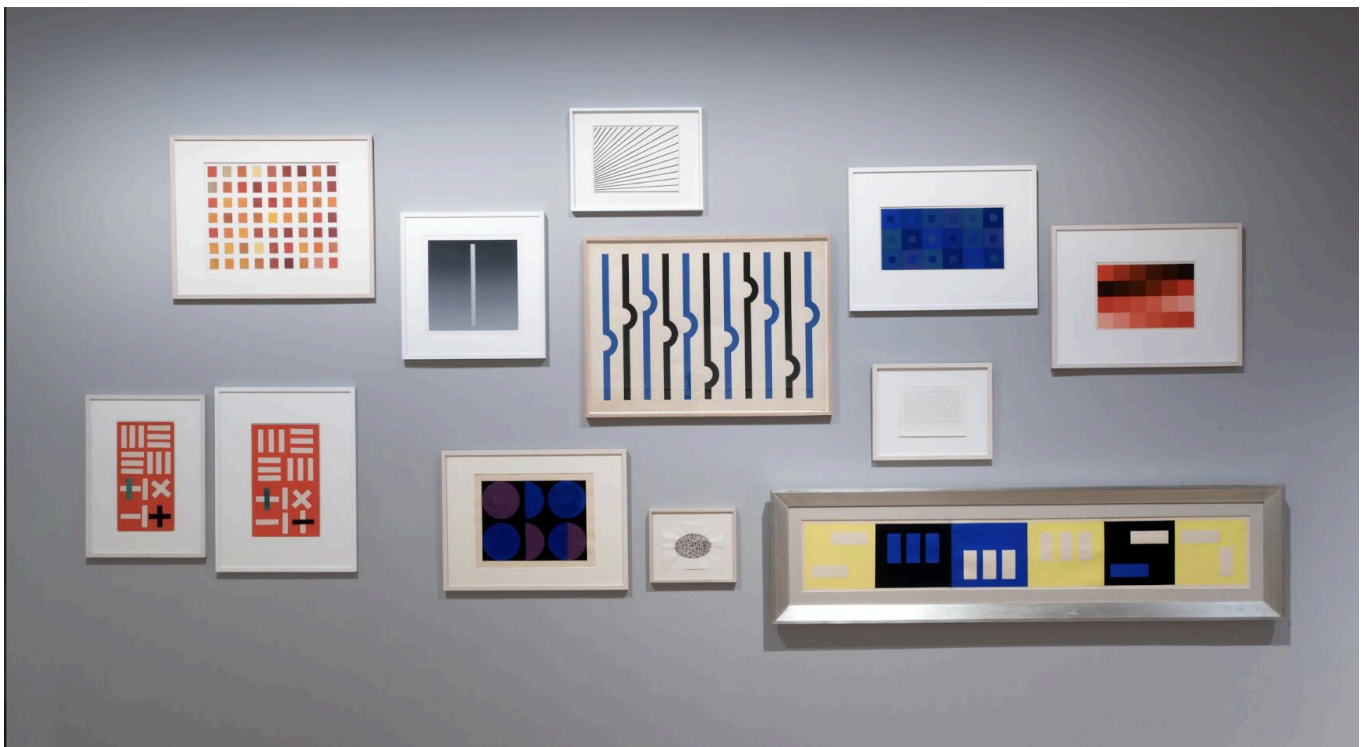
Although Vera Molnar was born in Budapest, she left her hometown early on, at the age of 23. She and her husband/artistic collaborator, François Molnar, went on to spend the majority of their lives in Paris, where they actively partook in the academic, progressive art scene. There they founded GRAV (Group de Recherche d'Art Visuel) amongst other inquisitive and research/practice groups and were productive in their own art practice. The works they made and the bold modes of thought that they employed would go on to permeate not only the Parisienne but the global art scene.

Curator Zsafia Máté told the author that she saw this opportunity to begin the journey of a travelling Vera Molnar exhibition in Budapest as a way to give the artist's own people the chance to not only see her work but grasp its influence on the art world at large: *even if the space is limited, the exhibition shows the full cycle and influence of Vera's career, pre- and post-computer, from the late '50s to 2023.*



(<https://clotmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Screenshot-2024-04-03-at-22.27.22.jpg>)

Asking a Shadow to Dance, U2P050 (2024). Installation view (2024). © Ludwig Museum. Art Photo: József ROSTA.



(<https://clotmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Screenshot-2024-04-03-at-22.28.14.jpg>)

Vera Molnar, Installation view, 2024. © Ludwig Museum. Photo credit : József ROSTA

In the same way that Buc element of *À La Recherche* many bridges that join th temporal bridges in the 1 interwoven in a tip of the hat from (https://clotmag.com), with Molnar at the centre. A generational Mexican wave, if you will.

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As such, the curators' decision to create a homage exhibition was rooted deeply in the title artist's practice. This can be seen in the very name of the show, which quotes Vera's homage series *À La Recherche de Paul Klee*, simultaneously honouring the Swiss/German expressionist artist Paul Klee and Marcel Proust's seminal work *À La Recherche du Temps Perdu*.

Going as far back as the 15th century's Albrecht Dürer and his "invisible square", which features not only in Molnar's works but also in contemporary pieces, including the sculptural homage *Asking a Shadow to Dance* (2004) made for Vera by the French art collective U2P050, the exhibition does what few tech shows can: it seamlessly blends previous generations' progress with contemporary developments without being didactic.

The exhibition is able to comfortably span centuries whilst never losing the fundamental thread of the aesthetics of generative and computer art. How? Through Vera Molnar's unquenchable curiosity together with her unique interest in combining the new with the old, technology with history, the "then" with the "what now?".

The most recent of Molnar's pieces in the show – a series of NFT (Non-Fungible Token) works made in collaboration with Martin Grasser in 2023 – exemplifies this philosophy. *Vera's use of NFTs not only makes her more accessible to a contemporary audience, but it also demonstrates her character. At 99 years old, Vera was still experimenting and exploring the technological landscape, states Máté. It is true that the NFT work is functional in converting a previous generation's tech language into today's.*

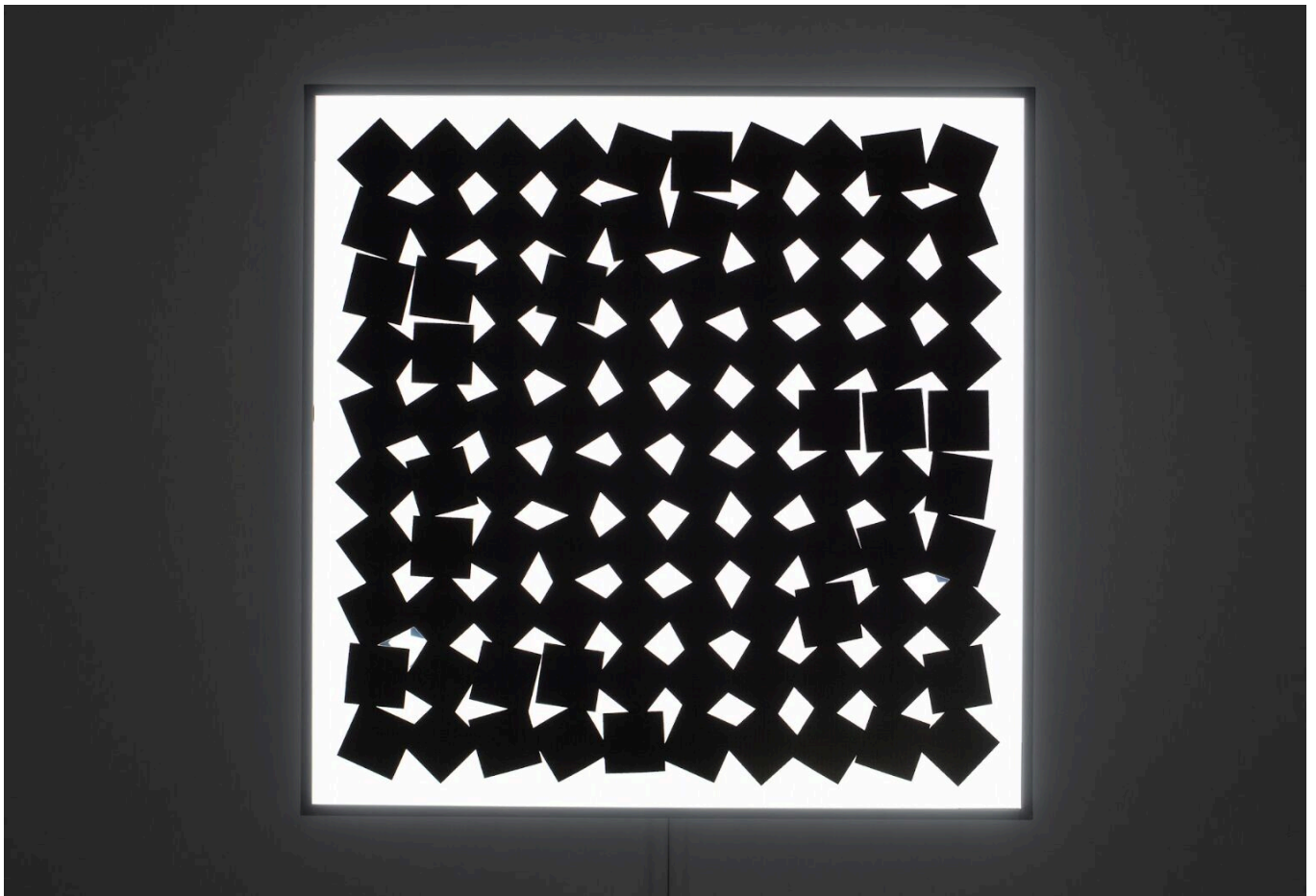
Whilst in her lifetime Vera saw computers as a tool, there is no doubt that technology is becoming more autonomous, where artists and others can end up submitting to rather than making use of it. When asked directly by the author what role the computer and new tech play in the exhibition – tool, muse, hero, or villain – Máté ponders a while and then replies *it's an overachieving tool.*

Vera Molnar was always f
means to an artistic end
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(<https://clotmag.com>)
makes clear that there's much more to each piece than an algorithm. Every work
has its own particular vibe and human - specifically Vera - element. This is down to
the artist's nature but also to her employment of the 1% disorder rule, where each
system was disrupted by 1%, causing what could be defined as "character".



(<https://clotmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Screenshot-2024-04-03-at-22.27.59.jpg>)

100 négyzet együttese | 100 Squares Ensemble, Antoine Schmitt. Installation view (2024). © Ludwig Museum. Photo credit: József ROSTA.



(<https://clotmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Screenshot-2024-04-03-at-22.27.50.jpg>)

Saint Victoire en 2 Bleus A, Vera Molnar (2017-19). Installation view (2024). © Ludwig Museum. Photo credit: József ROSTA

Of the fifteen contemporary artists who were selected to exhibit alongside Vera, each responded to the artist's 1% rule in their own way. One of the more successful works that made use of this was *Trame Temporelle* by German artist **Mario Klingemann**. Made up of a grid of screens displaying live footage of the viewer shot by security cameras, Klingemann uses fractional disruption in the context of time, interrupting each screen's footage with an exponential fragment of delay. This creates a ghostly likeness at transitional stages of the viewer's movements.

This work has a distinct eeriness that only makes it more attractive to a curious gallery-goer. Another contemporary work, *Homage á Molnar*, by the established British digital artist **Casey Reas** (<https://clotmag.com/interviews/casey-reas-creative-coding-for-art-and-design>), deals with this 1% by carrying it to its conclusion. By animating the varying angles of Molnar's source work *Lent Mouvement Giratoire* (1957-2013), Reas completed the trajectories of Molnar's 1% disordered sections of Dürer's invisible square, giving life to an otherwise static work.

The various homages in the exhibit, whilst all relatively simple in concept and execution, take on multiple and varied forms. This selection not only accurately reflects Molnar's ability to achieve density within simplicity, but it also creates a

varied and engaging exhibition whilst avoiding museum fatigue. In addition to the selection of raw materials recall the bridges of Budapest. By placing the work of the artist of the new generation, Máté and Castellani are inviting the viewer to see the differences, or perhaps the lack thereof, in the works of two of Molnar's admirers of different generations. The result may be surprising...

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À La Recherche de Vera Molnar is a subtle yet bold exhibition that recalls the best of a classic museum hang with simplicity in the context of a tech narrative. The joining of two tales, that of a woman's life and work and the development of technology, draws out an elegant approach to the subject of digital art and societal changes. The admittance, too, that previous generations can – and perhaps should – be considered relevant and even admirable goes against much of the spiel that contemporary artists and exhibitions are offering up nowadays, a push-back that is welcomed by this author.

What remains untold in *À La Recherche de Vera Molnar* is the narrative of a woman who was just that, a *woman* in worlds that belonged to men. Whilst, as Máté correctly states, *the fact that Vera was a woman was not her main focus. In fact, she would tell us, 'I considered myself to be François Molnar's cook until his death, and I was content'; it remains something that is important, even in its unimportance to the artist.* Perhaps this subject of Molnar's woman-ness was the 1% of disorder integrated by the curators in an otherwise seamless exhibition...

The touring exhibition runs at the Ludwig Museum in Budapest until 14 April. Its next stop will be in the city of Linz (Austria). The Francisco Carolinum Art Museum in Linz will host the exhibition from Budapest starting August 28, 2024.

À la recherche de Vera Molnar is a collaboration between the Ludwig Museum, the Fondation for Art and Culture (Stiftung für Kunst and Kultur) and the Vintage Gallery.

Website <https://www.ludwigmuseum.hu/en/exhibition/la-recherche-de-vera-molnar-artworks-vera-molnar-and-homages-internationally-acclaimed> (<https://www.ludwigmuseum.hu/en/exhibition/la-recherche-de-vera-molnar-artworks-vera-molnar-and-homages-internationally-acclaimed>)
(Media courtesy of the Ludwig Museum. Heading image: Molnár Vera, Lassú forgó mozgás 2 (1957-2013))



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From the visceral heart of London's punk, noise, experimental, and DIY scenes, a unique biannual event series has emerged with force this year. Just days away from its third iteration (and the second in London), Sunday School, conceived by Dom Stevenson (aka YAWS), is set to return on August 26th at the iconic New River Studios in North London. The lineup packs a fierce array of bands and live acts featuring heavy hitters like Russell Haswell and Autumns, among many others.



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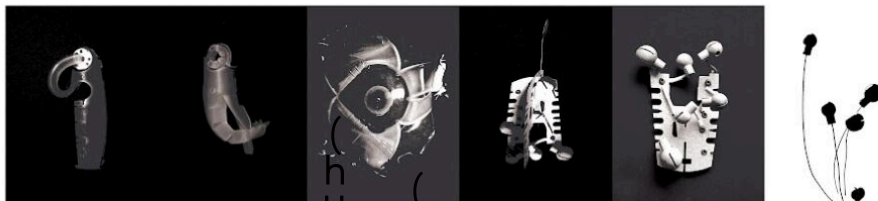
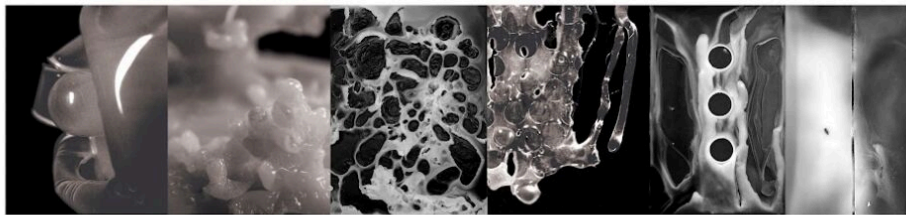
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