The research project “Parallel Chronologies” was launched to map, study, and generate curatorial and artistic practices and methodologies dealing with post-war Eastern European art exhibitions and events. Our goal is to present an international network of professional relationships, documents of exhibitions, events, and art spaces instead of the mere display of artworks from the period. We also attempt to propose a methodology with which documents and factual information as well as legends and cults can be researched, processed and displayed in an exhibition.

Creating our own chronologies we looked at why some events, works, figures gain significance as soon as they appear, making them the starting points of anecdotes and legends, while others are quickly forgotten or can only become significant when seen from a later context. We were interested to find out what roles and possibilities for public appearance the era’s political and social climate provided for progressive art, as well as what connections it had with “official art” and international trends.

“Parallel Chronologies” has been presented so far as an exhibition in Budapest in 2009, in Karlsruhe in 2010. In 2011 in Riga, accompanied by Sándor Hornyik’s compilation “Other Revolutionary Traditions” and the contribution of LCCA, Riga, Art History Institute, Tallinn, and Vilnius National Art Gallery.

This publication is an exhibition in newspaper format that considers the immediacy with which events and artworks reflected on the daily reality of their time, and also attempts to restore the then missing public appeal of these progressive practices. It contains two parallel projects, “Other Revolutionary Traditions” by Sándor Hornyik and “How Art Becomes Public” by Dóra Hegyi and Zsuzsa László. Sándor Hornyik deals with the history of cults developed around certain revolutionary figures of art and history. He investigates how Hungarian neo-avant-garde artists appropriated or undermined the heroes and strategies of official cultural politics in the 60s and 70s and how contemporary artists in turn appropriate and deconstruct the cult of avant-garde and neo-avant-garde figures. “How art becomes public” is an attempt to draw up a chronology of exhibitions and events that in the 60s and 70s redefined the relation between art and the public. We present the textual and visual documents of 16 legendary events from Hungary between 1966 and 1977, while an essay describes the turning points of Hungarian exhibition history. Through these case-studies we investigate how innovative models were introduced into exhibition-making, what kind of alternative presentational formats were developed, and how legendary events were preserved and revisited in the collective memory of the Hungarian art scene.

1 First realized in 2009 as part of the “Art always has its consequences” international collaboration – “The Invisible History of Exhibitions” project: www.artalways.org
Dóra Hegyi
Zsuzsa László
HOW ART BECOMES PUBLIC

As a starting point we addressed the process of chronology, an important channel for marking the artist movements of an epoch. Chronologies play a defining role in transforming assorted events into histories and events, especially in the case of East European art that often happened in the "second publicity" during the 60s and 70s.

The point of departure for most of the late chronologies is Dora Mauser’s richly illustrated "Invisible History of the Avant-garde Movement in Hungary 1966-80" published in the catalogue of an exhibition presenting Hungarian artists in Germany in 1980. Mauser is a visual artist, who herself travelled a lot, and worked as a one-person institution, taking up the role of art historian and curator as she started to record events and exhibitions. Another important chronological account of this era in Hungary was written by Miklós Kálos (1939) and Péter Kovács (1939), two art historians from the Lenin Király Museum in Szolnok/Szolnok. They started a series of exhibitions in 1965 with the title Hungarian Art in the 20th Century, with which they described and presented different periods according to the international trends that defined them. The exhibitions displayed mostly conventional objects of art, whereas the catalogues featuring the precise chronology and bibliography of the 60s and 70s also included underground and activist events, incorporating them in the system of periodisation. After 1989 there were attempts to rehabilitate the neo-avant-garde art that came to life under "political repression" and to rewrite the history of this period. The ambitious conceived exhibition "The Stalin – New Trends in Hungarian Visual Art" (1991) organized by the Hungarian National Gallery was one of the most influential attempts. In the last two decades several other chronologies were written to explore the "invisible" art events of the 60s and 70s. These chronologies are typically based on archives (such as those of the CS hud and Artpool) or are connected to art projects. During our research on chronologies we encountered several real, conflicting readings and memories of this period. We decided to launch an e-mail inquiry asking Hungarian art professionals belonging to different generations and sub-projects of the various generations, as well as events that were held at official (public), professional, and ad hoc exhibitions, such as culture houses or clubs, or ones that never passed the planning stage, or were banned. Since we were also looking for an answer to the question of how an exhibition becomes a work of art or an event and what can happen in an exhibition, we endeavoured to explore the connections between shows that present works of art in a static manner and various acoustic and performative practices.

At the second publicitiy is – even today – almost exclusively assigned to the participation and witnesses of the events themselves. Though the curiosity of younger generations is often held back by the lack of accessible information and the difficulty of unravelling the "legends", still a lot of young artists and curators have established serious relationships to certain phenomena of the period (see a selection of the answers published in this publication).

Responses – Selection

Gábor András: an artist, historian, critic, and curator born in 1954

I believe that the pro-supposition that "the majority of progressive events took place in the grey zone of non-official exhibition spaces" is the approach to the period under discussion results in a "one-sided" picture. Exhibitions that wanted to prove the "liberalism" of official cultural policy and state publishing of a similar-run were so-called from another, while simultaneously representing a "common" available cultural space, and allow- ing for certain passages (e.g., the exhibitions in the Piskamok/ Kunsthalle of "avant-garde", artists and start public and mass conversations from the se- miotics). For this reason, my personal list contains also "official" events and from my point of view, books of key importance, as well.

2. Herbert Read: Modern Painting, Hungarian edition: 1965
5. Iparterv - Szürenon - R exhibition, Budapest, 1968-70
6. Lajos Németh: Art’s Turn of Fate, Gondolat, 1970

As a "supplement" (if I may add) two extra:

ParaLLel CHronologies

In Hungary between the 1950s and 1960s, public exhibitions had to get permission from the responsible authorities – on the basis of a precise list of artworks – and were fully financed by state institutions. Those tendencies were not opportuned to find alternative means, of presentation and strat- egies of self-organization. A lot of important events, especially in the first half of the 60s, took place in "emergent" clubs, exhibitions, social and public and mass conversations - "network centres", "emblems of industrial headquarters, aleurines, private fora" without any institutional background. Some actions taking place in the street or in outdoor venues also became emblematic. We have to recall here the case known as...
It reveals how much change has been caused by history that the Inconnu group was one of the organisations that, reacting to the formerly private sphere, opened it to the public. This occurred in the months of a month for months in front of the Parliament with right-wing groups. I see the Inconnu group because it implies that one no one also will mention them, and they certainly belong in a historical archive.

Miklós Erdhardt, artist born in 1966

I don’t really know what to say, I have no experience (logically) of my own period of the world; what I do know is mostly what I have read from those whom I have likewise asked; and even in my own work, I do not relate to the Hungarian art of this time. What I see in the period is on the one hand, a sad isolation, and on the other, ambivalent heroism. If your exhibition could resolve these feelings I have, it would be wonderful. While I thank you for your invitation, I am sorry that I cannot offer a substantial contribution.

János Fodor, artist born in 1972

Since I was born in 1975, I can only have a poor picture of the period from sources caught in the filter of art history, or from spoken historical recollections. Among others, this recognition has prompted the joint video work I have made with Tibor Horváth (on collections of artists); nevertheless, we know that the writers write history, which means that it is unnecessary to research that which everyone knows, but what should be researched is what no one knows (myself included). With this, I do not mean to suggest an erroneous concept according to which research of curiosities would be desirable, but it would certainly be worth searching among the personal accumulations of the era (a list of names is a good start), since personal reports distort and suppress according to their own interest, while historical views are distorted and suppressed according to a historical act.

To sum up, I think you need to have the players of the era speak, not me, what you know everyone that could possibly know, and most probably much, much more. I wish you much success in your serious endeavour: it’s good that finally someone is seriously dealing with the question. This is truly the last minute, because even if enough time has passed for comparisons, it is still not necessary to go to the historical archives for every single piece of data.

Andreas Fogarasi, artist born in 1977

I don’t believe that I would be able to list ten events that have not already been the subject of the century, and which other participants have not already mentioned. Thus, I would like to propose just a single action, which established an interesting new relationship to official art and to a certain international scene, and this is József Major’s one-man demonstration against Victor Vasarely’s exhibition opening at the Műcsarnok/Kunsthalle in 1969. I heard first of the event in 2001, though I unfortunately cannot remember now where I read of it, or who it was who might have described it to me.

It is written about in Gábor Pénteky’s Samolod’s volume, entitled “Hogy Avangardot, ha vásárolt” [How to buy avant-garde, if you have purchased it] (How [is there] an avant-garde, if there is none). “The process of opposition, the ‘mission’ of the West is not destined to be effective in this context. When Vasarely’s 1969 retrospective exhibition opened filling all the rooms of the Budapest Kunsthalle, the mass media and cultural politicians welcomed the work of this non-conformist, József Major, one of the most talented (and most obscure) members of the new avant-garde, appeared with a small “point-size portable sack.” Whoever he was, they never introduced him, and in the crowd, he took it not, cast a glance about to be sure the unimpressed were not watching, and held it up: “Vásároly go home!” Could a Western artist understand how little this gesture had to do with envy, aggression or a desire for professional success, that it was distanced rather by loyalty and self-reflection?

— a. n. and b. had the authority of temporary government functions

In parallel with the emergence of activist practices, but first, independently from them, new possibilities appeared in exhibition-making in the second half of the 60s. In addition to the semi-public life of the studio-, studio- and club-exhibitions, some official venues also started concentrating on this. The idea (initiated by György Aczél, Minister of Culture) came about that exhibitions which cultural policy did not wish to support for ideological reasons should still be provided a venue. This exhibition space was the Ad millennium, where artists who represented different trends were featured on the condition that they themselves financed their exhibition. The institution of the self-financed exhibition was established by Lajos Kávék’s (painter-poet and visual artist; 1887–1967) emblematic exhibition in the Ad millennium in the year of his death. He could not get permission to exhibit his constructive works anywhere else, in Hungary, and they were well known among the younger generation. Thus, this exhibition provided exceptional insight into the master’s later oeuvre and also an occasion for progressive art circles and cultural politicians to take up potential occasions. At the same time, it was absurd and embarrassing to expect Kávé - a pioneer of leftist art movements before World War II, who in the 1920s was considered in the most prestigious galleries in Western Europe, to pay himself all the costs of his exhibition.

Self-financed Avant-garde

Self-organized and Self-documented Neo-avant-garde

While Kávék’s avant-garde work appeared within the realm of tolerated but not supported culture and was accompanied by a catalogue and reviewed in the press, the neo-avant-garde activist practices of the late 1960s truly achieved such a degree of plausibility. The Avantgarde exhibitions of 1968-80 have in particular significance in the history of exhibitions in Hungary in the sense they provided a common context for professional and “professional” management for a new generation of artists. These exhibitions were part of various progressive tendencies from abstract and informal painting and sculpture, to actionist practices. The legend of Avantgarde came into existence at the moment of its happening.

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from the period in question: 1964: Lajos Vajda; 1967: Lajos Gulácsy; 1968: the presented oeuvres in parallel. And I would highlight three of these even say that they could rehabilitate individual artists for professional circles.

I consider the first important because here, within the framework of the Department of the Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts, as well as the fact that for a similar period of time, I was employed by the Artpool Research Centre. While both prepared and surprisingly good sources of information, compared with how much a young artist might expect to learn in general about the period in question, nevertheless, it may be presumed that the viewpoints of the above mentioned institutions also function as filters.

Without trying to achieve academic validity, three well-known “projects” seem to be me to be most definite. Two of these did not take place in the capital, and it would be important to emphasise the special role of decentralisation in connection with them. Namely, that the control of the centralised cultural policy – it would seem – was less effective in other cities. A good example of this would be the steel sculpture symposium initiated by the Dunaújváros Ironworks, where production was classified into three categories: Supported, Tolerated, and Prohibited.

The three above mentioned projects are: “The 20th century Hungarian art” series organized by Mariia Károlyevá and Péter Kasza from 1965 and held at the Irinyi Király Museum and exhibited at the Colsos István Gallery in Székesfehérvár.

- The Chapel exhibitions at Balatonboglár.
- The activities and exhibitions of the INDIGO group.

The first exhibiton lasted only a few days but as László Beke (1944, critic, curator) wrote in 1980, it was “the sharpest, most clear cut event of 1968 looking back on the “golden age” of future samizdat publications, which now incorporated not only art, but also the activities that happened in November 1968. In this book, the author looking back on the “golden age” of future samizdat publications, writer about the history of the paradigm of 20th century modernism in Hungary from the emergence of the Iparterv group in his own chronological account of the years 1962 to 1991.

The Exhibition as Environment
Exhibitions that instead of displaying separate works of art presented projects and environments that incorporated the entire exhibition space also had to find venues outside state-controlled institutions. Aside from the Kiddi Fényes Hall, which was designated for the display of “tolerated art”, such works could only be exhibited in within the domains of fine art in this country. I mean a slap in the face to democ- ratic culture.15 For this even a small catalogue was printed with a brief introd- uction by Sinkó, the larger version of which was only distributed in English for strategic reasons. In this text Sinkó attempted to claim continuity between the Hungarian masters of the classical avant-garde and the young exhibitors.

In 1969 Sinkó created another collective show in Apártam extend- ing “the group” with two graphic artists, András Breznay and János Majo, and the four places of the 80s. A year after the 1969 show, they released a seminar publication with the title “Document 69-70”. This publication served as an example of future seminar publications with ideologically charged programmatic contents for the education of secret service officers.16 On the cover of the catalogue was András Breznay’s cover photo of the participants taken before the Quest exhibition. The photo com- municates the group-identity created by the exhibition.

In 1980, this group of artists exhibited together at the same venue again, at which time an English-Hungarian publication was issued containing a number of studies and also documentation of not only the exhibition, but also the activities that happened in November 1968. In this book, the author looking back on the “golden age” of future samizdat publications, wrote about the history of the paradigm of 20th century modernism in Hungary from the emergence of the Iparterv group in his own chronological account of the years 1962 to 1991.

The Exhibition as Artwork - Environments
Exhibitions that instead of displaying separate works of art presented projects and environments that incorporated the entire exhibition space also had to find venues outside state-controlled institutions. Aside from the Kiddi Fényes Hall, which was designated for the display of “tolerated art”, such works could only be exhibited in.
Villesen to find a subject in Hungary for a video work. We made record
3. Then I remember speaking a lot with Éva Molnár when I helped Gitte
simply women artists, who thought and lived in an emancipated way.
Arts. The fact that even today the scene is so macho (also) in Hungary
organised by the Intermedia Department of the Hungarian Academy o Fine
I went to most of the discussions, symposia, screenings, open days, etc.,
During the couple of years that I studied at home, I did not encounter a
4. I was once at a lecture of Tamás Szentjóby at the Kultiplex (a music
about the women artists of the period...
In 1999, when I was preparing for the Tamaki Faculty of the Hungarian Academy of Applied Arts and my art teacher (Mirta Sipos, the director of the art school and a sculptor-designer) or-
dered us all to go to the Miskolc/Kamnitz to see the Mískolc Eredi
retrospective exhibition, so that we would know what conceptual art was.
I cannot remember now, but she considered it important and I can
remember what an enormous experience this exhibition was for me! I
completely surprised myself by how interested I was, and I returned to see the exhibition several times(!), taking notes.
I can remember that later I spoke with a number of people who had also
returned to see the show several times, including someone who later
became an architect. Years later at the Kvényaev (a discount bookstore)
near Antsia, where there is a little bookshop in the left-hand corner, where
one can purchase all kinds of books at a massive discount, I found a
book by Mískolc Eredi among all kinds of dubious cookbooks and feng shu,
and now I don’t even know what the title was, but it was a small volume
that was a selection of his writings. I think it cost about 20 forints – it’s a lot but
that it was considered to be worth such a low market value.
2. I don’t know whether the fact that even today women are only rarely to be
found in determining positions is due to the fact that there was no fem-
innovative movement then in Hungary. Or was there? I know almost NOTHING
about the women artists of the period.
During the couple of years that I studied at home, I did not encounter a
single feminist art approach, discourse, reflection, critique – nothing. And I
went to most of these discussions, symposiums, screenings, open days, etc.,
organised by the Intermedia Department of the Hungarian Academy of Fine
Arts. The fact that even today the scene is so macho (also) in Hungary
must be due also to the role played by the lack of a feminist movement and
subsequent tradition. When I moved to Antsia, it was such a relief (I’m not
sure if this is the right word) to me to see older women as role models,
who taught me university, or who worked as a magazine, or who wrote.
Or simply women artists, who thought and lived in an emancipated way.
3. Then I remember speaking a lot with Eva Molnár when I helped Gitte Villesen,
who born in 1978 to find a subject in Hungary for a video work. We made record
the video work. “The first significant envi-
ment in Hungary” – an ex-
posing to Géza Perneczky –
– György Jenővács (1905)
20 20 April – 20 May 1976. – Galéria Szántó Názaryownye, Wroclaw, Poland
“Węgierska 1976”, film screening and action series, Hungarian par-
ticipants: Gabri Alatna, Imre Bak, Miklós Erdély, Tibor Gábor, Dóra
Maurer, László Lakner, Gyula Pauer, Péter Legény, Endre Tót.
18 September 1976. – Club of Young Artists, Budapest, Robert Flitflus,
Joseph Pfeifer: “Real-Space-Time Poemoid No. 1” project, installa-
tion with the collaboration of club members, organised by: László Bak.
participants: Tibor Gábor, Halász Károly, Adam Kari, Dóra Maurer, János Megília, László Mózes, János Nádasdi, Szabolcs Pinczészy, Péter Pruszkó.
17 April 1978. – Galéria Ramon, Warsaw, Poland, Tibor Hojaj’s action
“Dark Flash” in the “I am” International Performance Festival – the first
exhibition of Hungarian Performers, “Géordumit” exhibition action ac-
cion with carbon rod (Memory-model)
23 However, according to Géza Perneczky this exhibition was organized either as the second hand
24 The history of the Chapel Fold was published in the book “Davide Bertol: Variante”, (Bertol Anna-
21 Géza Perneczky also called the “Street” exhibition in Székesfehérvár by Erzsebet Schair (1968-1975) an environment.
The artist, a representative of a previous generation already active in the 30s, started to examine the relationship of space and
figures, to use non-traditional materials, and to mix everyday pop and cer-
tain refined, ecology paths only in the second half of the 70s. The installation,
made of paper and styrofoam and representing a stereo with human figures,
filled and reconfigured the entire exhibition space. The exhibition was opened
by János Fülöp, István Gyulay, and Pál Viró, entitled “Spaces”. Schair created a na-
tional transatlantic featuring the most important cultural personalities (using her
earlier portrait sculptures) executed by mysterious female figures. With this work
presented in the gallery of the local art museum, Schair transferred to the first
publicity the avant-garde idea of “environment”.
25 Independent Venue
The Iréna Csáki Gallery in Székesfehérvár, led by Mária Kovács and Péter
Kovács, was an exception in the sense that in this floor any exhibition
on space or gallery could develop a progressive profile. The organizers
and participants of non-confront exhibitions could only occupy semi-public venues,
spontaneously, on a few occasions, and then had to move on. In 1971 László Bekë
organized a large-scale concept exhibition, entitled “Idea / Imaginatio” in an
A4 folder, as no other location was available for such a show.
In 1966 György Galántai, a recently graduated social artist, found an aban-
donated chapel in Balatonfüred or Lake Balaton, and decided to open a studio
exhibition space in the empty building. Following a long and testing proce-
dure of acquiring permissions, the first exhibition opened in 1970. The initially
more traditional exhibitions – which also allowed room for “tolerated” trends –
gradually gave way to experimental, performative and time-based events as well
so as to present anti-materialistic institutional and political statements. When
acquiring the permissions of the authorities for more and more confront exhibitions
and events became more demanding, Galántai gave up the of-
ficial procedures and renamed the Chapel Gallery the Chapel Studios – from this
time on could only house non-public events.24
In principal, all events in the exhibitions, even if often they discussed with the concept of audience and current issues. From
the program of the three summer between 1970 and 72 we selected five events that relying on the inde-
pendence, transatlantic and experimental exhibitions and actions into urged the audience on to act in participatory.
In 1972 in May 15, the anniversary of the revolution and war of independ-
ence of 1848, a couple of thousand people demonstrated against the dictator-
ship. The Iréna Csáki Gallery in Székesfehérvár, led by Mária Kovács and Péter
Kovács, was an exception in the sense that in this floor any exhibition
on space or gallery could develop a progressive profile. The organizers
and participants of non-confront exhibitions could only occupy semi-public venues,

The essence of a chronology, as is expressed by its name, is to construct stories, in certain cases meaningful histories from a mass of events that ship at various places in Budapest. As a reaction, and inspired by Gyula Gondó's "The Whites" (1977) László Beke phoned a call that time for anise using rosé and cobaltblue, which already had precedents in the photos of Jesus Nupre (1936-2008). In April an "Avantgardistal Rally" was organized by Szanty with more than 40 participants, poets, visual artists, film directors, musicians and art historians, who would present readings, screenings, lectures, articles and more traditional artworks as well. The event was banned after the flyers were printed. In the summer of the same year Gyula Pauer and Tamás Szentjóby wrote an distributed a call for what today might be called an interactive - exhibition happening in the Chapel Studio, which had offered to hold the cancelled Avant-garde festival there at the same time. The event series and exhibitions entitled "Direct Week", according to the concept formulated in the call for participation, aimed to establish direct contact with the audience instead of exhibiting art objects. It was during this exhibition that Tamás Szentjóby presented his action entitled "Backward Strike - 30 days of resistance" with a lockbox over his head he "punished" himself for a week, for eight days he was also inviting the audience (occasional local visitors and art professionals) to interrogate him. During the "Direct Week" László Beke held an slide-lecture on cobblestone and grass stones in Hungarian Art that he later called the "best lecture of his life".

and words

THE PRESENT CONCEPTIONS ON CHRONOLOGY

1. Ten sentences on chronology

2. Ten sentences on chronology

3. Ten sentences on chronology

4. Ten sentences on chronology

5. Ten sentences on chronology

6. Ten sentences on chronology

7. Ten sentences on chronology

8. Ten sentences on chronology

9. Ten sentences on chronology

10. Ten sentences on chronology

1. Ten sentences on chronology
From the early 70’s minor control over progressive practices endangered individual careers too. At the end of 1975, Tamás Szentjóby was expelled from the country, as his artistic activities had been deemed overly provocative by the cultural authorities (that had been observed by the secret police since the 1960s). We selected three significant events from his activity in the 70s in Hungary 24:

1. An exhibition of new genres and also drew attention to two important venues of the period. The film was an event held at the University Studio, which was a venue that housed various conventional and progressive progressive practices in the 70s, 80s and 90s from pop music to theatre, screenings, and fine art events.25

2. Tamás Szentjóby: Make a Chair!, 1975, FMK, action photo (Photo: Éva Körner)

3. In December 1975, Szentjóby had to leave Hungary = "Ved János: A few ejaposzik. (Lights of Night)"

4. Móns Hatoum leaves her native Lebanon to study at the Byam Shaw School of Art in London.


7. Mona Hatoum leaves her native Lebanon to study at the Byam Shaw School of Art in London.

8. Tamás Szentjóby: Make a Chair!, 1975, FMK, action photo (Photo: Éva Körner)

9. In December 1975, Szentjóby had to leave Hungary = "Ved János: A few ejaposzik. (Lights of Night)"

10. Móns Hatoum leaves her native Lebanon to study at the Byam Shaw School of Art in London.

"ÉLÉTEM MEGJOBB MÜVE..." JOVÁNYOVICS GÖRGY LÖVÖDÁSA 1991. 250, 160, 80. (The first erotic novel of its kind to be published in Hungary in 1991.)

At the end of the closing night, the performance of László Vidovszky’s piece Schroeder’s Death was drowned in scandal.

31 Salo le 120 grado de Sodoma (Salo or the 120 Days of Sodom) ... 1975 film written and directed by Italian director Pier Paolo Pasolini.

26 On the occasion of the project to show everyone the greatest underground style standard. At the end of the 90’s Underworld’s magnum opus was released, 70’s phase that fell in love, was, on the other hand, it was not finished with the project was not a sign of the times.

27 The theme of the same name was performed at the University Studio in Hungary.

28 The project was only the most traditional educational device, the blackboard, as a prop. In this lecture he proposed the imperative “make a chair” — the symbolic object of strike — to go beyond the “use a chair!” imperative in George Brecht's events and the “look at the chair” imperative of Duchamp’s ready-mades.

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The list above is supplemented by the page numbers and the names of the artists. This list is not exhaustive.

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work, “Szarafit Art”! I November 1982. Upset Mini Gallery, Budapest, “ELEGÁDÓ” - real art exhibition, organiser: Ivinó Szépán, venue: Tibor Kuczyk’s musical action, live presentation by Peter Sarkadi, Ernő Talvay’s acoustic experiment, Xantos 9th elegant meditation (d.m. 9), exclusion from the Artespo sound archives

3/9 Andy Warhol “fells in love” with Duran Duran as a Blondie concert.


2/10 Nelaes Priz for Literature: William Goldman

Budapest, 21–27 March 2009

Tamás Szentjóby: non-artist artist born in 1946

I cannot willingly answer this exaggeratedly superficial, childish question. Nevertheless, I will answer, likewise superficially, but in good faith. The IPARTERV exhibitions including also the KFKI exhibitions on Budapesti or, the R-exhibition, a few FRA (PPK – Club of Young Artists) exhibitions, Krzysztof Wysia’s exhibition (in a house of culture of an outlying district), Sándor Altjai’s exhibition (in Mednyánszky Hall), Gyula Puskar’s Pseudo-exhibition (in a house of culture of an outlying district), Csaba Koczó’s photo exhibitions, the activity of Dr. László Vajgh in a theatre who organised progressive art, literature and music events in the 60s) the activity of Pál Perjő-Gál (famous for his exhibitions and his progressive music collection), the activity of Éva Kóerner (art history), the activity of László Balázs (art historian), the activity of Miklós Erdély, the Lunch happening (1966), Ives (the first Ives, 1969), and the action-evenings at the Egyetemi Színház (University Stage), the Lakáscsinthási (the Apartment Theatre).

Tibor Haja’s actions, some of the shows at the Baktróbilőd Chapel, the concerts at the Ó Zána Színház (New Music Studio), KEX concerts, Spora concerts, and “House-parties” as the art of the era.

János Sugár, artist born in 1958

In the 1960s, I was in elementary school, and in the 70s I was mainly in high school. I remember exhibitions from 1980 onwards. Nevertheless, there are two exhibitions I remember from my childhood:

Henry Moore’s 1967 exhibition in the Múzeum Kiscelli: it was about then that I realised that sculpture exists.

And what has remained with me very powerfully was the national caricature exhibition organised in 1968, filling the entire Múzeum Kiscelli, and caused enormous interest. It was most probably censored quite differently than the fine arts, and a few works that might even be referred to as Pop Art were included.

Much later, during my high school years, I found a pile of invitations to (Balatonboglár) Chapel shows on a forgotten shelf of a cultural institution, which I carefully studied.

Also important was Tamás Fekete’s 1975 exhibition in the Pécsi Lapidary Museum, where he showed unbelievably refinished, realistic plaster casts of small sculptures, e.g., someone leaning on the door of a car and talking with someone.

I see the photos of Balázs Konda’s maquettes in an exhibition (1972, Helikon Gallery), which I likewise took note of.

In January of 1980, jovinevics had an exhibition at the Institut Français, where he presented the exhibition that had opened 15 March 1979 in Adives (Hárs’s collaboration with Ivinó Nádas) and even afterwards it made a strong impression on me (this work was later named the artist’s best work).

Balázs Szombathy, artist born in 1950 in Veszprém

Though I had some connection with the progressive Hungarian art and artists of the specified epoch, and I also participated in exhibitions here, my overview of the events of this period in Hungary is quite incomplete. I have amassed this in retrospect, as it has become increasingly clear to me just how much I missed here as the citizen of another country.

Tibor Várkony, artist and non-profiteer appears born in 1957

In 1970, I was 13, in 1971 14, in 1972 15 etc., which means that either I should choose the path of trying to name with my mind of today 10 events, where I was not present, nor did I even hear of them – but only 10–15 years later, or I could recounts what influenced me as an adolescent, or when touched me then.

I declare the former, while for the latter, I cannot compress it into the events of 10 exhibitions.

Thus, I will try to put together something of an outline: What made an impact on me, and I think many other Budapest adolescents of my age who came to their consciousness between the 1960s and 70s, were rock film (and in part, TV), and the illustrated weekly and monthly magazines, and from the early 1970s, books.

Within rock, I name only the music, but also, e.g., the visual imagery, offered by the record covers, and within film, starting with the Beatles’ A Hard Day’s Night, within 2–3 years, it was possible to see Armstrong’s Blow-Up, Žalškius Point, and then through the films of Bergman, Fallus, Tarkovsky and Jancsó, up to Jean Vigo, and beyond: in music, from the Beatles and the Stones up to Pink Floyd, King Crimson, Miles Davis, Barótt: Kurtág, Suny, Kesz and Pálföldi.

By this way we could reach directly, and by means of the literary, I was in the higher levels of elementary school, I read the writings of Károly Vajda, Kasak, and through the volumes of the library of the classic art of, 1971-72 of Dudcshall.

I will remember well, in 1973-74, in a museum exhibition – at the Pécsi Lapidary Museum – Kasak, and at the Múzeum Kiscelli, Stradnàs (about whom I had read in the volume of Újus Császár: Források [Sources], and whose themes were nothing less than the vices of culture. And in his own book, entitled Hangszorogó naplói [Diary of Lies], and in 1971-72 we saw the exhibition of György Romanos in Adolf Fényes Hall, where he also met Kasak. It was only in about 1973 that we came upon Kasak’s books, but it was also then that the first Ginsberg was published, while Camus and Kafka also came into the picture, as well as, e.g., Agnes Heller, and then Menesi, Konrád, etc.

We first read about Szontagh, and Gilbert & George, in the magazine Múzeumkép (art), thanks to László Balázs, who informed us about the Paris Biennale (of 1973-74), while we saw José Sacco’s exhibition and performances at the Ernst Museum. We read about Miklós Erdély through the public correspondence of Gyula Kozák and Béla Kondor in the periodical Krisztina (Crucifix), where however, he was not mentioned at all.

In a word, I might say that in fact, it was only in the second half of the 70s that we began to become acquainted with the Hungarian neo-avant-garde; i.e., we discovered it after the fact, when Sobóly, Péter Halász, Beka-Sós, Lainer and Perenczély had already emigrated, and at times there was samit, and the new wave, in the framework of which Haja–Veszely emerged, just as Vesi–Zsuzsa, Erdélyi, and Szakács. But this is already a story that commenced with the turn of the 70s-80s with Magzi Víg, Magyar Múzeum (magazines), and the exhibitions and concerts of the period.

I think that it is nearly impossible to analyse the history of the 1960s-70s without a knowledge of the cultural policy / arts-sociological aspects of the era, so please don’t fall into the trap of ignoring them!! At the same time – and I recognise this – it is not easy because the cultural policy / arts-sociological aspects also changed almost from month to month for instance, the illustrated weekly, Tükör (Meyers) reported on Személyis first happenings, which means that I saw this at the age of 10 or 11, though of course I didn’t yet know what to make of it, and years passed until I received new information, even about the genre itself.

On the other hand no further information came through the weekly, Tükör, because it was banned, and in general this kind of cultural policy began to increasingly prevail in the Hungarian cultural public sphere, with prohibitions from 1971-72. For instance, the weekly youth and monthly cultural magazines from Yugoslavia in Hungarian could still enter the country since the work of the Hungarian censors was not uniform. There were things which could pass here, while over there they could not and when an event itself did take place, it was so much on the periphery that it didn’t reach those who could be interested in it.

Though what didn’t reach us directly, or immediately through the press, did reach us at least in the form of something quite differently than the fine arts, and a few works that might even be referred to as Pop Art were in museum exhibitions and events of the 60s, while over there they could not and when an event itself did take place, it was so much on the periphery that it didn’t reach those who could be interested in it.

paralel chronologies
THE LUNCH (IN MEMORIAM BATU KHAN) the first happening in Hungary

Date: 25. 06. 1966.
Participants: Gábor Altorjay (1946), Tamás Szentjóby (1946), with the assistance of Békács Mádó, Miklós Jánossy, and István Varráns,Celldom of István Szamos, Budapest.
Comments: The happening was organized in the cellar of a private house by Gábor Altorjay and Tamás Szentjóby. There were about sixty viewers.

The Recollection of Gábor Altorjay

The happening took place in a vaulted cellar that was built in the fifteenth to sixteenth century and allegedly used as a torture chamber. From the front of the garden an arbor led to the entrance of the cellar. At the corner of the arbor participants were welcomed by a baby carriage with two stunning dogs inside. The eyes were locked in an embrace.

Upon entering the arbor, the inmates were greeted by the initiators of the happening, T. (Tamás Szentjóby), who was buried in the ground up to his waist, lying. There was a closed placed next to him that one could read with eyes to a dispute opposite it. At the end of the arbor, the pet had been built with a few chicken inside, which T. occasionally pulled out of the ground and then broken down with the help of the rope.

Behind the retreating figure, a baby carriage was in flames.

Next, the invited participants descended the darkening of the cellar. The indicator lights of a powerful stereo amplifying system were the only source of light. After a nearly fifteen minute wait in the serving chamber darkness, Pénzügyi ("Chronicle to the Victim of Heroin") exploded from the speakers with a frenetic volume, dissolved, and chopped up to a state of virtual inreadibility. As soon as the music was over; in the front area left empty to allow for free movement a vase full of roses on a table was set on fire.

The burning rose bouquet provided the space with some minimal light. In the front there was a dining table set for two with a vase and a food carrier on top. On two of us were sitting at the table on Seisonion chairs thickly covered in mold. In the background, a human-size frame had been placed with a sower to its right and a rusty bicycle suspended above with a stopped clock in its center. There were prop chains on both sides and a chair in the middle. Next to the audience, a mobile chair had been fixed to the wall with wooden rails, on it was a small blue light. The chicken laid in the pot was visible next to the table. Our attitude was completely in vain, white, shut, set, and green smudged on our heads.

He was the third person, who, after the burning of the roses, extinguished on the lights. As it later became apparent, one of the main inadequacies was the absence of sufficient lighting. In the meantime, the microphone and the speakers continued to be in operation—so they were for the duration of the entire happening—amplifying and resounding even the smallest noise. According to a number of the participants, the sound suffused the entire space of the happening, although originally we did not intend to give the sound system such a significant role.

We began eating. Our hands consisted of cold paprika potatoes. While eating, I stood up and started to walk around the cell. After eating, I went on and started to walk around the cellar. Next, they retrieved a black handbag from an old refrigerator, which we handed to the audience. This was a strange scene, surrounded by cold and darkness. The people were walking and talking. After the light was switched on, a kitchen table could be seen in the background with two people sitting on it. Before us, behind them, a third person was bathing himself with a chafing dish and a candle, while they occasionally let out a great belch, amplified for the audience with the help of a microphone and speakers.

When they finished lunch, a large plastic bag was produced into which one of the participants vomited the contents of his stomach.

Next, they retrieved a black handling from an old refrigerator, which they handed to the audience. This contained white mice. Then they grabbed some hammers and shattered the plates, the table and the chairs. The third participant was tied to the doors: in a bond he stood and said one thing and pointed to the clothes of the tied person, and then they also smeared it with a rope of toilet paper on his clothing. The figures from a tank up-down were poured partly on the tied-up person and partly on the audience. A condom was filled with some kind of sticky, red material, and then hung up with a candle lit under it. The cassette player was switched on and distorted music could be heard. Then one of the participants tied a string around the roof in a spider web-like fashion, went back to the middle and smashed the light bulb with a thermos. In the meantime, someone had blocked the basement entrance, closing it down to stop entry.

The audience generally expressed appreciation for what they had seen; they were afraid to leave, lest they be regarded as conservative and opposed to novelty.

Anton Fux

Based on the above, it can be stated the spread of the happening phenomenon is harmful to the intellectual and political development of youth. Furthermore, it is an occurrence that goes against progress and facilitates the destabilizing politics of imperialist circles.

The key organizing figures of Hungarian happenings, as well as their possible foreign contacts, must be placed under surveillance.

Public appearances by the organizers of happenings must be prevented. It must be made impossible for them to use public forums for spreading and popularizing the happening phenomenon.

The main organizers of happenings must be warned against involvement in future happenings, with special regard to Tamás Szentjóby, who is the most active person in this respect. Szentjóby is to be told that if he does not refrain from organizing such events in the future, a recommendation will be made for his treatment in a mental institution.
From Prohibition to Tolerance

Kassák’s Work and the Cultural Politics of the 1960s

Back in April 1965, Kassák had asked for a personal meeting with János Kádár1. After this meeting, the matter of the exhibition came before the Political Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party. This body came up with the idea of ‘self-financed exhibitions.’ Kassák was allowed to have an exhibition in a state institution, but only if he paid all the costs himself. Although as the result of the “debate on modernism” shows, the official stance in 1965 was that abstract art was to remain prohibited, the decision-makers were most probably taking into consideration Kassák’s upcoming 80th birthday and also Kádár’s opinion, who had known Kassák from the 1930s and thought highly of him as a writer. (...)

Kassák saw this event, which also promised a sudden change in the situation of contemporary Hungarian avant-garde art, as his personal victory. A victory over his professional adversaries, too, especially over Aurél Bernhardt and Pál Pécsy. He wrote this to Klárá Lázó on 12 September 1966: “In March 1967, on the occasion of my 80th birthday, I shall have an exhibition in Pest. This will be the first institution of modern art. The gate has opened, and I am walking through it.” He commented on what had happened in a similar tone to Victor Vassary, too: “This will be the first constructivist exhibition here. See, I have broken through the concrete wall.” (...)

What Kassák said in defence of modern Hungarian art, when opening an exhibition entitled ‘The Eighties and the Circle of Arsenic’ in December 1965 in Szabaddelethelyez, also contributed to the weakening of prejudices. It soon turned out that what Kassák got, after waiting so long when he asked for a chance to make an exhibition, was a concession from cultural politics, given with bad grace – a cultural politics that still had its reservations about modern patrons in art, and vested in political autonomy, while at the same time being in a sorry plight because of both leftist critics and conservative professional cliques. The Adolf Fényes Hall, conceived into an exhibition space out of one of the first-floor apartments in a tenement house at Rákóczi Boulevard 30, constituted one of the more out of the way galleries in Budapest at the time. Artists who were not allowed to exhibit in the Kunsthalle or at the Ernst Museum for some reason, most often because of the “avant-garde character of their works” (in case the official formula of the time), were able to organise exhibitions there. In December of 1966, Kassák received the estimates concerning the costs of the exhibitions. The Kunsthalle, which was responsible for the operation of the gallery, included cleaning costs, the cost of addressing the envelopes for the invitations, and the price of the ceremonial bouquet for the opening in its estimates. These were all to be paid for in advance.

Kassák’s Work and the Cultural Politics of the 1960s

1. Private Archives of Hungarian State TV.

Published: Élet és Irodalom, Vol. 59, No. 49, 1st December 2006.

1. Kassák asked for a personal meeting with János Kádár.

2. He organized the exhibition.

3. Secretary of Culture at the time.
actions

1. Clip

Tamás Szentjóby: “Distance” (courtesy of Tamás St.Auby)

An audience member is asked to say a sentence. The performer marks a spot on the floor with chalk. Then the performer writes the recorded sentence on the traveled path on the floor with chalk. Then the performer writes the recorded sentences in different directions, at different speeds. The sentences are played by the performer, while it is pushed in the wheelbarrow along the already traveled path at the appropriate speeds.

2a. each sentence is spoken into the microphone by a different audience member.

2b. groups speak into the microphone.

3. performer places the microphone in the hand of an audience member, who is asked to say a sentence. The performer records the sentence on tape. Then the performer places the microphone in the hand of an audience member, who is asked to say a sentence. The performer records the sentence on tape, the same words are repeated 6 or 7 times. In between recordings, the performer is pushed in the wheelbarrow in different directions, at different speeds. The sentences are played by the performer, while it is pushed in the wheelbarrow along the already traveled path at the appropriate speeds.

2a. each sentence is spoken into the microphone by a different audience member.

2b. groups speak into the microphone.

3. performer records the readings on the recorded path on the floor with chalk, while playing them back along the path where they were recorded.

1. Tamás Szentjóby: “Direction” (courtesy of Tamás St.Auby)

Tamás Szentjóby planned an exhibition in July 1968, in the Iparterv Office, but it was cancelled after the invitation leaflet was printed and distributed. Three months later and three weeks before the famous first Iparterv exhibition he organized actions in the same location with Miklós Erdély and László Méhes. In the Iparterv catalogue issued in 1980 Erdély described these actions as his connection to the Iparterv group.

The Iparterv group had only loose connections to native cultural life in 1969. And I had only loose connections to the Iparterv group. This situation has changed within ten years. The group /as for its members/ has become an organic part of cultural life here. And I have only loose connections to recent cultural life.

My belonging to as well as staying outside the Iparterv group were determined by personal relations. Cooperations was, however, realized in my taking part in the second catalogue as well as in a series of actions previous to the first exhibition, accomplished in an Iparterv room by Tamás Szentjóby and myself. The show was the most important. Its title was “Three quarks for king Marko”. I made three actions.

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**IPARTERV I**

**Exhibition**


Participants: Imre Bak, Kristian Froy, Tamás Hencs, György Jóvánovics, Roma Kissari, Gyula Konkoly, László Lajkor, János Mailó, László Melés, Sándor Molnár, Imre Nádler, László Szentesi, Tamás Szentjóby, Endre Tót

Organized by: Péter Sinkovits

**Iparterv State Architectural Office, meeting hall, Budapest**

**Location:**

Iparterv State Architectural Office, meeting hall, Budapest

**Comments:**

The hall was not used regularly for exhibitions and the show was open only for a few days. It was accompanied by a small catalogue containing a short introduction by the curator and the comments of the previous exhibitions in addition to the work of the participants.

**Document 69-70**

**Exhibition**


Organized by: Péter Sinkovits

**Iparterv State Architectural Office, meeting hall, Budapest**

**Location:**

Iparterv State Architectural Office, meeting hall, Budapest

**Comments:**

Four more artists, Andras Baranyay, László Melés, János Mailó, and Tamás Szentjóby accepted Sinkovits' invitation. The exhibition was examined by an official jury. The catalogue was printed illegally in the private printing house of the Iparterv State Architectural Office a year later with a slightly different list of artists (Tamás Szentjóby and Sándor Molnár was left out, Miksics Erdély and Attila Pallai were included). The catalogue was used in a course book of the police academy as an example for illegal publishing. In 1980 a commemorative exhibition was initiated by art historian, Lóránd Hegyi (1954). On this occasion a comprehensive English-Hungarian publication was issued containing several studies and also documents of the previous exhibitions in addition to the work of the participants.

In December 1970, it came to our attention confidentially that a group of visual artists have printed – and distributed – an anthology without authorization. A portion of the works featured in the anthology is of antagonistic content. In April 1971, the Ministry of Culture also filed a report pertaining to this.

A confidential investigation on the matter yielded the following information: 16 artists had an anthology of their works printed and published under the title "Document 70." The materials necessary for publishing the anthology had already been prepared or exhibitions. The project was initiated by Gyula Konkoly who defected after collecting the materials. From this point on, the organization of the project was continued by S. Sinkovits. The value fund necessary for publishing the anthology was then gathered. Then a printer from an architectural institute (Iparterv) (presently: Industrial Buildings Consulting Co.) was won over to the cause, who agreed, in return for the collected sum, to print the material without authorizations (Legál). The artists handed the pages together themselves in 500 copies, which they distributed among themselves in accordance with the paid amount. The paper required for the publications (150 kg) was made by the printer from the institute of his manufacturer.

Of the contents of "Document 70," 3 engravings (sic) were politically antagonistic and objectionable. One of the paintings with the surname Erdély made an engraving (sic) which depicted a human corpse. The title of the work was "Error." Clearly, the picture displayed in this format easily lent itself to political misinterpretation. It should be noted that the artist, during the investigation (courtesy of György Jovánovics), stated that he made the engravings with semitophilic motivation and was deeply shocked that it gave the impression of an anti-Semitic disposition. For example, one had the title of "Kike Working Up." The question was made more complicated by the fact that both anti-Fascist images were achieved by an artist of Jewish origin who lost all of his relatives during the holocaust. It should be noted that the artist, during the investigation (courtesy of György Jovánovics), stated that he made the engravings with semitophilic motivation and was deeply shocked that it gave the impression of an anti-Semitic disposition.
György Jovánovics (1939), János Nádler

It’s 7 p.m.   Evening Chronicle Good evening!

From the reports of seven agencies: The Hungarian delegation led by Jenő Rózsa has arrived home from a session of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance in Warsaw. Greece’s, Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs continued preliminary talks with Egon Bahr. Secretary of the Prime Minister’s Office of West Germany, about a pact that would cease the use of force on the part of both countries. The communist parties of Western Europe held a conference on the situation in Indochina. Nádler’s cabinet members, in a separate meeting, requested the support of the senators of the president’s party in return to the Cambodian offensive:更重要的内容...

György Jovánovics has only put a single artwork on display. What you see in front of me, surrounded by a woman, is the sculpture of György Jovánovics in his studio. It has a slight pinkness on the surface, which gradually loses its colour with time, until it finally turns completely white. Every one of its angles and sides follows the walls with precision. Its height is 90 cm. Its greatest length is 60 cm, its width is 3 m. The total outer circumference of the small and large parts together is 16 m. It is made of slightly pink plaster, which gradually loses its colour with time, until it finally turns completely white. From the entrance to the left, the graphic work is displayed first. The first canvas painting of 200 x 120 cm is entitled “Maurusz”. The three paintings of identical size (120 x 120 cm) along the long wall engage with forms that can be formulated within a square. After the windows, a 120 x 200 cm horizontally oriented painting is entitled “Loveland”. The main wall features a 4-piece series with the continuous return of two motifs in an AB-BA rhythm, 180 x 130 cm in size, casein tempera technique. The larger painting behind the radio, “Homage a Vajda”, was painted by the young artist in honour of Lajos Vajda. The smaller painting of his hands, what made Jovánovics himself so self-satisfied, and what were Janos Frank and István Nádler smiling at so innocently.

The tapescript of the opening action. (courtesy of György Jovánovics)

Event in the garden of Miklós Erdély with the sculpture of György Jovánovics’s “Persian Walk” and exhibition “Exhibition Scenery”

Opening of the exhibition of György Jovánovics and István Nádler

György Jovánovics’s sculpture in his studio in Budapest

György Jovánovics’s sculpture in his studio in Budapest

Opening of the exhibition of György Jovánovics and István Nádler

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The image of the opening action. (courtesy of György Jovánovics)

The image of the opening action. (courtesy of György Jovánovics)

The image of the opening action. (courtesy of György Jovánovics)

György Jovánovics in his studio in Budapest

István Zoltán Vass reports from Szeged.

János Sugár on the Adolf Fényes Hall, his film “Persian Walk” and exhibition “Exhibition Scenery”

As the BBS (Bela Balázs Színház) accepted a film plan of mine in 1964, the producer applied to get the Adolf Fényes Hall as a venue. That is, one year after I finished with the Academy of Fine Arts (to be more exact, they kicked me out), I got the Adolf Fényes Hall, which I had always thought highly of, for 2 days to show a film. As the exhibition hall was an exhibition hall in the film too, I could get things done on the film’s budget. They prepared the whole exhibition based on my plan. We finished shooting that five minute long scene within half an hour and I had an exhibition for 2 days, under ideal circumstances, at a venue I could not have dreamed of. I thought it was the most beautiful gallery in the city, and among the best ones: not too big and not too small, with a huge courtyard on the ground floor. A large space, which could be divided into smaller parts in the first floor. A monoscopic exhibition had taken place there — it is a place where the spirit and content of future exhibitions live on. Unfortunately, the place has been given to the Artists’ Association, and nothing has happened in it since then; moreover, they have it a new and quite boorish name: the Arcade Gallery. As far as I know, Adolf Fényes was an art collector and a Sunday painter. The opening took place in February 1980. The space was made by Ingrid Siller: this was her first (!) opening of an exhibition. She made a reference to an earlier work by Jovánovics at my request: one of my favourites, an astonishing work that had been exhibited in the Adolf Fényes Hall.

Opening of the exhibition of György Jovánovics and István Nádler in Budapest

The image of the opening action. (courtesy of György Jovánovics)

The image of the opening action. (courtesy of György Jovánovics)

PARALLEL CHRONOLOGIES

documents

GYÖRGY JOVÁNOVICS - ISTVÁN NÁDLER self-financed exhibition

The photographic and radio documentaries can be watched until 31st April 1999, 9 p.m. on Wednesday and Friday.

It was one year less than 20 years ago, on 15th March, 1970 that György Jovánovics and István Nádler’s memorable exhibition was opened in the Adolf Fényes Hall. Remembering the event, the art historian Szilárd Nagy versed the following in an article: “When György Jovánovics organised his first exhibition in 1970, he showed an approximately 90 centimeters high, solid, thin (about 5 cm) work of plastic art, made of planes and rounded by a wall, which represents the ground-plan of the exhibition hall. This strange work of art checked the audience as well as his fellow artist. It was very different from what the public expected of ‘sculpture’. We can regard this work symbolically as the beginning of a new way of thinking about sculpture in Hungary.” According to Miklós Erdély “this is the mark of sustainable Hungarian art to a world standard.” (He probably meant that it had brought it back to a world standard lost since the Second World War.) Interestingly enough, the phrase ‘the best work of my life’ does not refer to the object displayed in the exhibition hall. Looking back from the perspective of his 60th birthday, when Jovánovics talked about the best work of his life, he was talking about the opening of the exhibition and not the exhibition itself. A new occurrence in art history...”

Hungarian art to a world standard.” (He probably meant that it had brought it back to a world standard lost since the Second World War.)
Visitors say

At first I didn’t know that this was an exhibition-type thing, the form was so unexpected and unusual.

I feel like I am inside a sculpture, really, inside the sculpture itself, so that there doesn’t even need to be a sculpture anymore, and it no longer matters what is around me; it doesn’t matter if it is an exhibition or a sculpture, I am so inside it that I don’t care at all.

Finally an environment has been created that no one else in Hungary has managed so far. I think you have a chance that the viewers were randomly scattered, the whole thing had a casual feel about it, an extremely strong grey feeling. This is more than exploiting possibilities, Gyula has definitely made a 180 degree turn, but in the best possible direction I think.

He has completely gone against everything he has done till now and it seems that this is very good as well. The only mobile part of the exhibition at the moment – aside from the people who move around in it, of course – it this rotating disc.

I believe in such initiatives, because as it is realised for two days, people come to see the concept, they pass on it, talk to others about it, take pictures of it, and then the day after tomorrow it will all be taken down. If it was 20 metres, it would still have to be taken down. So existentially it does not prevail, only the concept survives.

I think this is the absolute exhibition when you don’t even need sculptures. What for? (...) I am a sculptor myself and I am surprised to see this.

The First PSEUDO Manifesto, October, 1970

The English equivalents for the expression PSEUDO are: false, deceptive, unreal, and seemingly real. In the field of sculpture, the term has been used in connection with the works made by Gyula Pauer in 1970. It refers to one of the striking features of sculptures, and therefore one of the aspects of sculpting. The PSEUDO sculpture does not seem to be what is genuine form actually is. The PSEUDO sculpture is not about the medium of sculpture itself, but rather the circumstances of the medium of sculpture.

One of the historical antecedents of PSEUDO sculpture is MINIMAL SCULPTURE. MINIMAL sculpture is a kind of plastic art that has been reduced to a few simple geometrical forms; the shocking effect of which lies in their pure, almost paradoxical appearance and their deliberate avoidance of ornament and sentimentalism. Its other antecedent was the illusionistic technique of OP ART. The pure form in OP ART is dissolved in the endless possibilities of motion. However, OP ART has remained a two-dimensional art of decorative illusionism.

PSEUDO misleadingly creates the impression of the surface of another sculpture over the pure forms of MINIMAL SCULPTURE, giving the image of two sculptures simultaneously. This effect is achieved by projecting the pattern of a more complex object onto the surface of simple geometrical forms. This is done by means of a photographic process. On the surface of the sculpture there appears the surface of another sculpture: The PSEUDO sculpture is a more real image and illusion, the material and the intangible, on the same object at the same time. The exact forms are discoverable, but perception is always hampered by the illusionistic image. Essentially, PSEUDO includes the following questions:

1. the existence of sculpture
2. the absence of sculpture
3. the PSEUDO-like attitude, the manipulated nature of the object
4. themes more than the material space of sculpture and demand functional interpretation. We consider the following interpretation correct:

The PSEUDO quality depicts the manipulated nature of the sculpture as a work of plastic art. This manipulated nature may characterize the existence of art in general. The manipulated nature of the PSEUDO sculptures, both in its form and in its technique, is only a symbol of the existential manipulated nature of plastic art (and the arts in general).

In the last third of the 20th century modern art entered into the maximum of social manipulation by following the path of commercialism. Of course, PSEUDO cannot tell us about the manipulated nature of the prices, commerce, advertising strategies and functions of art objects, because PSEUDO sculpture is not a historical treatise or sociological essay, nor is it an illustrated popular lecture. The PSEUDO sculpture is a sculpture representing itself as a manipulated sculpture, thus proving the existence of the state of manipulation. PSEUDO reveals itself as a false image, or at least as a complex object that also gives a false image.

But PSEUDO does not commit itself merely to the art of exposure. PSEUDO sculpture carefully sets new surfaces on the surfaces of simple and concrete objects, and these visual elements, settling gently on the surface of the object, present the forms from a new perspective. Consequently PSEUDO not only negates manipulated existence, but affirms it as well, exposing its complexity and structural richness. Finally, PSEUDO cannot be interpreted as an1 unambiguous stance. With the dialectical unity of affirmation and negation it moves towards the world beyond it, but it also returns into itself. PSEUDO remains another philosophy of humanism, but what it was at the very moment of its birth – sculpture, PSEUDO will exist as long as an appearance is a real factor, and vice versa.
Dora Maurer: "Once We Departed" (1972), photo-action
(Miklós Erdély, Tibor Gáyor, György Jovánovics, Tamás Szentjóby)
(courtesy of Dóra Maurer)
The chapel at Balatonboglár will be available to us between July 1–8, 1972

We can hope to broaden our possibilities through direct contacts. Our programme makes use of means through which we can obtain direct feedback. In other words the audience comes into contact with us not through concomitants but through activity.

From July 1st to 7th we will hold a “DIRECT WEEK”. (So we are not organizing an “exhibition” and do not make use of classical means).

On July 8th we will re-organize the “cancelled” AVANGARD FESTIVAL, which was originally to be held on April 30th.

We will send out invitations to the events of the day.

One can contribute to the completion of DIRECT WEEK in two ways:

a) personally - presentations, concepts evolved on spot, happenings, events, body, animation, other actions
b) through various media - film, slide, tape recorder, projects, concepts-shows, message, correspondence, environs, etc.

The AVANGARD FESTIVAL program will begin in the early afternoon and continue until late evening.

The programme is essentially identical with that previously planned. You must provide whatever accessories you may need. (There are only sockets)

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responsibility-taking action

TODAY YOU OPEN THE EXHIBITION

Interview with István Harasztý, 1998

"(...) for example there was an action that I came up with there, a ribbon bearing the three colors of the Hungarian flag was stretched across the entrance with a sign above it that said here "Today I open the exhibition". Well, now, artists were also fastened to the door post on a short string so that no one could cut this ribbon. I was well aware of how much sweat and sacrifice had gone into what we were exhibiting there, so I was the case for the members of the Pécs Workshop as well. And I said, whenever someone should bow down and slip under this ribbon. So those who bowed down and slipped under the ribbon, that was so gratifying to me, that lo and behold, we had not worked in vain. And then comrades of the various councils from nearby towns like Kaposvár slipped under the ribbon, in dark attire, to verify that nothing had been put on exhibit, that lo and behold, we had not worked in vain. And then comrades of the various councils from nearby towns like Kaposvár slipped under the ribbon, in dark attire, to verify that nothing had been put on exhibit that they had not signed.

Interview with György Galántai, manuscript, 1998

In the first version the ribbon was a shred of toilet paper and you could cut it, in other words I thought that everyone should open the exhibition at their own risk, the artists should not be responsible for everything, so I called it the action of assuming responsibility. Since so many people came and we had to replace the ribbon continuously, I started to use a better version, which I documented with a series of slides.

Tug of War Action

Photo: György Galántai (courtesy of Artpool Art Research Centre)

Interview with Gyula Pauer, 1998

The weekend was organised by Beke, and we had a great time together. I almost learned to speak in Czech and Slovak, and they almost learned Hungarian. We closed the event with a photo demonstration, where everyone shook hands with everyone else, and we took photos of this, hands holding hands, one by one, and put the small cubes next to one another like a mosaic. In the end, all those who were shaking hands signed the photos. By this action, we symbolically made peace with each other, at a time when our political system was still in conflict with Czechoslovakia. It featured a fascinating photo of the unified troops, which had just marched into Czechoslovakia, putting up a play of a tug-of-war, immediately before or after occupying a village. Thus, I organised a tableau vivant to this effect in Balatonboglár. The whole thing was put together in a very naïve manner, of course, instead of using a rope, Hungarian and Czechoslovakian artists, separated into two groups, played tug-of-war with the issue – this photo – of the aforementioned periodical. The story is a bit forced, as I suddenly realised that this was not only a political issue, but also a political illusion. But also, the idea of the slide juxtaposition of photographs, while also being a means of a picture within a picture. It was similar to composing a tableau vivant to reenact an event for a historical periodical. I had a great time coming up with this idea and, all in all, it is good that we did this.

Photo: György Galántai (courtesy of Artpool Art Research Centre)

MEETING OF CZECH, SLOVAK AND HUNGARIAN ARTISTS

Interview with László Beke, 1998

In this period I tried to work in liminal fields. There had been a few things by the magyars already that I made in order to demonstrate that even though we were not an artist, a critic could pro-
duce art, too. I was and am also oddly attracted to Central Eastern Europe, and I had always been irritated by the fact that while Slovaks and Hungarians have seemed to hate one another for 150 years, whenever we take a closer look at things, we can co-operate in really productive ways. So I began to learn Slovak, be-
cause I wanted to do something personally to mark this tension. This is also significant, as I think that 10-15 years ago, Hungarians and perhaps even more Slovak artists still rely on this: that they could and can have such great ideas together. This event was also initiated because of this. I somehow happened to come across an English language periodical with a special issue on Czechoslovakia. It featured a fascinating photo of the unified troops, which had just marched into Czechoslovakia, putting up a play of a tug-of-war, immediately before or after occupying a village. Thus, I organised a tableau vivant to this effect in Balatonboglár. The whole thing was put together in a very naïve manner, of course, instead of using a rope, Hungarian and Czechoslovakian artists, separated into two groups, played tug-of-war with the issue – this photo – of the aforementioned periodical. The story is a bit forced, as I suddenly realised that this was not only a political issue, but also a political illusion. But also, the idea of the slide juxtaposition of photographs, while also being a means of a picture within a picture. It was similar to composing a tableau vivant to reenact an event for a historical periodical. I had a great time coming up with this idea and, all in all, it is good that we did this.

Tug of War Action

Photo: László Beke (courtesy of Artpool Art Research Centre)

Meeting of Czech, Slovak and Hungarian Artists

Organized by: Péter Türk, Jiri Valoch
Petr Stembera, Rudolf Škura, Tamás Szeinjöbl, Anna Szedov, Endre Tóó, Péter Türk, Jiri Voloch, László Beke (1944)
Location: Chapel Studio, Balatonboglár
During the two-day meeting an exhibition and various actions were organized by László Beke, who invited artists from Czechoslovakia and Hungary to create contacts with each other.

Saturday: a conversation outdoors. The basic plan of the meeting is the docu-
mentation of the meeting itself. There were approximately 15 Hungarian and 15 Czech artists who took part. They were together from 2 p.m. on Saturday until 2 p.m. on Sunday. There were actions in the meantime.

Beke: on three walls facing the door
Czech - Slovak - Hungarian words - words - words
On the big wall: Beke's handshake concept
Beke's action: approximately 15x15 photos of Czech and Hungarian artists shak-
ing hands.

Pauer: pseudo-cards on the right-hand side of the door, made together with the participants
Szeinjöbl: Bob Nave Aby
Szan Mohib
Pomahat!
Imre Bak brought exercise-books and handed out envelopes, everyone put their fingerprints inside, then sealed it and put their names and the date in it, Balatonboglár, 26.08.1972. 12.03
Miklós Erdély's photo on the right-hand side of the door, on the column next to Perer's wall: three photos of girls (portraits), the homon and the top one, the middle one y (notes)
J. H. Simoes Stamp Activity Love cards on the wall, to the left from the entrance.
Péter Türk's companion wall
Endre Tóó's telegram
László Melvin wrote a text with white chalk on a white base
Legends: filled in the appeal
Stano distributed Pillers' catalogues
Peter Valiak's suggestion was not realised: everyone would have gone to the chapel, blindfolded, holding hands. (Documented by photographs).

Photo: György Galántai (courtesy of Artpool Art Research Centre)

György Galántai’s diary, 27th August, 1972

PALLET CHRONOLOGIES DOCUMENTS

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LÁSZLÓ BEKE, MIKLÓS ERDÉLY, GYÖRGY JOVÁNOVCIS, PÉTER LEGÉNDY, JÁNOS MAJER, GYULA PAUER, AND TAMÁS SZENTJÖBHY

exhibition and actions

Interview with Támas St. Auby, 1998

I exhibited a construction in Balatonboglár, too, which dealt with what was forbidden.

Art historians often assume that this is related to the three categories: supported, tolerated, and forbidden.

It is related to these, too, but the basic concept is embedded in an aesthetic system – it refers to what is determined as forbidden by the state and the church. Not in the order of revolution or state socialism and its church, actually, but world-wide. What was important for me was to name the territory, the territory of what is forbidden, and to suggest that this should be forbidden, as art has always been expressly such for us.

In Balatonboglár, I put an A4 size sheet of paper in the altar’s place. It had one sentence written on it with very small letters: the forbidden? I set up a counter in front of it, so when the audience marked it, they could not read what was said, as it was too far away.

In order to be able to read it, one had to climb over the barrier, and when someone did so, they could read: Be forbidden! For them, they could realize exactly what they had done: they had stepped over a barrier.

I Classification used for cultural practices in this period.

Interview with György Jovánovics, 1998

“This work entitled ‘János Major’s Coat’, which became paradigmatic in Hungarian art […] was banned during a train ride. I was travelling to Balatonboglár with Miklós and Major, and we knew that the train would include something, but as it turned out, I was not the only one who did not know what to do. I thought I would improvise, like I had done with the small white square in plaster; Major and Erdély had not prepared either. While we were travelling, Jancsi Major took off his coat, as he was hot, and hung it up.

The audience tried to get over itself almost hesitantly, so there were only a few audible sighs and heaving guffaws. The tying together of the participants and the see me roar effect formed a good union (closed by the burning of the ties). The previous night parade had been extremely comparable to this block.

The event created (Tibor Hajas) was working with nervousness. One has to think of the tension of the moment and the tie to be burned subsequently even after the event. Everyone considered themselves positive because they were tied up, and it’s a question how many were offended (those were the ones who did really protest) by being called upon to burn the ties in an exemplary way.


A Guest-Book Entry

I am sorry that I am the first to write a note here, but I see, there are no notices yet of tonight’s events, so I have to announce (and then dash) Tibor Hajas’s event.

The audience tried to get over itself almost hesitantly, so there were only a few audible sighs and heaving guffaws. The tying together of the participants and the see me roar effect formed a good union (closed by the burning of the ties). The previous night parade had been extremely comparable to this block.

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FreEDOM industry broadcAST, CHannel 4

reading action and happening

What kind of country doesn’t have a capital city? Undeveloped? Inferior? And what if it has more than one? Or is it in the process of changing locations?

What country only has a border to the north and south? Or the other way around. Non-existent? Not fit to negotiate? A joke?

What kind of power block doesn’t have ruling power? Doomed? Weak? Is it even a power block?

What kind of army doesn’t have a general staff? A disorganised one? Impotent? Boring?

What kind of general order refers to the day before? Historical? Dull? Obscene?

What kind of flag is one which is only partially used? Secret! Undesirable! Diluted?

What kind of monument doesn’t refer to anything? Meaningless? A prison? Illegal?

What kind of law can be created by anyone? Illegal? Forbidden? Unlawful?


What kind of solidarity has opinions and programs that change from one person to the next? Solid? Commercial? Rural?

What kind of law is that which is not enforced by anyone? Non-products? Unenforceable? A nightmare?

What kind of qualification is valid for only fifteen seconds? Does it allow for abuse of power?

Does it break the rules? Is it cruel?

What kind of identification card is that in which I replace the photo twice a day to reflect the changes in me?

A question makes a statement—about a possibility, a probability, a conceivability—without making me in prison. The question of which I can be a prisoner is unrealized freedom. Unrealized freedom is a trap. It is a statement in which I can be made prisoner. A free prisoner of my free statement. I make myself compatible to my freedom and unpredictable if I act against it.

Realized freedom is a standard. A standard in the bank of mass production. Realized freedom is suitable for mass production. The possibility of becoming independent: freedom in the process of realization; self-contradicting, contradicting myself; an instant exit from the choices.

I make statements against my conviction so that I am held accountable for it by others.

I submit a lawful application to commit an illegal act.

I make intellectual efforts in order to prove that the human brain is not meant for thinking.

I make demands. When they are met, I demand withdrawal.

I play falsely so that I can cry cheater.

Every day, I file a written complaint about myself.

I must know my intervals: I must remember the present immediately. I am to try and upset my plans. I am to pull the rug from under my feet. I am to compromise myself. I am not to know any time for defending myself.

I am not to expect any goodwill from myself. I am to be ungrateful to myself. I am to undermine my self-esteem. I am not to share my joy and pain with myself. I am not to expect any goodwill from myself. I am to be ungrateful to myself. I am to undermine my self-esteem. I am not to share my joy and pain with myself.

I am to do myself wrong.

I am to refrain from considering my problems. I am to abstain from my inquiries.

I am to be public.

I am to deny my sincerity publicly.

I am to upset my plans publicly.

I am to consider myself publicly. I am to be dishonest with myself.

Everything that is public is a proclamation, if you will.

Every action is a proclamation, if you will.

Every existence is a proclamation, if you will.
Támás Szentjóby: He Ropes the Cow with Rope

Ernesto Che Guevara, President of the Cuban National Bank, said in a statement to French journalist Jean Massily:

"Of course it is very unfair when a very intelligent person earns exactly the same as an intellectually stunted person. In fact a very intelligent person ought to earn less, since either nature or God (it doesn't matter what we call it) granted him at birth the lifelong investment of the creative spirit, a treasure that cannot be bought, unlike others who at a disadvantage the moment they were born. He created an unusual structure from three elements - the gifted, the untaught and money.

What sort of structure had been familiar until then?

The first: where the able person received more than the less able.

The second: recognizing the absurdity of the above, life was so organized that everyone, the able and the less able alike, received exactly the same.

Che's suggestion transcends these structures and offers a new one. Clearly, it is not simply just that he recognized these three elements by arbitrarily inverting their usual order, but he also restructured its inner meaning according to an original idea. In order to create a new structure from a pre-existing structure we must recognize our fundamental, true interests. When we become conscious of our true interests, a demand is formed - almost spontaneously - in which the particular new structure can be created. Che was compelled to submit his suggestion within a system of relations in which money had to be taken into consideration. This is important to note so that we do not assume that the new proposed structure is no longer exchangeable with a radically new one. Che Guevara, President of the Cuban National Bank, hated money, and had other elements of reality allowed, would have withdrawn money from circulation. This would be clearly the most far-reaching change in the person-money relationship.

I'm saying all this because I would like to thank the present forces of structural change that have appeared and are working. They have the power and are capable of reorganizing and regrouping the less able alike, received exactly the same. The next operation derives from a new classification of the elements of reality.

So my topic is the new classification of the elements of reality.

In the Che quote the linguistic structure of the elements were left unchanged when compared to the previous time of affairs. The elements have been inverted resulting in a new relationship to reality of effecting change internally on the prior linguistic form. So it appears that language is the scheme of life. It's a schema, that it's a coffin, which the act, the form-giving act, reveals and permeates. If we devote our lives to freedom, changing our lives and to the Homo ludens program, then starting from such a structure, investigating the possibilities enables us to construct instructions for ourselves that clash with the limitations of surrounding life, the schema, the coffin; they will permeate it, and give us the possibility of living our life within a broader framework.

Let us choose a sentence as an example: He ropes the cow with rope.

In this sentence, elements, structure, and meaning fit into our lives with the same infinite simplicity and naturalness as the sentence "He is talented and is therefore well-paid." If we recognize that we are free, and we are capable of reorganizing and regrouping the elements of our lives according to our interests, then we must use our freedom to demonstrate this very freedom. He ropes the cow with rope.

Examples of reclassification of linguistic form:

He ropes the cow with rope.
He melody with a gust of wind.
He rates the dog with rust.
He laughs the cock with anger.
He reads the denunciation with joy.
He sings the anthem with sugar.
He pours theサー with water.
He throws the gun with a child.
He exchanges her with embers.
He understands the constitution with good intentions.
He chases birds with a boat.
And so on.

Adhering to the structure of the sample sentences produces new classifications that in part realize manageable life-phases, and in part end in absurdity.

If we devote our lives to freedom, changing our lives and the Homo ludens program, then starting from such a structure, investigating the possibilities enables us to construct instructions for ourselves that clash with the limitations of surrounding life, the schema, the coffin; they will permeate it, and give us the possibility of living our life within a broader framework.

The next operation derives from a new classification of the sample sentence "He ropes the cow with rope" in a version that is both within and without itself, that is, a new relation is brought about in the environment, even if it is limited by the space and time in which it happens.

Long live the new classifications! Long live the structure of cultural politics, where those with minimal abilities can plan their lives as freely as the very talented.

Long live the cultural-political structure that permits the introduction of new classifications. Long live the forum for the unexpected! Long live the new classifications!
The opening exhibition

38 STREET exhibition

Géza Pereneczky on Erzsébet Schaár

Schaár. The last exhibition of Erzsébet Schaár was accompanied by a catalogue containing the poems of János Pálnoky coupled with the art pieces, next to which they were read out. The process of building the exhibition and the opening with reading of the poems was filmed by János Gulyás (1946). The installation was later displayed in Lucerne and then, finally, in Pécs, where the temporal styrofoam components of the sculptures were re-placed with pieces made of concrete. Géza Pereneczky writes about Schaár in his comprehensive essay about the Iparterv group and the neo-avant-garde in Hungary.

The Neo-Classical Branch of the Neo-Avant-Garde

There were two others who died of the Hungarian model: Miklós Erdély and Erzsébet Schaár. They both fully understood and experienced 100 per cent, this artificial sweep of narrow-mindedness and blissful moral dignity, day by day, and they were also the ones who had to pay the highest cost, even though very differently, for their day-to-day struggles with this permanent state. Erzsébet has hardly been mentioned, so I should write about her. Did she have anything to do with the Hungarian avant-garde, or did she simply become a significant artist because she was a significant artist? Of course she did not belong to the Iparterv group (a group of neo-avant-garde artists operating in the late 1960s). She was married to Tibor Vilt, and thus in fact was closer to the generation of the European School. She, however, refused to be placed among them, and perhaps there was indeed no more basis to this than her birth date.

For decades, she was known as a sensitive portrait sculptor. It was only in the second half of the 1960s that something suddenly showed her in front of the Iparterv group. An outsider could feel that Schaár suddenly stepped over the constructionists, post-c囤urism and abstract expressionism that had once surrounded her, going beyond even concept art or things made in the spirit of samizdat, rounding her, going beyond even conceptual art and things made in the spirit of semiotics, to become a master of architectural space and the human figure. At that very moment, she started to form the pan de Dios of human beings and houses out of folding shutters and plastic tablets. I see the reference to dancing in pairs in this way, to this unusually broad sense of the word, to conjure up a theatrical tragedy and sacred space, too. The music stops, the figures make a last stir, making polystyrene rustle for a last time, and the sacred space, too. The music stops, the figures make a last stir, making polystyrene rustle for a last time, and the sacred space, too.

The Neoclassical Branch of the Neo-Avant-Garde

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And here we are: autonomy. The inner light, warmth and independence Hungary was never able to give (think it over: her first exhibitions took place in the 1930s!). This is where she got her obstinacy from, her heading hardness, her strength that could desiccate gentleness and create from it dried flowers, with which she walked around in the world and acted in the field of art. (…) As for the dry facts: her most important work was the one entitled Street set up in Székesfehérvár: she built this in 1974, but it stood there only temporarily, for one month; then she herself demolished it. She rebuilt it one year later in Luzern, in a reduced form, and this is the version that can be seen in Pécs today, made of lasting material. However, there are many things one cannot find in this finalized version: forms joined by the tranquillity of decomposing leaves, the melancholy of forgotten portrait sculptures, the naturalness of passing, this penetrating and worn mausoleum-effect – things that were never more basis to this than her birth date.

And here we are: autonomy. The inner light, warmth and independence Hungary was never able to give (think it over: her first exhibitions took place in the 1930s!). This is where she got her obstinacy from, her heading hardness, her strength that could desiccate gentleness and create from it dried flowers, with which she walked around in the world and acted in the field of art. (…) As for the dry facts: her most important work was the one entitled Street set up in Székesfehérvár: she built this in 1974, but it stood there only temporarily, for one month; then she herself demolished it. She rebuilt it one year later in Luzern, in a reduced form, and this is the version that can be seen in Pécs today, made of lasting material. However, there are many things one cannot find in this finalized version: forms joined by the tranquillity of decomposing leaves, the melancholy of forgotten portrait sculptures, the naturalness of passing, this penetrating and worn mausoleum-effect – things that were really personal in her work. It became a sculpture and ceased to be an environment. However, her middle-sized and smaller works did manage to preserve and still radiate her original intention: the superhuman attempt to delineate how big her world is and who should be part of it. To catch and hold pieces of furniture, walls, human beings. This world is repeating the classical dimensions of architecture, but can only be the home of human beings made of paper and ephemeral personalises, the residence of such dissolving figures in the 20th century. A cemetery in front of the gate to paradise, the white consolation portrait of those who cannot pass to there. It was perhaps this relentlessness and clarity that shortened the whole of the Hungarian avant-garde when Erzsébet Schaár died suddenly in 1975. All of us could see for a moment our place at the light of surprise as it flamed up.
Excerpts from FïKA* – Interview with Tamás St.Auby

"Make a chair!" (Homage à George Brecht) was held at 8:00 p.m. on 6 June 1975. What was it all about?

- Eva Körner suggested that I should do something for Fïka. (...) Körner’s idea came just at the right moment for me as on the one hand, I had something important to say that I had wanted to make public for about a year then. On the other hand, I knew at the time that I would emigrate soon, so I wanted to make my declaration and get it over with. (...) So from October 1974 till my going into exile, December 1975, I wanted to get certain things done, tie up loose ends in my life here. For example, I intended to make a retrospective exhibition, which I managed to accomplish, right there at Fïka in the spring of 1975 – as well as this thing with Brecht. The Brecht issue is a bit complicated, and it leads very far. That is one of the reasons why my introduction took that long, to reach escape velocity, so to say.

Simply, briefly, quickly. I was intrigued by a particular case of the "now." It was related to an issue of a broader nature, a mutation that had fascinated me since the first time my voice went hoarse in childhood. Change is mutation itself. Changing back is not change but repetition. As opposed to the professional standpoint, mutation can occur only at a level higher than the previous stage, in other words, at a level that better enhances survival. Whatever adapts regresses, and whatever transforms is the mutant itself. Even in changes concerning art and art history, the "Aufhebung" or substitution is "aleatorically contrapunctual" – to put it in a simplified way. To give you a graphic model: sublated Romanesque art was a level that better enhances survival. Whatever adapts regresses, and whatever transforms is the mutant itself. Change is mutation itself. Changing back is not change but repetition. As opposed to the professional standpoint, mutation can occur only at a level higher than the previous stage, in other words, at a level that better enhances survival. Whatever adapts regresses, and whatever transforms is the mutant itself. Even in changes concerning art and art history, the "Aufhebung" or substitution is "aleatorically contrapunctual" – to put it in a simplified way. To give you a graphic model: sublated Romanesque art was

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On the one hand, the future drops from the sky, but on the other, it is realized as mankind accomplishes it. Therefore, you know what is supposed to be the experience of the future. And Georg Brecht noted and did what surpassed the stage of Duchamp. Duchamp did not use the readymade; he aestheticized the universe of use by placing it into a state of non-use. He turned it into the object of poetic manipulation, plus, tails, teeth, etc. As Brecht later wrote, Duchamp channelled back into use the perception and the evaluation of non-art as art, that is, he aestheticized the action itself. Brecht transformed this “non-art as art” into “art as non-art” by putting in to use the aesthetic dimensions and spiritual approaches of mankind. Duchamp denies the autonomous aesthetic reality of the work of art. He considers this notion uncritical- not only does he activate the spectator mentally, but also by interpreting activity literally, he transforms the essence of art into an action, an active art. It sounds a bit complicated, but that is how Duchamp’s is turned upside down, or rather not set back on its feet. Brecht changed the readymade back to the back of the urn. He channelised it. Here is the bottle rack, let us hang bottles on it or even with the eyes of an astronaut – it is not by chance that the first spatial pictures were taken of the Earth at that time. Consciousness “surpassing as such” became material for art.

The question was the following: “since all has become non-art-art, what could surpass even that? What happens when the Drip-Music unavoidably becomes quiet/sublated, when the water evaporates/becomes indifferent” applied when selecting the readymade (although, contradicting himself, he enthusiastically-

On the one hand, Duchamp’s operation is not a form-creating operation – and that is emphasized by the “innovational” applied when selecting the readymade (although, contradicting himself, he enthusiastically-

}- Yes. This is the expulsion itself. This solution is not a less-defying one, but rather, an inherent consequence of the crime. According to the Law, everything belongs to them, except the surplus. If they take away from that, if they pick from the forbidden tree, in other-words, if they overconsume this: and that will happen in a result, to other words, they will have to work, moreover, they will not have to produce a surplus through their work, and on top of that, they will have to consume it. In the concurrent sentences – although the partial ver-

Quite simply, we just have to determine what we need. I defined it as a chair. The chair is necessary be-

The Subsistence Level is the Maximum Level.
NUDE/MODEL
exhibition and action

Notes for the exhibition. (courtesy of Orsi Drozdik)

1. Fine art model.
2. The institutionalized fine art model. Art model.
3. The model of thought - that society wishes for the individual.
4. The model of thought - that the individual offers to society.

Orsi Drozdik

Emese Sűvecz’s interviews with the participants

András Halász: Piriska was a professional nude model. She may have been a gipsy. We liked her a lot. However, her role remained that of a model.

Orsi Drozdik: Her name was Piriska Szabó.

Zsigmond Károlyi: You know these people were usually quite unfriendly. It was pretty depressing to realize this. But Piriska was different. She was a bewitching flower, in the springtime of her life.

Orsi Drozdik: I invited some artists and critics to participate in my performance in order to legitimize my work. Oh, yes, their names are: András Halász, Zsigmond Károlyi, Károly Kelemen, László Beke, and Miklós Erdély. They were my friends rather than just colleagues. They could do whatever they wanted. They opened my show.

András Halász: I liked it a lot – it was a silent, relatively small room. And behind these big wooden doors, they were sitting together. Piriska was sitting naked on a chair, and Orsi was at her drawing bench as I found it beautiful, because it somehow showed the truth of this situation. She went to school for six or seven years, and she was looking at the nude, with unerring precision. I found it very funny, it was not erotic at all.

Zsigmond Károlyi: I can remember that there were five of us, and I wrote a text. But I don’t remember what it was. Then Orshi and Piriska walked into this room, which was somehow closed off first with a curtain, then with a gauze curtain, so you could not enter. The spectator could see them as a picture framed by the doorway.

Orsi Drozdik: They didn’t understand the work — art history and the audience. On the visual level it was very pleasurable and complex. It was comprehensible in a modernist way too. They understood the work this way but the use of the female body and its complex structure they did not understand. Unfortunately, I did not explain clearly enough why I chose a female nude. I should have elaborated more what the conflict is about. Even though I consider secrecy as a very important component of art, this work was didactic, still, I did not provide any guidance to its reading. The intention was to show the grotesque nature of the situation — that a woman artist has to draw a naked woman.

Zsigmond Károlyi: I do not want to judge the work, but to tell you the truth, the idea of drawing a nude model, as a performance, did not impress anyone that way. Our rather naive: how much does the whole thing cost, how much is it that one of them is drawing the other. Usually this is how things go. But let’s take this as a social condition: it is mandatory for everyone to draw; in this constellation you try to define yourself, that you either like or dislike the model, either feel disgust or empathy with her situation — this is interesting to analyze.

András Halász: In 1977 the Rózsa circle was still active. It was Kelemen’s and my idea to establish women’s art in Hungary. But, at first, we thought of others, not only Orshi; for instance, El-Kazovszky’s name emerged.

Orsi Drozdik: I did not look at the nude model with desire. To be frank, it was fairly depressing to realize this. But Piroska was different. She was a bewitching flower, in the springtime of her life.

Zsigmond Károlyi: She was the object of their sexual desire. And I inherited an academic method, which is totally ambiguous: for women to depict naked women is an ambiguous procedure. It was a normative condition that women painted female nude models, and no one had changed this.

András Halász: It was about women’s art, but I was not sensitive to it as all. I was not really interested in it. On the level of theory, I did not work with it either. But it is a fact that Orshi pretty much advocated the idea, as we agreed to it.

András Halász: Orshi undertook this role, she organized this “Ship Excursion,” but somehow it came about that she was very much an independent artist and detached herself from the movement very soon. She did not become a soul of the movement.

Zsigmond Károlyi: Piriska was very different from the average, everyone was in love with her. Very many men were courting her — so put it in this way. Many things can be said about Piriska, because she was really everywhere: at parties, in the neighborhood pubs, as if she had gone to the Academy like us, but in another manner. She was not the one who made drawings, but she was drawn.
I have yet to meet anyone as avant-garde as Béla Kondor. His entry onto the scene was completely unexpected and induced a now unimaginable traditionalism. At the same time, his program represented a now unimaginable traditionalism. His work was characterized by a strange tendency to engage in conversations with the attack this relatively passive, post-impressionists and realists. Because modernist fostered progressive traditions too. Our progressive tradition went back to Béla Kornóis, and was suddenly storms. They acknowledged that the great master, Gyula Rózsa, Kornóís, and Leó Szajer were indeed, great but only as fossils of the past. Kondor’s huge invention was that he said that they think László Kornóis was not a reactionary artist, I will draw for them like he did and not the way they represent the whistling conductor. And if I want to paint a whistling conductor, I’ll try my best to be like László Kornóis. And well, no one was expecting this that someone would begin to draw in this way.

(…) The facts have been a third-year student when he invited me and showed me the Dózsa-series hiszeichungs that were being made at that time. So I could see once more those clear and fine figures a study of draughts drawn by pencil. His style was basically formed — it did not change much from that one. He found his way when he was a third-year student, and an experimental work of art of his was already published in the Új Hang magazine in 1955-56. Strangely enough, no one thought about its connection with the events of 1956, it is astonishing that in March 1956, the students were talking about an “other” Dózsa, and an “other” Dózsa, and these revolutions one has to evoke simultaneously the significant Hungarian historical events of 1919, 1949, and 1989, where — as a consequence of revolutionary processes — the official art, the official artworld, did not change in a democratic way. 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The sad thing is that even though the activity of this was a profession, a craft that people must nor a college degree, nothing really, only a hu-

avant-garde. This is what is at work in arte pove-

course this is not general, but a very strong fac-

to put it in this extreme way, encouraged by

Those who dare to create something really

One of course may be shaken by the death

Engaged in the investigation of leftist critical traditions and conjuring up the Dózsa cult, Société Réaliste produced 1979 for the Over the Counter

István Kiss: 1514, (1961), statue

peasant uprising of 1514, György Dózsa, played

Ádám Szabó handed the Munkácsy Prize to Ádám Szabó and Ádám Szabó. It is a very obtrusive artefact con-

Béla Kondor died at the age of 41, having fulfilled his mission. We should acknowledge rather than lament this. One of course may be shaken by the death


Société Réaliste: the “Dirty Parallel”, (1979), art work, dealers, graffiti, and the Fall of Communism in 1989, with the emergence of “true” democracy.

So Kondor rapidly “model” was not the expression of the communist ideology, it was a reaction to its failure and even an affirmation of it. In

“other” revolutionary traditions

engy. That is what we find really beautiful. Of course this is not general, but a very strong fac-

to have, a pair of spectacles and a glass – everyone can place them next to each other. You

At first sight, one can observe two main differences to the original print. The

This issue and the debate probably had an impact on Béla Kondor, but he chose another, strategic argument for his Dózsa series, that differed both from Derkovits and Markódy, and was basically non-ideological. Committed to the historical period as a matter of fact but somehow in an atavistic manner, he applied and conceptualized the “national” revolution of 1848 and the so-called “dirty parallel” and the falling of the regime.

In the beginning of the 1960s, Hungarian painting turned from a three-decade-long crisis into the phase of a purified and committed fer-

Béla Kondor: The Way of Rivers, (1965); Venice Biennale, 1964; Sao Paolo Biennale, 1964; 1965; Venice Biennale, (1956), etching, 17,5 x 11,8 cm

Kondor struggled and lived through the last two phases of the crisis: he was a child, a symbol and finally a victim of this struggle. He got his degree in 1956 and thus appeared in front of the public at a time when the fine arts defined itself as socialist, and did not admit even to itself, that the very generation of the so-called avant-garde in the last century that they loudly praised, not the bourgeois-

Béla Kondor: The Way of Rivers, (1965); Venice Biennale, 1964; Sao Paolo Biennale, 1964; 1965; Venice Biennale, (1956), etching, 17,5 x 11,8 cm

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Besides official cultural policy, the avant-garde also established a claim in Konدور’s legend after his sudden death. Although his revolu-
tionary graphic style attracted many followers even in his lifetime and his creations and his position earned him the titles of “the most avant-
garde artist” and “the most controversial”, there are those who claim he was unmanageable, cynical and stubborn. He was not the only one to be really strong to be able to have a connection praised him, or called him a traitor. It shows that Konدور did not bargain and desist from list the intellectual spares Kondor’s and Erdély’s work in this area is good, too.

A document by Konدور
We travelled to Szentendre with my photographer colleague for the opening of the new art-
istories. At the end of the celebration, a few partici-
portraits of Béla Kondor from the catolouge of his memorial exhibition entitled “Dear Samu…” (Photo: Zsuzsa Bokor, Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest)
Fact Art (1971)

1. Lajos Kubista was interned in the Főfö arena cemetery in Budapest.
2. Cubism was not born in Budapest.
3. No "ism" was born in Budapest.
4. Victor Vasarely was born in Hungary.
5. Op Art was not born in Hungary.
6. Nicolas Schöffer was born in Kubista.
7. Kinetic Art was not born in Kubista.
8. Tivadar Herd was born in Budapest.
9. Zionism was not born in Budapest.
10. The father of the nuclear bomb, Leó Szilárd was born in Hungary.
11. Pop Art was born in the USA, its influence extended to Hungary.
12. Béla Bartók was born in Hungary, but died in New York.
13. Concept Art was born in New York; since it is a theory, it is not born in Budapest.
14. Jarvis Neumann, founding a mathematical institute, is not born in Budapest.
15. Cybernetics has been used for the successful production of artworks in numerous technologically developed nations, whereas in Hungary— as far as I know—we have never got round to it.
16. If, as I claim, the assertions in the above concept are incontroverted, then, in this case "Fact Art" would be a more fitting title than "Concept Art.

Would Fact Art have originated in Budapest?

This hypothesis can only be maintained if its founding arguments are actual facts. When I re- assessed the accuracy of the arguments, I found that the 3rd argument is false. Consequently, Fact Art was still-born in Budapest, because one of the arguments, from which we concluded its coming into being — the one, according to which no ism was born in Hungary — is wrong, no fact.

There was one ism that was born in Hungary: Bicisérđism.

In 2007, Little Warsaw exhibited a provocative installation entitled Ozve Észak Ápja that even drove the attention of the mainstream media. The central motif of the work is made up of neon tubes and combines a red pentacle and a yellow hexagram with an inscription “major”. Referring to the sepulchral fact that the origin of the ism is explicable for the nature of the ism, the title of the installation comes from the science-fiction film, Alien. Hence the title and the central motif are strongly suggestive of the spirit of anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, while also reflecting implicitly socialist management (expressed) of the so-called “Jewish Question”. What is more, the installation is essential in the production of art history as the word “major” denotes a Hungarian artist, János Major, beyond its political and military connotations. On the grounds of his lineage, Major permanently dealt with his Jewish identity and even opened his own Jewish graphic work, in Memoriam Móric Scharf, represents the complexity of the subject. János Major composed the idea of the combination of the Red Star and the Jewish Star from one of his drawings that was inspired by a real gravestone photographed by Major.

What is Avantgardism? (1973)

Can we consider it an avant-garde act that Móric Scharf, a Hungarian Jew and a descendant of Jews for thousands of years. He was born in 1916, his parents made me think of representing and commemorating him. He did not want to belong to a single kind. He did not want to belong to a single kind.

His photographic works demonstrated that Major used and appreciated the avant-garde and conceptual art just as he did classical graphical techniques. Through the craftsmanship of photography, the avant-garde infiltrated his ‘transmitter’ art even in a technical sense, although we still do not know how Major himself evaluated his own photographic experiments in the context of his grand art (pencil paintings and frescoes).

Major's Star

In all probability, it is the repetition of certain words, information, or the repetition of certain images, that initiates the later canonised names (from Erdély to Groh’s book, Imagination) of the neo-avant-garde canon. The theoretical background of the neo-avant-garde canon is displayed all too well in the fact that Major’s best known work of art is still the Lajos Rákosi Gate – the monument of ‘fitter of cubs’. Paired together with his spiritual manifest, Real Art, it got into the canon through Belá’s famous conceptual exhibition, Imagination (1971) and Klára Gold’s book, Állatok későbban (1972). According to Major’s manifest, Hungary is an “idea haikuspoem,” as even cubism dead here. Majó also gave the reason for this fact: in Hungary nothing significant was born, here “things” only end. All the famous Hungarians (the Nobel Prizes, Honorary Doctors, etc.) left the country and made their groundbreaking achievements somewhere else, not only ep, kinetic art, and cybernetics.

Accordingly, there was also a four-page version of this Fact Art concept that contained another important striking entitled “The Yid in Wasingston” (Alphaville) (1967) and a letter about Hungarian anti-Semitism. In this letter, Major
interpreted even his "other" infamous etching, the I Monomania Alptrauch which evoking the main "arrow" of the "Trahentes Blood Lites" of 1882. Further, Sz. also adapted the story in his film, the Livian (1970) inspired mainly by previous books on the therapeutic "Great" from the "tough" Hungarian "Alfavit". Supposedly, Sz.'s current imagery also had an impact on Erdély’s interpretation of the indictment that was based heavily on the psychological analysis of individuals that involved the communist "show trials" of the 1940s. He, on the other hand, argued on the grounds of the accusations (based primarily on Miklós Erdély's conference) indirectly interpreting the phenomenon of the Holocaust as a prison because of an irrational murder. The "students", allegedly, cut the throat of a young Hungarian girl to use her blood for a Jewish ritual.

But it is not a problem, either, as it is also not

Miklós Erdély

Tams Szentjóby: Exclusion exercise - Punishment-preventive autotherapy

I. You can ask anything from the self-sentenced

II. You can ask the following:

- Are all life-schemes that exclude even one other human being immoral?

- Can one form a community with another person without being completely free oneself?

- Is it a person's real purpose to make one conscious of the fact that one's fate is identical to history?

- Is it the most important thing to discover and realize what is needed for life?

- Those who bear the unbearable, do they know nothing about life? - Know nothing about that interdependence that is contained in life - Can he bear himself without us, is everything hopeless without us?

- Can the blockade of the present be broken only by a new type of behavior?

- Is the realization of the future in the present an acceleration of our lives?

- Because historical time applies to the totality and not to the individual, you would try to live the facts of the present and your future dehis-

- Is this all so manifest difference and therefore he can activate a potentially different.

- Can the changeable also be unfixedness? It is unfinished to be changed? Is change suffering? Is incompleteness - suffering?

Erdély's Stamp

On the one hand, the group Flugpost2000 produce multiples of cult art objects, on the other they use the capitalist production of the object of art and in value, as they are grasping the mechanism of art with the proper source. All of them, they have a "conceptual" multiple that existed only as a ramp-up plus previously in 1974, Miklós Erdély allegedly - actually no "original" stamp has remained - invoiced a stamp with the inscription "to my friend".

On my friend's wedding, he deduced his first published collection of postcards entitled Little Warsaw, from another viewpoint, investigated the cult of Szentjóby – at that time a professor of the "Methodius (apostles of the Slavs), and also refers to the cult of Szentjóby – at that time a professor of the Academy of Arts, the interiorisation of ideology. Portraying himself as a nun of the underground, however, Erdély spontaneously exaggerates the feeling of self-reproof, which was not really appreciated even in the avant-garde circles.

Erdély: It was also involved in the issue of the Jewish Question, which might have contributed as well to Miklós Erdély's Gallery of the Yid and Szemjóby. What happened was that the five of us - myself, Dára Maurer and three other friends - were coming close to the gate of the chapel. I noticed that the chapel's improvised iron gate was red and shifted by 90 degrees. To show my friends what I meant, I jumped over there and got myself into a horizontal position. I remember that when Dóra first photographed me, Miklós lay down on the ground, was covered by the inside of the church from his waist down, and took a portrait as if he had been taken from somewhere and shifted by 90 degrees, too, and as if he had been talking from a pit, only a puzzled look and the two most splendid ideas, that of Títoş György and Tamás Szemjóby later, as I could not see them that at Samarkand. Szemjóby gives a Texan-like aspect to the photo and Szemjóby, to use the idea of the camera, suddenly pressing a book. He is plunging heading through the leaves of a tree, almost hitting the ground. But I find Títoş György’s appearance even more interesting. He brings a wonderful, surrealistic camera-like, easy-flying aspect into the photo, smoking a cigarette, like someone on a summer holiday. He is looking at the lake Balaton, with his eyes closed, his expression calm, his face half-smoked, and glasses at something from behind a wall with an incredible tranquility. What was most surprising was that György was actually

interviewed with ecologists' complicate administration and extensive bureaucracy, was sponsored by Erdély for his absolutely nonsensical end. From the historical perspective of cults, the story of and the manner of the censorship's non-intervention is not based on the manner in which the agricultural group in the age of technical irreversibility, but also on the fact that the mass has overcome the future value of being "the best friend of Miklós Erdély", thereby mocking his own cult.

Once We Departed (1972)

Spontaneous actions in a chapel, photographed by Dára Maurer and published under the title We once went. Participants: Miklós Erdély, Tibor Gábor, György Jovánovics, Dára Maurer, Tamás Szemjóby.

An interview with György Jovánovics (1998):

This work, Dára Maurer's photo series, stemmed from my idea. That is, it had several authors: the first version is the one developed by Miklós Erdély György Jovánovics and Tamás Szemjóby. What happened was that the five of us - myself, Dára Maurer and three other friends - were coming close to the gate of the chapel. I noticed that the chapel's improvised iron gate was red and shifted by 90 degrees. To show my friends what I meant, I jumped over there and got myself into a horizontal position. I remember that when Dóra first photographed me, Miklós lay down on the ground, was covered by the inside of the church from his waist down, and took a portrait as if he had been taken from somewhere and shifted by 90 degrees, too, and as if he had been talking from a pit, only a puzzled look and the two most splendid ideas, that of Títoş György and Tamás Szemjóby later, as I could not see them that at Samarkand. Szemjóby gives a Texan-like aspect to the photo and Szemjóby, to use the idea of the camera, suddenly pressing a book. He is plunging heading through the leaves of a tree, almost hitting the ground. But I find Títoş György’s appearance even more interesting. He brings a wonderful, surrealistic camera-like, easy-flying aspect into the photo, smoking a cigarette, like someone on a summer holiday. He is looking at the lake Balaton, with his eyes closed, his expression calm, his face half-smoked, and glasses at something from behind a wall with an incredible tranquility. What was most surprising was that György was actually
I don’t think she herself knew it would have that effect. We can see this fantastic image of tranquility, a very still tranquility, while Gáyör is lying on his back in filthy, unkempt brushwood. Dóra always told me that she would publish my idea or my photo—she almost said ‘your photo’, even though it was she who exposed it, while everyone else added their own idea.”

An interview with Dóra Maurer (1998):

“I think it was Miki Erdély’s or Tamás Szentjóby’s idea that we should go to Balatonboglár in May 1972. We asked Galántai for the key to the chapel and shot 36 photos—the full capacity of a camera—on the square and the ideas we had around the chapel. That was when the photo series was made. It was Jován’s idea. There was a grid put across the chapel door, originally from a fence, but applied horizontally and not vertically. Jován stood on it, and the others automatically began to find their places, too. Szentjóby lay down on a branch and stuffed his long hair into his shirt, so his hair was not floating like Jován’s in the photo. Erdély placed himself in the door, bent over, as if he had been glancing out from the balcony of one of its members, László Lakner. This renowned photo is also a part of a photo-series that is less familiar, but Little Warsaw staged the whole series in the Crew Expendable. On one of them, a tall, lanky, young man with glasses, János Major is leading the group, as if he were the epitome of the avant-garde. Despite the fact that the artists went to Lake Balaton only by chance on a sunny summer day, they created an everlasting work of art that has become an iconic representation of the spirit and community of the neo-avant-garde. Showing the features of a cult, the photo also has critical qualities. This piece of the photo series received the subtitle Space Disarray that on the one hand, obviously refers to the subversive, confusing, revolutionary activities of the avant-garde; while on the other, travesty the cult of self-representation and traditional portraiture, points to their often forgotten self-irony. Similarly, another photo also had cult status in the 1980s, which also represented an avant-garde company, the Iparterv Group on the balcony of one of its members, László Lakner, this renowned photo is also a part of a photo-series that is less familiar, but Little Warsaw staged the whole series in the Crew Expendable. On one of them, a tall, lanky, young man with glasses, János Major is leading the group, as if he were the epitome of the avant-garde. It could be that he represented himself too ironically, even sarcastically during his lifetime, so the task of situating him in the avant-garde “pantheon” has been left to others.

Discrediting the “youthful” artists and closing the “illegal” space, the state agencies seriously reacted against the Chapel Exhibitions. Szentjóby euphemistically “had an opportunity” to leave the country—eventually, he immigrated to Switzerland in 1975—that contributed to the constitution of his cult. In 1980, he and Erdély (with his fellow avant-garde artists) represented Hungarian contemporary art on the cover of a catalogue of a significant West-German exhibition (Kunsthalle, Wilhelmshaven). The cover photo made by Dóra Maurer is the “documentation” of a spontaneous “action” at Balatonboglár entitled Once We Departed (1972). The simplicity of the title has manifold reference to the spirit and the reception of the avant-garde. Despite the fact that the artists went to Lake Balaton only by chance on a sunny summer day, they created an everlasting work of art that has become an iconic representation of the spirit and community of the neo-avant-garde. Showing the features of a cult, the photo also has critical qualities. This piece of the photo series received the subtitle Space Disarray that on the one hand, obviously refers to the subversive, confusing, revolutionary activities of the avant-garde; while on the other, travesty the cult of self-representation and traditional portraiture, points to their often forgotten self-irony. Similarly, another photo also had cult status in the 1980s, which also represented an avant-garde company, the Iparterv Group on the balcony of one of its members, László Lakner, this renowned photo is also a part of a photo-series that is less familiar, but Little Warsaw staged the whole series in the Crew Expendable. On one of them, a tall, lanky, young man with glasses, János Major is leading the group, as if he were the epitome of the avant-garde. It could be that he represented himself too ironically, even sarcastically during his lifetime, so the task of situating him in the avant-garde “pantheon” has been left to others.

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