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Kazuko Miyamoto <> Florin Maxa: A dialogue

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Exile is pleased to present the first presentation of works by Romanian-born artist Florin Maxa (born 1943) in New York. His works are set in dialogue with works by Japanese-born, New York-based artist Kazuko Miyamoto (born 1942). While their geographical, cultural and social biographies couldn't be further apart, their works share an affinity that becomes first introduced through this exhibition.

The works on display, some of them have not been seen publicly since the time of their production, range from 1972 – 1980. Both artists have their roots in minimalist practice but increasingly extended their artistic vision towards a less conceptually-rigid, more free and personal expression.

Music plays a central role for both artists. While Maxa is deeply passionate about classical music, Miyamoto is interested in various kinds of global music ranging from traditional Japanese music to contemporary experimental Jazz. The logics and systems embedded in music, from exactly controlled notations to jam-session spontaneity, have been a source for their explorations and became a central inspiration for their works.

In Florin Maxa's work the Hexagon, as a central mathematical shape, is the starting point of his exploration. Through earliest computer renderings (as early as 1973) to his later distorted canvases, Maxa explores the inherent potential of this quintessential form on paper, on canvas and in objects. The hexagonal source becomes deconstructed and disfigured towards a free anamorphic shape, often in form of double-sided, free-hanging canvases.

Following his recent solo show at Exile in Berlin, the presentation in New York shows a selection of works that have survived his drastic action in 1981 in which he burnt many of his early works as a sign of personal freedom and protest against communist censorship in Romania following his first, and until today only, solo exhibition in Bucharest in 1980.

Kazuko Miyamoto moved to New York in 1964 and has been deeply involved in the minimalist scene since her initial meeting with Sol Lewitt in 1968. Though Miyamoto operated mainly within the private realm of her studio, only showing her works to friends and peers and avoiding any artist limelight. As a founding member of A.I.R. women art collective in 1972, Miyamoto developed her practice quietly as an active member through 5 solo exhibitions at A.I.R. until 1980.

The works in the exhibition are from the 1970s and show her early diversion from stringent minimalist logic towards

a more subtle, free and personal expression. Error, as a positive sign of human individuality and a core aspect of improvisation, have always been central to her work. In one of the few surviving paintings from the period, on view for the first time since 1973, Miyamoto draws her inspiration from the natural pattern of a leaf of fern. The artist abstracts this pattern onto canvas allowing her hands to follow a minimalist imprecision that would become increasingly important to her work until today.

The exhibition of works of Kazuko Miyamoto's and Florin Maxa's wants to encourage further investigation into the work of both of these artists and simultaneously raises questions of our understanding of minimal artistic practice as well as creative exchange across borders during cold-war politics.

LIST OF WORKS

EAST WALL

Kazuko Miyamoto: *Untitled*, rubber and nails on painted wood, 86 x 72 cm, 1971 (Segment of *Untitled* (string construction), approx 335 x 920 x 5 cm, 1971. Installation at 55 Mercer, New York)

Florin Maxa: *Metamorphoses*, computer graphics plotted on paper, 29 x 41 cm each, 1973

Florin Maxa: *Leaf*, acrylic on linen over metallic stretcher (double sided) 78 x 44 x 1 cm, 1980

Florin Maxa: *Hexagon with tail*, wood, 65,5 x 50 cm, 1981

Florin Maxa: *Metamorphoses*, computer graphics plotted on paper, 41 x 29 cm, 1973

WEST WALL

Florin Maxa: *Wing*, linen over metallic stretcher (double-sided), 165 x 27 x 0.7 cm, 1980

Kazuko Miyamoto: *Trail Dinosaur*, ink and pencil on paper, 101 x 86 cm, 1978

Kazuko Miyamoto: *Untitled* (string construction drawing), color pencil on vellum, 51 x 64 cm each, 1974

Kazuko Miyamoto: *Ways of fern*, acrylic on canvas, 156 x 116,5 cm, 1973

NORTH WALL

Florin Maxa: *Hexagon with turquoise lines*, acrylic on canvas on custom stretcher, 72 x 67 cm, 1980

VIDEO

Florin Maxa: *The Garden*, 16mm projection filmed and transfer to DVD, 10:35 min, ca 1979-81

Kazuko Miyamoto: Documentation of A.I.R. exhibition, video transfer to DVD, (Part 1: 23:32 min, part 2: 31:45 min) 1978