

**ÉVA BODNÁR and WALTER OBHOLZER** 07.04.2018 until 23.06.2018 INNSBRUCK

There has been a close collaboration between Galerie Elisabeth & Klaus Thoman and both Éva Bodnár and Walter Obholzer for many years. In 1978, the gallery presented the artist Walter Obholzer (together with Dieter Fuchs and Josef Herbert) for the first time, and in 1981 it introduced Éva Bodnár at its Innsbruck premises, then still called Galerie Annasäule. And in 1982 it organised the first solo exhibition (including catalogue) with Walter Obholzer.

Éva Bodnár paints what she likes. She gives free reign to her tools, i.e. her eyes, hands, thoughts, and feelings, in order to interrupt an unwanted intellectual machinery during the painting process, and perhaps also to find an answer to the following question: How can you paint what you don't even think? Her deliberate, procedural approach is based on a comprehensive assessment of her effectiveness, her scope of action, and her ability. The central question, the one as to your own skills, as to what you can do without artificial input, by your own force, without tricks and false bottoms, as to how much you can achieve by yourself, and from which point your work stagnates without others getting involved, has accompanied the artist all her life. Bodnár's rich and varied experience, as well as her assurance in terms of composition and technique, allow her to continue pushing her own limits as an artist. Through various, at times predetermined, at times self-imposed framework conditions, such as temporal or spatial limitations, she permanently challenges herself and her own self-discipline. This specific type of stress, in combination with the elaborated coincidence whose existence always requires good and clear decisions, guarantees a strong, well-grounded presence. In this sense, Bodnár gives herself a healthy thrill that becomes clearly palpable in her very powerful and vivid works. For her most recent series of works on canvas, measuring 80 centimetres by 80 centimetres, she immersed herself into a time of togetherness with Walter Obholzer. The latter's share in the exhibition are tempera paintings on aluminium and watercolours, created between 1992 and 2000, wonderful examples of his "systemic painting," impressively decoded in the catalogue to the solo exhibition at the Vienna Secession in 2000 through texts and a reprint of Obholzer's image database.

Éva Bodnár was born in Budapest in 1952. Between 1973 and 1976, she studied at the Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts, where she also met her future husband and artist colleague Walter Obholzer. A little later, in Vienna, after a once more successful entrance exam, Bodnár continued her studies at the Academy of Fine Arts and, in 1981, graduated in the master class of Wolfgang Hollegha, whose basic premise – to reflect before and after painting, but not while doing it – found entrance into Bodnár's own *modus operandi*. Éva Bodnár lives as a freelance artist in Vienna. Since 2002, she has been teaching a drawing class at the Academy of Fine Arts and supporting her students in activating their very own drawing and painting machine.

Walter Obholzer, born in Ebbs in Tyrol, in 1953, studied at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna from 1973 to 1978. From 1974 to 1975, he spent time at the Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts in Budapest, where he met Éva Bodnár. He had his first solo exhibition at Galerie Elisabeth & Klaus Thoman in Innsbruck, in 1982, followed by exhibitions at Galerie Ropac in Salzburg and Paris. Obholzer represented Austria at the 1988 Biennale di Venezia, and, together with Lois Weinberger, at the 1991 São Paulo Art Biennial. In 2000, he had a much acclaimed solo exhibition at the Vienna Secession, which consolidated his reputation as the founder of conceptual painting in Austria. Between 2000 and 2005, Obholzer was professor for abstract painting at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. After a long, serious illness he died in the autumn of 2008. The ornament and emblems, symmetry and asymmetry, as well as proportion theory, play an important role in his work. With his "vertical panoramas," Obholzer examines the nowhere land of the empty, white walls of modernity, in order at the same time, through the deployment of the "historical" ornament, to suggest a place.

We are looking forward to your visit!  
Klaus and Elisabeth Thoman

Innsbruck, April 2018