

WHITE CUBE

Dóra Maurer

12 September – 3 November 2019

White Cube Bermondsey

North Galleries

White Cube is pleased to present an exhibition of work by Dóra Maurer at Bermondsey. Coinciding with her year-long display at Tate Modern, London, Maurer's second exhibition with the gallery focuses on paintings from three distinct series produced during the past 30 years: 'Overlappings', 'Quod Libet' and 'IXEK'.

Maurer's rigorous conceptual practice, which encompasses painting, drawing, printmaking, photography and filmmaking, is rooted in a sense of movement and indeterminacy. Focusing on the grammar of geometrical forms and using systematic analyses and mathematical methodologies, her approach can alternate between process-based experiment and formal investigations of rule-based compositional logic. Originally trained as a graphic artist during the late 1950s, traces of the printmaking process – its methods of distortion, duplication and reversal – are evident in her paintings. This idea of 'shifting' is manifest through the repetition of singular forms, displacement, transformation whilst exploring the potential for colour to influence spatial perception. As Maurer says: '[...] my whole way of thinking comes less from painting; my approach is much more influenced by my long years of conceptual and conceptional activity.'

The paintings in this exhibition, which date from the late 1990s to 2013, explore geometry and perspective using shaped canvases with overlapping planes of colour to create a distinctly three-dimensional presence. Deeply engaged with the colour theory of Josef Albers, whose 1963 book *Interaction of Color* Maurer has translated into Hungarian, she explores in her work transformation through superimposition, whereby the pairing of two coloured elements can result in the distortion of one or equally, the emergence of a new form. Highlighting Maurer's interest in what she has previously described as 'the tense relationship between squares and rectangles', the work also foregrounds the mathematical concept of the magic square, a recurring form enclosing a static value that can be variously combined to create a dynamic entity and is here used as a basis for pictorial abstraction.

The earliest works in the exhibition, from the 'Overlappings' series, feature two planes of colour in the form of distorted squares, curved or foreshortened as if stretched onto spherical surfaces. Elegant and fluid, they have a semblance of plasticity, appearing to hover in space like pieces of paper or fabric in motion. In fact they exist on a single plane, using colour alone to create the illusion of layering and transparency, as if one colour is seen through another. By contrast, the recent 'Quod Libet' series

employs more linear forms: rectangular or square frames of colour, overlaid and set at an angle. At once diagrammatic and volumetric, they effect a total abstraction of the visual field, both in terms of their image and their comprehensible reality as a flat, two-dimensional object. In *Quod Libet 47* (1998/2000), for example, or *Quod Libet 46* (1991/2003), where both horizontal and vertically arranged rectangular shapes intersect, the solid areas of white between each frame of colour seem to simultaneously appear and recede, as if borne into view only by chromatic delineation.

In the current 'IXEK' series, whose title refers to the word in Hungarian for the plural of the letter x, two (*IXEK 6* (2010) and *IXEK 7* (2011)) or three (*IXEK 10* (2013)) fields of colour intersect, their formation loosely referencing the axes of a letter x. Using a palette of only eight colours, mixed afresh each time and hence variable in tone from work to work, they focus on the reciprocity of colour and form and the way they connect and interact. Maurer has commented that the exploration of colour and light and its effect on perception has evolved from her filmmaking practice: 'Filmmaking made me realize the actual relationship between colour and light [...] It was at this point that colour became my work material and the backbone of my painting concept for the last 30 years.'

BIOGRAPHY

Dóra Maurer studied at the Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts between 1955 and 1961. Widely acknowledged as one of the most important members of the Hungarian avant-garde, throughout her career she has been a keen promoter of young artists. Maurer has exhibited extensively, most recently at Tate Modern, London (2019); Museum of Modern Art, New York (2015, 1985); Whitechapel Gallery, London (2015); Museum Ritter, Germany (2014); The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas (2014); 12th International Biennial, Istanbul (2012); Ludwig Museum, Budapest (2012, 2008, 1997); and Centre Pompidou, Paris (2010). Her work is held in collections across the world, including Museum of Modern Art, New York; Tate Modern, London; Art Institute of Chicago; Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest; Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin; and Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

White Cube Bermondsey is open
Tuesday–Saturday, 10am – 6pm and Sunday, 12 – 6pm.
Admission is free.

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