

Károly Kismányoky (1943–2018, Pécs), before joining the Pécs Workshop collective, developed a series of works titled *Connected Forms*, in which he explored the visual and conceptual relationships between geometry and organic structure. His practice from the 1970s to the 1980s encompassed conceptual art, land art, and experimental photography, investigating the relationships between perception, space, and process.



Károly Kismányoky, *Connected Forms IV*, 1969, indian ink, cardboard, 1000 × 700 mm

László Méhes (1944–2022, Budapest) emerged in the 1970s as part of the Hungarian neo-avant-garde, working at the boundary between painting and photography. Influenced by Robert Rauschenberg and Yves Klein, his mid-1970s series, such as *Hommage à Yves Klein* or *Nudes with Drapery*, introduced works that examined the proximity between painted and photographic imagery, particularly through depictions of female bodies.

From Serbia/Vojvodina, **Pál Petrik (1916–1996, Subotica)** and **József Ács (1914, Bačka Topola – 1990, Novi Sad)** are regarded as key figures of the postwar art scene in Vojvodina.

Ács's work is closely linked to the emergence of enformel and matter painting in Vojvodina at the end of the 1950s. He developed an abstract painterly language through dense layers of monochrome (most often ash-grey or earthy tones) structured with incised circular rhythms. This approach connects him to a variant of so-called "last naturalism," a form of enformel that

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FARKAS MOLNÁR | PÁL PETRIK | JÓZSEF ÁCS

KÁROLY KISMÁNYOKY | LÁSZLÓ MÉHES

BORIS BUĆAN | STANO FILKO

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Pál Petrik, *Untitled*, 1960, mixed media, plywood, 597 × 848 mm

Artmarket Budapest 2025
16 – 19 October 2025

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Boris Bućan, *The Firebird: Petrushka I. Stravinsky*, 1983, original silk-screen, paper, 2032 × 1958 mm

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AVANTGARDE GALLERY is dedicated to showcasing the rich and varied legacy of the historical Avant-garde movement. While it maintains strong connections with post-war art from Central and Eastern Europe, its scope is global, encompassing a diverse roster of artists who have been active from the 1950s to the present day.

For **Art Market Budapest 2025**, Avantgarde Gallery (Zagreb, Croatia) presents a cross-generational overview of Central European avant-garde and neo-avant-garde art from the 1920s to the late 20th century. The presentation features eight artists from Hungary, Serbia, Croatia, and Slovakia, whose practices exemplify the diverse trajectories of 20th century innovation and experimental strategies across the region. Together, they reflect a complex narrative of formal invention, conceptual inquiry, and cultural exchange.

From Hungary, **Farkas Molnár (1897, Pécs – 1945, Budapest)** was an architect and painter trained at the Bauhaus. As a member of the international avant-garde, he contributed to the design of modernist housing projects and visionary architectural schemes, such as the *Red Cube House*, which linked Hungarian modernism with European functionalism and utopian design. In 1921, he travelled to Italy, producing several Cubism-inspired cityscapes that mark an early synthesis of architectural structure and painterly abstraction.



Farkas Molnár, *Untitled*, 1921, aquarel, paper, 340 × 282 mm

retains distant references to natural phenomena while simultaneously translating them into a radically material and gestural visual language.

Petrik's works from the early and mid-1960s similarly reflect this material-based abstraction, rooted in the landscape of the Pannonian Plain. His *Flood* (1964) is considered one of the landmark works of postwar painting in Vojvodina. Like Ács, Petrik's practice matured into a distinctive and autonomous form of matter painting that assimilates the visual language of European enformel.

While Pál and Ács represent the postwar developments of abstraction within the Vojvodina art scene, **Radomir Damjanović Damnjan (1935, Mostar – 2025, Milan)** belongs to a later generation that positioned Yugoslav art within an international context, dividing his career between Belgrade and Milan. Active since the early 1960s, he participated in *documenta III* (Kassel, 1964), the *Venice Biennale* (1966, 1976), and other major international exhibitions. His work *Painting with String* (1973) exemplifies his experiments in primary painting by replacing the canvas with taut strings. Through this act, Damnjan questions the very foundations of painting as both surface and gesture, emphasising process, structure, and materiality. His broad practice, ranging from painting and performance to video and installation, epitomises a consistent engagement with the conceptual redefinition of the image.

From Croatia, **Boris Bućan (1947–2023, Zagreb)** is recognised as a seminal figure in Croatian contemporary art and one of the few regional artists to attain a truly international reputation. His poster *The Firebird, Petrushka: I. Stravinsky* (1983) stands among the most important works of European graphic art of the late 20th century. Merging symbolism, bold formal reduction, and

conceptual precision, Bućan elevated the poster to the status of fine art. The work's cultural impact was acknowledged when it appeared on the cover of the Victoria and Albert Museum's *The Power of the Poster* (1998) exhibition catalogue and entered the collections of MoMA (New York) and other major institutions, confirming its position as an enduring symbol of European modernity and artistic innovation. Research project *EVA – European Visual Art* included it as one of 500 key works of European artistic heritage from prehistory to the present.

From Slovakia, **Stano Filko (1937, Veľká Hradná – 2015, Bratislava)** is one of the founders of conceptual art in Slovakia and among the most radical figures of the Central European neo-avant-garde. The presentation features works from his *Transcendency* series (1978–1979), which comprises bl/w and gold-toned photographs with cut-outs, painted interventions, and



Stano Filko, *Transcendency*, 1978 – 1979, paint, photograph, 179 × 242 mm

photomontage. These works evolved from his concept of *White Space in a White Space* and express Filko's lifelong exploration of transcendence, phenomenology, and the relationship between the physical and the metaphysical. Through the recurring use of white — as colour, symbol, and void — Filko proposed a vision of art as a path toward immaterial and spiritual experience. Created during the politically repressive period of the 1960s and 1970s, the *Transcendency* works also function as a critique of ideological conformity. The cycle was later exhibited at *documenta 7* in Kassel (1982), affirming Filko's position as one of the key conceptual artists of his generation.

By bringing these artists together, Avantgarde Gallery situates their individual practices within the broader narrative of Central European avant-garde and neo-avant-garde art. The presentation demonstrates that this region's artistic production was not isolated from, but instead actively engaged with, the principal developments of 20th-century art. From early modernist experiments inspired by the Bauhaus to the conceptual and performative innovations of the 1970s, the selected artists reveal the depth and continuity of avant-garde thinking across different generations and contexts.

These practices emerged in environments marked by political constraints, yet they consistently articulated a radical autonomy of artistic thought. The presentation thus highlights how the Central European avant-garde not only contributed to regional cultural identity but also to the broader development of modern and conceptual art in Europe. Their legacy continues to inform current artistic and curatorial discourse, inviting renewed examination of the relationships between centre and periphery, tradition and innovation, freedom and constraint in postwar art history.

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REPRESENTED ARTISTS

AUTOPSIA	BORIS DEMUR
GIOVANNI PIZZO	IVO GATTIN

WORKS BY

ALEKSANDAR SRNEC	GORGONA
JOSIP VANIŠTA	IVAN KOŽARIĆ
MARIJAN JEVŠOVAR	ĐURO SEDER
OHO	MARJAN CIGLIČ
NAŠKO KRIŽNAR	RADOMIR DAMNJANOVIĆ DAMNJAN
STANO FILKO	VOJIN BAKIĆ