



Botond András KISS

THE SPACE
CONTEMPORARY ART GALLERY & MANAGEMENT

Botond András

KISS



To me, the act of creation involves a process of exploration and discovery. It's about sensing and feeling something that I can turn into a goal to unfold. My artistic endeavors establish a foundation where my creativity and thoughts can flow freely. I am intrigued by novel perspectives, delving into the underlying complexities of materials and surfaces, and the accidental connections between disparate elements. I place significant importance on the role of coincidence, deliberately incorporating it into the creative process.

Stones, the sacred structures crafted from them, Japanese gardens with their meticulously chosen rocks – these elements provide crucial inspiration. Their simplicity and complexity captivate me, embodying timeless depth and elusiveness, layered with profound meanings. I find resonance in the perspective of Eastern cultures, which independently observe diverse materials with deep respect for the forces of nature, seeking essential insights.

To achieve my desired clean proportions, I predominantly blend painting, pictorial, and photographic techniques. The choice of execution and tools depends on the narrative I wish to convey, resulting in a diverse appearance for my works.

— Botond András Kiss

The Shapes of Time

Noémi Szabó, art historian

"...the artist is not a free agent obeying only his own will. His situation is rigidly bound to a chain of prior events. The chain is invisible to him, and it limits his motion. He is not aware of it as a chain, but only as *vis a tergo*, as the force of events behind him. The conditions imposed by these prior events require of him either that he follow obediently the path of tradition, or that he rebel against the tradition. In either case, his decision is not a free one." – one can recall a basic premise of George Kubler's influential work *The Shape of Time* when examining the art of Botond András Kiss.

The Shape of Time, a monumental essay in cultural theory, grapples with the interplay between tradition's pervasive influence and the contemporary call for cross-traditional plurality. Kubler highlights the inherent contradiction: overly emphasizing tradition's power may limit radical or progressive visions of the future, while an excessively open treatment of tradition can lead to a homogeneous interpretation of the past, also of the origin.

Examining the art of Botond András Kiss against this backdrop reveals a thoughtful exploration of how the heritage of tradition can authentically extend into the present and future. Despite completing his art/graphic studies just seven years ago, Botond András Kiss has consistently delved into how the past and tradition can be genuinely integrated into the contemporary.

Central to Kiss' artistic pursuits is the theme of capturing time or timelessness, reflecting a philosophical curiosity that aligns with a clear and rigorous stylistic approach. Employing various techniques from traditional graphic arts, painting, and bookbinding, Kiss creates conceptual installations and art object ensembles that embody his profound exploration of time and tradition.

The legacy of the past and the benefits of intuition

In 2017, Botond András Kiss concluded his graduation work, the installation named *Stepping Stones*, marking the inception of his recurrent, spiraling exploration of specific questions and issues. Central to this artistic journey are two complex symbols that emerge as leitmotifs: the stone and a meditative approach inspired by Eastern philosophy. *Stepping Stones*, in essence, serves as the artist's thesis, examining how the ancient, formless material—the stone—transforms into a fundamental unit representing civilization and a metaphor for our thought processes.

The installation draws inspiration from Japanese gardens, steeped in millennia of history, where every element carries symbolic significance. Zen dry gardens, constructed with pebbles, stones, and rocks, stand as abstract representations of nature, serving as spaces for spiritual retreat and meditation. Among the distinctive motifs of these gardens is the winding system of stepping stones, forming a deliberate path that encourages slow and contemplative movement.

Kiss leverages the layers of meaning associated with this 'inward attention' in his work *Stepping Stones*. While the installation doesn't explicitly reference Japanese gardens, it echoes their essence through a massive circle of 'stones.' The artist, true to his graphic style, crafts a monumental print by arranging traces on the wall in a circle. Using copper plates with various stains and design fragments, he creates a visually striking composition on a field of sifted flour on the ground.

The graphic installation extends into space, engaging in a dialogue about the interplay between past and present, genres, and their potential interpenetration. Noteworthy are the intricate technical challenges Kiss confronted to realize a print surpassing the conventional scale of graphic art. The resulting print, a unique monotype, is shaped by a series of experiments and fortuitous occurrences. For Kiss, the journey to the 'finished work' is as significant as the product itself. An intriguing illustration is the cyanotype version of *Stepping Stones* (2017), both an independent work and a documentation of the creative process.

Marked copper plates with numbers form complex, map-like structures, aligning with a structuralist approach that characterizes Botond András Kiss' artistic vision as its third pillar.

World Model

The recurring motif of roads and walls constructed from stones in Kiss' art is inherently tied to his modular approach. The objects he crafts typically form part of a larger whole, often an installation, mirroring the stones he portrays as basic units contributing to a more extensive structure, such as a wall. The application of a modular structure, as an organizational principle, extends beyond merely capturing the visible world or personal experiences. Instead, it serves to distill the essence of universal interrelations.

A compelling illustration of this approach is found in the 2020 book object, *Fitting*. Here, objects and units of diverse qualities seamlessly interlock like pieces of a puzzle. Granite is arranged in a rectangular form reminiscent of a gold engraving, juxtaposed with a smaller composition of concrete blocks and red granite cubes. On the reverse side, a page of a book adorned with digital signs creates a tapestry of stones. The structural configurations of the stones establish a close relationship with the overall visual composition of the page, rich with symbols. While the model theoretically allows for disassembly, it is in this specific form and context that the objects, representing the order and system of the world, acquire a more complex meaning than their individual existence.

In Botond András Kiss' sophisticated technological toolkit, photography plays a distinctive role. Although integral to his creative process, it is only one among the various techniques he employs. The 2020 installation, *Islands*, serves as an exploration of photography's capacity to alter scale. A macro shot of a model crafted from pebbles and water surfaces creates the illusion of a monumental landscape, prompting reflection on the 'truths' that can be shaped by the relativity of a given point of view.

Meditation Vortex

The sensitive realm of Botond András Kiss delves into not only the steadfast systems of stones symbolizing eternity but also the organic, and hence evocative, phenomena of nature. His 2022 exhibition at The Space Gallery, *Meditation Vortex*, showcased a closely interlinked series of works capturing the transient nature of bamboo reeds bending in the wind, raindrops falling, and subtle eddies in the water. These seemingly arbitrary and commonplace occurrences contribute to shaping the essence of the world, akin to the butterfly effect. Change emerges from the monotonous repetition inherent in the natural order.

In Botond András Kiss' distinctive approach, characterized by the harmonization of form and content, this series takes center stage where chance and the expressive gesture, embodied in free-flowing lines, play a pivotal role compositionally. The structure of the works within *Meditation Vortex* deviates from the conventional square grid, instead embracing diagonal and circular forms, infusing a dynamic and fluid quality into the artistic composition.

Rock - Paper - Scissors - Rock... – Works by Botond András Kiss 2023

The familiar childhood game of Rock, Paper, Scissors echoes through the exhibition of Botond András Kiss' latest works, extending beyond mere symbolism to encompass the artist's essential tools: stone, paper, and scissors. These fundamental elements, with their broad spectrum of uses and varied meanings, significantly shape Kiss' working method and artistic approach. The exhibition titled *Rock - Paper - Scissors - Rock...* is more than a collection of individual artworks; it's a complex installation, a unique model where each element, though viewable separately, contributes to the overall composition.



Kiss' artistic focus centers once again on stone as a foundational unit, an archetype representing the enduring core of human civilization. Stone, the ancient building material, serves as the basic module, surpassing ore in permanence. His mixed-technique works depict walls as captivating fragments, their structure, system, and stability evolving through the changing arrangement and specific network of stones. Combining painting, printmaking, and bookmaking, Kiss employs cut-out Japanese papers in layers on canvas, determining the statics of the depicted stone wall. The overall plastic effect is achieved through the nuanced intensity of graphite powder sprinkled on the substrate.

The (re)constructive attitude permeates Kiss' photographic series, *Gates*, where he explores the intricate meanings behind gates as historical symbols. These images exist in a unique, floating state, evoking a complex system of symbolism.

Kiss' deep-rooted interest in archaeology and museology leaves an indelible mark on his entire body of work. Consequently, it's not surprising that an exhibition dissecting the metaphorical possibilities of stone culminates in an ancient yet abstract sign.

Botond András Kiss, born in 1992 in Budapest, pursued his education at the Hungarian University of Fine Arts, Faculty of Graphic Arts, from 2012 to 2017 under the guidance of his master, András Lengyel. Presently, he is employed at the paper restoration workshop of the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest. In 2019, he drew inspiration from Japan, and since 2015, he has found repeated inspiration in Italy for his artistic endeavors. Alongside traditional printmaking techniques, Kiss has ventured into creating objects.

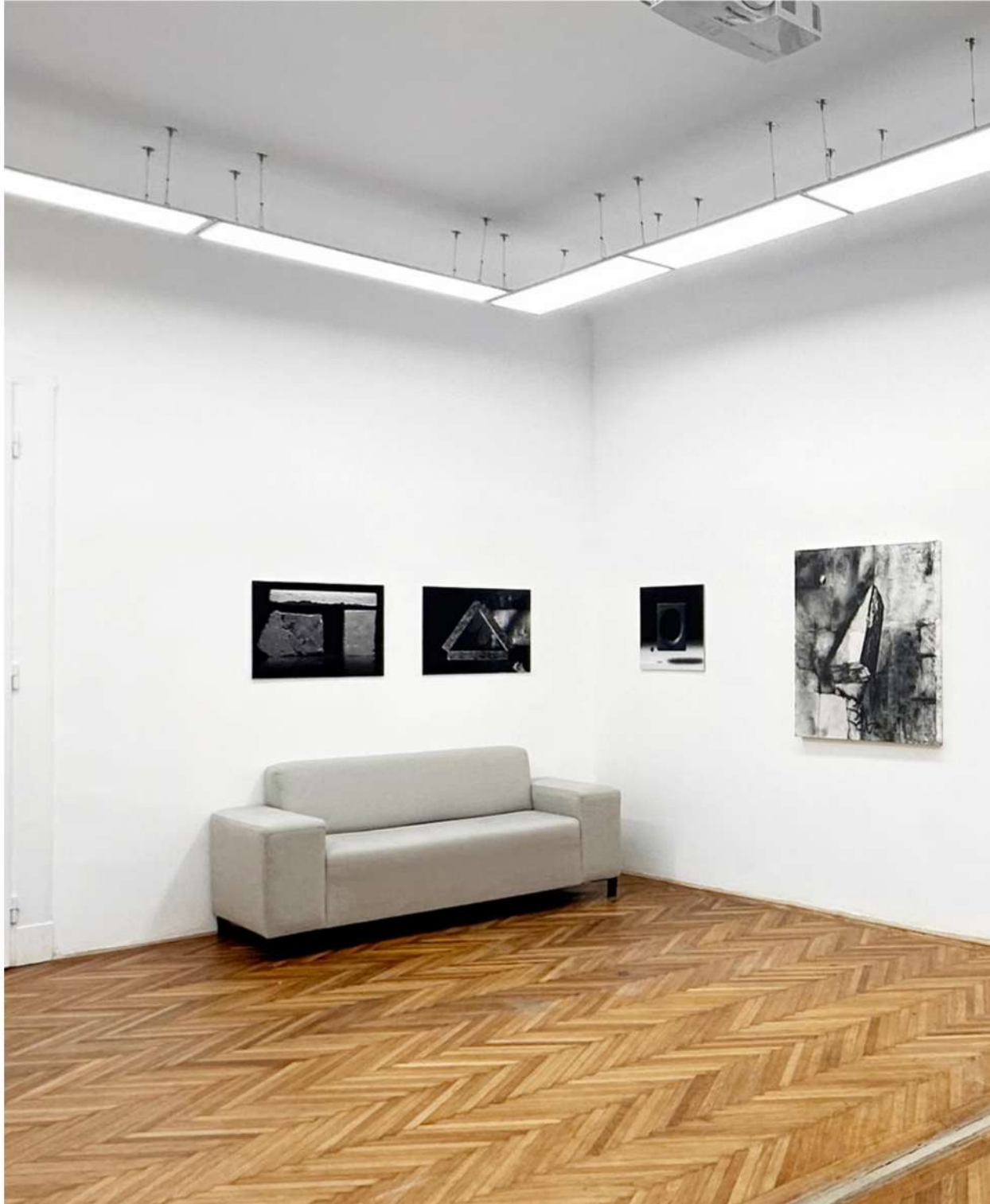
Since 2022, he has been represented by The Space Gallery.

*„[...] Stones can be left to fend for themselves.
We are fascinated by them because they outlast us.
So we use them as parables for eternities.
The temporal references here are applied to people.
The stone is considered a sign of the presence of
humans, as traditional example for forms of human
existence, for personal power, and for cult practice.
Stones as materialization of spiritual life.“*

— Günther Uecker, 1969

Rock - Paper - Scissors - Rock...

2024.01.10 - 02.16.

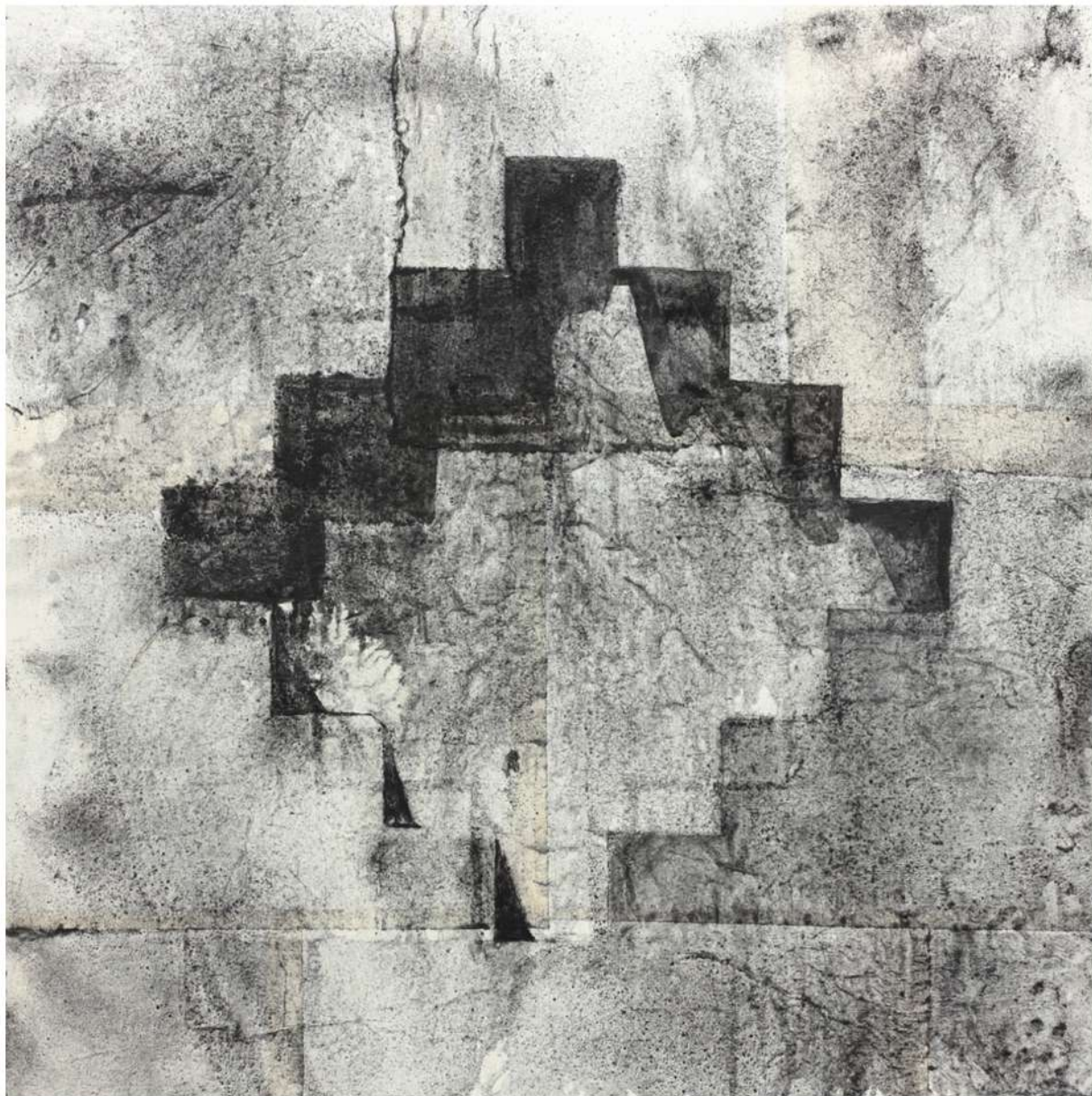






Walls 1.

2023 • graphite, acrylic, Japanese paper on canvas • 100×100 cm



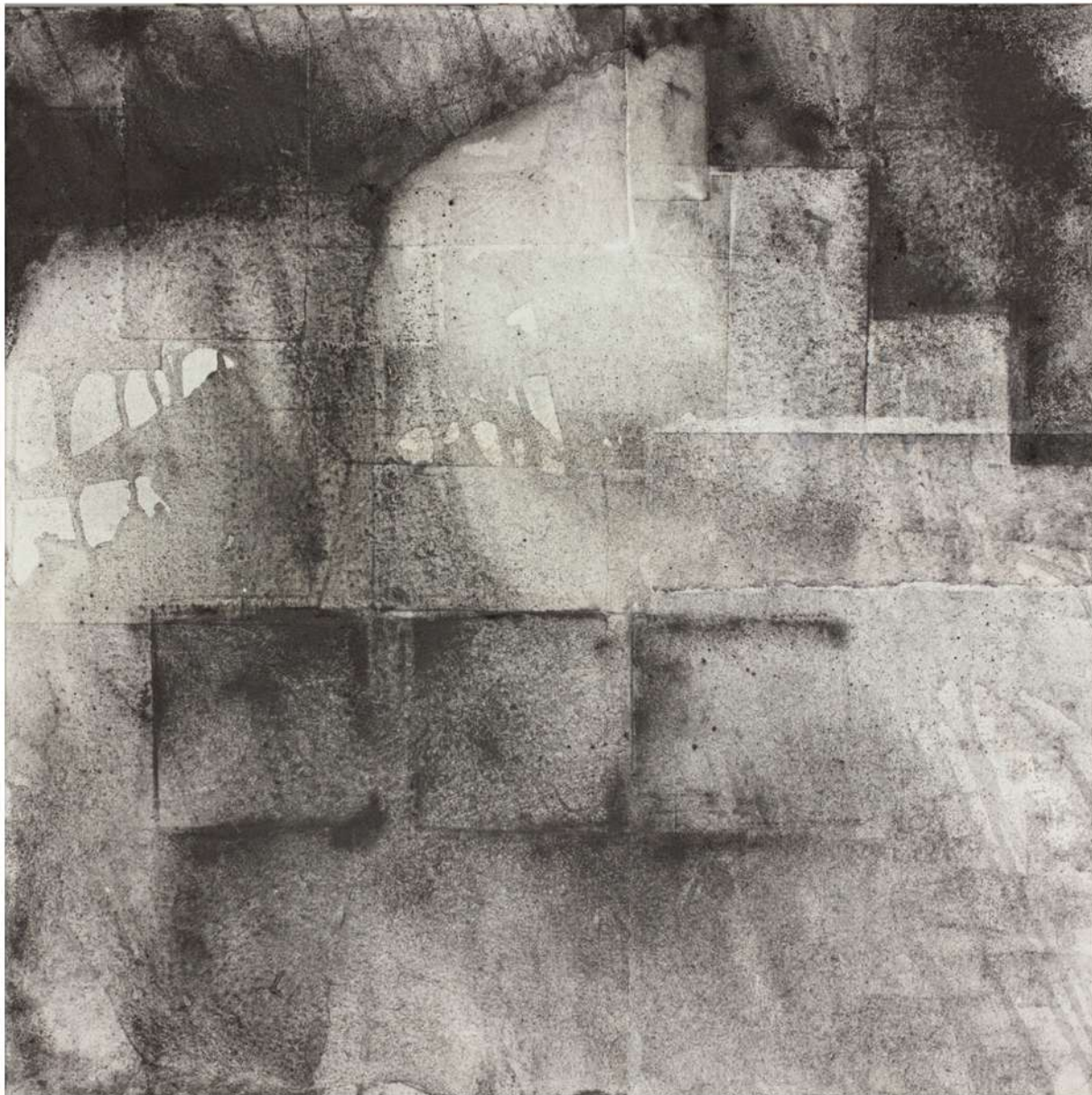
Walls 2. (Circular Staircase)

2023 · graphite, acrylic, Japanese paper on canvas · 100×100 cm



Walls 3.

2023 • graphite, acrylic, Japanese paper on canvas • 100×100 cm



Walls 4.

2023 • graphite, acrylic, Japanese paper on canvas • 100×100 cm



Walls 5. (Triangle)

2023 · graphite, acrylic, Japanese paper on canvas · 100×100 cm

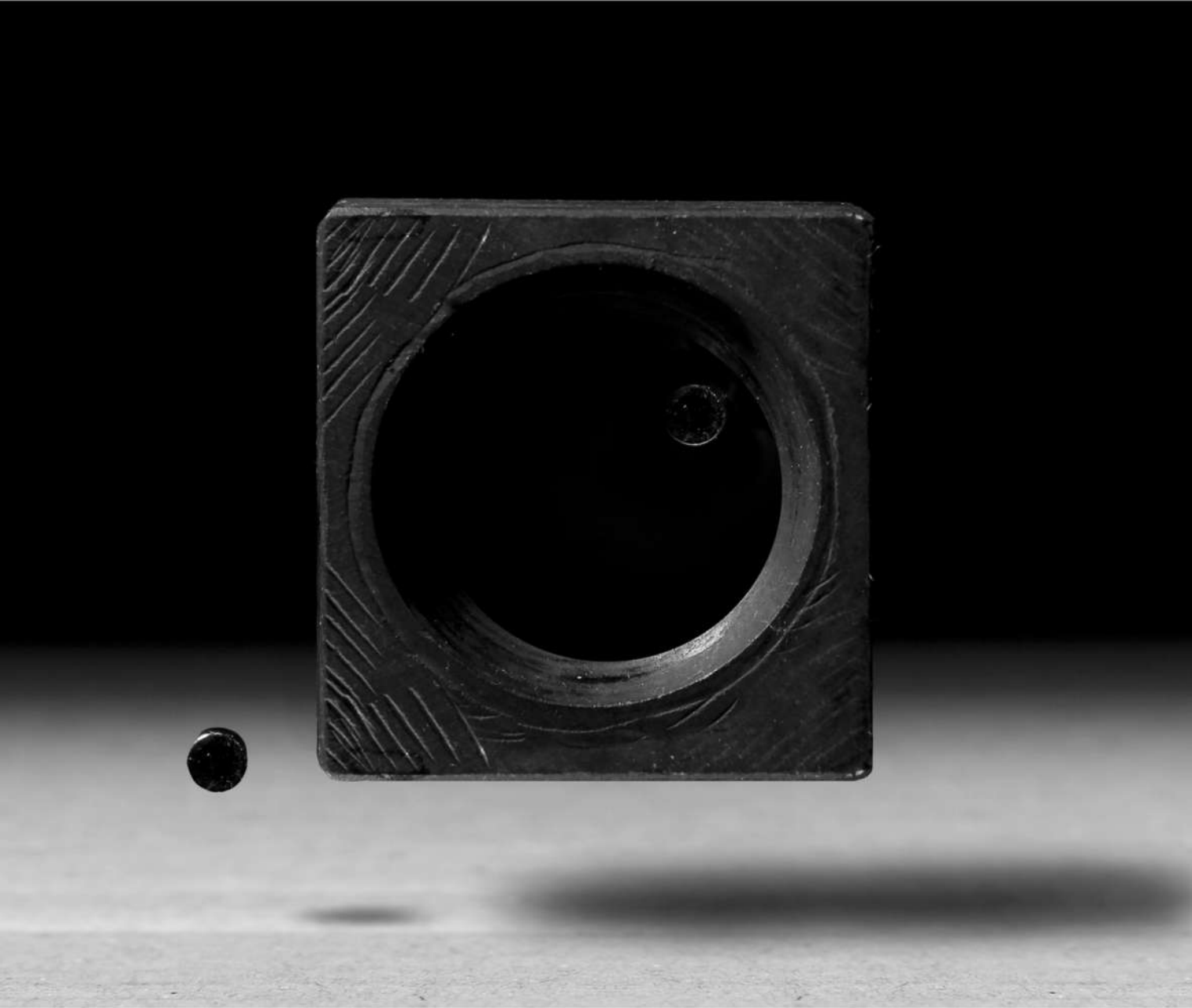


Fitting 9.

2021 · graphite, acrylic, Japanese paper on canvas · 100×100 cm

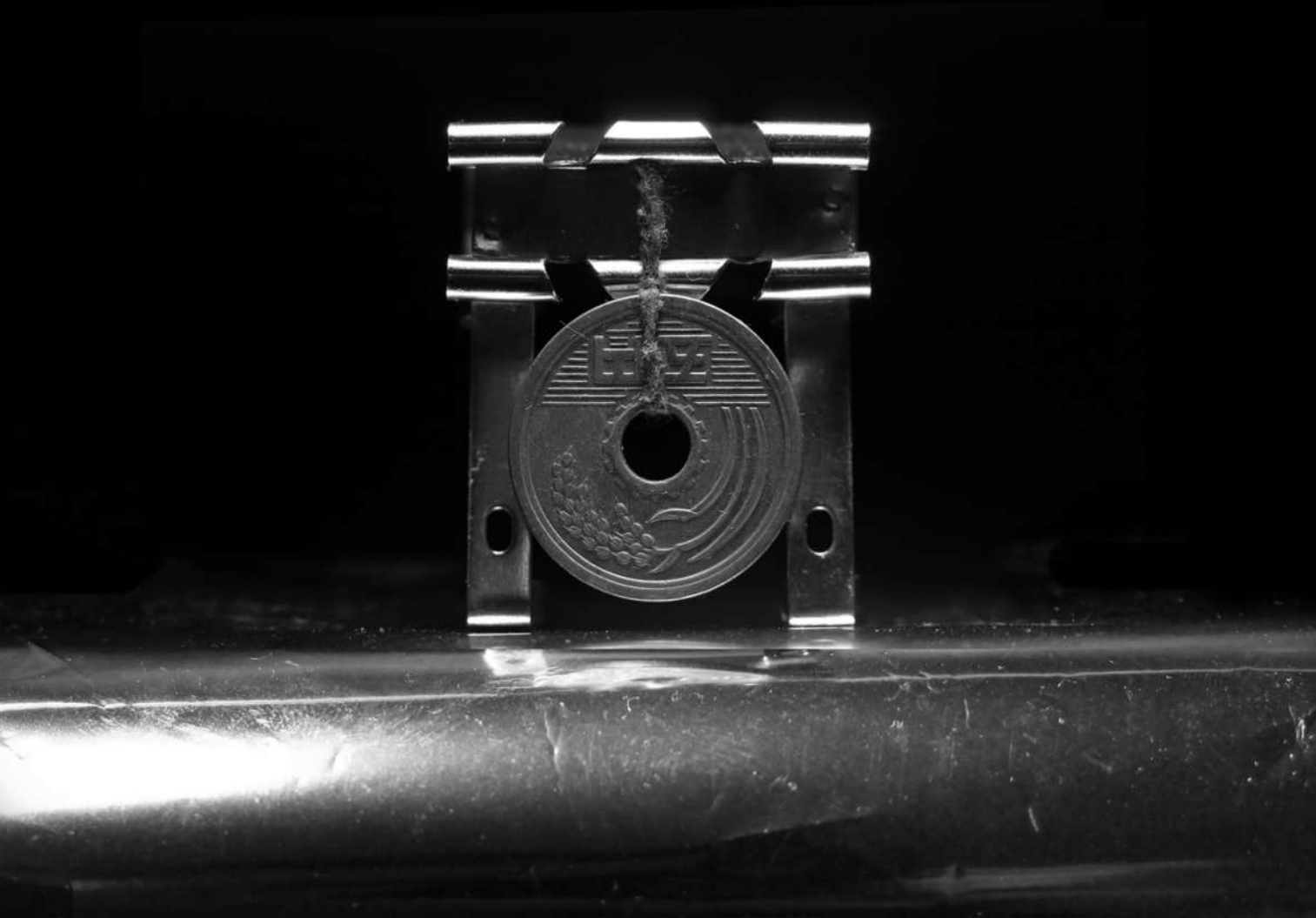






Floating

2023 · giclée print · 50×60 cm · edition: 3 + 1 AP



Japanese Gate

2023 • giclée print • 50×60 cm • edition: 3 + 1 AP



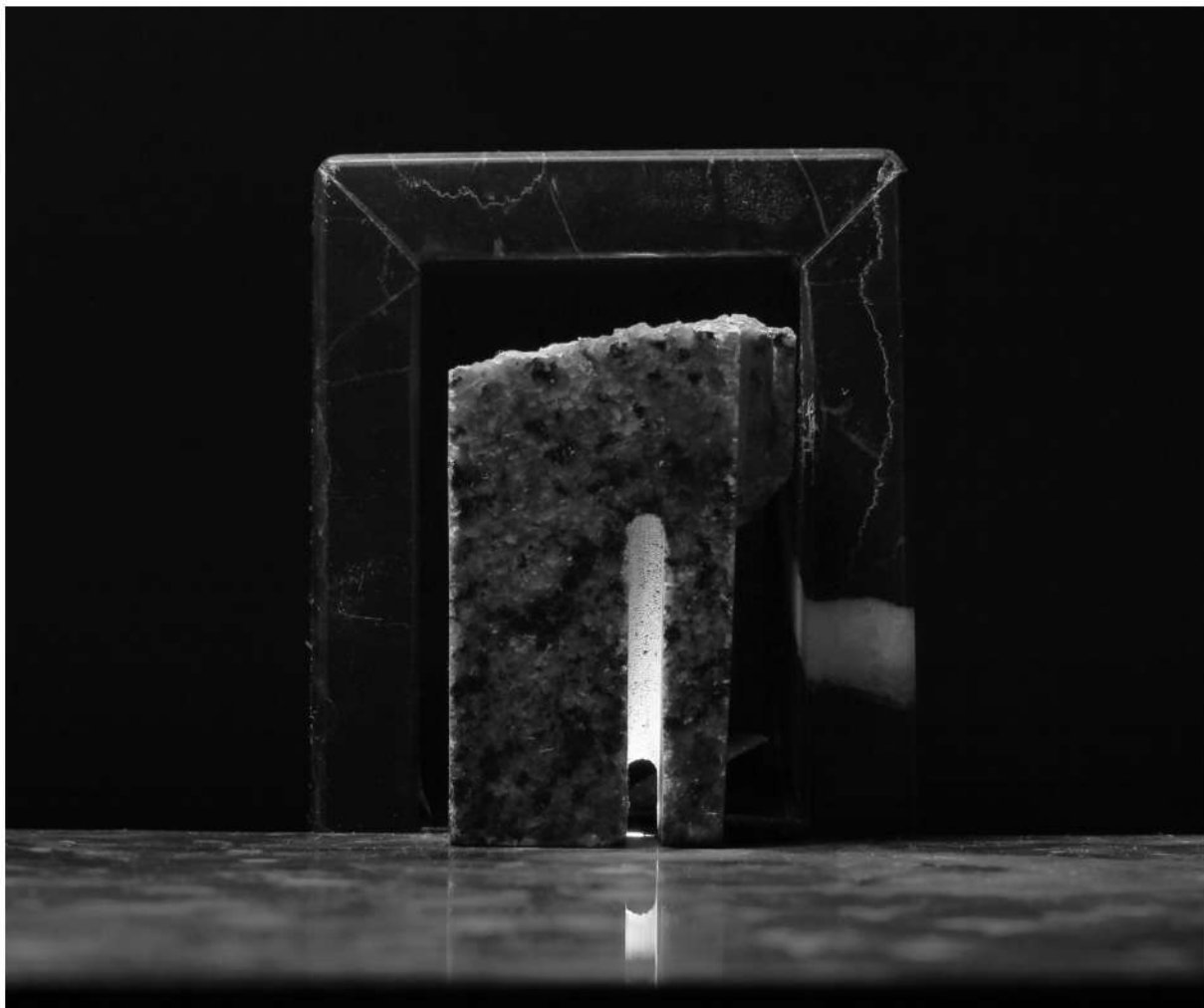
Minotaur Gate

2023 · giclée print · 50×60 cm · edition: 3 + 1 AP



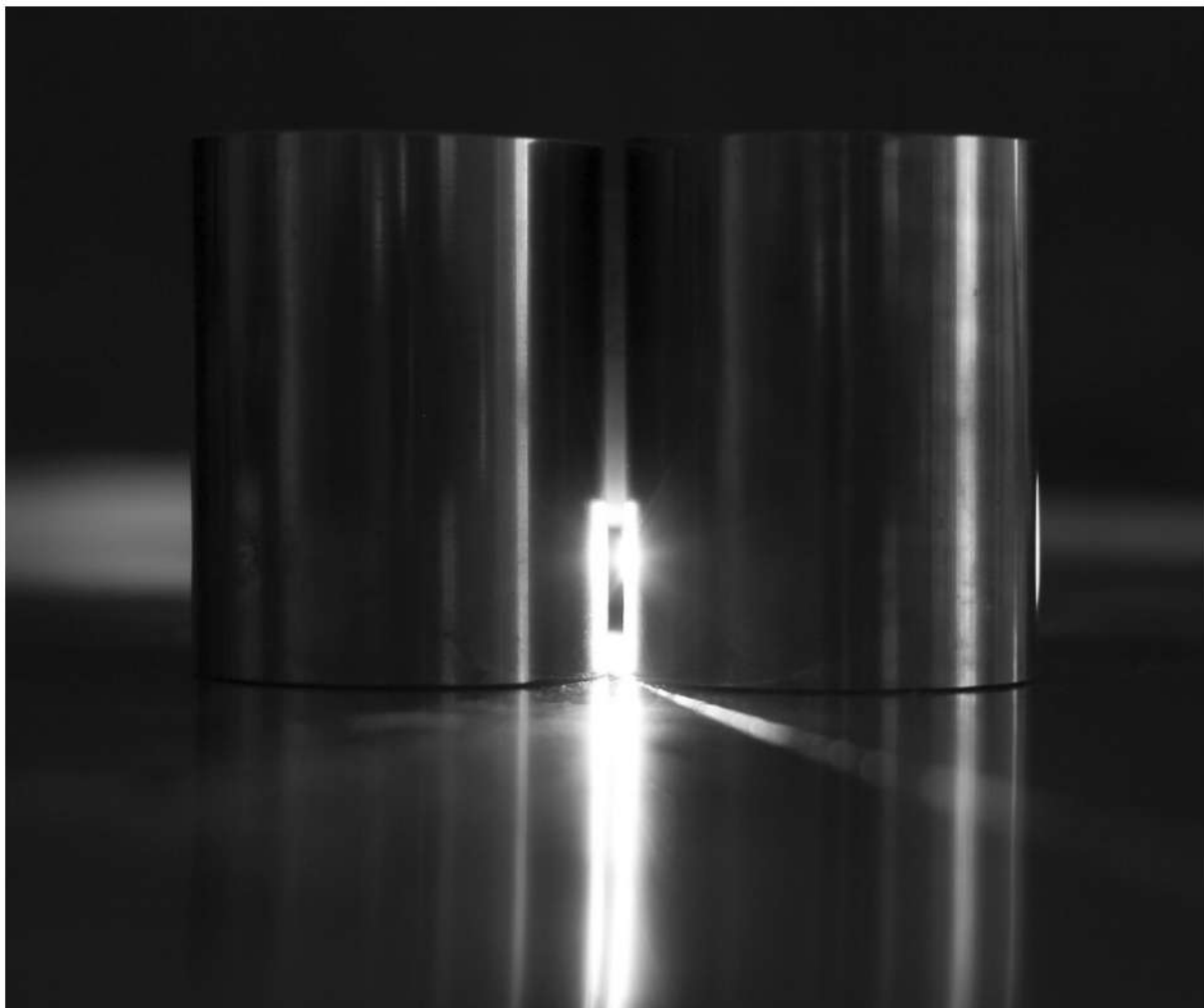
Triangular Gate

2023 • giclée print • 50×60 cm • edition: 3 + 1 AP



Tiny Gate

2023 • giclée print • 50×60 cm • edition: 3 + 1 AP



Light Gate

2023 · giclée print · 50×60 cm · edition: 3 + 1 AP



Modul A

2023 · patinated, brushed copper plate, acrylic, cardboard · 20×20×10 cm



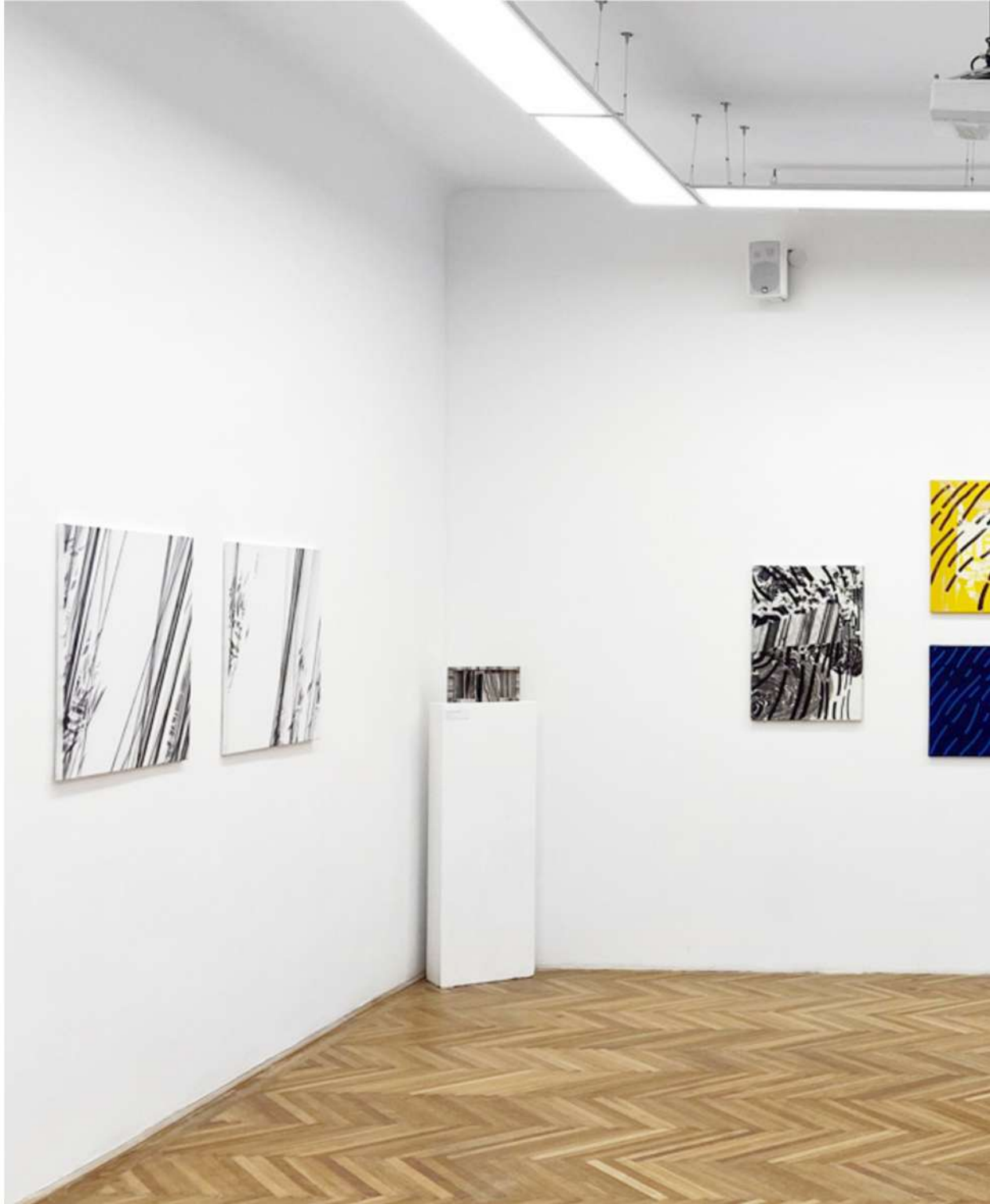
Modul B

2023 · patinated, brushed copper plate, acrylic, cardboard · 31×31×8 cm



Meditation Vortex

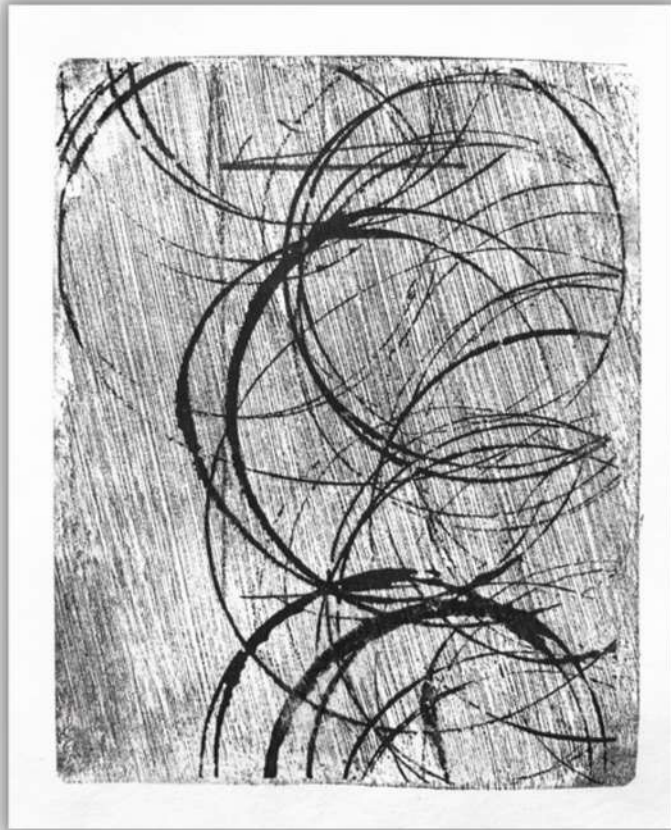
2022.09.29 - 10.28.





The term 'vortex' typically refers to a whirl or turbulence, but its meaning can also extend to the impact that art or a creative gesture can elicit, depending on the context. Taking a pause from the hectic pace of life is crucial, and, in my view, everyone should have their own meditation objects. The swaying reeds in the wind, the rhythmic dance of raindrops, and the perpetual fluctuations of the water's surface all serve as meditative visual experiences for me. Observing these scenes is genuinely captivating, as the interplay between permanence and constant change weaves into a monotonous yet profound effect. This ongoing continuum intersects with the realms of thoughts, emotions, and memories, creating a swirling turbulence, or a 'vortex,' within me. It becomes a wellspring of inspiration, compelling me to engage in the art-making process.

— Botond András Kiss



Vortex 1-2.

2021 • transfer, relief printing on paper • 35×25 cm



Meditation Vortex

2022 • exhibition view, *The Space Gallery, Budapest*



Bamboo Shadows 1-2.
2022 · acrylic on canvas · 70×70 cm



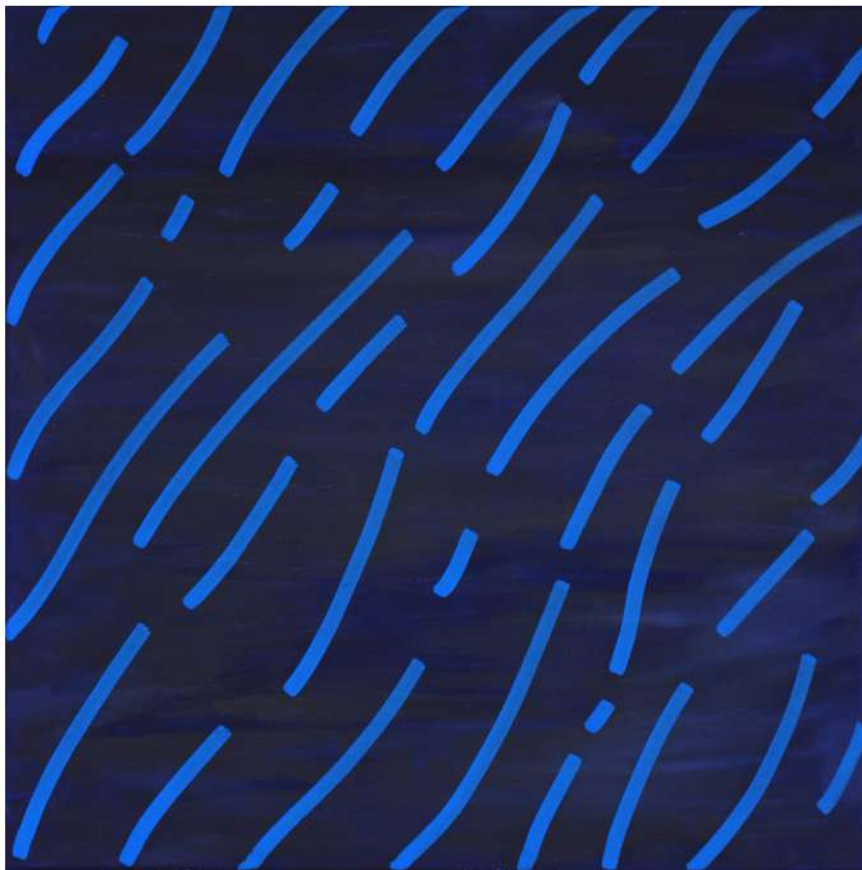
Waves 1.

2022 · acrylic, ink marbling, Japanese paper on canvas · 50×70 cm



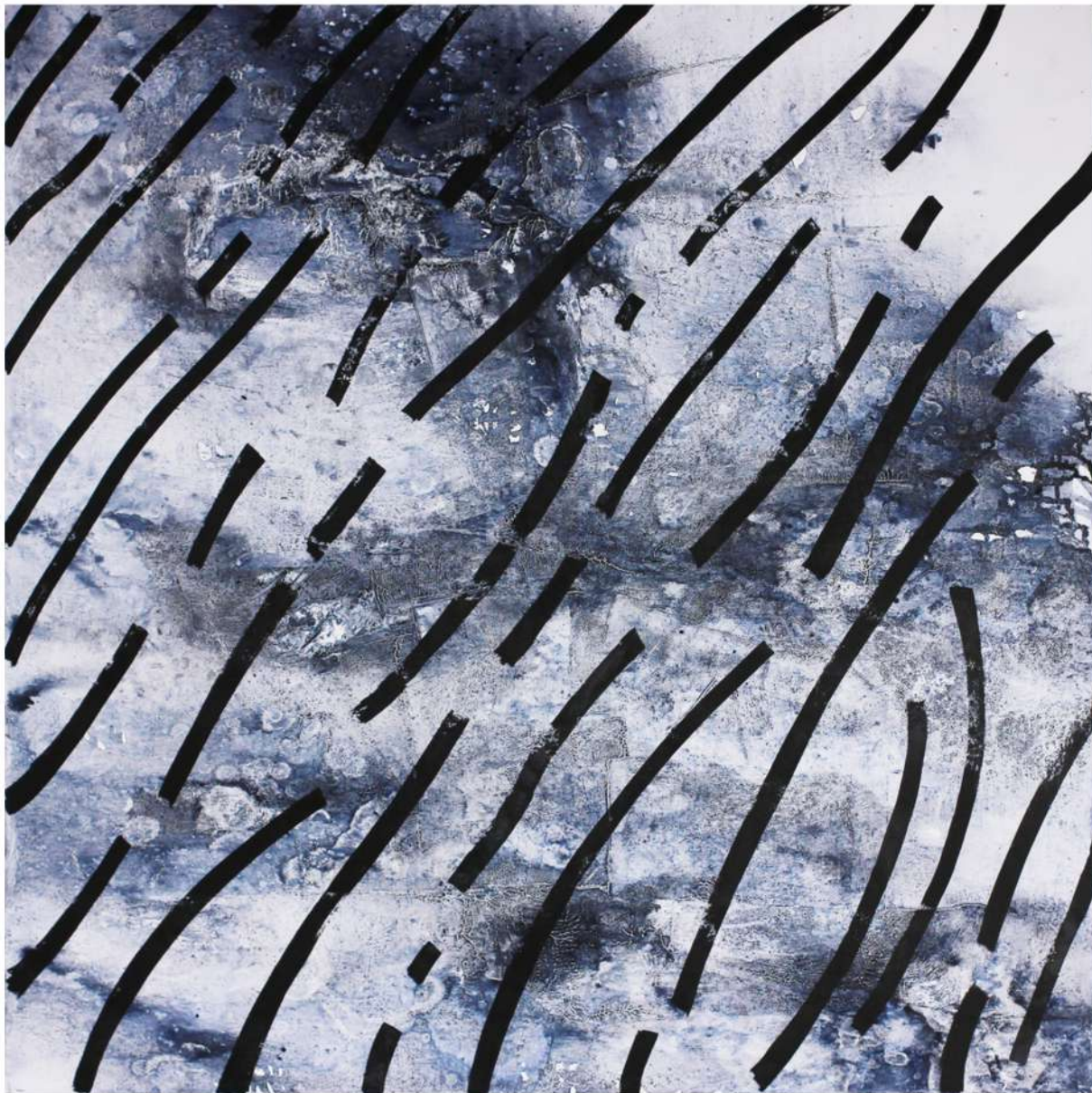
Yellow Wave

2022 · acrylic, oil on canvas · 60×50 cm



Blue Wave

2022 · acrylic, kazine tempera on canvas · 50×50 cm



Sea

2022 • acrylic, oil on canvas • 100×100 cm



Analogy 1-2.

2021 • transfer, collage, ink, paper • 40×30 cm



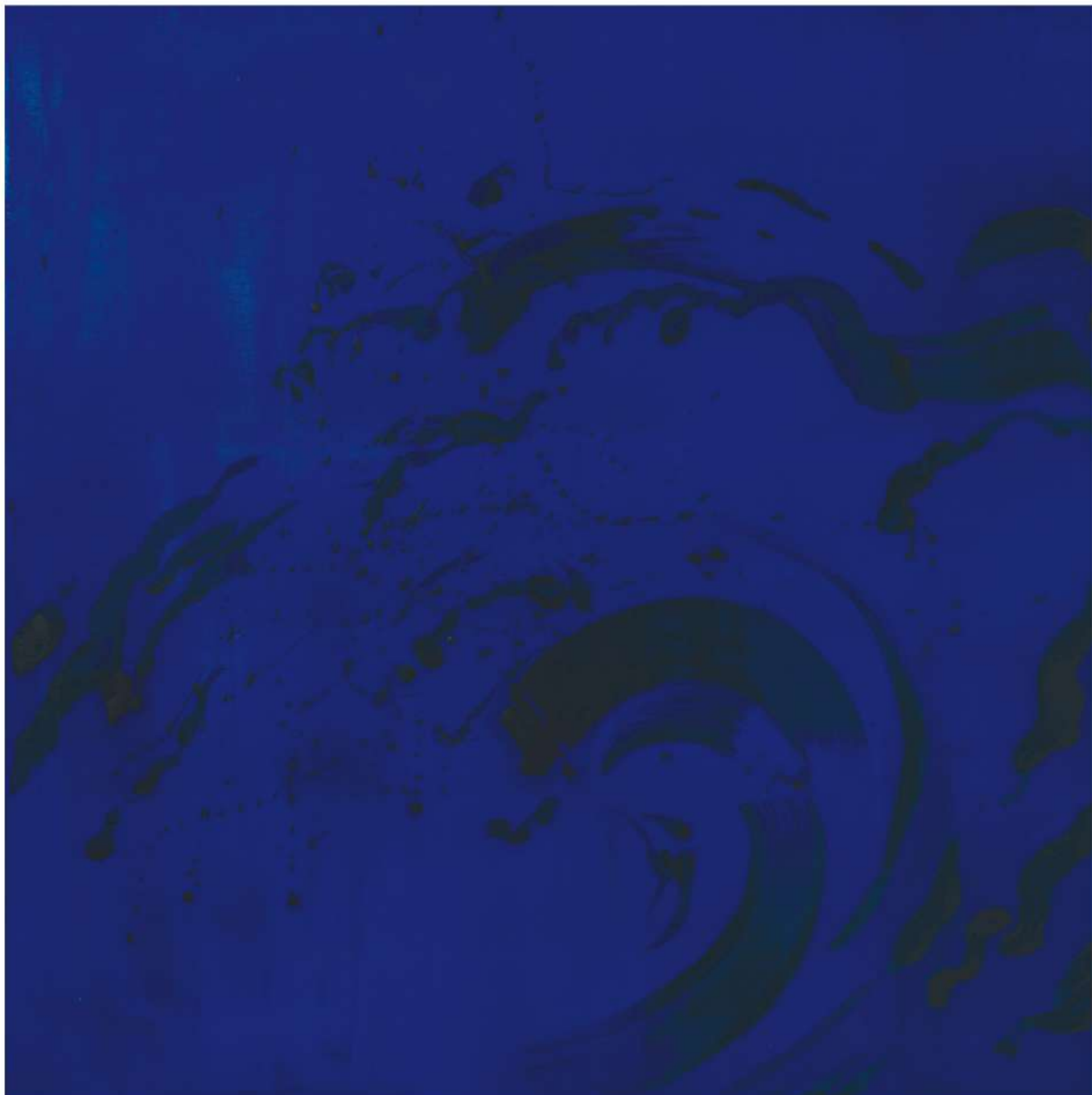
Black and White Fit

2021 · book object, marble, paper · 15,5×30×6 cm



Light-Shadow Structure 1-7.
2021 · acrylic on paper · 35×20 cm



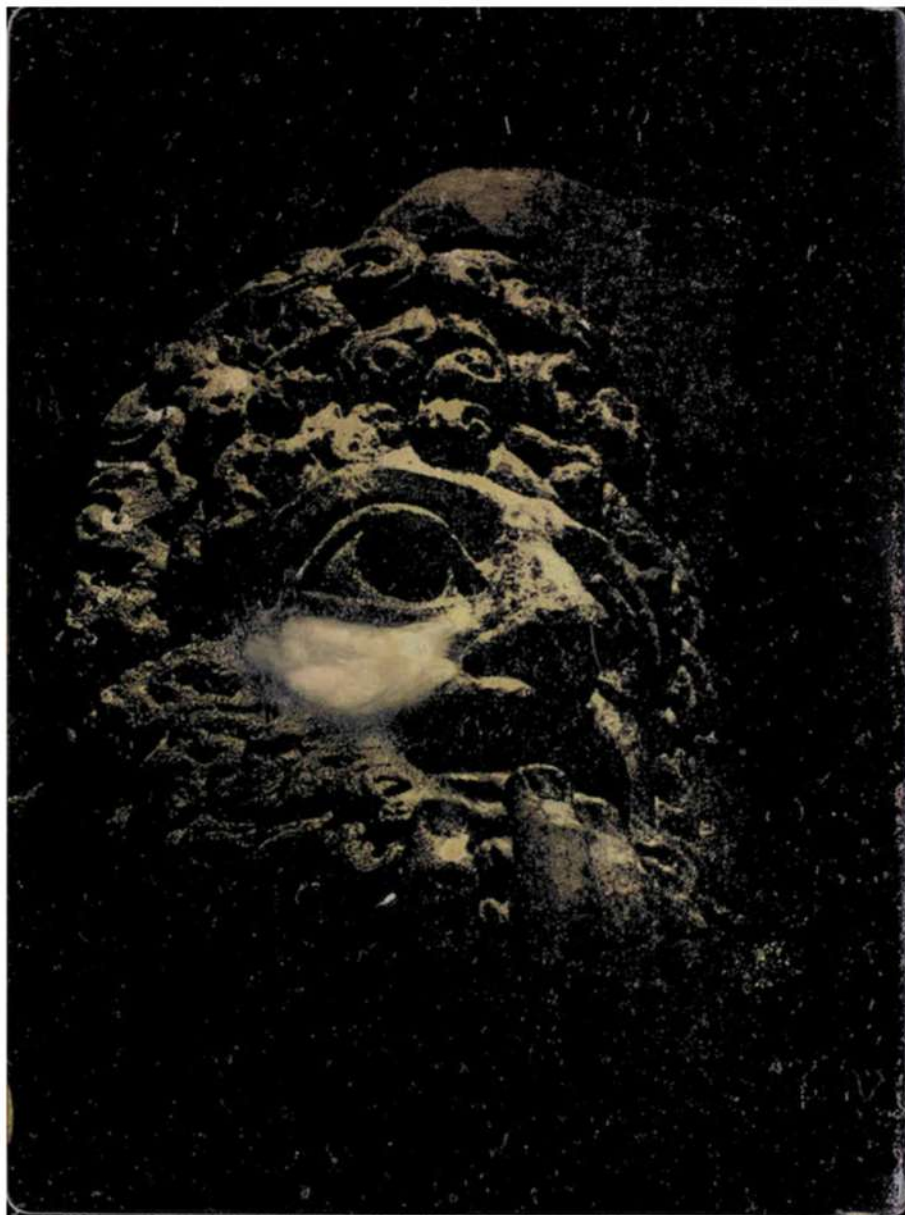


Big Wave

2023 • oil, kazine tempera on canvas • 70×70 cm

Selected works

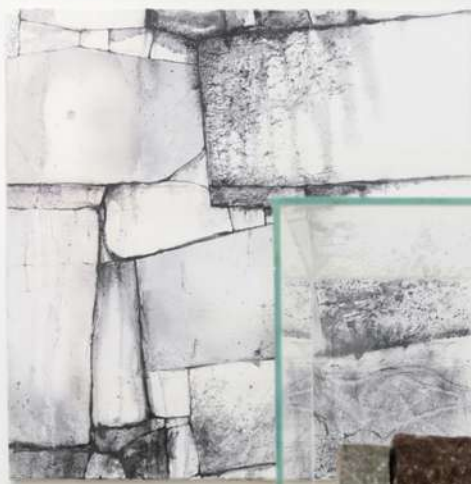
2017-2023



Antique Memories 1-5.

2023 · printing ink, brass, photo transfer · 20×15 cm





Structures

2022 • exhibition view, Vízivárosi Gallery, Budapest



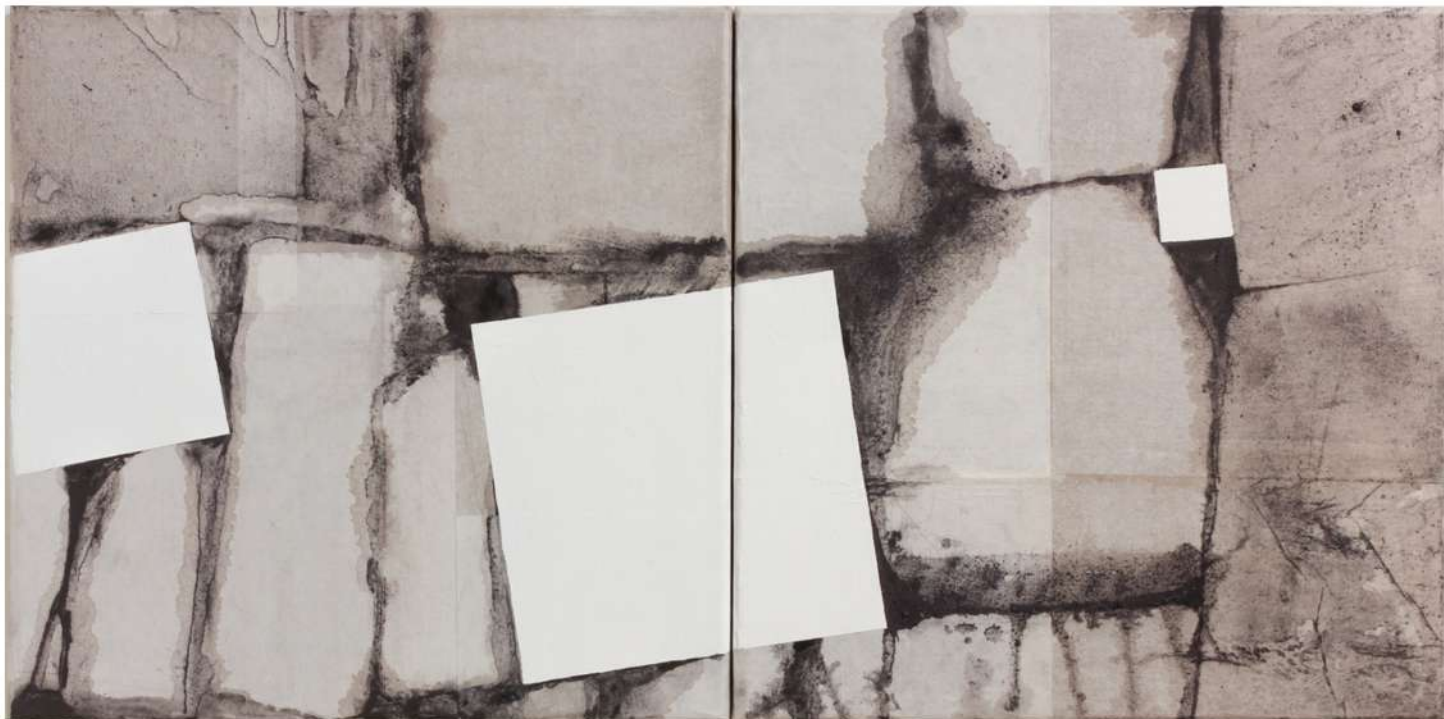
Structures (installation)

2020 · giclée prints, stone installation with chalk on black board



Islands 1.

2020 · giclée print · 40×60 cm

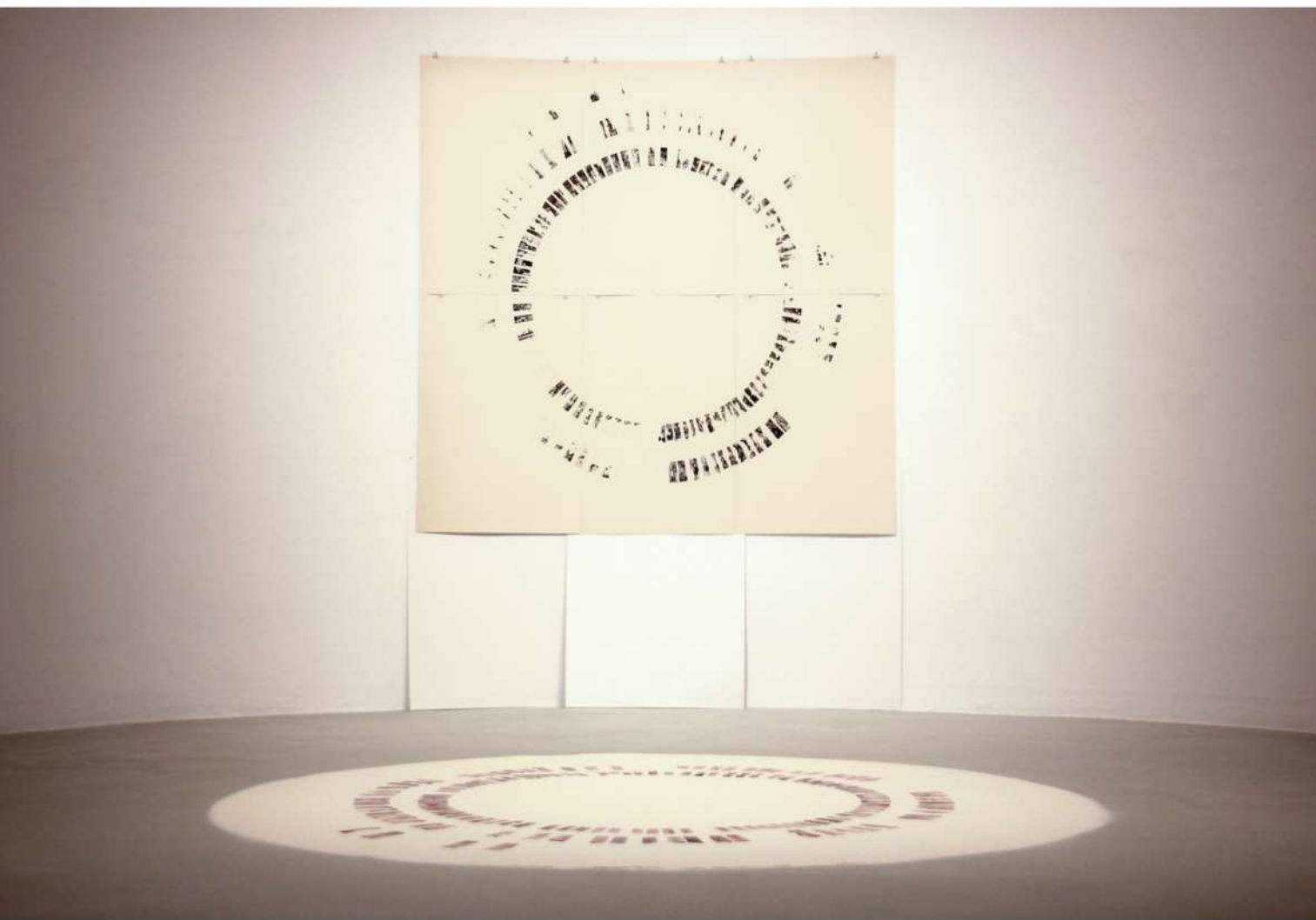


White Paste 1-2.

2022 • graphite, acrylic on canvas • 40×80 cm



Fitting, Hamarikyu Gardens
2021 · graphite, paper · 40×60 cm



Stepping Stones (installation)

2017 · print: aquatint, heliogravure · 188x190 cm · installation: flour, 152 copper plates · 220 cm



Biography

1992, Budapest

Lives and works in Budapest

Represented by The Space Art Gallery, Budapest

EDUCATIONS

- 2019 – 2020 Budapest Art Mentor
2017 – 2018 Hungarian University of Fine Arts, Master of Fine Arts Teacher
2012 – 2017 Hungarian University of Fine Arts, Graphic Design
2007 – 2012 Secondary School and College of Fine and Applied Arts, Budapest

ART FAIRS

- 2023 Art & Antique, The Space Art Gallery booth, Budapest
2023 Budapest Contemporary, The Space Art Gallery booth, Budapest
2020 Art Market, Budapest Art Mentor booth, Budapest

AWARDS, GRANTS

- 2020 Special Prize, 2nd Carbon Drawing Triennial, Contemporary Gallery, Tatabánya
2019 David Lynch Childhood Nightmares Photo Competition Award, Kunsthalle, Budapest
2015 Lossonczy Tamás Award
Barcsay Jenő-Award
2010 Award of the National Association of Hungarian Artists

MEMBERSHIPS

Association of Hungarian Graphic Artists
National Association of Hungarian Artists
Fészek Art Club
Hungarian Society of Artists' Booksellers
Blue / 8 Group

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 *Rock - Paper - Scissors - Rock...* – The Space Art Gallery, Budapest
2022 *Meditation vortex* – The Space Art Gallery, Budapest
The Mystique of Formation – Trafik Kör, Dabas
2018 *Flows* – Montázs Art Café, Budapest
2017 *Stepping Stones* – TAT Gallery, Budapest
2016 *Ryoanji gardens* – Arcus Galéria, Vác
Set memories – Hungarian Cultural Institute, Sofia, Bulgaria

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 *Structures, three generations together* – Vízivárosi Gallery, Budapest
IV Small Graphic Art Biennale – Hatvan Gallery
Between – organised by MMAT, Vörösmarty Mihály Library, Székesfehérvár
2021 *IV. Artist's Book Triennial* – Turiec Gallery Martin, Slovakia
Without Margin – organised by MMAT, Újlipótvárosi Klub-Galéria, Budapest
2020 *Showcase exhibition* – Bartók 1 Gallery, Budapest
Explorers 3.0 – Budapest Art Mentor exhibition, Budapest Project Gallery
2. Carbon Drawing Triennial – Contemporary Gallery, Tatabánya
New works, new faces - organised by MMAT – B32 Gallery and Cultural Space, Budapest
XVIII. Panel Painting Biennale, REÖK Szeged
2019 David Lynch's childhood nightmares awarded in photo competition – Kunsthalle
Digit/classic 3 - photographic transcriptions – Vízivárosi Gallery
Crossover 170 Heckenast Landerer exhibition – Óbuda Cultural Centre, Budapest
< backwards backwards forwards – Fészek Gallery, Budapest
2018 *Nap mint nap – jelen idő Óbudán* – IV. Óbudai Képzőművészeti Tárlat, Budapest
I Wash My Hands – organised by MMAT, Karinthy Szalon, Budapest
2017 *XXVII Miskolc Graphic Design Triennial*
Zureta – International Contemporary Graphic Art Exhibition and Symposium, Tokyo University of the Arts, Tokyo
The mirage of solitude – Latarka Gallery, Budapest
Graphics open 2 – Hungarian University of Fine Arts, Budapest
2016 *2nd Art Book Triennale* – Leányfalu
III. National Drawing Triennial – Dornyay Béla Museum, Salgótarján
Walk – Miskolc Gallery, Miskolc
Third International Student "Drawing" Biennale, Sofia
23rd Budapest International Book Festival, Millenáris, Budapest
2015 *III. International Biennale of Drawing and Graphic Arts, Győr*
AnotherPICTURE – TAT Gallery, Budapest
9th Grottesque Triennale – Kaposvár



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Nemzeti
Kulturális
Alap



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