

Vera Molnar

ART BASEL / Zero10 Section / booth Z6

Galerie Oniris (F) + Interface Gallery (NL)

Short presentation:

Vera Molnar (1924–2023) has been internationally recognized as one of the pioneering figures in digital art, algorithmic art, and generative art since the late 1960s. Unlike many pioneers of digital art who came from an engineering background, Vera Molnar developed a practice deeply rooted in an academic art education. For more than fifty years, her work has explored the relationship between order and chance, structure and freedom, reason and play. Through geometric compositions and algorithmic experiments, she has left a profound mark on the history of contemporary and digital art. In June 2026, Art Basel in Basel will host her first solo exhibition, presented by the galleries Oniris and Interface, stand Z6, section Zero10, highlighting the enduring influence of her work on generations of contemporary artists. The works on display reveal the timeless modernity of her vision and her seminal role in the history of generative art.

*#VeraMolnar #DigitalArt #AlgorithmicArt #GenerativeArt #ContemporaryArt
#ArtBasel #WomenInArt #DigitalArtist #ModernArt #GenerativeDesign*

Contacts:

- Galerie Oniris / Mr Florent Paumelle
galerie@oniris.art / +33 671633633
- Interface Gallery / Mr Martijn Dijkstra
info@interfacegallery.io / +31 641193985

Long presentation:

When Vera Molnar decided in 1968 to use computers to create her artistic work, it was a real pioneering act: she was one of the first women artists trained at the academy to turn to new media. The digital image genre was still quite young at that time, only a few years earlier; the first calculated images had been developed, in fact simultaneously in the United States and Germany in the early 1960s. Vera Molnar was able to efficiently generate meticulous works with the accuracy afforded by a computer, freeing her up to experiment with a variety of forms and colors.

Vera Molnar graduated from the Budapest School of Fine Arts in classical painting and graduated as a professor of art history and aesthetics in 1947. Since then, her works have been both abstract and geometric. She has never been interested in the representation of nature and when she tries to explain the real reasons for her choice, she says "the simplicity of these forms moves her again and again".

Concerned with the intersections of abstract aesthetics with information and technology, Vera Molnar was an active member of a large circle of colleagues invested in advancements in computing. She first used mainframe computers to produce plotter drawings in 1968.

Between 1960 and 1968, she worked with an "imaginary machine". Cybernetic instruments being too expensive at that time, she decided to work as if she was doing it with a machine, i.e. systematically. Her research procedure then consists in writing simple programs and elaborating series of transformations of forms according to precise guidelines and by setting prohibitions. It integrates here the methods of scientific experimentation.

In Vera Molnar's creation, the computer is used as a fast and efficient tool to facilitate systematic investigation of the infinite field of possibilities: it does not create the work in the artist's place. In her case, the work, which in others could be systematic or even "mechanical", is in fact intended to bring out the unexpected, freedom and imagination.

Vera Molnar's works have regularly been featured in major exhibitions dedicated to digital art and the history of generative art. In 2018, her work was included in landmark exhibitions such as *Thinking Machines: Art and Design in the Computer Age, 1959–1989* at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and *Artists & Robots* at the Grand Palais in Paris. In 2022, a selection of her computer drawings was exhibited at the Giardini as part of the 59th International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale, *The Milk of Dreams*. In 2023, she participated in the group exhibition *Coded: Art at the Dawn of the Computer Age, 1960–80* at LACMA in Los Angeles. In 2024, just days after her passing, the Centre Pompidou in Paris dedicated a major solo exhibition to her work, titled *Speaking to the Eye*.

The Franco-Hungarian artist Vera Molnar was born in 1924 in Budapest, Hungary. She lived in Paris from 1947 until her death in 2023, just before her 100th birthday.