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About Light Art

Szabolcs Vida, art director, Light Art Museum

rés a présen: One rarely hears of a light art museum... How did the Light Art Museum, or LAM, start out?

Szabolcs Vida: Exhibiting light art works is difficult. Especially in conventional museum spaces. Most of the works require darkness and museum halls are typically flooded with light. A significant part of the light art works are made site-specifically, and their display is preceded by a long installation process, moreover, special expertise is needed to maintain them too. A traditional museum generally finds it hard to provide the necessary infrastructure. So, for quite some time now, there has been a need, both coming from artists and art professionals, for special exhibition venues. In 2022, due to a lucky constellation, some artists and the dedicated supporters of light art met and decided to found a museum that would meet these requirements. There are very few examples, but there are some other museums around the world that are specialised in exhibiting light art. At the same time, LAM filled a long-standing gap in the region. It excels with its features, dimensions and goals. We not only display works that are hard to access but financially support the artists through a special scheme, which fosters the creation of new works and also the integration of light art into the art canon.

rap: Who created LAM?

SZV: LAM is a privately founded museum. We believe that fine art represents significant value and an institution like ours can sustain itself from the market. We regard it as an important goal to reach out to people who previously took no interest in contemporary fine art. We are doing our best to draw in the younger generation, and experience shows that we are on the right path. Of course the building is also an important part of the museum experience. The Hold Street market, which was built during the industrial era and had a communal function, had been standing unused in recent years. With the museum opening here the architectural values of the building can be seen again, moreover, we are emphasising them through the use of the interior and special lighting. In this way the building, constructed after Győző Czigler's design, is integrated into the museum visit.

rap: What had you been doing before LAM?

SZV: My fine art career started at the BA programme in photography at METU, where I became familiar with the foundation of conceptual fine art. Then, I explored the meeting points between art and technology at the media design programme at MOMÉ. In the meantime, I participated in the board of FKSE [Studio of Young Artists' Association], and it was important for me to work for the community of young fine artists; I was also a member of the OFF Biennial team. I joined LAM in spring 2022. By then I had nurtured close ties with new media art and I also had experience as a project manager in and outside the art scene. I think I arrived here at the best time as I was able to join the creative side of things.



Szabolcs Vida

rap: The title of LAM's first exhibition was *Light Revolution*. What works are exhibited here?

SZV: This exhibition was originally planned to run through late March but it's so popular that we decided to extend it. From April we will be welcoming visitors with an enlarged exhibition with a total of 37 works, including those by Attila Csörgő, Emese Benczúr, Lőrinc Borsos and Tamás Komoróczy. The selection, which can be seen until 15 August, chronologically spans from László Moholy-Nagy to the present day, and brings together artworks that allow visitors to explore various creative methods as well as a colourful range of themes and applied technologies.

rap: What can we expect in the rest of this season?

SZV: Our next exhibition, which will run for a year, will open in September 2023. Its curators are Barnabás Bencsik, Bori Szalai and Dalma Kovács. With this show we would also like to present prominent international artists to the Hungarian public. We will keep the key space-forming element of the first exhibition – a 2,000-square-metre walkable balloon inflated in the centre of the hall and providing a 360-degree projection screen – but we will obviously invite new artists to exhibit their works in this special installation.