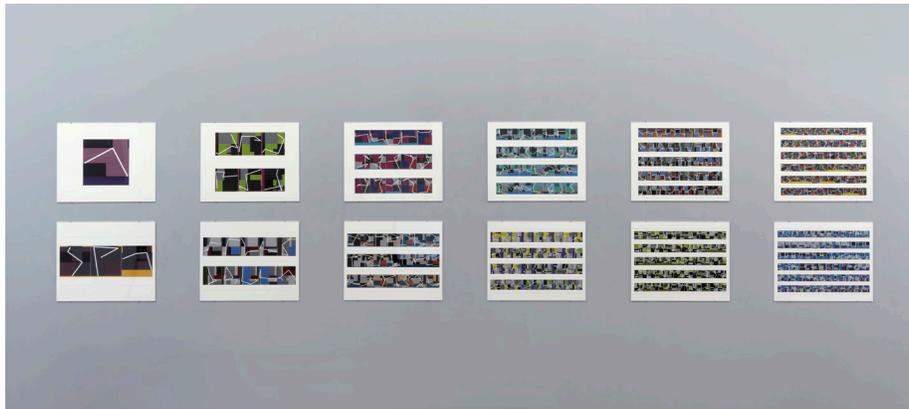


Wallpaper*

Algorithmic art: Manfred Mohr talks remix, revolution and fixing radios

By Rhiannon McGregor and Elly Parsons



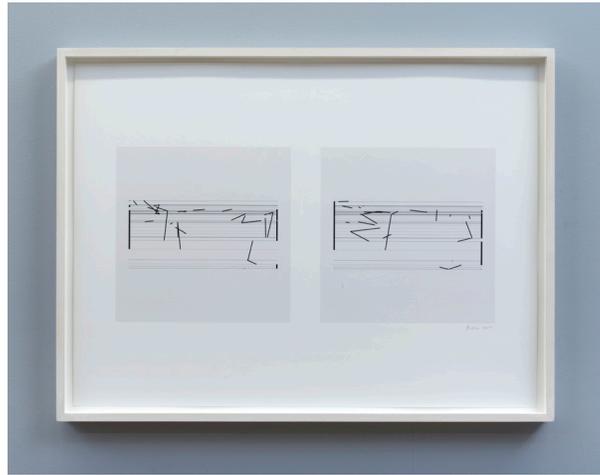
The idea to create art from algorithms is the center point of my work – that a non-visual logic will create a visual entity is what is so exciting about this process,' explains New York-based artist, Manfred Mohr, whose work is on display in 'Artificiata II', from next week at Carroll / Fletcher in London.

Known as 'the godfather of digital art', Mohr began his career as a painter, going digital in the late 1960s. This shift stemmed from his childhood hobby of back-yard engineering ('building radios and amplifiers') alongside a pre-existing fascination with notation. Mohr found his art 'slowly transforming from abstract expressionism to computer generated geometry'.

When Mohr was first exploring algorithms, his contemporaries were shunning the computer as pro-capitalist paraphernalia. The international student protests of 1968 'produced an aggressive hate for computers, which the students called bourgeois and military machines'. Mohr was physically and verbally attacked in Paris because of his preference for the medium, and one of his works (displayed in the historic Salon de Mai) was destroyed by activists.

Despite the social stigma, and the distinct lack of available computers to learn on, Mohr found a way to experiment with every dimension of digital art – even if this meant 'fearlessly and courageously walking into the Meteorology Institute in Paris to ask for access to their machines'. He was also propelled by digital-music pioneer Pierre Barbaud, whom he first met in 1967. The freeform, jazzy notes remain in Mohr's work to this day.

Once Mohr had gone digital, he never went back. 'I experimented, in 1971, with a light pen to digitise a circuit board and in 1974 I modified a plotter to make etchings by tracing with a sharp steel needle on treated copper plates.



'In 1972–75, I made experimental computer movies using a microfilm camera, which had been developed just a few years before. I built, in 1967, electronic sound installations and in 1990, I used a computer-based laser to cut large reliefs out of metal plates,'

In 2002, unfulfilled by the limitations of existing programming, Mohr built his own PCs to run animations of his work, in one of his most resourceful acts of innovation. Sometimes out of necessity, and whether working with technology or not, 'the artist always has to find or invent his own tools'.



Read more at <http://www.wallpaper.com/art/algorithmic-art-manfred-mohr-talks-remix-revolution-and-fixing-radios#VG0qbf0BvcExQTyh.99>