Manfred Mohr
1964- 2011, Réflexions sur une esthétique programmée

Sept 9 – Oct 15, 2011
bitforms gallery nyc

Opening Reception: Friday, Sept 9, 6:00 – 8:30 PM
Gallery Hours: Tue – Sat, 11:00 AM – 6:00 PM

It was May 11, 1971 when the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris opened the influential exhibition "Computer Graphics - Une Esthétique Programmée". A solo exhibition by Manfred Mohr, it featured the first display in a museum of works entirely calculated and drawn by a digital (rather than analog) computer. Revolutionary for its time, these drawings were more than mere curiosities – they signaled a new era of image creation, setting in motion a trajectory of modernism and information aesthetics.

Using Manfred Mohr's work as a touchstone, "1964-2011, Réflexions sur une Esthétique Programmée" reveals, through his art work, a critical period of development in media arts. It examines shifting perspectives in art and the working methods that made the visual conversation of information aesthetics possible. How the computer emerged as a tool for art, results from its capacity for handling systems of high complexity, beyond our normal abilities.

Discovering the theoretical writings of the German philosopher Max Bense in the early 1960's, Mohr was fascinated by the idea of a programmed aesthetic, which coincided with his strong interest in designing electronic sound devices and using scientific imagery in his paintings. Mohr studied in Germany and in Paris at the Ecole de Beaux-Arts, and in 1968 he was a founding member of the seminar 'Art et Informatique' at the University of Vincennes. Further influenced by the French composer Pierre Barbaud who was using a computer to compose music, Mohr started writing in the FORTRAN programming language to create concrete compositions that he executed as ink drawings on paper with a plotter in 1969.

Marked by the exhibition at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Mohr's work is an important bridge between handmade manipulations and machine-calculated structures in art. His demonstrated interest in process, language and line texture are revealed in early abstract painted works, made prior to his discovery of the computer as a tool for art. Mohr's rhythmic, and later temporal, compositions are also influenced by his activities as a jazz musician.

This exhibition was organized by Laura Blereau.

Concurrent exhibitions with Manfred Mohr
Through Nov 10, Santa Barbara, CA: Kavli Institute for Theoretical Physics (KITP), *Algorists*
Sep 15 - Jan 22, Kitchener/Waterloo, Canada: THEMUSEUM. *RAM: Rethinking Art and the Machine*
Sept 23 - Nov 9, Sopot, Poland: Galeria Sztuki, *Konkret - Sammlung Heinz und Anette Teufel, Stuttgart*
2011 – 2013, travelling exhibition catalog: *Aufbruch, Maleri und Raum / Awakening, Painting and Real Space;* Situation Kunst Bochum, Museum Pfalzgalerie Kaiserslautern, Akademie der Künste Berlin, Museum Kulturspeicher Würzburg and Kunsthalle Rostock

Fall exhibition schedule for bitforms gallery nyc
Sep 9 – Oct 15: Manfred Mohr: *1964-2011, Réflexions sur une esthétique programmée*
Oct 25 – Dec 3: Claudia Hart: The Sleep of Reason
Dec 8 – Jan 21: Björn Schülke
Dec 1– 4, Miami: PULSE art fair

Biography

Manfred Mohr (b. 1938, Germany) is known as a pioneer of the digital art genre. A co-founder the "Art et Informatique" seminar in 1968 at Vincennes University in Paris, he discovered Prof. Max Bense's writing on information aesthetics in the early 1960's. These texts radically changed Mohr's thinking about creativity, and within a few years, his art transformed from abstract expressionism to computer-generated algorithmic geometry. Encouraged by the computer music composer Pierre Barbaud, whom he met in 1967, Mohr programmed his first computer drawings in 1969.

His first major museum exhibition, "Une esthétique programmée", took place in 1971 at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. It has since become known historically as the first solo show in a museum of works entirely calculated and drawn by a digital (rather than analog) computer. During that show Mohr demonstrated the drawing of his computer-generated imagery using a Benson flatbed plotter for the first time in public.

Mohr's pieces have been based on the logical structure of cubes and hypercubes, including the lines, planes, and relationships among them, since 1973. The rules of geometry, logic, and mathematics are fundamental to the artist-authored algorithms that generate his artwork.

Recently the subject of a retrospective at Kunsthalle Bremen, Mohr's work is collected by the Centre Pompidou, Paris; Joseph Albers Museum, Bottrop; Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art; Victoria & Albert Museum, London; Ludwig Museum, Cologne; Wilhelm-Hack-Museum, Ludwigshafen; Kunstmuseum Stuttgart; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Museum Kulturspeicher, Würzburg; Kunsthalle Bremen; Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Strasbourg; Daimler Contemporary, Berlin; Musée d'Art Contemporain, Montreal; McCrory Collection, New York; and Esther Grether Collection, Basel.

Solo exhibitions and retrospectives of his work include ARC - Musée d'Art Moderne de la ville de Paris (1971); Joseph Albers Museum, Bottrop (1998); Wilhelm-Hack-Museum, Ludwigshafen (1987, 2002); Museum for Concrete Art, Ingolstadt (2001); Kunsthalle Bremen (2007); Museum im Kulturspeicher, Würzburg (2005); and Grazyna Kulczyk Foundation, Poznan (2007). Mohr's work has also been part of group exhibitions at the MoMA - Museum of Modern Art, New York (1980); Centre Pompidou, Paris (1978, 1992); ZKM / Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe (2005, 2008, 2010); Museum Ritter, Waldenbuch (2005, 2006, 2008); Museo Nacional Centro de Reina Sofia, Madrid (1989); MoCA, Los Angeles (1975); National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (1984); Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco (1973, 1977, 1980); MoMA-PS1, New York (2008); Leo Castelli Gallery, New York (1978); Galerie Paul Facchetti, Paris (1965) and Zürich (1970).

Mohr is the recipient of a Golden Nica from Ars Electronica; the Camille Graesser-Preis, Zurich; D.velop Digital Art Award and a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship.

For images and more information on the exhibition, please visit:
www.bitforms.com

Directions to bitforms gallery
Nearest subway is the C/E to 23rd St in Chelsea

bitforms gallery is devoted to emerging and established artists who embrace new media and contemporary art practice.