

418 Contemporary Art Gallery, Bucharest

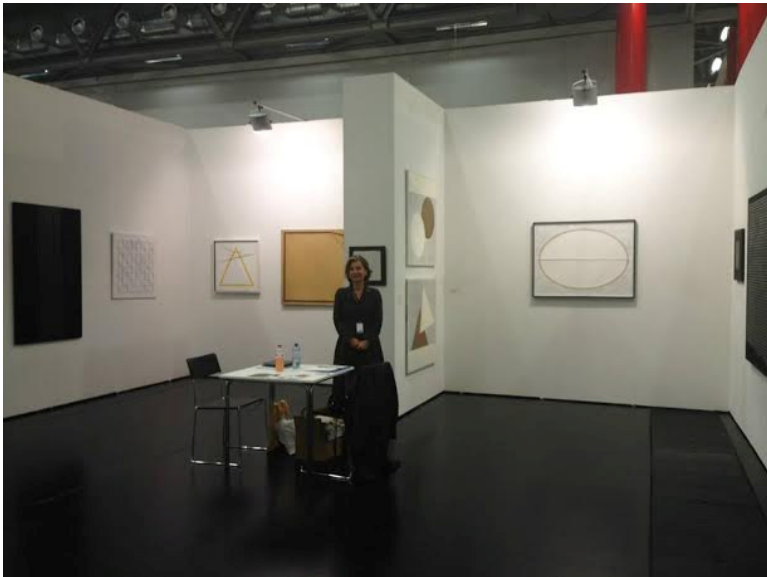
CEE galleries at VIENNAFAIR series: no. 7.

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418 Contemporary Art Gallery was founded in 2008 in order to support and represent Romanian artists. Its main focus is on paintings, sculptures, installations and photography. Joana Grevers, art director and curator of the gallery talks about its history, main purposes and presence at Viennafair.

Kinga Hamvai: Your gallery was established in order to enable Romanian artists to show their works throughout the world. What methods do you apply for that? How does your gallery promote them?



Joana Grevers, art director and curator of 418 Contemporary Art Gallery

Joana Grevers: 418 Contemporary Art Gallery was created in March 2008 by Dr. Joana Grevers, a Romanian-German art historian living and working between Munich, Bucharest & Cetate, Romania and Guy K. Williamson, an American entrepreneur and businessman. Our aim is to promote and to connect young, emerging artists from Romania to the international art scene and to represent already established key figures of Romanian-born artists, who had already been recognized on the international art scene and market.

Our first six years of existence were dedicated to the extensive promotion of young emerging artists, such as Cristian Răduță (a Bucharest-based sculptor), Anca Bodea (a painter from the School of Cluj) and Ștefan Radu Crețu (a Sibiu-based sculptor and installation artist), through solo-shows in the gallery space, Art Fairs, external collaborations with other art institutions in Romania and abroad, catalogues and their yearly presence in the summer workshops from Druga Mansion in Cetate, South-Western Romania (www.cetateartsdanube.com). In the same time, we focused on the promotion and the increasing visibility of the already established artists, such as Romul Nutiu (1932-2012), the representative of Abstract Expressionism in Romania from the early sixties, whom we have promoted since our beginnings. Lately, we started a fresh and rewarding collaboration with the Romanian-born artist Sorel Etrog (1933, Jassy - 2014, Toronto), the Romanian-born German artist Diet Saylor (1939, Timisoara) and with Vincentiu Grigorescu (1923-2012), a Romanian-born abstract artist, living in Italy since the early 70s.



Vincentiu Grigorescu: Gioco Geometrico 2, 1980, 100 × 100 cm, oil on canvas on wooden panel

Our inclination towards abstraction and works in an expanded field is intertwined with the more classical, but still intriguing approaches of the figurative. Nonetheless, all our activities intend to create a solid and reliable profile of a Bucharest-based contemporary art gallery, in a fresh and emerging art market from South Eastern Europe.

KH: Who are the collectors of the works of artists you work with? Are they mainly Romanian or international?

JG: I would say not many Romanians but mainly foreigners who have lived in Romania for a period of time and collectors we meet internationally at art fairs.

KH: You have participated at various international art fairs. What are your experience about them?

JG: We had very good experience with Art Toronto where we participated several times. Also at Art Palm Beach, Art Hamptons and Art Santa Fe. In Europe we were at Kolner Liste, Art Market Budapest and ArtInternational Istanbul. And we are very glad now to attend the Viennafair.



Guy Williamson, director of 418 Contemporary Art Gallery

in former-Socialist countries, especially now, when we have free access to all means of research and communication.

The story of Vincentiu Grigorescu is a classical one: being of bourgeois origins, he studied architecture and arts and, in the late 40s, he dedicated himself to graphic design (he was one of the top creators of postal stamps of that time) and later on, as few other fellow artists, he was inclined towards geometrical expression and abstraction, in the constant attempt to escape the confinements of Socialist Realism.

In 1972, after some exhibitions abroad and being invited through the Artist Union of that time, he asked for political asylum in Italy, where he lived and worked for 40 years in Milan and Castelnuovo. He never returned to Romania again. In the 70s and 80s, Vincentiu Grigorescu was in close collaboration with gallery-owner Zita Vismara in Milan, who represented his works. Also, he had a great solo show in 1975 at Galleria di Arte Moderna, in Turin, curated by Angelo Dragone. He was constantly sustained by famous art critics, such as Gillo Dorfles, Alberto Veca, Angelo Dragone or Marzia Ratti (director of CAMEC, La Spezia).

In 2012, after his death, his works were featured in the exhibition *Superfici Sensibili. Dialogo con il supporto*, curated by Marzia Ratti at CAMEC La Spezia, Italy, with a selection of famous Italian artists, such as Alberto Burri, Enrico Castellani, Lucio Fontana, Piero Manzoni etc.

His artworks can be found in well-known private collections, such as the ones of William Rogers, Frank Shakespeare, von Thyssen, Pierburg, S. Brody, Luciano Pomini, P. Capitini.

KH: So you are taking part in Viennafair for the first time. What are your expectations? What are your plans for the fair? Which artists are you representing there?

JG: Our gallery will show a selection of paintings on canvas that were created in the 70s and 80s by Vincentiu Grigorescu, with focus on a series entitled *Geometric Casuali*.

In the framework of recent global initiatives to recover artists from the 60s and 70s that lived and worked in different geographic areas, the discovery of Vincentiu Grigorescu's artistic universe is one of most importance. One special focus, of course, is made upon the artists that were active beneath the Iron Curtain,

We wish that the works by Vincentiu Grigorescu will have a strong impact on curators, collectors and visitors of the fair.



BOOTH D20

COLOANA / 1978-1980 / OIL ON CANVAS / 145 X 90 CM
RECTO - INFINITO / 1972-1973 / ACRYLIC ON CANVAS / 140 X 130 CM
GEOMETRIE CASUALI 1 / 1973-1975 / OIL ON CANVAS / 70 X 70 CM
GEOMETRIE CASUALI 2 / 1973-1975 / OIL ON CANVAS / 100 X 100 CM

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**VINCENTIU
GRIGORESCU**

**VIEN
NAFAIR**
The New Contemporary
2-5 October 2014

418gallery

KH: Do you have any special goals for the future?

JG: Going on with searching and researching the artists working in abstract manner in the 60's and the 70's behind the Iron Curtain in Romania.

Also continuing the artist in residence program in Cetate Workshop on Danube which we already started in 2009. And of course increasing the presence in museum exhibitions, art events and art fairs for all the artists that we represent.