

**Victor Ciato**

Variations in the spirit of the Tang System

Opening April 15, 18 - 22 h

April 15 - June 3, 2011

Tuesday - Saturday, 12 - 18 h

Heidestrasse 50, 10557 Berlin

Galeria Plan B is happy to present the first exhibition in Germany of the Romanian artist Victor Ciato. Victor Ciato (born in 1938) is one of the few post-war Romanian abstract painters who completed their work in Romania during the Communist regime.

After graduating from the "Ion Andreescu" Fine Arts Institute in Cluj in 1964, Victor Ciato freed himself from the academic norms and consciously embraced abstract art, in dire contradiction with the official art of those years. From those ideologized socialist subjects painted in oil on canvass, Ciato went straight to nonfigurative art choosing the fragile techniques of water colours and gouaches on paper. Starting with the end of the sixties (the stage of abstract works in water colours that the artist called "0 Moment") until the end of the seventies (the stage of geometric abstraction) Victor Ciato produced a consistent and diverse body of abstract works, quite singular in Romanian art of that time.

If the water colours painted between 1966 and 1968 could be characterized as purist works, exquisitely coloured, intuitively achieved, the geometric abstractions of the seventies represent the systemic research into the discourse of abstract art. Furthermore, they are the result of the artist's contact with the Western artistic world; in 1973-74 Victor Ciato spent a couple of months in Paris where he was impressed by artists such as Alexander Calder or Pierre Alechinsky – remarkable for the intensity of abstraction in their works. At the same time, however, he was disappointed with the art practiced by young artists – for instance the fashionable artist Bernard Buffet – whose works were too extensively influenced by market demands and compromise. He came back from Paris and decided to initiate a new 0 Moment, generated by his recent acquaintance with the Western experience (unlike the first 0 Moment which had marked his break with the norms of the ideologized East). The works he achieved starting with 1973 were rigorously built and tried to create a logical system of a two-dimensional rendering of spatiality. Shortly after completing this cycle of works, Victor Ciato read an article published in one of the art journals of the time, about a particular system of representing reality invented by the Prince of Tang, of the Ming Dynasty in mediaeval China, referring to a method of representating the world by dividing the painted surface according to a pre-established geometrical logic. Thrilled with his discovery, he decided to rename his works and entitled them "Variations in the spirit of the Tang System", considering them part of a traditional system of abstract thought.

In our opinion, the analysis of Victor Ciato's work (covering the last 45 years) implies the chronological analysis of its stages of creation and of the social context that generated his works. Works from these stages will be exhibited in the coming years at Plan B Gallery, in its locations from Cluj and Berlin, in a series of thematically structured exhibitions. At the end of this analysis, the documents, the interviews, the results of the entire process of photographing-cataloging-archiving of the artist's works – so precarious in the case of those Romanian artists belonging to the previous generations – will represent the basic material of a necessary major retrospective exhibition.

For further information please contact the gallery at +49.172.3210711 or [contact@plan-b.ro](mailto:contact@plan-b.ro).