

Helga Philipp

Spaces of Movement

1.5. – 20.9.2026

Starting in the 1960s, Helga Philipp (1939–2002) developed a visual language that focuses on perception. Clear arrangements, simple formal elements, and serial structures form the basis of her works, whose effects change depending on the perspective of the viewer.

In this context, Philipp is considered an influential key figure at the intersection of Concrete Art, Kineticism, and Op Art in Austria. As part of an artistic formation that sought to break away from gestural painting and made visual perception its subject matter proper, her work established a deliberate counterpoint to the expressive tendencies of the postwar years. Through exhibitions like *nova tendencija* in Zagreb in 1965 and 1969 or *Kinetika* in Vienna in 1967, she was linked to international networks at an early stage.

Building on her training as a sculptor, Philipp experimented with industrial materials such as glass, plexiglass, metal mirrors, and aluminum, transcending the boundaries of the two-dimensional surface. Playing with superimposition, transparent layers, and spatial constructions, her works not only produce optical effects but oscillate between image and object, engaging both real space and the viewers' movements. This exhibition brings together works spanning four decades and showcases the breadth of her practice in painting, printmaking, and object art.

Helga Philipp was born in Vienna and took up her studies at what is now the University of Applied Arts Vienna in 1953. From 1965 to 2002 she worked there as an assistant professor. In her teaching, she addressed issues central to her own artistic approach and influenced a generation of artists engaged with perception, space, and systematic structures.