

A WALK IN TIME

EXHIBITION WORKBOOK FOR ADULTS

LUDWIG — MUSEUM OF
MÚZEUM CONTEMPORARY
ART

A WALK IN TIME

The booklet you hold in your hand will bring you closer to 17 of the works in the *Time Machine* exhibition.

The exhibition is not about the science-fiction possibility of time travel, but examines the relationship between time and art from different perspectives, and sees the works themselves as time machines that allow us to travel mentally.

The exhibition *Time Machine* was created during the short break caused by the pandemic, under extraordinary circumstances, so the organizers could not ignore the lessons of the recent period. From the museum's collection, we have selected works that reveal different aspects of personal, artistic and historical time from the curator's personal point of view.

– Krisztina Szipőcs, exhibition curator

Time Machine. A selection from the collection of the Ludwig Museum.

2020. szeptember 01. – 2022. 12. 31.



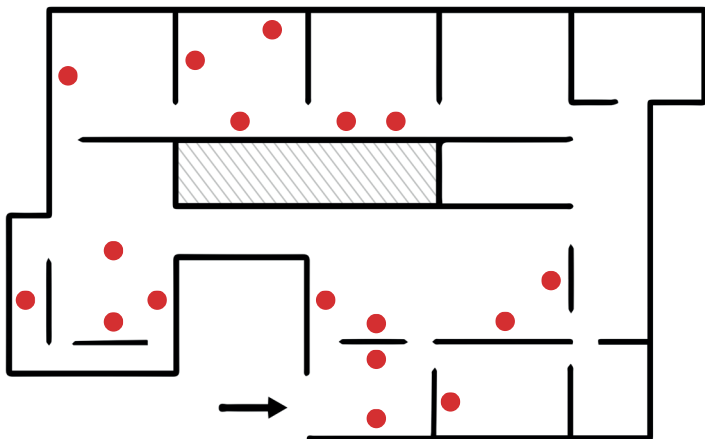
USER GUIDE

As you will see, we have included different content for adults and young people that contain short writings, tasks, and suggestions.

Always take the time to look at the artwork thoroughly before you turn your attention to the workbook. Then, after reading the explanation, complete the given task. If you need it, the answer key is on the back page of the given task. You can use this workbook alone or with a group. It is worthwhile to discuss the art with others and share your thoughts.

The pace and route of your walk is up to you.

The artworks in the workbook are represented by red dots on the map below.



COLOPHON

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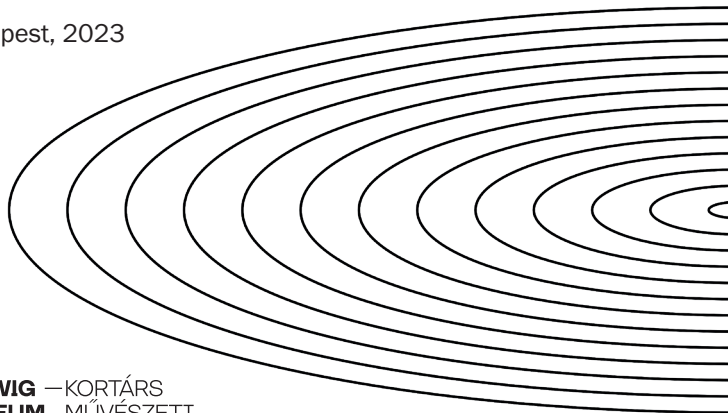
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PÉTER GÉMES: HOURGLASS

1995, photograph

The artwork titled *Hourglass* is a part of Péter Gémes' "Diary" series.

Human hands and arms are visible in the photographs. The fingers hold drawing utensils. The hand is working. At the time of its creation the artist, who was already very ill, seized the idea of time passing in a monumental way and showed the determination of a creative person. Although the hourglass refers to the passing of time in general, the X-Ray hands refer to a personal timeline.

The artist arranged the photos into two opposing triangles. If we turn the hourglass over in our imagination, which is necessary for it to function, we arrive back at the same point where we were before. Perhaps Péter Gémes really was able to stop time!



We will list several devices that measure time. Which does not belong in the list and why? Multiple answers could be correct.

Cuckoo Clock–Hourglass–Sun Dial–Water Clock



The following reading will help with the solution. In István Hahn's book, *Calendar Systems and the Calculation of Time*, look up the term "clepsydra".

CSABA NEMES: TIMELESS

1996, photograph, sand-blasted glass

This work connects to Péter Gémes' work *Hourglass* on several levels. Like in *Hourglass*, a timepiece is central, a clock, which in this case is notable for its absence. Csaba Nemes searched across Hungary specifically for church towers that were missing their timepiece. It is often the case that a faith community might not have the resources to install a clock. The title of the work, *Timeless*, is made ironic by the absence of the clocks, since even without the clock time passes, and human time especially.

Speaking of churches, time is not usually the first thing that comes to mind, but sacredness. It is but one more step to think about the timeless transcendence of God. Csaba Nemes' church towers and Péter Gémes' pyramid-like triangles that face towards each other like heaven and earth both point to dimensions beyond our physical reality.



Try it out, how does your internal clock run. Start a stopwatch and without looking at it or counting the seconds, spend 50 seconds with yourself (The works of Gémes and Nemes together have 50 photos in them). Try to guess how long 50 seconds is and when you think they have passed, look at the stopwatch. How exact was your internal clock? Did 50 seconds seem long or short?



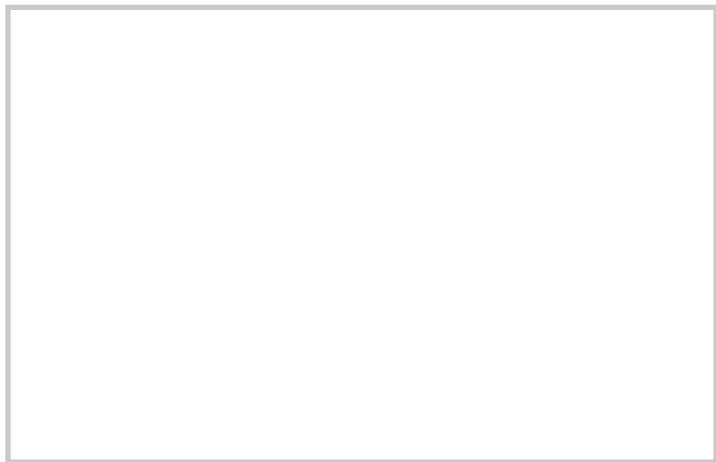
What did you notice during this short time? Write it down or draw it!

CSABA NEMES: TIMELESS

1996, photograph, sand-blasted glass



A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing, consisting of 12 lines.



EMESE BENCZÚR: SHOULD I LIVE TO BE A HUNDRED

1997, embroidery on clothing labels

We see clothing labels on the wall that have been embroidered, and rolled up in spools below. Emese Benczúr started measuring her own life's time as a young mother. She counted how many days she would live until she turned 100 and she fabricated as many labels with "Day by Day" written on them. Underneath the caption "Day by Day" she embroiders, "I think about the future".

It is not just the concept of time and its duration and contents that are the focus here but also its finite and infinite nature. Infinite time is time that is finite but the end is unknown to us. It is in this uncertainty that the difficulty of the passing of time lies.

How and with what should we spend these finite days we have in life?

One way to make time visible is to complete a monotonous task that repeats on a cycle. For example the embroidery of a clothing label. To think of the future in the moments of completing the embroidery, measuring the days, hours, minutes. While this continuity is sustained, the future is also more easily understood and reachable.

Emese Benczúr's choice of materials and methods of working refers back to the 1970s feminist artists. Typically women's work, embroidery also brings up the question of the gendered nature of artwork.

HAJNALKA TARR: BOTTICELLI: THE BIRTH OF VENUS

2011, puzzle on fibreboard

Hajnalka Tarr refers back to Botticelli's Venus in her work. She is not interested in remaking the colours and shapes in the work, but captures the swirling movement on the heavy fibreboard. While each small piece is in accord with the original work, the whole does not materialize before our eyes into the classical masterpiece.

The philosophical question of identity surfaces here, which seeks an answer to the question: How long is something essentially the same and when does it become a different thing? Tarr's piece is made up of all the same parts. Is it the same thing? A simple question, but even in the case of people it is not easy to draw a line. The examples of ancient Greeks changing out the pieces of a rotted out boat or the continual reproduction of cells in modern medicine ask the same question. How long does something hold its essence, and when does it become something different?

The artwork of Hajnalka Tarr works with elements that are measurable and tactile, at the same time she also appeals to our emotions (for example, our wonder at seeing Botticelli's work).



Pick a simple shape. Using it alone, create an arbitrary image by repeating it multiple times.

HAJNALKA TARR: BOTTICELLI: THE BIRTH OF VENUS

2011, puzzle on fibreboard



KAMILLA SZÍJ: WITHOUT TITLE (1, 2, 3)

2014, pencil on paper

While Kamilla Szíj's large-scale works seem to be drawn with mechanical precision from afar, up close we can discover the small imperfections and unique lines of a hand made object. The mantra-like repetition of the various elements reference a meditative state.

Her work is strongly characterized by the reduction and abstraction of forms. She intentionally does not give titles to her works because she prefers not to influence the viewer or the associations that they make with her work. In her own words: "I think that all is one. There is no time, so within time everything is present at once. What is present around us or happens to us here is in connection with the universe".



The drawings are built up from tiny motifs, similar to reciting a mantra. The repetitive elements are calming, and they can take us into a deep, meditative state. After seeing her work, it is worth listening to Steve Reich's concerto titled *Violin Phase*. Watch the video that goes along with it because the dance by Anna Teresa de Keersmaecker also reminds us of Kamilla Szíj's drawing.

TIBOR GÁYOR:

Q 8/8 SPIRALE – DEMONTAGE 1–16

1974, acrylic and canvas collage on fibreboard

In Tibor Gáyor's work we can see 16 squares that are all the same size. The three visual elements in the work are the black background, the canvas covered in white acrylic paint and the back of the canvas, where here and there the white paint is visible in patches from the other side. These three visual elements appear in different ratios throughout the work, in constant transformation. The artist uses the changing elements and two sided surfaces of the materials to show the connection between positive and negative space.

The first image is the white square appearing on the black one, which, cut and folded, begins to create the illusions of the evolving square step by step. We can see tectonically folded structures, which develop within a closed system. Independently from any real or historical time or space, the work references a universal, internal sense of space that asks visual and philosophical questions. In this system, all changes in proportions and relationships occur internally, in relation to itself. Tibor Gáyor does not step out of the whole created from 16 parts. The concept, the serial thinking creates its own structure and the work comes into existence at the moment that it is observed.



Examine the work well. There is a directionality of the changes in the 16 squares. Does the artist turn the squares to the viewer's right or left?

TAMÁS KIRÁLY: VELVET DRESSES

1980S, velvet

Tamás Király started his work as a fashion designer in Budapest in the early 1980s. In the later years of the Kádár era, he quickly became an emblematic figure of the underground scene.

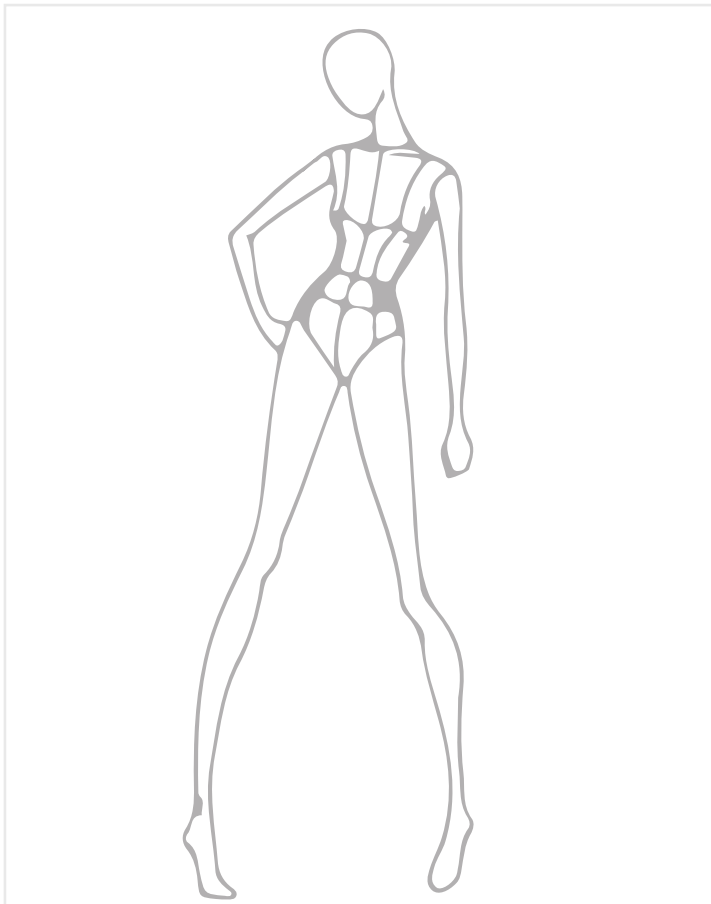
Király was always interested in the ideas of transformation and ongoing processes in themselves. He often used the most inexpensive materials and even reused items he himself had made. What is so wonderful about his work is that through it he created a different type of transformation. He transformed the severe lack that pervaded society in that moment into something unique and spectacular.



Sketch with a light hand, but with intentionality. Today, lack has been replaced by over-production and consumerism. What could you create with recycled clothing?

TAMÁS KIRÁLY: VELVET DRESSES

1980S, velvet



LÁSZLÓ RAJK: LETATLAJK

1987/2018, metal, mixed media

László Rajk's work was originally part of a film set. It refers to old fashioned airplanes, even going back to Leonardo da Vinci's 15th century ideas that copied the flight of birds.

A variety of shapes and forms make up the work. Saws, telescopes, a traverse, and Tatlin's Tower can also be seen here.

This work is also local. The title of László Rajk's model airplane is also a made up, composite word. There is the Russian "le-taty," which is the verb to fly. Then it also refers to the important Russian Constructivist artist Vladimir Tatlin, and is a part of László Rajk's name as well. Tatlin was an important figure in the revolutionary Russian avant-garde. The work moves back and forth between the current art movements and those of a hundred years ago.



In the same room as Letatljak, one can see Pieter Bruegel's work, *The Tower of Babel*, and Tatlin's *Monument to the Third International*. While we are looking at the work, let's think about it – what could our own age's relationship to Babel be?

LÁSZLÓ FEHÉR: WELL WITH A FIGURE

1989, oil on canvas

Who is hiding in the figure drawn with simple white contours? Maybe a lost child, a lonely old man, a recently landed UFO, or all three at once?

The small figure in the painting is actually the artist himself. It is a very concrete likeness, but the bald head also hints at an important political figure, Vladimir Lenin. For a while in the years prior to the fall of the Soviet Union, there was no need for guessing games, because statues of Lenin were a decisive and frequent sight in the socialist bloc countries. Bald Lenin was everywhere in the public sphere. In 1989, when the 13 foot high statue of Lenin (made by artist Pátzay Pál) was dismantled and taken from the Felvonulási tér, Budapest, where it had been standing in front of a 50 foot high granite wall, there was a rightful feeling of something familiar being left at the bottom of a well, left to the fog of forgetfulness. Not only did the Kádár regime and its legacy become utterly hopeless, but society itself was pushed out of its normal roles and became stuck in a lost, airless place.



On the other side of the room, across from László Fehér's painting you can see the photo series from Antoni Muntadas titled *Media Scenes / Media Monuments Budapest*. There is a photo in this series of the original statue of Lenin by Pátzay Pál in its original location, which was once known as *Felvonulási tér* (Parade Square), and today is called *Ötvenhatosok Tere* (The square of the 1956-ers).

ENDRI DANI: 182 CM

2016, giclée print

Eighteen photographs: at first glance, they are all the same, yet they are actually all completely different. The artist is visible in his stiff stance in front of crumbling plaster surfaces, endless cables and barred windows.

By placing himself, his body in relation to the tight spaces of the built environments that were constructed during the communist dictatorship throughout Albania, the artist highlights the necessary conforming of the human body and life to the political system as well. To this day, the legacy of totalitarian power can be seen and felt in Albania in its most diverse cities, and yet here and there a wash bucket, a plant, or a small table are visible. These objects break the monotony of these condominiums and make them homier, freeing them from their forced uniformity.



Try standing like Endre Dani. Take a deep breath, place your feet close together, place your hands by your thighs and stretch up through the top of your head. Stay this way for a few seconds, or as long as you can. Then release the breath, shake it out, and continue on your way.

MALCOM MORLEY: RACE TRACK (SOUTH AFRICA)

1970, acrylic, wax, acrylic resin on canvas

The scene visible in the painting is South Africa, specifically Durban, which is presented as an attractive travel destination. The Satour travel company, whose mark is visible in the bottom left corner, is advertising it as a sunny place where one can find carefree relaxation. Malcolm Morely in his hyper-realist style has enlarged and repainted the postcard exactly onto canvas. You can see the loud milieu of the race track, the excitement in the stands and the cheerful sight of the colourful parasols. All of this seems to forget the political context that exists in the background: Apartheid. Morely uses the simplest symbol of resistance, the "X." He pulls the red lines across the neutrally recreated painting, which creates a strong contrast within the image. These two rough, imperfect lines come from the hand that is one of the most highly recognized perfectionist painters of his age.

The leader of the Indian independence movement, Gandhi, at the beginning of his legal career, opened an office in Durban. He spent 21 years there, where he faced the crushing racism of the government that was directed at Indians also. As a result of this, he worked out his philosophy of nonviolent resistance. According to this philosophy it is important to reach the desired goal without aggression, and the strength of truth will win in the end.



If you are interested in knowing more about the life of Gandhi, it is worthwhile watching the 1982 biographical film directed by Richard Attenborough.

DAVID HOCKNEY: CONTRE-JOUR IN THE FRENCH STYLE – AGAINST THE DAY DANS LE STILE FRANÇAIS

1974, oil on canvas

David Hockney lived and worked in Paris from 1973 to 1975. While in Paris, he regularly visited the Louvre. In this painting, he captured the experience of light that he had during one of his visits, which he also wrote about in one of his autobiographical writings. He went into the room seen in the painting, he saw the half-drawn blind on the cross shaped window frame, and looked out the window into the courtyard of the Louvre. This impression was such an inspiration to him that he created sketches and photographs of the space, and then he created a painting of it in his studio. In 2017 it was exhibited in a show in Paris organized by the British Council.

If we are observant, we will notice that there are a variety of painterly styles in his painting. This work is an interesting combination of a variety of art historical periods, which were important for Hockney's own development as well.



Try to recognize which painting styles you see from the given list. Underline the ones you think are recognizable in the picture.

Expressionism, Pointillism, Classicism, Renaissance, Dada, Impressionism.

JASPER JOHNS: CORPSE AND MIRROR

1976–77, oil on canvas

At first glance, Jasper Johns' work appears to be an abstract painting. The red, yellow, and blue lines dominate the picture. They seem random, but in some areas we can notice that they mirror each other. If we read the title, then we think of the visual and verbal elements of the painting at once. A narrative starts to develop, which is not made of concrete figurative elements.

In his work, Jasper Johns regularly uses half secret or mysterious displays. A vague idea appears, because we do not see any specifics, but the title and visuals together draw an obscure story. The picture is open to interpretation because it is up to the viewer to connect the clues left by the artist, in other words, to finish the picture and make meaning. The mirroring, folding, and the title with the word "corpse" can also point back to the game that Surrealist artists are famous for, called Exquisite Corpse.



In the picture, find the elements that match the title: the corpse and the mirror.

Instructions for the seek and find are on the next page:

JASPER JOHNS: CORPSE AND MIRROR

1976–77, oil on canvas

A. Stand directly in front of the painting. Find the vertical central axis, then look left and right. What do you notice?

.....
.....
.....

B. The three primary colours dominate the painting. Find those parts where you can see colours other than those three. What colours are these?

.....
.....
.....

C. Why does this picture resemble a thriller? In these movies, what is frequently shown before you see the killer?

.....
.....
.....

PABLO PICASSO: THE MUSKETEER

1967, oil on plywood

Some of the most important and highly treasured artworks at the Ludwig Museum are the works from Pablo Picasso. *The Musketeer* is not only interesting because it is a good example of a figurative work from the Spanish painter, but it can also be a manifestation of the painter's masculine identity. There is an attraction in Spanish culture to strong masculine figures. The artist also felt that it was part of his calling to embody and show his role models in this picture. These role models are referred to in the title, which shows a complicated name if you look on the label: Domenikos Theotokopoulos van Rijn de Silva. Who can these be? Picasso took this name from a combination of three master painters of the 17th century. He is also quoting one of them in the visual aspects of the painting as well: the elegant and well groomed moustache, the black clothes, and the lace collar all refer back to his famous forebear.



Try to guess, who are the three famous painters whose names Picasso used?

Domenikos Theotokopoulos.....

van Rijn.....

de Silva.....

**Picasso himself had a much longer name than the one we know:
Pablo Diego José Francisco de Paula Juan Nepomuceno María de los
Remedios Cipriano de la Santísima Trinidad Ruiz y Picasso.**

Domenikos Theotokopoulos – El Greco
van Rijn – Rembrandt (van Rijn)
de Silva – Diego Rodríguez (da Silva) y Velázquez

DÓRA MAURER: REVERSIBLE AND INTERCHANGEABLE PHASES OF MOTION, (ETUDE 5)

1972, photograph, white pencil on cardboard

This tableau is the fifth work of a series, as you can see in the title. One of the main messages in the work is that the main idea or meaning of the work is changed based on the order of the elements presented. The dynamics of the individual photos change based on how they are situated in relation to the others and this can be observed through seeing the same photos in three different arrangements. The ideas of a variety of multiple viewpoints, interpretations, and meaning all being valid is also an important one in contemporary art.

On the tableau, an act is presented in an objective way from multiple points of view. What this achieves is that the work is open to interpretation and the viewer becomes an active participant in the work. The artist does not spell out what has happened with the man in the photographs. Who is he? Where is he? Why does he act in the way that he does? The viewer, who brings their own feelings and experiences to the piece, begins to form mental associations and make connections to the images presented even without realizing it.



What are the 3 stories that come to mind based on these images? Tell what could have happened to this man.

If you are viewing this work with a group, share your stories with each other.

PÉTER TÜRK: TREADMILL I–II

1975–1981, black and white photograph

The work of Péter Türk is a diptych of two similarly sized images. On the left, you can see 16 different photos that are all the same size. On the right, there is one image that is built from a mosaic of smaller squares. One can see that even if it is broken up and not very clear, the same man is visible on the large mosaic as on the 16 individual images. It seems that the artist averaged the individual images in the mosaic. We can understand his methods by noticing the small red squares in the corners of the smaller images, which also appear in the corner of the larger image as well. At the time of the creation of this work, in the Kádár era, averaging was an important ideological category. It was important to do away with social extremes.

The subject of the photograph is the father of the artist. In this way, Türk creates something philosophical and political that is also personal.

The title of the work is also very informative. The treadmill was used already by the Romans in construction and the milling of grain but the term is also used figuratively to refer to the difficult, monotonous quality of human life.



It is worthwhile to read the article on treadmills in Wikipedia. They have fascinating illustrations that complement the text.

KRISZTIÁN FREY: AUGUST '68

1968, oil and sticker on canvas

Krisztián Frey was not able to go to art school due to his heritage. In socialist countries, if your family had wealth, then you were considered suspect. Frey was denied entry to art school because of his family heritage and its relationship to the Soviet politics of the time. Despite this, he was self taught and became one of the deciding figures of his time. His work connects to Pop Art, Informel, and the neo-avant-garde movements.

The captions that are visible in his work refer back to the Surrealists, led primarily by André Breton. The freeing of the subconscious, free association and creating without limits are all features of Frey's instinctive, painterly style and variable pace. Often because of these elements, his work is characterized as gesture painting.

In the work titled August '68, a variety of captions and figures are visible in multiple places on the canvas. The artist worked on the painting over a period of time and these figures signal the various stages of development of the artwork.

The date, August '68 refers to the suppression of the Prague Spring. In addition to this, it is an important year in the artistic career of Krisztián Frey as well. It was in 1968 and '69 that he was able to exhibit his works at the Iparterv Exhibitions. The following year, he emigrated to Zurich and only came back to spend part of his time in Hungary in the 90's.