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Doctoral School

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**Mutual intersections**  
**– Transparency in contemporary visual arts**

Theses

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## I. Short synopsis and structure of the dissertation

The introduction enumerates the complex transparency from the manufacturing processes to forms in art therapy. The next unit classifies transparency from a visual and visual arts point of view. I created my own typology which proves to be essential in putting down the foundations of the topic. This type of “cleaning up” could make way for finding deeper correlations. The various categories are illustrated by examples from contemporary visual arts.

The main categories according to my classification:

1. Homogenously translucent materials
2. Mutual intersection as a defining factor
3. Inwrought materials
4. Reflection
5. Multiplication of reflections – intersections expanded in space
6. Making the invisible visible

The classification, focusing primarily on material usage, is followed by an overview of the notion of transparency from such thinkers as Karlfried Graf Dürckheim and Béla Hamvas. Dürckheim’s theory about “permeability” proves to be especially important for the dissertation and my current work. The last unit examines the complex phenomenon of transparency through my own work. The appendix details parts of my teaching work connected to the topic.

## II. Main conclusions of the dissertation

The deeper, more detailed, more complex people get to know themselves, the closer they get to their own inner essence. This change, or evolution, effects arts, allowing cleaner – in a way more transcendent – content to surface. Loosening barriers, opening gates or making them transparent makes way to a better relation to the big picture, the world as whole. In the early phases of this process one is surrounded by layers of frills and shells. While the artist stays on the outer surface of these layers, cannot or will not penetrate deeper, their works remain “by-products”. If they are able to purge these outer layers and advance in quality, they can produce higher content works of art.

One of the ways to reach this objective is through the phenomenon of transparency, or the usage of its materials. This way content and form intersects and new transparent layers are created.

The notion of transparency is both physical and metaphysical; inducing a common point of view from which the intersections of visual arts and the psyche can be illuminated. How transparent does a work of art make the permeability and obstacles between human relations? Transparent materials wake up the gaze that often only pays attention to the outer appearance and make it focus on the

inner world.

Thus I inspect the usage of transparency in both visual and conceptual sense.

Based on the typology experiment of the phenomenon two major categories can be identified that partly overlap. One of these is obviously defining the degree of visibility of objects (visual aspect); the other meaning regarding the workings of systems can be further divided based on its connection to the mental sphere.

For the topic of this dissertation the examination of transparency from a communicational aspect is paramount. Art and its inseparable thinking process is communication. Clear thoughts are the base requirements of artistic success.

Does "living the transparent existence" really lead the artist towards the meaningful things? Can transparency express the hard-to-grasp essence of immaterialness in a material world? I was - and still am - looking for the answer to these and similar questions.

Transparency, simplifying its formula as I previously mentioned, appears in two aspects. The first is the visual aspect, from the material usage, the second is the content aspect. The latter relates mostly to Dürckheim's views. Transparent material usage and the Dürckheimian permeability carries similar, comparable interpretability.

Until the artist is not transparent enough to adopt the forces of being, not open enough to perceive the basic happenings propelling the world, the shells surrounding her keep her from creating art.

The permeability of the artist works similar to the permeability of transparent materials. This is where material and intellectual realization meet. Beyond the metaphoric and symbolic correspondence of the notion and phenomenon deeper correlations also emerge. I am attempting to reveal these correlations.

The connection of material usage and the mental plane, my main goal in my dissertation and my works, can be realized through the visual appearance, where expression, appearance and content are harmonized and become one. The material of the foil I usually use has an ambivalent meaning: it is artificial, not from nature; it separates, but also connects. The cohesive link is connected to light. This is how we can get to a meaningful, higher metaphysical-natured world. Following this road the degree of de-materialisation also intensifies.

Transparency is connected to an obscurely dim world that leads to the discovery of transcendent secrets on the boundary of existence and non-existence. The expression of a reality beyond the world transforms in a transparent way into the world of the self. If one is sufficiently transparent ("permeable") for existence, then one is also transparent for the transcendence hiding within (Dürckheim). Transparency is medial in nature, a transmitter that modifies the original vision, information. This results in a kind of visual abstraction, "distortion". The conveying medium shows its "flaw", revealing itself. It transmits, but also modifies in every case.

The man with a "middle-of-the-roader" (Dürckheim) permeability - a metaphor of "normal" transparent materials - has sufficient composure. Transparent materials can be symbolising the skin of the human psyche. It separates, but connects as well; it is a delicate surface.

Mutual intersections form the core of transparency. Similarly to a well-known montage formula, a new quality is born. Through this we can speak of time-space condensation. The expansion of space also means the experiencing of all spatial relations at the same time. For mutual intersections to occur the meeting of at least two transparent materials is needed.

Regarding transparency it is important to mention that it shifts the usual senses; we can see inside things, reveal the invisible. It is a kind of illusion that leads away from the surface and points towards the true meaning.

Light and transparency are inseparable, both in material and spiritual sense. Anything that stands in the way of light modifies the vision, the appearance. The degree of intersection is a defining factor. Our eyes are completely transparent. Where and how is the picture created? If the visual presence, the "flaw" cannot be revealed then the transparency is "perfect"; through this it unmakes itself (for example perfectly transparent windows, clear of all distortion, reflection, scratches, pollution, etc.).

In every case transparency also means a degree of sensitivity. Works of art are permeable, transparent for new content as well (for example variations, modifications, sequels, medium changes).

The quality of transparency defines the satisfactory intake of the forces of life, through which the permeability of the artist can become the metaphor of transparency. The material usage of transparency becomes inseparable in many ways from the connected abstract phenomenon, way of thought, spiritual/intellectual approach.

As the world changes, art changes with it; the same way the widespread, intricate *existence* of transparency emerges in new ways.

### III. My work and transparency

The material (visual) and intellectual expression, presence of transparency sees through all my works created during the doctoral programme. A well-defined arc can be seen where I get from solid materials and "down-to-earth" expression to transparent, ethereal material usage, and the inseparable, light-intertwined, intangible new dimensions of being. This change is complex, pointing in several directions. It shows the growing openness of the artist, and it also means the emergence of inner, more meaningful but more transcendent content. For me this "de-materialisation" and "release" can be compared to mostly the Dürckheimian way of thinking.

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