

# Attila Csáji „Returning” laser environment

at Grote Kerk  
Den Haag  
2011.



on the occasion of the opening of the  
Hungarian EU presidency



Attila Csájai

## „Returning” laser environment

- (1. Returning – Hungarian folk song
- 2. Fire-bird – magical song
- 3. Allegro – Music: László Dubrovay)

on the occasion of the opening of the Hungarian EU presidency  
on Monday the 31st of January 2011  
at Grote Kerk

Rond de Grote Kerk 2501 CN Den Haag  
Welcoming remarks by:

**H.E. Gyula Sümeghy**  
Ambassador of the Republic of Hungary

**H.E. Mr. Zsolt Németh**  
State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary

*Artistic introduction:*  
**Kas Oosterhuis**  
Architect

**László Dubrovay**  
(1943)

Graduated as composer from the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music in 1966. Between 1972 and 1974 he studied with Karlheinz Stockhausen on a DAAD scholarship. In 1985 he was invited to Berlin within the frames of the DAAD Künstlerprogramm to spend a year there.. He has realized electronics and computer music productions in the most important studios of Europe (Stockholm, Cologne, Freiburg, Berlin, Lüneburg, Bourges, Budapest) He has composed works in almost all musical genres (including opera, ballet, orchestral and chamber music, choral and solo music, and works for wind band as well as electronic and computer music.) He is theory-professor on the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music.

“In my youth, it was my basic attitude to doubt everything: words, slogans that turned into their direct opposites, rapid accommodation to the status quo, an order too hard and strict.

Later, I came to doubt the chaotic dabbling camouflaged as order. I have always handled chaos with more care than I have handled order because I know very well that we must not fit reality within the limits of our understanding. Instead, we have to extend those limits so that they can accommodate a new image of reality established by research and our sensitive minds. I also know that where now we see only chaos we can find coherence once we alter our approach. An important coherence that can lead us closer to our future. Experiences of my own work have proved that this is so. Still, my elementary instincts have always made me shun chaos. Perhaps the reader finds it strange but I have never been attracted by technical civilisation. On the other hand, I soon realised that rather than rejecting technical civilisation we have to mould ourselves capable to try and solve the very problems it goes on generating.” detail, from the “Time on the Tilt”- this is a selection from Attila Csájai’s lectures



## Attila Csáji

Painter (born 1939, Szepsi ), full member of the Hungarian Academy of Arts

He comes from the Highlands presently part of Slovakia. He and his family were forcibly re-settled from Kassa to Budapest after WWII. He spent a happy year in Holland as a child.

From the mid-60s he painted plastic pictures to be interpreted with light (Messages, Sign-Grids, Calligraphies, and Monochromatic Pictures). Metallic colours and a plastic quality were prevalent in his works. In his painted reliefs emerging from a borderland of chaos and order his main concern was the peculiar orderliness and dynamics of material structures.

In the 60s and 70s, he set out to organise the new Hungarian Avant-garde (SZÜRENON series of shows in Poland and Yugoslavia, "R" exhibition, shows in the Balatonboglár Chapel, etc.) He made a major contribution to a process of fresh spirit in the arts, a process whose after-effects can be felt even today.

In the mid-70s, aided by the Central Physics Research Institute in Budapest, he started to explore the pictorial possibilities provided by laser light. His associate has been Norbert Kroó, the noted physicist. Recognising his achievements as a light artist, he was elected a member of the Center for Advanced Visual Studies (CAVS) of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). In 1987, while on a George Soros grant, he continued his light art research in Cambridge, Mass. and New York City. In the early 90s he gained the support of Interscience Technology (Los Angeles).

He organised a series of International Light Symposia (1993, 1996, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2010). He founded the György Kepes Society, and within it, a self-sustained International Light Workshop.

Since the early 70s he has received many grants and invitations to participate at artists' workshops from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Denmark, France, the United States, Slovakia, and Holland.

After the political turnabout in 1989-1990, he was elected Chair of the Szinyei Society, the National Association of Hungarian Artists, and Curator for the Visual Arts of the National Cultural Fund. At present, he chairs the International György Kepes Society.

He has participated in 500 exhibitions including such internationally acclaimed ones as the ELECTRA 83 of the Paris Museum of Modern Art presenting artist-innovators of electricity. He was the only artist invited from Eastern-Europe at LICHT-BLICKE (Film Museum, Frankfurt) where he first introduced the hologram as an artistic medium. He was a standard guest at shows organised by MIT/CAVS in the US. He attended the Light and Space Exhibition at Tallin's Kunsthalle, a major encounter of technically-minded artists in the Baltic states. He was featured in the major 60s exhibition of the Hungarian National Gallery, in the "Beyond Art" show of the Budapest Ludwig Museum, and at the Copenhagen LUX EUROPÆ 2002 show for light artists, etc.

He has presented many one-man shows including ones in the Adolf Fényes Gallery (1968), the Hungarian National Gallery (1977, 1980, 1983), Kassa's Jakobi Museum, MIT/CAVS (Cambridge, Mass.), the Hungarian Academy in Rome, Budapest Gallery, Dunaszerdahely's Contemporary Hungarian Gallery, etc.

In 1998, a monograph on his work was compiled from the writings of Lóránd Hegyi, Ottó Mezei, Ferenc Takács et al. 5 documentary films have been made about his art.

"Time on the Tilt" 2009. This is a selection of Attila Csáji's lectures delivered at Budapest University of Applied Art, Light Symposia, Budapest University of Engineering, MIT/CAVS Cambridge, Union College – New York, Scenectudy, etc., and his writing based on those lectures, expounding highly original ideas. Textual overlaps are occasioned by recurring themes.