



## **Computer-Grafik 1984**

**Exhibition: 19<sup>th</sup> of January, – 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2018**

„That the computer has learned how to draw has nothing to do with art.“<sup>1</sup>

The cathode ray tube is a vacuum tube that contains one or more electron guns. It modulates, accelerates, and deflects electron beam(s) onto a phosphorescent screen to create images. So far as to the technological side of traditional TVs - the rather unsexy predecessor of our HD-ready LCD televisions. The technology behind these relics from the early stages of communication have rarely been developed continuously but been replaced by others. Nonetheless, they are not only the basis for today's representation of analog and digital signals, we owe them the technical requirements involved in creating Computer- and Digital Art. Therefore let's be grateful for all the cathode-ray oscillographs and program-controlled printers for vector graphics.

As always in art history, contemporary events cannot be categorised by epochs as our mind does not capture the present, but the past. The time in which one finds oneself is very difficult to evaluate - it seems impossible to relate the present to the future.

1984 Herbert W. Franke published „Computer-Grafik“ where he lists the 45 most promising, international computer artists of that time without diagnosing his present. Because of his claim to completeness he manages to create an inventory of digital art and therefore one of the first books of this kind. This important piece of work allows and enables us to reflect on its pioneers.

At a time when hardly anyone had a PC he finds himself explaining and justifying the use of computers and their task of visualization beyond election results and block diagrams. Along with now established artists who are gaining more and more popularity such as Vera Molnar and Manfred Mohr who are already showing their work at the Centre Pompidou Paris or the Museum of Modern Art New York he mentions other pioneers such as Manuel Barbadillo, Tony Longson and Peter Beyls equally.

DAM Gallery Berlin shows works of Manuel Barbadillo, Horst Bartnig, Peter Beyls, Frank Böttger, Harold Cohen, Kenneth C. Knowlton, Herbert W. Franke, Tony Longson, Manfred Mohr, Vera Molnar, Sylvia Roubaud, Roger Vilder, Edvard Zajec and others. Let's reset our minds to the year 1984 and travel to the pioneers of computer art. Let Herbert W. Franke provide us with his vision of the future and therefore allowing us a different understanding of this very current topic.

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1 Herbert W. Franke, in: Computer-Grafik, 1984.