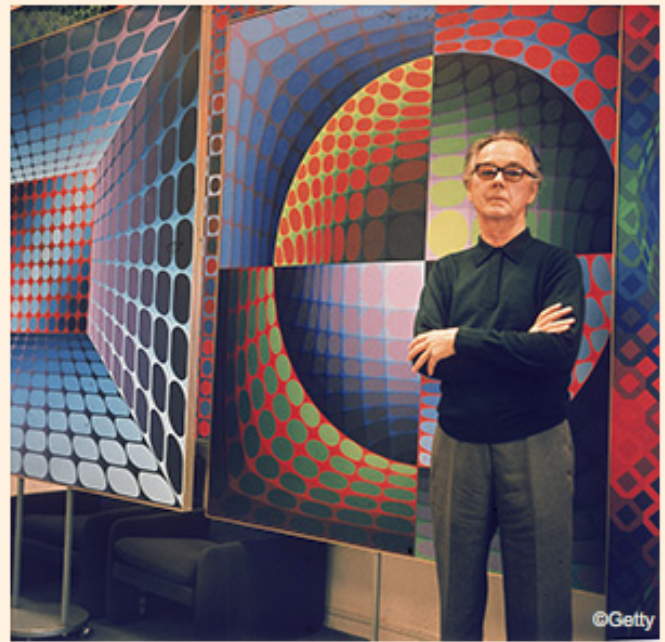


What now for the market for Victor Vasarely? After 20 years of vicious litigation over the estate of the op-artist – whose eye-bending geometrical compositions graced hotels, boardrooms and student digs in the 1970s – a final judgment has been handed down by the French appeal court. It has ruled that some 450 works distributed to the heirs of the artist after his death rightfully belong to the Vasarely Foundation, which runs two museums in France.

After having completely dropped from view, work by Vasarely has been enjoying a revival, at least for his earliest pieces. The record stands at £562,250, set at Sotheby's in 2010 for "Altai III" (1955-58). But what happens now if one of the 450 works reappears on the market? According to Pierre Vasarely, president of the foundation and grandson of the artist: "We would try to negotiate with the owner – as long as they had been bought in an above-board transaction." He claims that there have been some contentious deals, and a consequence of this new ruling could be that some works become unsaleable. Indeed, last year a former lawyer for the foundation – who had apparently been paid in works of art – attempted to sell 22 works through the French auction house Artcurial, only to see them seized at the last minute and the sale cancelled.



Op-artist Victor Vasarely (Getty)

Article by Georgina Adam, art market editor-at-large of The Art Newspaper

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