

FRANÇOIS MORELLET

DASH DASH DASH

Blain | Southern
Potsdamer Straße 77–87
10785 Berlin

2 May–1 August, 2015
Private View: Friday, 1 May, 6–9 pm

*'I have reduced my intervention, my creativity
and sensibility to a minimum... everything you
find belongs to you as an observer.'* François Morellet



Photo: Atelier Morellet

Néons 3D : 65°-90°-25°, 2015
Acrylic on canvas on wood, 3 white neon tubes,
high voltage cable and transformer
246 x 201 cm

Blain | Southern is delighted to present *DASH DASH DASH*, an exhibition of new and historic works by the acclaimed French artist François Morellet. The artist has created two monumental site specific installations for the gallery's vast 9,20 metres high and 39 metres long space in Berlin. Shortly following his 89th birthday, the exhibition is the first major display of Morellet's work in Berlin since his 1977 solo show at the Neue Nationalgalerie, and will be held during the city's Gallery Weekend.

In an unlikely pairing, Morellet manages to combine humour and playfulness with strict mathematical systems, making work which is whimsically titled, aesthetically uplifting and conceptually rich. He has worked with geometric forms throughout his long career and although he has employed a variety of media and techniques his interest in grids and planes remains constant.

The centerpiece of this exhibition, the new site-specific *3D Bandes décimées* (2015) and *3D concertant* (2015) are characteristic examples. These two large-scale vinyl installations cover opposing walls in the gallery's groundfloor space. On one wall the artist has created a repeated sequence of overlapping vertical and diagonal lines; on the other wall these are repeated in negative form, creating origami-like shapes. Morellet plays with our visual expectations; planes and lines are tilted, symmetry is disrupted and geometry is altered. The result, as with much of Morellet's work, is playful, beautiful and challenging, inviting the observer to engage intellectually as well as aesthetically.

Mounted on the outside wall of the upper exhibition space, is *π Weeping Neonly* (2014), an iconic Morellet work in neon. Comprised of 42 white neon lights, the work is arranged in a pattern that was determined by using the number π . The neon tubes are connected to each other by electric cables and joined to power transformers. The visibility of cables and transformers, and material in general, is an integral part of all of his works.

The upper space has been divided into two rooms, the first housing a suite of monochrome paintings. These works are produced with the same system as the large scale installation downstairs as the titles reveal accordingly, *3D concertant*. The system used for the site-specific installation is evident throughout the whole exhibition. The second room contains a series of 'neon paintings' set against painted square canvases. They are arranged according to the lines and stripes of the monochrome paintings in the first room. Since 2005, Morellet has produced the series *Strip-teasing* in which the artist explores his interest in the ratios of lines. Lines can adopt different appearances depending on the medium

in which they are executed: pencil, stripes, neon tubes or the demarcation line created by different colored surfaces. In *Strip-teasing sur la pointe trames 75°-165°, 100°-190°* (2006) the lines are painted as thick black stripes on one side and on the other in fine thin lines. While the thick stripes fill the most part of the canvas, the thin lines appear almost dematerialized. In *4 à 4 bleu toile brute* (2012), the four neon tubes are fragments of two squares of the exact same size as the raw canvas on which they are set. Although the arrangement of the neon tubes appears random, the artist used a grid and the number π as a guideline for the composition.

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Note to Editors:

François Morellet was born in 1926 in Cholet, France. He received no formal artistic training and taught himself to paint. , he is now recognised as one of Europe's most important artists of geometrical abstraction. His early work anticipated minimal art and his work from the 1960s, utilising wall painting, architectural features, tape, neon lighting and other mixed media, has been an inspiration to subsequent generations of installation artists. Morellet has worked with various materials and has investigated the use of the exhibition space in a manner similar to artists of installation art and environmental art. His early works of the 1940s were semi-figurative, both painting and sculpture. Later, in the 1950s, he turned to abstract art, heralding a prolific and lengthy career characterised by simple geometric forms encompassing drawing, painting, sculpture and installation. He has gained an international reputation, especially in Germany and France, and his work has been commissioned for public and private collections in Switzerland, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, and the U.S.A. Morellet has realised many public commissions throughout his career and was one of the few contemporary artists invited to create a permanent installation for the Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Selected recent exhibitions include: *François Morellet. One more Time*, A arte Invernizzi, Milan; *François Morellet*, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham (2013); *François Morellet 5*3*, Le Box, Marseille; *Dynamo*, Grand Palais, Paris, *Light show*, Hayward Gallery, London (2013); *Ghosts in the Machine*, New Museum, New York, *Neon - Who's afraid of red, yellow and blue?*, La Maison Rouge, Fondation Antoine de Galbert, Paris (2012); *François Morellet, Réinstallations*, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2011); *François Morellet. Mes images*, Musée d'Art ancien et contemporain, Epinal, *François Morellet, 9 + 1, Installationen*, Museum Pfalzgalerie, Kaiserslautern, *L'esprit d'escalier*, Commande du Musée du Louvre, Paris (2010); *François Morellet chez Le Corbusier*, Couvent de la Tourette, Evieux, *La quadrature du carré, une introspective*, Museum Ritter, Waldenbuch (2009); *François Morellet, raison et dérision*, Musée Würth France, Erstein, *François Morellet, 45 années lumière*, Château de Villeneuve, Vence (2008); *François Morellet, Ma Musée*, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes, *Blow up, 1952-2007, Quand j'étais petit je ne faisais pas grand*, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (2007); *François Morellet, Démonétisations*, Musée d'Orsay, Paris (2006); *Beyond Geometry: Experiments in Form, 1940s-70s*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, LACMA (2004).

Morellet's work is featured in numerous major public and private collections, including: Tate Gallery, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Nationalgalerie, Berlin; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; LACMA, Los Angeles; MoMA, New York; Guggenheim Museum, Abu Dhabi; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia; Hirshhorn Museum, Washington; Kunstmuseum, Bern; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris; The Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv; Louisiana Museum of Art, Humlebaek. Several retrospectives have been devoted to his work, notably in 1985 at the Brooklyn Museum, New York, and in 1986 and 2011 at the Centre Pompidou, Paris.