

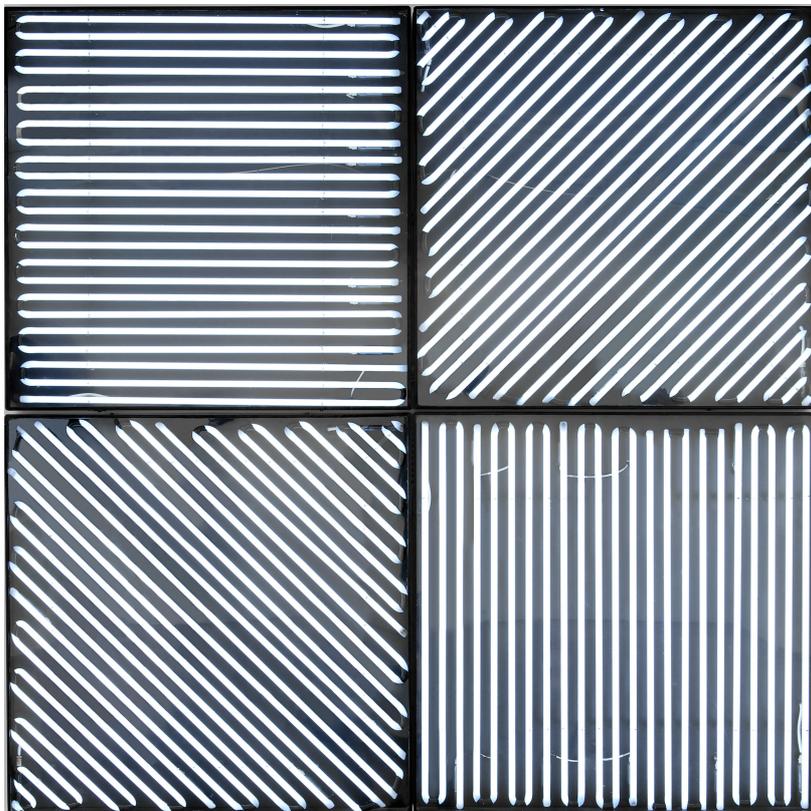
# LÉVY GORVY

## LÉVY GORVY AND KAMEL MENNOUR TO PRESENT SOLO BOOTH OF FRANÇOIS MORELLET AT FRIEZE MASTERS

**Booth C10**

4 - 7 October 2018

Frieze Masters  
Regent's Park  
London, United Kingdom



François Morellet. *Néons 0°, 45°, 90°, 135° avec 4 rythmes interférents*, 1963. White neon tubes in metal and Plexiglas boxes, 63 x 63 inches, 160 x 160 cm. © 2018 François Morellet / Artists Rights Society, (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris. Photo: Archives kamel mennour. Courtesy Lévy Gorvy and kamel mennour.

**London, UK—** On the occasion of Frieze Masters, kamel mennour and Lévy Gorvy are pleased to present an exceptional monographic joint booth exhibition of work by French artist François Morellet (1926-2016)—a precursor of conceptual art and a major figure of postwar geometrical abstraction.

Curated by Béatrice Gross, the exhibition brings together two dozen historical works dating from 1954 to the late 1970s. These masterworks testify to the extraordinary versatility of Morellet's system-based, and often witty art, with titles that may contain playful double entendres. Also evident in the works on view is the prolific scope of Morellet's oeuvre, comprising a variety of media and artistic concerns.

In 1952 the artist, then 26, resolved to base his practice on achieving neutrality in his art: this resolution is evident in the formal economy of Morellet's work, along with the artist's predilection for seriality, and the all-over, anti-composition aesthetic of his work. Using the grid as his starting point, Morellet developed an apparently infinite series of compositional variations with disorienting visual effects by layering, rotating, and fragmenting the grid. Though his practice began with hand-painted works,

paintings screen-printed on wood, and wire mesh mounted on wood, it expanded to include three-dimensional work made with neon lights, and stainless steel. Irreverent heir to concrete art, and briefly associated with the optical and kinetic art movements, Morellet was a founding member of the Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel (GRAV), a collaborative of artists active in France from 1960 to 1968.

Carefully curated to honor and echo Morellet's unique creative output, the booth's exhibition design is based on a grid measuring 80 cm—the dimension favored by Morellet for most of the paintings he made during the period considered. The construction and placement of the neon installation from 1963, the artist's inaugural foray into the medium, also reflect these dimensions. Complementing Morellet's work will be *Êtes-vous heureuse?* (1987), a photograph by American artist Louise Lawler that depicts the entrance to the Morellet house in Cholet, France, with one of Morellet's early works hanging prominently on the wall. A sculpture by another artist—part of Morellet's art collection—is also visible, as is the artist's pet parrot. This symbolic portrait completes the presentation's homage to the self-declared "freak child of Mondrian and Picabia," as the artist described himself in an autobiographical text from 1987. The exhibition presents Morellet's work in accordance with his meticulous logic of order and harmony, underpinned by a dynamic of controlled chaos that pays tribute to the artist's Dada spirit.

### **About the Artist**

François Morellet (1926-2016) was born in Cholet, France. Self-taught as an artist, he developed his practice as a painter alongside running a family-owned toy factory until 1976. This position allowed him to finance his early artistic career and exposed him to material production techniques, which greatly invigorated his artistic practice. Visiting Brazil in 1950, Morellet encountered the Concrete Art movement and the innovations of its progenitor, Max Bill. This visit, and a 1952 trip to the Alhambra in Spain, contributed to a shift in the artist's stylistic approach to painting after returning to France, with his work becoming more geometric and analytical. Also influential during this period was Morellet's introduction to the art of Marcel Duchamp and Piet Mondrian.

In 1961, he co-founded the Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel (GRAV) with fellow artists Julio Le Parc, Jean-Pierre Yvaral, Francisco Sobrino, and Horacio Garcia Rossi, pursuing what Morellet termed "programmed experimental painting." After GRAV disbanded in 1968, Morellet's interests in site-specificity gained momentum, and his work expanded into architectural structures.

Morellet's work has been included in important international group exhibitions including *The Responsive Eye*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (1965); *documenta*, Kassel, Germany (1964 [with GRAV], 1968, and 1977); and the Venice Biennale (1970, 1990, and 2011). Major retrospectives of his work have been held at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY (1985)—an exhibition that travelled to the Musée d'art contemporain, Montreal; Brooklyn Museum; and the Center for the Fine Arts, Miami—as well as the Centre Pompidou, Paris (1986 and 2011) and the Galerie nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris (2000–01). His work is housed in major public collections around the globe, including the Los Angeles Museum of Art, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Seoul Museum of Art, Tate Britain, and the Kunsthaus Zurich. In 2010 he became one of three contemporary artists to have a permanent installation at the Louvre in Paris.

### **About Lévy Gorvy**

Lévy Gorvy cultivates a program devoted to innovation and connoisseurship in the fields of modern, postwar, and contemporary art. Founded by Dominique Lévy and Brett Gorvy, Lévy Gorvy maintains gallery spaces at 909 Madison Avenue in New York and in Mayfair, London. In September 2017, Lévy Gorvy opened an office in Shanghai. The gallery fosters continued dedication to the living artists and artists' estates it represents and pursues a robust program of exhibitions and multidisciplinary events. Lévy Gorvy also produces ongoing art historical research and original scholarship, publishing exhibition catalogues, monographs, and other key publications.

909 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10021, +1 212 772 2004  
22 Old Bond Street, London W1S 4PY, +44 (0) 203 696 5910  
[www.levygorvy.com](http://www.levygorvy.com) | [@levygorvy](https://twitter.com/levygorvy)

### **Press Contacts**

Marta de Movellan, Director of Communications, [marta@levygorvy.com](mailto:marta@levygorvy.com)  
Sam Talbot, [sam@sam-talbot.com](mailto:sam@sam-talbot.com)

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