

“Francois Morellet: No End Neon.” Artweek.LA. 16 September 2013. Web.



Francois Morellet: No End Neon

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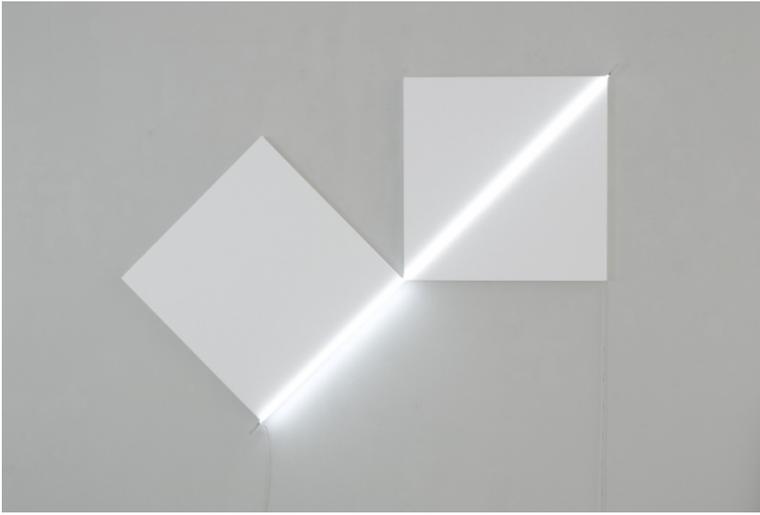


Over the course of five decades, François Morellet has sought to subvert conventional narratives of artistic construction as a pioneer of geometric abstraction, and as a founding member of GRAV, France’s influential Kinetic collective. In applying a set of self-imposed mathematical constraints to simple lines and geometric shapes, the artist has emerged as what critic Thomas McEvelley termed a "postmodern Pythagorean." Blending this dispassionate, codified process with a sly humor immediately apparent in his titles, Morellet mounts a progressive and insistent inquiry into the behavior of continually expanding systems.

Morellet's neon installation NoendneoN will be on view in the main gallery. Discovering neon in the early nineteen-sixties, Morellet has been drawn time and again to its quantifiable physical properties, as well as to its cool, mechanized luminescence. The central palindrome of

NoendneoN addresses the artist's enduring interest in wordplay. A series of slender argon tubes, intersecting the gallery wall at slanted angles, explores the concept of the infinite canvas. Although the perimeters of the installation are necessarily defined by physical restrictions, NoendneoN is governed by a continuous system, and in the mind's eye it is easy to conceive of the work extending, indefinitely, into space.

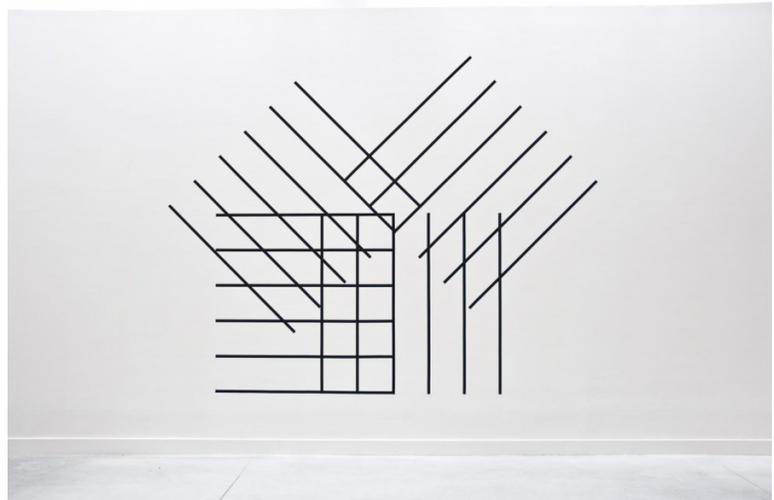
In the adhesive installation sTamponades, also in the main gallery, Morellet refers to his signature gridworks composed of parallel lines. Using an inkpad and stamp the artist composes a template, which is magnified and transposed during installation, substituting the titular stamp for strips of black adhesive applied directly to the gallery wall.



The artist further attests to the seemingly inexhaustible possibilities of neon in the south gallery, where he works on a more intimate scale. In a series of white canvas paintings, neon light illuminates the stark beauty of a precise right angle or hypotenuse, while in the sculpture *Lamentable*, fragile neon tubes form a deconstructed loop suspended from the ceiling. As he deftly manipulates

the material properties of neon, Morellet challenges the rigid notions that govern our perception of the medium's boundaries.

François Morellet's work can be found in the collections of the Tate Gallery in London, the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, the Nationalgalerie in Berlin, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Musée du Louvre in Paris, where Morellet is one of three contemporary artists to contribute a permanent work to the museum, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York, which recently acquired his renowned painting *Random distribution of*



40,000 squares according to the odd and even numbers of a telephone directory. He has been the subject of career retrospectives at the Centre Pompidou in Paris and the Brooklyn Museum in New York, and has exhibited at such institutions as the New Museum and the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and the Grand Palais and the Musée d'Orsay in Paris. Born in 1926, Morellet lives in Cholet, France.