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Cover

Bernar Venet and his *Effondrement: 200 tonnes*, Le Muy, 2017

# BERNAR VENET

RETROSPECTIVE 2019–1959

21.09.2018–06.01.2019

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Wednesday to Friday, from  
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Admission

Full rate: 9 euros  
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Free for visitors under 18

Access

– By car  
Along "quai Charles de Gaulle",  
Lyon Parc Auto carparks P0  
& P2, special rate for museum  
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– Ride sharing  
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– By bus  
"Musée d'art contemporain" stop  
Bus C1, Gare Part-Dieu/Cuire  
Bus C4, Jean Macé/Cité internationale  
Bus C5, Cordeliers/Rillieux-Vancia  
– By bike  
Several Velo'v stations are located  
around the museum  
Cycle lane from the Rhône's banks to  
the Museum

Exhibition

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# 6 Foreword by the curator

**From 21 September 2018 to 6 January 2019, this exhibition presents a remarkable and previously unseen ensemble of 170 artworks, including Venet's early performances, drawings, diagrams, and paintings, as well as the photographs, sound works, films and sculptures that retrace 60 years of creation. This is the most ambitious retrospective ever devoted to the artist.**

**It aims to examine the different stages that led a certain young artist, of twenty years of age, at the beginning of the 1960s to seek to “remove any form of expression contained in the artwork in order to reduce it to a material fact”. He then went on to appropriate astrophysics, nuclear physics and mathematical logic, and took a break of 5 years before finally returning, albeit unexpectedly, to his easel. These paintings were followed by sound works, poetry, and later by *indeterminate lines*, *accidents*, *random combinations*, and *collapses*, culminating in the curved lines of the monumental sculptures in Corten steel, dedicated to the urban space.**

But this retrospective also aims to show how **reason** and **intuition** have continuously and simultaneously converged in Bernar Venet, making his artwork, which feeds on instability, imbalance, entropy, unpredictability, uncertainty, turbulence, chance and incompleteness, a universe with forms that are as clear as they are poetic.

Bernar Venet operates by means of signs. He wants these signs to be precise and exact in such a way that they are transparent to their own form. “Thinking is essentially the activity of operating with signs”, wrote L. Wittgenstein in *The Blue Book*, adding: “If again we talk about the locality where thinking takes place, we have a right to say that this locality is the piece of paper on which we write or the mouth which speaks”.

One of the first “localities” for Bernar Venet was paper, but very quickly in his work, the locality would become a multiple universe with unexpected geographies, unusual materials and territories freed from all constraints. In 1961, the locality inhabited by the artist was somewhere between the act, presence, performance and memory. All of this was incarnated by means of the following action: the artist was photographed lying down amongst what can only be referred to as rubbish. By means of the focal length, the shutter speed, the moment and film photography, this locality—but to what are we referring when we use this term? The photo that we see? The moment

depicting the artist's action? Or the memory that one discovers... —this locality or place therefore, is freed from the matter and these heavy materials. Thus, from the very beginning, the near and the distant, that is to say, the form here and its distant invisible metaphors: the elsewhere, the infinite, history... are all contiguous. That same year, another locality was incarnated in a sound track recording movements across gravel; later it would be the impact of the three-second Chinese inkjet drawings done on paper laid out in strips on the ground. In 1963, the formless—which would become the focus of attention five years later with Robert Morris's work—could be seen in the hundreds of thousands of pieces of coal that made up a heap formed by a shovel, a combination of the force of gravity and the movements or actions of the digger. And indeed two years previously, tar had already been spread quietly on boards with titles such as *Déchet (Scrap)* when the panel beater, directed by the artist, covered cardboard reliefs with glycerophthalic paint using a paint gun. These boards were to be repainted by their owners depending on the latter's tastes or else they ran the risk of not receiving a certificate of authenticity from the artist. Then, with a quick side-step, the artist moved from one place to another: from the mechanical covering over to the process itself. The year was 1963 and thirty areas of a painting were successively covered at the rate of one area per month according to

a “filling procedure” that required minimal input and was intentionally devoid of expression. The implementation of these two *actions* heralded two types of future. The first, random and unknown, concerned the glycerophthalic cardboard reliefs whose colours could be altered beyond the artist’s control. The second, was that of inexorable determinism, linear and sequenced: the process whose completion corresponded to the complete covering of the canvas, a repetitive action, intentionally devoid of subjectivity (nothing is said about the back). This type of work will be reinterpreted in terms of its methodology of ‘inexpressivity’ during the retrospective.

“Inexpressivity”, “neutrality”, “depersonalization”, are the words used at the time to designate this type of place or locality by forgetting, or pretending to forget, how the threads of a carpet woven according to the future of the story will transform everything into a radical singularity. There is neither objectivity nor “depersonalization” unless the words are frozen in the narrow-mindedness of their time so as to compel them not to fill themselves with configurations of the future. A future that Bernar Venet actually implements in his two “actions”.

Following this attempt at depersonalization naturally came the desire to attain the *Objet Absolu* (*Absolute Object*), whose form refers solely to it (and to itself). It is this self-referential attitude of modernism that Bernar Venet transforms into monosemy by borrowing the term from linguist Jacques Bertin. He traces one of the possible itineraries between the technical drawing of a tube on graph paper and the presence of the tube itself. One is on the wall, the other is on the floor, horizontal and vertical, plan and volume. They consist of two distinct signs, two obvious forms for a single projected object, and the attempt to reunite one and the other, and one to the other, in absolute circularity, whatever the meaning. To ultimately create a form circumscribed by what it is and nothing else, unanswered, isolated and collapsed in on itself in the manner of a black hole.

This elementary particle of the visual arts, discovered in two stages by Bernar Venet in 1966, is to art what the electron is to the observer: both wave and particle. The observer will never know both the speed and the position, the electron abandons the trappings of one to borrow that of the other. This probabilistic monosemy that evokes Niels Bohrest, is in fact, something like a Janus with two complementary faces. It is endowed with great intuition in the manner of Schrödinger’s cat, half dead and half alive. And to continue with the scientific metaphor, we can say of this monosemy that it “cannot be decided” in tribute to the most magical theorem of the twentieth century, elaborated by Kurt Gödel, to whom Bernar Venet paid tribute in a diptych from 2010.

Then, of course there are the equations, diagrams, blow-up enlargements, the simultaneous artistic/scientific performances (or the reverse), dense proposals that rely heavily on multi-media devices (sound, set design, image, duration, superposition, etc.). At the time, the interpretation of all these localities, between polyphony and polysemy, was often recapitulated in expressions or statements

declaring Bernar Venet to be “a pioneer of conceptual art”. While this is true, we should put such statements to one side because this kind of formula is much too reductive in the sense that it imposes on conceptual art a territory and a particular domain, whereas concept and idea have evolved through art since its creation a few centuries ago up until today’s post-media works. Bernar Venet traverses this “conceptual” moment, reinstates it, and contributes to changing its attributes and the obligatory stages, but continues his path towards other places. It is within this spirit that the indeterminate line appeared in 1979 both as “free” and “conceptual”. This form of continuity between **reason** and **intuition** gives Bernar Venet’s work its unique irreducible presence, its Planck’s constant dimension, in a way, between that which is near (places, signs, object) and the infinitely poetic (the far away). This itinerary of places and displacements is expressed through terms such as: *Position of, Connected to, Calculation of, Improvised Unfinished, Indeterminate, Disorder, Accident, Collapse, Saturation...* Encapsulating space, time, the imagination, form and the formless...

Bernar Venet’s *Orages magnétiques et autres phénomènes associés*, his *Paysages météorologiques* like the series *Déchet, Lignes droites* and *Arcs en désordre* may be said to be more or less equidistant between chance and necessity. Another aim of this retrospective is to verify in what way a *Ligne indéterminée* from 1984 may be distinguished from another from 1995, and to what extent a *Surface indéterminée* or two, or a *Surface hachurée* are the result of a *choïce*, while a work like the *Effondrement de 5 lignes indéterminées* is the result of an *act*.

**In France Bernar Venet’s protean work remains little known today, partly because it is partially exhibited, in certain ‘periods’ or selected in terms of a specific medium (his works made using tar, and steel sculptures, etc.). Today, it deserves to be seen in its entirety so that the public can gain an insight into the scale, ambition, complexity, poetry and simplicity of his work.**

**This exhibition covers 60 years of artistic creation. It is spread over three floors of the Museum and is best visited from the ground to the top floor, according to a reversed chronological order. This is the reason why the retrospective is called *Bernar Venet 2019–1959*. The artworks have been primarily chosen from the artist’s personal collection, but are complemented with various works on loan from private and public collections in the US and Europe.**

**On 20 September, for the inauguration of the exhibition, the artist is scheduled to perform four performances.**

**Bernar Venet will return in January 2019 to exclusively present his latest creations in Lyon.**

Thierry Raspail, exhibition curator

Summer exhibition at the Venet Foundation, Le Muy, France, 2016







# 10 The artist

Born in 1941 in Château-Arnoux-Saint-Auban, Bernar Venet has been living between the US and France since 1966. His research into materiality, of that thing “there”, directly, without discourse, freed from all “metaphysics”, and his taste for experimenting led him early on to consider the traditional constituents of an artwork in a new fashion in a quest for univocality.

In 1961, during his military service in Tarascon, Bernar Venet carried out a performance consisting of him lying amongst waste materials. This was his first engaged artwork. Bernar Venet was just 20 years of age when he coated his canvases with tar; exhibited a heap of coal, thereby challenging the definition of sculpture; produced cardboard reliefs covered with paint by means of a spray gun; recorded the sound of a wheelbarrow being pulled across a gravel path, etc. All of these works shared a desire to make use of industrial materials and demonstrated his obsession for the colour black: “Black is the repudiation of easy communication”.

His early works contained the seeds of conceptual art, and he was encouraged by Arman, César, and Jacques Villeglé.

He followed Arman’s example, and paid him tribute by removing the “d” at the end of his first

name (“so that the Americans wouldn’t pronounce it Bernarde”). He settled in New York towards the end of 1966, and he exhibited his work alongside Sol LeWitt, Donald Judd, Carl Andre, Dan Flavin, etc. A lover of the hard sciences—he collaborated with scientists from the nuclear physics department at Columbia University—and developed a four-year programme, at the end of which, he even envisaged giving up his artistic career. In 1971, he devoted himself to the numerous retrospectives honouring his work—the one at the New York Cultural Center for example, referred to him as one of the pioneers of conceptual art. At the time, Venet was just 30 years of age. A catalogue raisonné entitled *The Five Years of Bernar Venet* was also published, and he participated in conferences all over the world, even teaching a series of classes at the Sorbonne.

From 1976 onwards, he returned to the arts and his work would ultimately pursue his love of mathematical formulae. He produced notably a series of sculptures called *Lignes indéterminées* (indeterminate lines), followed by sculptures in the form of arcs made from Corten steel, which constitute some of Bernar Venet’s best-known works. These arcs would be produced in both vertical and horizontal format, and arranged either geometrically or randomly.

“For me showing a heap of coal was the same as showing a sculpture, which for the first time in the history of art, had no specific form, and whose product, i.e., the coal, was not destined to create an artwork but instead was the artwork itself.”

“The objective was to show a heap [of coal]. Freely placed on the ground, with no specific form, obeying only the laws of gravity. Whether we put one or two tons of coal, whether it was placed in the middle of a room, in the corner or against a wall, whether it was high or a flat heap... all of these considerations were of relatively little importance. [...] The coal, deposited freely in a pile, freed the sculpture from the preconceptions of the composition imposed by the artist.”

“I was convinced that art was not made for pleasure but for knowledge. This removal of pleasure came from a Puritan desire and seemed to correspond to a serious, even a sombre form of nature. [...] Artifice, colour, and the spectacular all seemed childish to me.”

# || Bernar Venet in 55 dates

Bernar Venet and his *Effondrement*:  
200 tonnes, Le Muy, 2015



**2019** Bernar Venet's brand new works are presented for the last days of his Lyon's retrospective.

**2018** *Poetic? Poétique? Anthologie 1967-2017* is published by Jean Boite, for the first time gathering the whole of Bernar Venet's poetry, never exhibited and rarely published. Series of poetic reading with Kenneth Goldsmith (Le Muy/New York).

Two major exhibitions in France are dedicated to his works: *Bernar Venet, rétrospective 2019-1959* in mac LYON and *Bernar Venet, Les années conceptuelles 1966-1976* in MAMAC, Nice.

**2017** Receives the 26th *Prix Montblanc de la Culture* for the Venet Foundation. This award recognizes the work of outstanding private patrons of the arts throughout the world.

Exhibition in Blain Southern, London: *Looking Forward: 1961-1984*.

**2016** Receives the 2016 International Sculpture Center (ISC) Lifetime Achievement Award. Exhibits his *Angles* sculptures at Paul Kasmin Gallery in New York. At the same time, and also in collaboration with Paul Kasmin Gallery, *Disorder: 9 Uneven Angles* is installed at Union Square, New York. June sees two important public installations: *89° Arc × 14*, a 17 meters high permanent sculpture, is unveiled in Bonn, Germany, in collaboration with the Stiftung für Kunst und Kultur. *Effondrement: Arcs*, a temporary site-specific work of 35 tonnes, is installed in Basel, Switzerland, in collaboration with the Galerie von Bartha, as part of the Art Basel Parcours program.

**2015** Develops his work on the *Angles*, and presents a new series simultaneously showing them in Venice during the Biennale, in Pilane in Sweden, and in Veszprém in Hungary. Exhibition at gallery Ceysson & Bénétière, Luxemburg. Four sculptures are exhibited in four public spaces in Aix en Provence, France.

**2014** He exhibits *Saturations*, *GRIBS*, and sculptures at Hyundai Gallery, in Seoul, and a retrospective of *Points*, at the Espace Jacques Villeglé in Saint Gratien, France.

Inauguration of the Venet Foundation in July, in Le Muy, France. Solo shows at the Strandverket Museum, Gothenburg, Sweden, as well as Von Bartha Garage, in Basel, Switzerland, coinciding with Art Basel, and at the Galerie Scheffel, in Bad Homburg, Germany.

**2013** The French Postal Service issues a commemorative stamp of his exhibition at the Château de Versailles in 2011. In March, he receives from IVAM the International Prize Julio González.

Group show *Blickachsen 9*, in collaboration with the Maeght Foundation (Saint-Paul-de-Vence, France), in Bad Homburg, Germany. From April to October, Bernar Venet presents *84 Arcs/Désordre*, twelve groups of lean archs in the Palais du Pharo gardens in Marseille. He shows works during the 55th Venice Biennale (Abbazia San Gregorio).

**2012** Retrospective at the Müscarnok Museum in Budapest, Hungary, with the publishing of a monograph of his paintings (1961-2011). Shows his *GRIBS* at Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand. Inauguration of *88.5° Arc × 8*, a 27-meters high sculpture at Gibbs Farm. Exhibition at Forsblom Gallery in Helsinki, Finland, as well as in Hong Kong and Singapur. Inspired by his iconic *Saturations*, his Bugatti Veyron Grand Sport is unveil at the Rubell Family Collection, during Art Basel Miami.

**2011** Retrospective of 50 years of paintings (1961-2011) at the Seoul Museum of Art, South Korea. The Château de Versailles invites Bernar Venet to exhibit in the castle's garden and at the Château de Marly in France. A film, *Venet/Sculptures* is produced by Thierry Spitzer on this occasion.

Exhibits sculptures at the Poppy & Pierre Salinger Foundation in Le Thor, France, as well as in Frankfurt, and at the Ludwig Museum in Koblenz, Germany.

Develops his work on steel wall reliefs (*GRIBS*), which he inaugurates at the Von Bartha Garage in Basel, Switzerland, among a selection of recent paintings and sculptures associated with historical works.

**2010** Retrospective at the IVAM in Valencia, Spain. The Texan-French Alliance of the Arts and the McClain Gallery exhibit 10 large-scale sculptures by Venet installed in Hermann Park, Houston. At the same time, the Stiftung für Kunst und Kultur in Salzburg, Austria exhibits ten sculptures. Inauguration on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice of *Neuf lignes obliques*, a 30 meters high sculpture in honor of the 150th anniversary of the city's reunification with France. To inaugurate its new headquarters in Seoul, Dongkuk Steel Mill installs a 38 meters high sculpture on the Ferrum Tower facade. The Musée des Abattoirs in Toulouse presents works by Bernar Venet among those of friends he collects: Donald Judd, Dan Flavin, Sol LeWitt, Carl Andre... Installation of *Deux Lignes indéterminées*, 12 meters high at "Hannam The Hill" in Seoul.

**2009** The Espace de l'Art Concret in Mouans-Sartoux (France) stages the first public exhibition of artwork from the Venet Collection. In June, invited to install four big sculptures on more than 1,200 square meters at the Arsenale Novissimo during the 53rd Venice Biennale.

A group of paintings and sculptures is mounted at the Kunsthalle Darmstadt in Germany, then moves to the Palais des Beaux-Arts (BOZAR) in Brussels. He develops his variations on golden background "shaped canvas".

**2008** Sotheby's for the first time invites a single artist—Bernar Venet—to present his work on the grounds of the Isleworth Country Club, near Orlando, Florida. Twenty-five monumental sculptures showcase the artist's work of the last two decades, highlighting some of his most distinctive themes. The city of San Diego hosts a dozen of the artist's sculptures in California during one year.

**2007** Inauguration of *Saturation* on the ceiling of Palais Cambon at the Cour des Comptes in Paris. *Retrospective 1961-2007* at the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Seoul.

Traveling sculpture show moves to the French cities of Bordeaux and Metz.

Inauguration of a 25 meters sculpture, *Deux Arcs de 135° et 100.5°* commissioned for the Toulouse metro.

*GRIB 2, 2015*



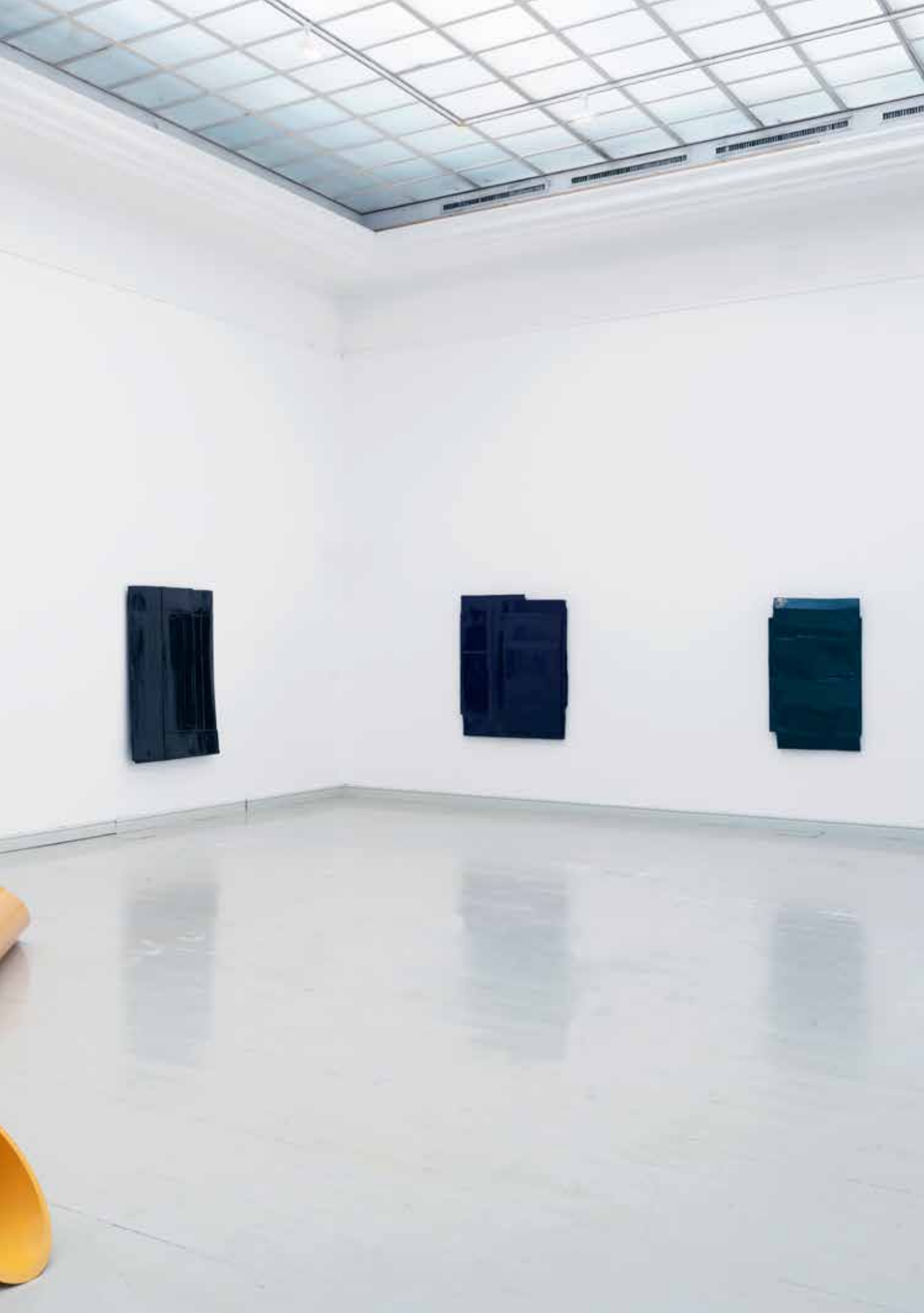
*Effondrement: Eight Indeterminate Lines, 2009*



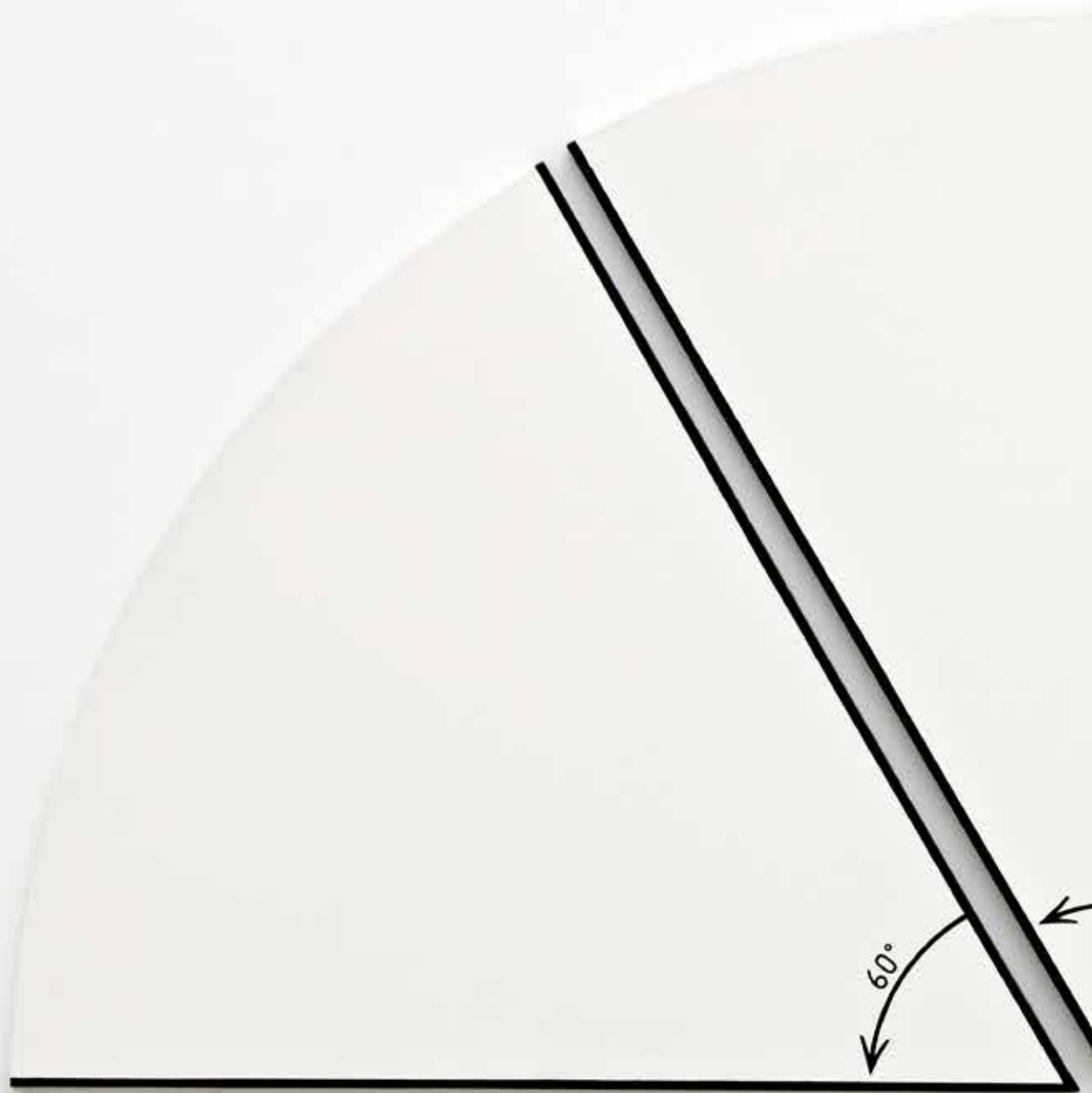


Exhibition: Kunsthalle Mücsarnok, Budapest, Hungary, 2012

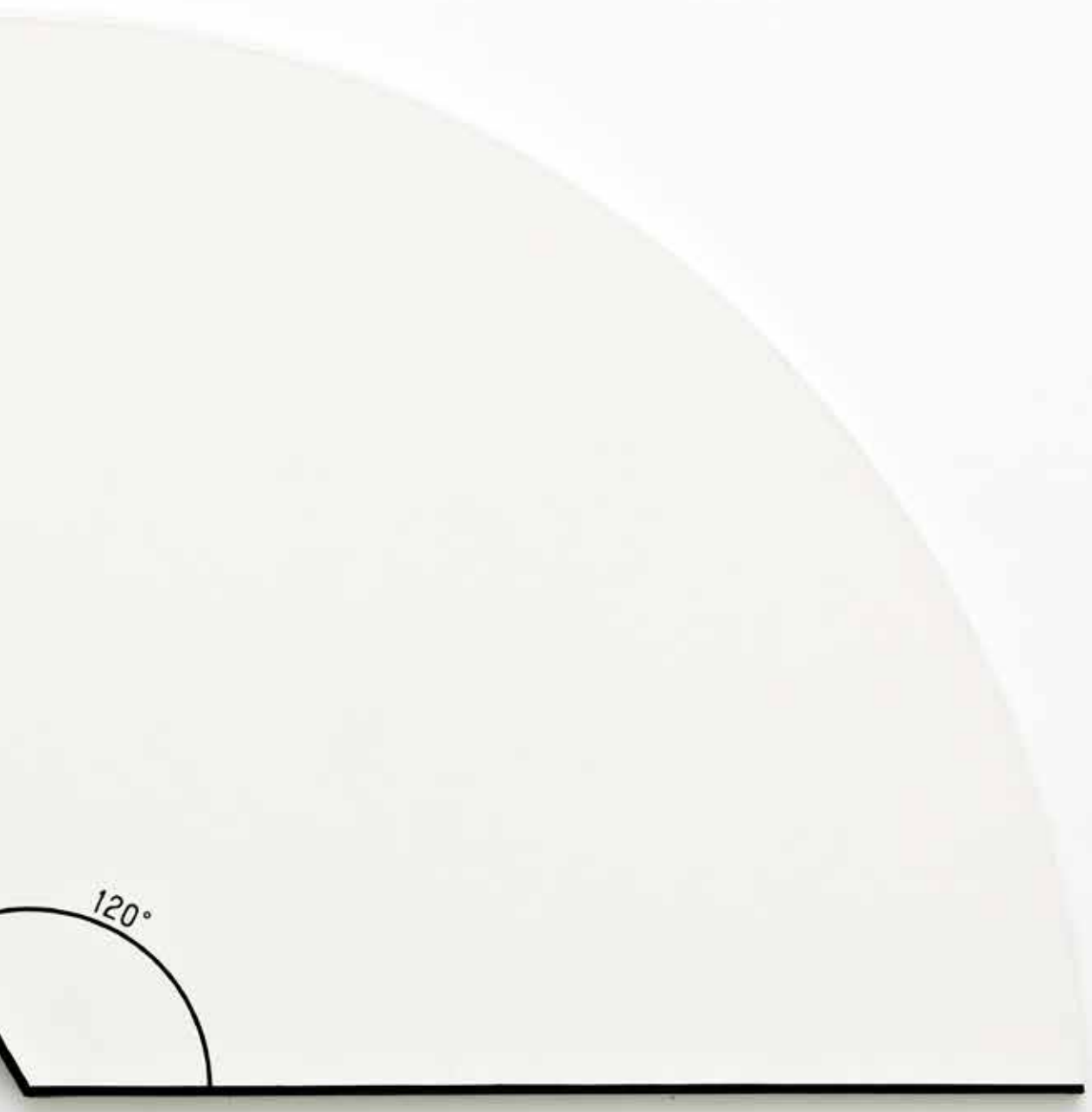




*Position of Two Angles of  $120^\circ$  and  $60^\circ$ , 1976*







120°

**2006** Receives the Robert Jacobsen prize for sculpture from the Würth Stiftung in France. Opens in Le Muy a new exhibition space for its large sculptures. Installs there *Lignes droites, Désordre, Acier C10, 140 barres, 100 tonnes*. Participates in *La force de l'art* at the Grand Palais. Exhibits a set of large sculptures at Forest Park St. Louis. The city of Liège in Belgium acquires the monumental *Quatre Arcs en désordre*.

**2005** On January 1st, the artist is named Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur. His sculptures continue to tour with exhibitions in Knokke-le Zoute in Belgium and North America; the Evo Gallery in New Mexico; and the Carrie Secrist in Chicago. Exhibits *Autoportraits tomodensitométriques* at the Musée Arles antique, during the *Rencontres internationales de la photographie*. Invited by RoseLee Goldberg to participate in *Performa 05* in New York.

**2004** Three simultaneous solo exhibitions at locations in New York City: the Robert Miller Gallery, at Jim Kempner Fine Art, and on the Park Avenue Malls between the 50th and the 54th streets. Traveling sculpture show makes its way to: the cities of Liège, Belgium; Miami, Florida; and Denver, Colorado. Publication of *Art: A Matter of Context*, a book of the artist's writings and interviews spanning 1975-2003.

A year of important commissions for: Bosch Collection in Stuttgart, Germany; AGF, Paris, France; and the Colorado Convention Center, in Denver.

Retrospective of the artist's *Arcs* exhibited at the Musée Sainte-Croix of Poitiers, France. Participates in the exhibition *Monocromos de Malevich al presente* curated by Barbara Rose in the Reina Sofia in Madrid, and *Intramuros* at the Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art Contemporain (MAMAC) in Nice, France.

**2003** Seventeen solo exhibitions this year, including a retrospective of his early work from 1961 to 1963 at the Hôtel des Arts, Toulon, France, with the publishing of a catalogue, *Bernar Venet 1961-1963* by Thierry Lenain. Exhibition *Autoportrait tomodensitométrique* gathering images of the anatomy of the artist made by IRM at the Musée d'Art moderne et d'Art Contemporain in Nice, France.

L'Yeuse, Paris publishes the first book dedicated to his mural paintings, *Bernar Venet, le sublime par les mathématiques*, written

by Donald Kuspit. Participates in *Poésie-performance* with Ben and Bernard Heidsieck in the Espace de l'Art Concret, Mouans-Sartoux. Traveling sculpture show makes its way through Europe: to the castle of Herberstein in the Austrian Alps; on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice, France; the city of Luxembourg; Bad Homburg, Germany; and in the Jardin des Tuileries, Paris.

**2002** Exhibits his sculptures at Robert Miller Gallery in New York, his mural paintings in Ludwig Museum, Coblenz and at Anthony Grant Inc. in New York.

Artha Benteli publishes a monograph by Thomas McEvilley in French, German and English on the artist's complete body of work.

Twelve large sculptures are exhibited at The Fields at Art Omi International Sculpture Park in New York State for the summer. The show moves in November to the Atlantic Center for the Arts of New Smyrna Beach in Florida.

**2001** Assouline publishes *Bernar Venet, Furniture*. Inauguration of the Chapelle-Saint-Jean in Chateau-Arnoux, France. The stained glass windows and all the furniture are designed by Bernar Venet.

**2000** New series of wall paintings, *Équations majeures*, exhibited in Rio de Janeiro, Brasília and São Paulo, and at the Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain in Geneva.

A year of important publications: *Bernar Venet 1961-1970*, a monograph by Robert Morgan published by Cahiers Intempestifs; *Bernar Venet, Sculptures et Reliefs*, written by Arnaud Pierre and published by Giampaolo Prearo; *La Conversion du regard* a compilation of texts and interviews from 1975 to 2000 published by the Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain in Geneva. *Global Diagonals*, a catalogue about a humanistic and artistic project with *Lignes droites* (each 100 meters long) virtually connecting the five continents, with a text of Jan van der Marck and Elie Wiesel.

**1999** Releases the third version of the film *Tarmacadam* with Arkadin Productions, presented for the exhibition *Bernar Venet, 1961-1963* at the Musée d'Art moderne et contemporain in Geneva. This museum also publishes a compilation of his poetry, *Apoétiques 1967-1998*. Receives the commission of a *134.5° Arc* for the new Uni-Mail university complex in Geneva.

**1998** Participates in the Shanghai International Sculpture Symposium. Continues his series *Surfaces indéterminées*.

**1997** Moves to a studio in Chelsea in New York City. Begins a new series of sculpture entitled *Arcs × 4* and *Arcs × 5*. Designs the exhibition scenography for an exhibition at the Espace de l'Art Concret, in Mouans-Sartoux.

**1996** Residence at the Atlantic Center for the Arts in Smyrna Beach, Florida. Receives the Commander's badge in the Order of Arts and Letters, awarded by the French Ministry of Culture. Thierry Spitzer films an installation of *Accident*, one of the new works composed of straight lines that are also exhibited at Karsten Greve in Paris and at Espace Fortant in Sète, France. The city of Brussels invites him to exhibit ten large *Lignes indéterminées* along Franklin Roosevelt Avenue.

**1995** In May, the Museum of Modern Art in Hong Kong inaugurates the presentation of his sculptures previously exhibited at the Champ de Mars, Paris. Continues his work on the straight line that evolves to the Accidents. Makes oxycut steel reliefs, the *Surfaces indéterminées*.

**1994** Presents twelve sculptures from his *Lignes indéterminées* series on the Champ de Mars, Paris. This exhibition kicks off a world tour of Venet's sculptures. Begins to work on the sculptures *Lignes droites*. Carter Ratcliff's monograph *Bernar Venet*, is published by Abbeville Press in New York and by Cercle d'art in Paris.

**1993** Invited to participate in the artists' film festival in Montreal, Canada for his film *Acier roulé XC-10*. Retrospective in Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art Contemporain in Nice, travels then to the Wilhelm-Hack-Museum in Ludwigshafen.

**1992** The engines's roar of the Concorde composes *Mur de son*. Shoots *Acier roulé XC-10* at Marioni workshops. In Japan, inauguration of a *Ligne indéterminée* in the district of Adachi-ku in Tokyo. Begins a series of steel reliefs composed of arrows, the *Directions arbitraires et simultanées*. Participates in the exhibition *Manifeste* at the Georges Pompidou Centre, Paris.

**1991** Creates several musical compositions including *Sound and Resonance* at the Studio Miraval, Var, France. Release of two compact discs on the Circé-Paris label, *Gravier Goudron*, 1963, and *Acier Roulé E 24-2*, 1990. Marval publishes *Noir, noir et noir*, which gather his photographic work from 1963 to 1990, with a text of Jean-Louis Schefer. Three crosses entitled *Le Rocher des trois croix* are raised on the Rock of Roquebrune-sur-Argens (France), in homage to Giotto, Grünewald and El Greco. Thierry Spitzer and Jean-Marie del Moral start the shooting of *Bernar Venet, lignes*, which will end in 1996.

**1990** Installs a monumental *Ligne indéterminée* on the Place de Bordeaux in Strasbourg. First exhibition of his steel pieces of furniture at Mostra gallery in Paris. First *Combinaisons aléatoires de lignes indéterminées jonchées sur le sol*.

**1989** Awarded the «Grand Prix des Arts de la Ville de Paris». On November 23th, he presents his performance-intervention about *La Ligne à vif* at Templon gallery, Paris. Installs *Deux Arcs de 197.5°* at Belley, France. Acquires an old factory and a mill in Le Muy, in the Var (France) to spend his summers.

**1988** Participates in the group show collective *La couleur seule* at Lyon (France), invited by Thierry Raspail. Jean-Louis Martinoty asks Bernar Venet to stage his ballet *Graduation* (conceived in 1966) at the Paris Opéra. The artist is the author of the music, choreography, set designs and costumes.

Installs his *Arc de 115.5°* for Telic-Alcatel at Strasbourg. La Défense (Paris) commissions a monumental *Deux lignes indéterminées*. Receives the *Design Award* in the United States. La Différence publishes the monograph *Venet* written by Jan van der Marck.

**1987** For the 750th anniversary of the city of Berlin, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Air France commission the *Arc de 124.5°* (36 meters long), installed on Alexanderplatz, close to the universal clock Urania.

**1986** Receives commissions for Épinal, Nice, Austin and Norfolk. Exhibits at Leo Castelli gallery in New York.

**1985** First large sculptures of *Lignes indéterminées*.

**1984** First exhibition of *Lignes indéterminées* at Templon gallery in Paris.

**1983** First models of *Lignes indéterminées* made in steel. Seth Schneidman directs the film *Bernar Venet 1983*.

**1982** Moves in a loft at 533 Canal Street, New York.

**1979** Begins the relief series of *Arcs, Angles and Diagonales* made of wood, followed by the first *Lignes indéterminées*. Creates steel sculptures made of two arcs. Receives an American grant from National Endowment for the Arts.

**1978** Invited by Achille Bonito Oliva to participate in the exhibition "Della natura all'arte, dell'arte alla natura" at the Venice Biennale, Italy.

**1977** Exhibits at Documenta VI, Kassel, Germany. Exhibition of his recent paintings at the Musée d'Art moderne in Saint-Étienne (France).

**1976** Returns to New York in September and moves in a loft on West Broadway. Starts creating artistic work again. His first painting of *Angles* and *Arcs* series are elementary geometric figures. Retrospective of his conceptual work at the La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art of San Diego, organised by Sebastien Adler.

**1974-75** Teaches "Art and Art Theory" at the Sorbonne, Paris, and gives lectures in many universities and cultural institutions in France, England, Italy, Poland and Belgium. First monograph by Catherine Millet, published by Editions du Chêne in Paris and Giampaolo Prearo in Milan. Jean-Pierre Mirouze devotes him a movie: *Œuvre terminée, œuvre interminable*. Solo show of his conceptual works in the Institute of Contemporary Art in London. A representative for France at the XIIIth São Paulo Biennale, Brazil, with Gottfried Honegger and François Morellet.

**1972-73** Moves to Paris with wife and kids. Thinks and writes about his own work. Introduce the notion of "monosémy" borrowed to Jacques Bertin. Participates in the exhibition *60-72—Douze ans d'Art Contemporain* in Grand Palais.

**1971** After the group show *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects*, retrospective in New York Cultural Center organised by Donald Karshan, who publishes a catalogue raisonné of his conceptual works.

**1969-70** Settles in a loft on Broadway Avenue and creates his own furniture in a minimalist aesthetic. Participates in the *Conception Konzeption* exhibition in Leverkusen, Germany. Gives lectures in Europe, the United States and Japan. Participates in the *Art by Telephone* exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago. Stop any artistic production as announced. Paul Wember organizes a retrospective of his works at Museum Haus Lange in Krefeld. His works appear in several group exhibitions, at the Dwan Gallery, at Leo Castelli and at Paula Cooper.

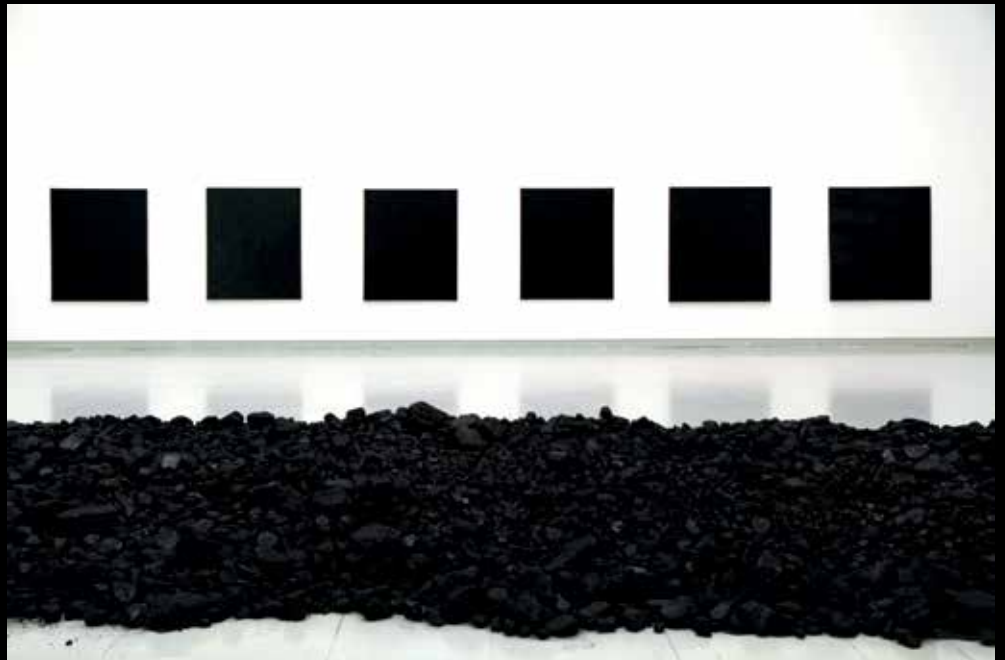
**1968** Stays at the Chelsea Hotel. Participates in *Prospect 1968* at the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, alongside Joseph Beuys and Marcel Broodthaers, among others. Museums are beginning to acquire his works, including the Museum Haus Lange in Krefeld and the following year the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Columbia researchers collaborate with him for a performance at the Judson Church Theater.

**1967** Stays in a studio on 14th Street and 1st Avenue. Connects with Jack Ullman at the Department of Nuclear Physics at Columbia University in New York. Develops conceptual works based on scientific information. Meet the minimal artists from the Dwan Gallery. Establishes a four-year program at the end of which he plans to stop his artistic production.

**1966** First trip to New York in April-May. Arman offers him to stay in his studio at 84 Walker Street, which was once occupied by Jean Tinguely. Invited to the *Impact* exhibition at the Musée de Cêret, he sends the plan (industrial design) of a tube. Seduced by the objective aspect of the technical drawing, he starts making new works based on the use of mathematical diagrams. Creates a ballet, *Graduation*, to be danced on a vertical plane which will be created in 1988. In December, moves permanently to New York.

**1965** Exhibits his works at the IVth Paris Biennial.

*Pile of Coal and Tars, 1963*



*Cardboard Relief, 1965*



**1964** Participates in the Salon *Comparaisons* at the Museum of Modern Art, Paris. He exhibits his abstract *Reliefs cartons* in the room dedicated to Nouveau Réalisme and American pop art. Participates also in 1965 and 1967.

**1963** Back to Nice. He sets up a workshop in the old town, 18 rue Pairolière. Continues his tar paintings, and takes pictures of gravel, coal, and asphalt. The *Tas de charbon*, the first sculpture without specific dimensions, is today considered an important step in the development of his work. Become friends with Arman and several representatives of the Nouveau Réalisme in Paris, including César, Raymond Hains and Jacques Villeglé, who invite him to exhibit with them. Decide to remove the "d" from his first name.

Towards the end of the year, made his first *Reliefs cartons*, which he describes as industrial paints.

**1961** In March, begins his twenty-two months of military service. First assigned to the Tarascon selection center, he obtains a place under the roof that he converts into a workshop. His works, painted on the floor with the feet, evolve very quickly towards big black monochromes painted in tar. Photographs himself in the middle of garbage cans. This action is his first recorded performance.

**1959-60** Employed as a stage designer for the Nice City Opera. He considers his first paintings as symbolists, inspired by the influence of Paul Klee.

**1958** Not admitted to the Arts Décoratifs school in Nice, he studies during one year at the Villa Thiole, the municipal art school in Nice. Expelled one week because he was heard defending Picasso in front of other students.

**1947-57** Attracted by religion, he considers becoming a missionary. A local artist encourages him to paint and draw. At eleven, he is invited to take part in the Péchiney painting fair in Paris.

**1941** Born on April 20 in Château-Arnoux-Saint-Auban in the Southern Alps, France.

## Bernar Venet in his workshop, Nice, 1963



*Scrap*, 1961



# 22 More about: — his arrival in the United States

In 1966, Bernar Venet visited New York for the first time during the months of April and May. Arman allowed him to stay in his studio at number 84 Walker Street, which had been formerly occupied by Jean Tinguely. In December, Venet moved permanently to New York, and initially settled in a small one-room apartment on 14th and 1st, later at the Chelsea Hotel, and finally in a loft on West Broadway, where he would make his own furniture in a minimalist style. He exhibited his work alongside other minimalist artists like Sol LeWitt, Donald Judd, Carl Andre, Dan Flavin, Frank Stella, etc. It was in New York that he made the acquaintance of Marcel Duchamp.

“While I was trying to explain to the best of my ability what had justified this idea; particularly that of presenting an artwork that had no physical appearance or presence (sound alone, despite the fact I was a visual artist), Marcel Duchamp interrupted me and said in an amused tone: ‘So you’re the artist who sells wind? [...]’. Then Duchamp, still smiling, wrote on a corner of the newspaper placed on the table, the following sentence: ‘**La vente de vent est l’évent de Venet**’. We burst into laughter about this improvised pun about my non-material artworks that contained a quadruple anagram of my name. An example of Duchamp’s wit and skill. [...] I was amazed by his ability to improvise so effortlessly, over the course of a conversation, creating a perfectly fitting play on words.”

# — his interventions in the public space

Bernar Venet creates monumental sculptures, installed on a permanent basis, thereby creating “a change, a disorganization, a disturbance”, according to the artist.

In the mid-1980s, particularly in France, there was a renewal of public commissions of artworks, and as a result, Bernar Venet’s sculptures found themselves all over the world from Paris to Berlin, Cologne, Geneva, Tokyo, Seoul, Auckland, Denver, and San Francisco.

In 2011, following in the footsteps of Jeff Koons, Xavier Veilhan and Takashi Murakami, Bernar Venet was invited to exhibit his artworks at the Château de Versailles. He exhibited seven new monumental works, the highest of which measured 22 m. His *Arcs* foster an implicit dialogue around the body, equilibrium, gravity and the relationship to the surrounding environment. On the occasion of the exhibition in the Jardins de Versailles, this artwork can be said to make use of the classical space, with its symbolism and geometry, ordered by the rules of perspective.



“I can see in Versailles, immense open spaces, with endless perspectives. It is at once the ideal place in which to install my sculptures, and a great challenge in that I find myself confronted with such a sublime and majestic landscape. My *Arcs* need to fit into this landscape without getting lost in it, and for this, numerous parameters need to be taken into consideration. This is why I wanted to create new sculptures for this exhibition, adapting them to the topology and the scale of the place.”

“When the sun hits the sculptures, at dawn and at dusk, they take on an orange hue, almost incandescent. Like a nod to the dazzling gold of the château’s gilded features.”

## — on mathematics

“My sculpture has always had a close link with mathematics. Whether it is the geometry of the *Arcs*, *Angles* or *Lignes Obliques*, upon which I engrave their mathematical identity. [...] My more complex works such as *Combinaisons aléatoires de lignes indéterminées* or *Accidents* may be identified on the other hand, with more recent versions of mathematical theory, like chaos theory, catastrophe theory and complexity science.”

“In my work, the form may be multiple while the concept remains unique. Unique but open. Ann Hindry develops this idea in *L'équation majeure*, she speaks about a general equation, a conceptual matrix of some kind, from which sub-equations develop that are parallel proposals, variations, and extensions of the main theme.”

# — monosemy

In 1971, Bernar Venet qualified his so-called conceptual period (from 1966 to 1970) as “monosemic”. While reading an article by the semiologist Jacques Bertin published in 1970 in the review *Communication*, he acquired a kind of certitude of which, up until then, he had only had some kind of intuition.

“The paintings belong to the domain of visual messages and the signs that they exploit may belong to one of these three groups (explored in the work of Jacques Bertin, in France):

Polysemy – this refers to the figurative image open to interpretation and which requires a context in order to understand its meaning.

Pansemy – this refers to a non-figurative image, open to all interpretations.

Monosemy – this refers to the graphic image (diagram) and mathematic symbol; they possess only one level of meaning.”

# — the Venet Foundation

In 1989, Bernar Venet purchased a former factory and windmill in an estate of 4 hectares at Le Muy in the Var region: an artist’s haven. Here, taking inspiration from Donald Judd’s project in Marfa, Texas, he brought together his large collection, made up of one hundred odd artworks by some of the leading artists from the past fifty years (Donald Judd, Dan Flavin, Sol LeWitt, Carl Andre...), all friends and acquaintances of Bernar Venet’s during his time in New York. In 2014, after twenty-five years of transformation of the Muy property, the Venet Foundation is inaugurated and opens its doors to the visitors each summer for exhibitions.

“The essence of my work, and that of the artists I like, is presented here in the best possible conditions, without commercial objectives. I want to showcase my experiences from a remarkable period of time, the 1960s and the years that followed in the country that welcomed me at the age of 24: the United States.”

“Everything that is shown is the fruit of my friendships with the artists, and in turn, I am donating my collection so that it won’t be broken up.”

“This collection is my legacy. I want people to understand the exchanges that occurred between artists from the same generation, who were all very connected and who contributed to writing the history of art of the 20th century. My collection is like a constellation, it is determined by the ties of friendship and mutual admiration; it is coherent and does not obey any profit criteria. I would like it to remain intact and altogether in the same collection. For me, this collection is an artwork in itself.”



# — the materials

“The action on the material as an artistic act in itself.”

*La conversion du regard*, 2010, Mamco, p. 127.

“What is initially obvious about my work is that it is difficult to deny the presence of the materials when it comes to my intent. My sculptures illustrate the story of their fabrication and the resistance of the metal. A contest of force and struggle carried out between the steel bar and myself. ‘Who’ can do ‘what’ to the other? A struggle between the will of the artist and the rigid nature of the laminated rod [...] I suggest a certain movement but I am directed by the steel bar that resists and doesn’t yield to my desire for domination... a game of compromises in which I must leave the bar its autonomy. The result? An account of the forging gesture and the possibilities of the material which I do not transform beyond its natural characteristics.”

Bernar Venet usually creates his *Lignes indéterminées*, *Arcs* and *Angles* in Hungary, 70 km from Budapest. In the factory at Nagykörös, he even has his own special team.

Tons of Corten steel, in the form of raw metal beams, are curved, bent, folded and twisted until they take on the desired shape. They then need to be ground, cleaned, sanded and polished. In order to transport his monumental sculptures, customized trailers are built, and the works are transported by a special convoy. Then the cranes take over, arranging and positioning the steel lines and arcs.

“It is not so much the rust as the steel that matters. The Corten steel that I use, obtains during flattening and processing, a certain quantity of chrome, nickel and copper. Because of this, its rust takes on a beautiful reddish colour that forms a perfect contrast with the natural environment.’

# 28 Around the exhibition

The cultural events and activities put in place offer a wide range of approaches to Bernar Venet's work, in order to locate it in the context from which it emerged; to underline the importance of its place historically, and to reveal its continuity and ongoing relevance.

Various actions off-site have also been organized around this retrospective.

These complement the rich programme available on-site that aims to attract a broad public. Throughout the year, the mac<sup>LYON</sup> puts in place partnerships with third level teaching establishments, developing with them a number of transdisciplinary projects.

## Bernar Venet in Lyon

- Performance of the artist on the evening of the inauguration, Thursday 20 September
- October 2018 Master class by Bernar Venet in cooperation with mac<sup>SUP</sup>—a residency programme for artists in the scientific sphere.

## Accompanying the exhibition

- Master class: sculpture since the 1970s, cycles of 3 lectures
- Creation and literary mathematics, discussion with the author of Oulipo
- mac<sup>SUP</sup>: artists' residencies in the scientific sphere (university programme with mac<sup>LYON</sup>, Université Lyon 1, École Centrale de Lyon, École normale supérieure de Lyon).  
October 2018 - April 2019

## Off-site events

- François Stemmer—A teenager/ an artwork, programme of workshops at the Museum based around teenage artistic practices (programme funded by Matmut)
- Hôpital du Vinatier: art initiation programme, around the creation of a wall mural
- Mostra de Givors: programme creating an exhibition around the Museum's collection by locals, in collaboration with Veduta/Biennale de Lyon in the autumn of 2018
- Urban tours (discovering exterior artworks)

## Shows

- "Ouïe le jeudi" with the Spirito Choir: concerts and rehearsals followed by a visit of the exhibition
- Improv students from the Conservatoire National Supérieur Musique et Danse de Lyon take over the exhibition spaces

## Tours

- Guided tours, visits for school groups, families, children's workshops...
- But also new tours for adults, featuring a screening, debate, a drink, and/or visit to an artist's studio...
- Multiple perspectives on art thanks to a variety of guest speakers from all domains of expertise
- Projects revealing the behind-the-scenes running of the Museum to high school and junior high school students...

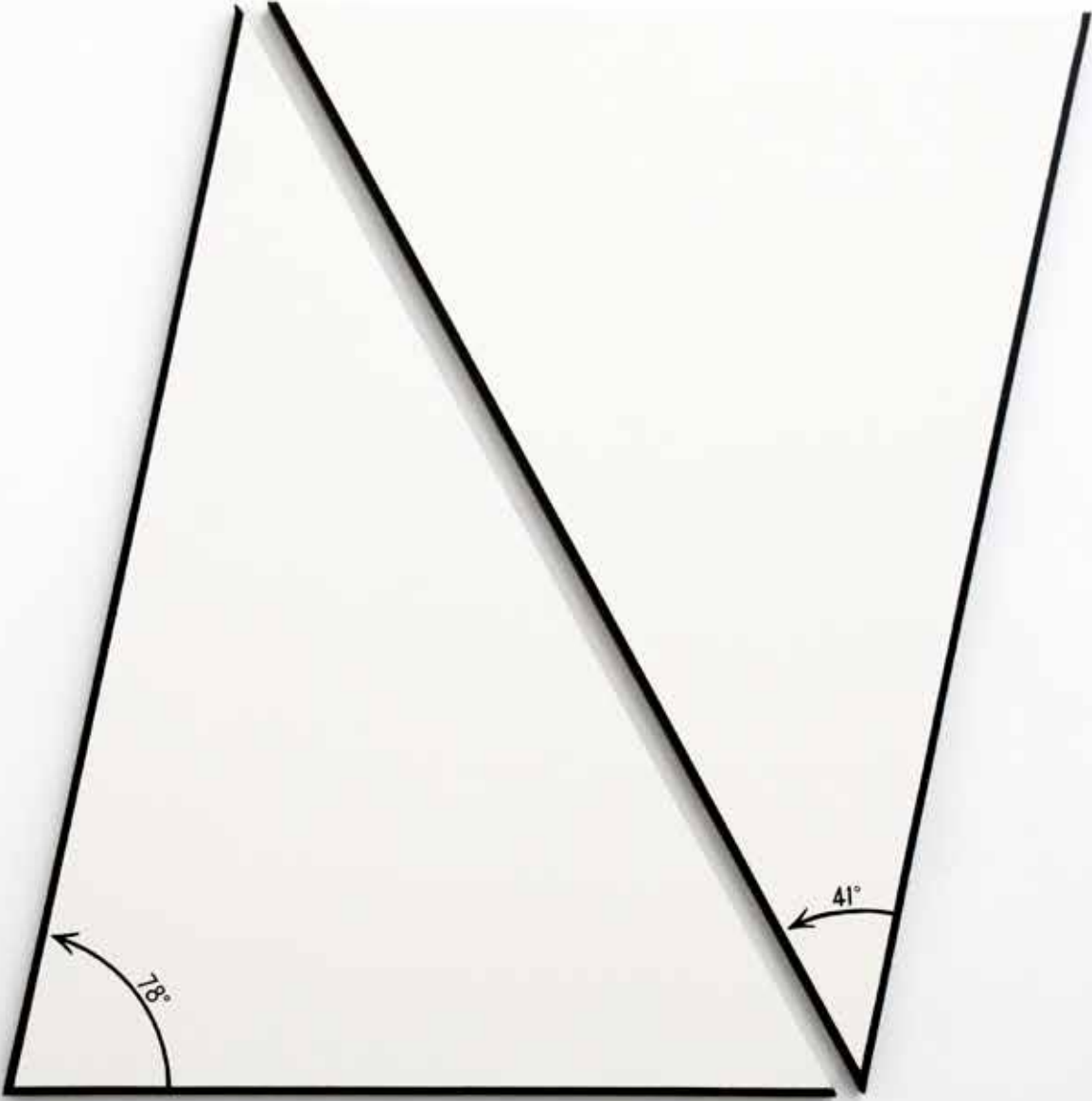
# Publications

The Bernar Venet retrospective is accompanied by several publications:

—Two publications accompany the retrospective: firstly, an anthology of texts that are today indispensable, written about Bernar Venet's work since 1961, and secondly, the exhibition catalogue. The latter consists of a general presentation by Thierry Raspail, two essays by Thierry de Duve and Donatien Grau, an interview between Bernar Venet and Hans-Ulrich Obrist. The catalogue is fully illustrated throughout.

— A special edition of Beaux-Arts Magazine devoted to Bernar Venet, published in September on the occasion of the exhibitions at the mac<sup>LYON</sup> and the MAMAC Nice.

*Position of Two Angles of 78° and 41°, 1977*





*Effondrement: Angles, 2012*







# 32 About the Museum

Created in 1984, the Musée d'Art Contemporain de Lyon [Museum of Contemporary Art Lyon] moved to the Cité Internationale in December 1995 to a building specially designed by Renzo Piano. The museum boasts three floors of exhibition space and a total surface area of 3,000 m<sup>2</sup>.

Thanks to its fully modular interior, the exhibition space can be transformed with each new artistic project. A new museum reopens for each exhibition! The museum shows current national and international artists. Exhibitions, often co-produced with international institutions, focus on all forms of modernity.

Since its creation, the museum privileges a unique policy in terms of collections: it collects exhibitions, which are produced in close collaboration with the artists.

There are currently more than 1,300 works of art in its collections which include a large number of monumental works: works over 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> by artists such as Robert Morris, Abramovic and Ulay. The entirety of the museum's collections, if displayed simultaneously, would require over 30,000 m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition space.

Every 2 years, the museum welcomes the Lyon Biennial of Contemporary Art.

Furthermore, every 2 or 3 years the museum hosts a large monographic exhibition devoting all three floors of exhibition space to a single artist. Exhibitions have included Andy Warhol in 2005, Keith Haring in 2008, Ben in 2010, Robert Combas in 2012, Erró in 2014, Yono Ono in 2016. And now, Bernar Venet!



# Some artists in the macLYON collection

## George Brecht

The exhibition ran from 11 October – 25 November 1986 (the first and only retrospective of George Brecht's work during his lifetime). After the exhibition, macLYON acquired a set of *Event Glasses* and received a donation of a *Void*, made for the exhibition, as well as 26 *Chair Events* (reconstructed and recognized by the artist for the occasion). It is the largest set of works by Brecht ever brought together. *Water Yam* and a few *Flux Boxes* were added to it later.

## John Cage

From 28 September – 30 December 2012, the macLYON exhibited a work by John Cage from a completely new angle: it was *Cage's Satie: Composition for Museum*. On that occasion the museum was unable to acquire the pieces (they were not for sale) but obtained permission from the John Cage Trust to "re-play" this totally new joint work by the two musicians, within the walls of the museum.

## Robert Filliou

In 1986, the museum acquired one of Robert Filliou's important works, titled *Recherche sur l'origine*, as well as *Work As Play–Art As Thought. Recherche sur l'origine* occupies an unusual space since the work is 89 metres long. In 1991, the museum acquired prototype 00 by Robert Filliou and Joachim Pfeufer, which was designed in 1963 with the title *Le (ou La) Poïpoïdrome à Espace Temps Réel*. Since 2000, Bruno Van Lierde's complete collection Robert Filliou editions has been on loan to macLYON.

## Dan Flavin

Invited by the museum, Dan Flavin realizes two monumental pieces of work for the entrance of the Palais des Beaux-Arts, in which is situated the museum at the time. The two works, titled *Untitled (to the Citizens of Lyon)* and *Untitled (to Isabelle "the Lovely Lyonnaise")* enter the collection and complete *Untitled (to the real Dan Hill)*, acquired in 1984.

## Anna Halprin

From 8 March – 14 May 2006, macLYON organised the first ever retrospective of work by Anna Halprin. After the exhibition, the museum acquired a set of photographic, sound and graphic pieces by this pioneer of performance.

## Douglas Huebler

After the solo exhibition dedicated to the works of Douglas Huebler (11 May – 14 June 1989), two *Durations Pieces* and *Crocodile Tears II* enter the collection.

## Allan Kaprow

In 1993, the macLYON attempted to acquire Allan Kaprow's *Barriers*, which he had created for the 1993 Biennale. But the work was rejected by the cultural commission. Thanks to the help of Pierre Restany and the FNAC, *Rearrangeable Panels 2*, created in 1958, entered the museum's collection in 2007.

## Joseph Kosuth

Kosuth's solo exhibition presented two works distant from 20 years, created in 1966 and 1985. The first one, titled *N'importe quelle vitre de... à placer contre n'importe quel mur de...* is composed of 22 glass plates of 0,6 x 2,70 metres. The second one, *Zero & Non*, occupies 500 square metres of walls, repeating 22 times the same text coming with blue, yellow and red adhesive. These two monumental works, with *Cathexis n°4*, entered the collection.

## Sol LeWitt

From 8 October to 23 November 1987, the museum invites Sol LeWitt and Mario Merz. It entrusts the walls to the first, the floor to the second one. The two *Wall Drawings*, created for the occasion, occupy together 93 metres long and are 4,5 metres high.

## George Maciunas / Fluxus

Between 1995 and 1999, the macLYON acquired a set of works by George Maciunas and other influential Fluxus artists.

## Gustav Metzger

From 15 February – 14 April 2013, under the direction of the artist, the museum produced the biggest auto-creative work by Gustav Metzger: *Supportive*. It was designed for the 3rd floor of the museum and occupied nearly 200 m<sup>2</sup>. It was acquired in 2011. The exhibition was presented in 2013. In 2015, Gustav Metzger made a gift of *Hotplat* to the museum.

## Nam June Paik

In December 1995, the inauguration of the new Museum building, designed by Renzo Piano in the Cité Internationale, coincided with the opening of the 3rd Lyon Biennale. The museum asked Nam June Paik if he would agree to "remake" the 13 "prepared" televisions that he had created in 1963 for Wuppertal, but which had since been lost. Nam June Paik agreed and made 9, which entered the museum's collection in 1997.

## Ben Vautier

From 3 March to 11 July 2010, the entire museum space was devoted to a huge retrospective of Ben's work. After the exhibition, the artist donated the complete set of his *Gestes* to the museum.

## Laurence Weiner

Invited at the same time than Joseph Kosuth (15 June – 15 July 1985), Laurence Weiner creates *Des masses de métal en train de rouiller répandant des taches sur le sol* for the museum. Six years later, on the occasion of the third Biennale de Lyon entitled *Et tous ils changent le monde...*, Laurence Weiner creates *Farine & Eau (+) (-) Sucre & Sel*. The two works entered the collection since then.

## La Monte Young & Marian Zazeela

The plan for a concert and an installation by La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela to take place during the 1993 Lyon Biennale came to nothing, but the artists were guests of the macLYON and created a *Dream House* on the 3rd floor. It is the only *Dream House* in a European collection and the most monumental. The work entered the collection in 2007.

# 34 Press visuals

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01 Bernar Venet, *Untitled*, 1959  
Oil on canvas, 134 × 114 cm  
Photo credit: Archives Bernar Venet, New York © Adagp, Paris, 2018

02 Bernar Venet, *Scrap*, 1961  
Industrial paint on cardboard, 150 × 120 cm  
Photo credit: Archives Bernar Venet, New York © Adagp, Paris, 2018

03 Bernar Venet, *Scrap*, 1961  
Industrial paint on cardboard, 153 × 97,5 cm  
Photo credit: Archives Bernar Venet, New York © Adagp, Paris, 2018

04 Bernar Venet, *Pile of Coal and Tars*, 1963  
Sculpture without specific dimensions  
Tar on canvas  
Approximately 150 × 130 cm each  
Exhibition: Mücsarnok Kunsthalle, Budapest, Hungary, 2012  
Photo credit: Archives Bernar Venet, New York © Adagp, Paris, 2018

05 Bernar Venet, *Cardboard Relief*, 1965  
Industrial paint on cardboard, 155 × 84 cm  
Photo credit: Archives Bernar Venet, New York © Adagp, Paris, 2018

06 Bernar Venet, *Cardboard Relief*, 1965  
Industrial paint on cardboard, 115 × 125 cm  
Photo credit: Archives Bernar Venet, New York © Adagp, Paris, 2018

07 Bernar Venet, *Position of Two Angles of 120° and 60°*, 1976  
Acrylic on canvas, 197 × 397 cm  
Photo credit: Archives Bernar Venet, New York © Adagp, Paris, 2018

08 Bernar Venet, *Position of Two Angles of 78° and 41°*, 1977  
Acrylic on canvas, 212 × 210 cm  
Photo credit: Archives Bernar Venet, New York © Adagp, Paris, 2018

09 Bernar Venet, *The accident as a working hypothesis*, 1996-2007  
Performance, September 9, 2007  
Exhibition: Museum Küppersmühle für Moderne Kunst, Duisbourg, Germany, 2007  
Photo credit: Werner Hannapel, Essen © Adagp, Paris, 2018

10 Bernar Venet, *Two Indeterminate Surfaces*, 1999  
Torch-cut steel, 248 × 812 × 3,5 cm  
Photo credit: Archives Bernar Venet, New York © Adagp, Paris, 2018

11 Bernar Venet, *Related to: "Zig Zag Path Zu Between Nodes U and V in a Planar Mesh"*, 2001  
Acrylic on canvas, 195 × 195 cm  
Photo credit: François Fernandez, Nice © Adagp, Paris, 2018

12 Bernar Venet, *77.5° Arc × 30*, 2005  
Corten steel, 410 × 360 cm  
Exhibition: Museum Küppersmühle für Moderne Kunst, Duisbourg, Germany, 2007  
Photo credit: Werner Hannapel, Essen © Adagp, Paris, 2018

13 Bernar Venet, *Effondrement: Eight Indeterminate Lines*, 2009  
Rolled steel, length: 10 m  
Photo credit: Sylvie Leonard, Les Abattoirs, Toulouse © Adagp, Paris, 2018

14 Bernar Venet, *Bugatti Painting*, 2012  
Acrylic on canvas, diameter: 243 cm  
Photo credit: Archives Bernar Venet, New York © Adagp, Paris, 2018

15 Bernar Venet  
Exhibition: Kunsthalle Mücsarnok, Budapest, Hungary, 2012  
Photo credit: György Darabos, Budapest © Adagp, Paris, 2018

16 Bernar Venet, *Effondrement: Angles*, 2012  
Steel, site-specific dimensions  
Exhibition: Mücsarnok Kunsthalle, Budapest, Hungary, 2012  
Photo credit: Alexandre Devals / Archives Bernar Venet, New York © Adagp, Paris, 2018

17 Bernar Venet, *Pearl Oval Diptych with "Bew"*, 2013  
Acrylic on canvas, 243 × 438 cm  
Photo credit: Archives Bernar Venet, New York © Adagp, Paris, 2018

18 Bernar Venet, *GRIB 4*, 2014  
Torch-cut, waxed steel, 243 × 800 × 3,5 cm  
Photo credit: Archives Bernar Venet, New York © Adagp, Paris, 2018

19 Bernar Venet, *GRIB 2*, 2015  
Torch-cut, waxed steel, 235 × 470 × 3,5 cm  
Photo credit: Archives Bernar Venet, New York © Adagp, Paris, 2018

20 Bernar Venet  
Summer exhibition at the Venet Foundation, Le Muy, France, 2016  
Photo credit: Xinyi Hu, Paris © Adagp, Paris, 2018

Portrait 01 (on page 36)  
Bernar Venet and his *Effondrement: 200 tonnes*, Le Muy, 2015  
Photo credit: Jérôme Cavaliere, Marseille © Adagp, Paris, 2018

Portrait 02 (on page 11)  
Bernar Venet and his *Effondrement: 200 tonnes*, Le Muy, 2015  
Photo credit: Franck Leclerc, Nice © Adagp, Paris, 2018

Portrait 03 (on cover)  
Bernar Venet and his *Effondrement: 200 tonnes*, Le Muy, 2017  
Photo credit: Gérard Schachmes, Paris © Adagp, Paris, 2018





01



02



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04



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Bernar Venet and his *Effondrement: 200 tonnes*, Le Muy, 2015





# BERNAR VENET, RETROSPECTIVE 2019–1959

