

BEN RETROSPECTIVE

03.03 >
11.07.2010

PRESS
RELEASE

Ben
envahit
Lyon
le ...

Press contact

Heymann, Renault Associées
Laurence Gillion
+ 33 (0)1 44 61 76 76
l.gillion@heyman-renoult.com
www.heyman-renoult.com

300 dpi visuals available on request

Lyon Museum of contemporary art
Cité internationale
81 quai Charles de Gaulle
69463 LYON Cedex 06

T +33 (0)4 72 69 17 17
F +33 (0)4 72 69 17 00

www.mac-lyon.com



mac

musée
d'art contemporain
de Lyon

THE EXHIBITION

/ « MORE THAN 3 000 m², IT WILL BE MY BIGGEST AND MOST IMPORTANT EXHIBITION, AT LAST ENOUGH SPACE TO SAY EVERYTHING, TO SHOW EVERYTHING [...] I KNOW I ALWAYS PUT TOO MUCH BUT IT WILL BE RICH : MORE THAN 60 TOPICS AND 589 DIFFERENT IDEAS. » /

Extract from Ben's newsletter, 2009. Web site : www.ben-vautier.com

The Lyon Museum of Contemporary art presents from March 3d to July 11th 2010 the most important retrospective dedicated to the artist Ben Vautier. He is one of the major XXth century artists, known for its performances, installations and paintings.

For the first time, this exhibition relates the entire work of this great artist, important member of the Fluxus movement.

This exhibition shows 50 years of works on more than 3000m²: from the very beginning at Nice to the most recent works, through his appropriations, performances, paintings and installations. This event also includes new videos and works created especially for this occasion. All the recurrent topics dear to Ben are exhibited, gathered by series: Bananas, Ego, Gestures, Ethnos, Sex, Truth etc. Ben plays with these topics and the language to question art, but also ego and truth with as serious as humour.

The first floor of the museum is devoted to the historical part of Ben's career, and includes a large choice of works in the Fluxus* spirit. Divided in 5 thematic spaces (Concept/Appropriations from 1958 to 1970, Gestures, Forms, Bananas and Writings), it presents in particular almost all Fluxus works of the MoMA 's collection.

The second floor of the exhibition is organized around the monumental work, the *Bizart Baz'art* and 20 spaces on themes as Money, Sex... It leads to discover the profuseness of Ben's work.

The third floor explores the Ego's concept which underlies the all work of Ben, through topics such as Philosophy, Self-criticism, Introspection...

Placing Ben's work in its historical context, this huge retrospective gives visitors the opportunity to improve understanding of a universe often only superficially known.

The curatorship of this exhibition is entrusted to a Fluxus specialist, the american art historian Jon Hendricks, who oversees the all Fluxus part of the exhibition and the realization of the catalogue.

Jon Hendricks is an artist and consulting curator of the Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and curator of Yoko Ono Exhibitions.

He has edited and co-edited a number of books: *"Make a Salad"*, *Fluxus Scores and Instructions*; *The Transformative Years with Marianne Bech and Media Farzin* (Museum for Samtidskunst, 2008), *What's Fluxus? What's Not! Why* (Centro Cultural/Banco do Brasil and Silverman Fluxus Collection, Detroit, 2003), *Fluxus Codex* (Abrams, 1988) and *Yes YOKO ONO*, with Alexandra Munroe (Abrams, 2000).

Hendricks has curated numerous exhibitions of both Fluxus* and of Yoko Ono's work in museums in many countries. Hendricks is a member, with Jean Toche, of GAAG (Guerilla Art Action Group), created in 1969. From 1966 to 1968, Hendricks was the director of the Judson Gallery at Judson Memorial Church in New York.

* Fluxus is an amorphous group initiated by George Maciunas in 1962, bringing together artists from all around the world, from George Brecht to Nam June Paik and from Ben Patterson to Joseph Beuys.

CHOICE OF WORKS

The press is allowed to use freely the photography of Ben's work sent by the mac^LYON as part of the Ben retrospective, and this for the articles on this exhibition.

These works may be published on the following conditions:

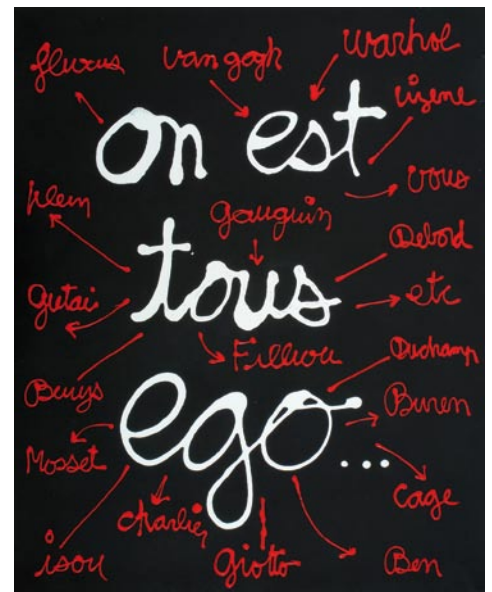
- Copyright mentioned close to any reproduction will be: author's name, title and date of the work, followed by © Adagp, Paris, 2009, whatever the origin of the picture or the place of storing of the work.
- For online press publications, the definition file is limited to 400 x 400 pixels and the resolution must not exceed 72 DPI.



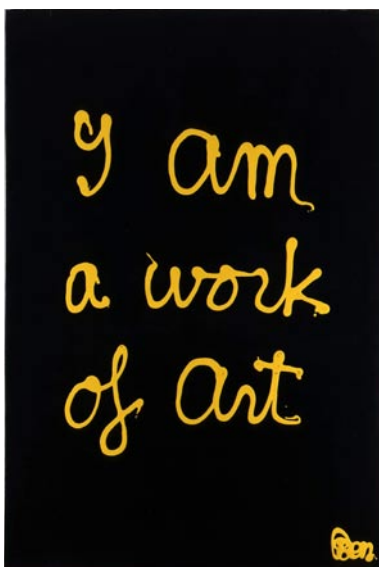
BEN, *I sign life*, 1970
© All rights reserved



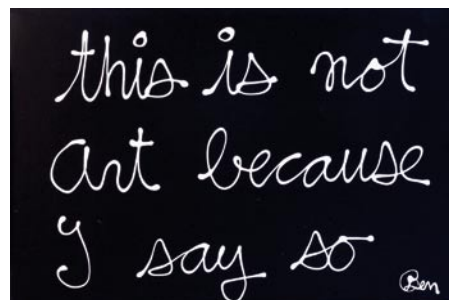
BEN, *There is no center of the world, I doubt*, 1995
225 x 330 cm Acrylic and objects on wood
© Adagp, Paris, 2009



BEN, *we are all «ego»*, 1998
162 x 130 cm, Acrylic on canvas
© Adagp, Paris, 2009



BEN, *I am a work of art*, 1982-1983
130 x 95 cm Acrylic on canvas
© Adagp, Paris, 2009



BEN, *This is not art because I say so*, 2006
54 x 81 cm Acrylic on canvas
© Adagp, Paris, 2009



BEN, *What you see is what you get*, 2004
89 x 116 Acrylic on canvas
© Adagp, Paris, 2009



40 years of Fluxus at Nice, 2003
© All rights reserved

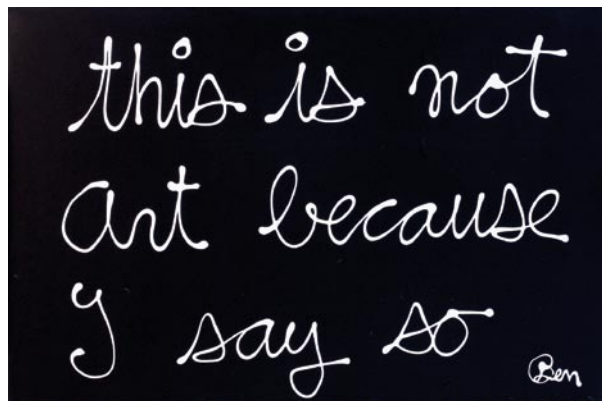
THE CATALOGUE

This retrospective comes along with a reference book recounting the whole Ben's work. More than a catalogue, it is an original book, with a variety of approaches, historical, scientific, and humorous.

Essays specifically realised for this book including the recurring and essential topics of Ben's work (ego, concept, gesture, paradox, Fluxus, performance...) are written by specialist and scientist authors: Arthur Danto, Jean-Hubert Martin, Midori Matsui, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Susanne Rennert and Philippe Vergne.

Besides, it includes a complete biography of the artist and a reference bibliography, a wide iconography of about 300 illustrations, from historical photographs to very recent images of the artist in his workshop.

A preface by Thierry Raspail, director of the Lyon Museum of contemporary art, and an historical text by Jon Hendricks opens the book.



BEN, *This is not art because I say so*, 2006
54 x 81 cm Acrylique sur toile
© Adagp, Paris, 2009

THE AUTHORS

Arthur Danto

Philosopher and art critic, Arthur Danto is mainly known for his works in analytical aesthetics. He is not only one of the most important art theorists but also an influential critic who publishes his articles, among others, in *The Nation*, *Naked Punch Review* and *Artforum*.

Jean-Hubert Martin

Jean-Hubert Martin has been director of many institutions in France or abroad, among them Kunsthalle, Bern, the National Museum of Modern Art, Paris, the Museum Kunst Palast, Dusseldorf. He curated the exhibition *Magiciens de la terre* in 1989 and several biennials of art, such as the Biennial of Lyon (*Partages d'exotisme*, 2000) and Moscow Biennial, 2009.

Midori Matsui

Midori Matsui is an art critic. She teaches at the University of Art "Tama and Musashino", Tokyo.

Hans Ulrich Obrist

Independent curator, Hans Ulrich Obrist is currently co-director for exhibitions and programs and director of the international projects at the Serpentine Gallery in London.

Susanne Rennert

Specialist of the Fifties and Sixties. Since 2007, she is curator of the Gerhard Hoehme Foundation at the Museum Kunst Palast in Dusseldorf.

Philippe Vergne

Philippe Vergne is the director of the DIA Art Foundation in New York.