MSU BROAD

MSU Broad Announces First Major Retrospective of Michel Parmentier in the United States.

(*Left to right*): Michel Parmentier, *15 mars 1967*, 1967; *25 avril 1984*, 1984; *26 mars 1991*, 1991.

East Lansing, MI – *Michel Parmentier*, on view from April 28–October 7, 2018 at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University (MSU Broad), is this artist's first-ever major retrospective in the United States. Traversing the distinct phases of Parmentier's production (and non-production), the show brings together nearly thirty works of art alongside rarely seen archival materials and personal ruminations.

Over the course of his career, Parmentier developed highly controlled processes for his work; for instance, folding the canvas at measured intervals, painting the newly created surfaces monochromatically, then unfolding the canvas to reveal precisely registered strips of paint in 38 centimeter bands. In his early works, Parmentier also changed the color of choice annually, beginning with blue in 1966, then moving to gray in 1967, and red in 1968.

Around the same time, in early 1967, he joined Daniel Buren, Olivier Mosset, and Niele Toroni (later identified collectively as BMPT) in vehemently challenging painterly subjectivity and traditional modes of authorship. A restless sense of discontent drew these artists together, but also broke them apart. Towards the end of the year Parmentier renounced his affiliation with the group, and a little less than a year later, in 1968, he announced his retirement from painting altogether. This radical gesture and ensuing fifteen-year hiatus from artistic production points to the power of his convictions and refusal to compromise.

However, Parmentier returned to art-making in 1983 and immediately resumed where he left off with a new series of black paintings. He also began experimenting with transparent tracing paper, barely visible graphite script, and other folding techniques to distance himself from producing works that were overly determined in both form and content.

Michel Parmentier describes the life-long quest by the artist for pure forms of creative expression untethered from any concrete associations, and will further encourage new generations of artists and scholars to grapple with Parmentier, whose legacy looms large yet remains largely unwritten. "This unprecedented exhibition will allow audiences from the Midwest and beyond a comprehensive understanding of an artist who uniquely exemplified an exceedingly rare fluidity between artistic practice and non-artistic action," said Marc-Olivier, Director of the MSU Broad and Curator of *Michel Parmentier.*

Michel Parmentier is curated by Director Marc-Olivier Wahler, with support from Associate Curator Steven L. Bridges. Support for this exhibition is provided by the MSU Broad's general exhibition fund.

Michel Parmentier is organized by the MSU Broad. Its presentation at MSU Broad is made possible by Étant donnés Contemporary Art, a program of the French American Cultural Exchange (FACE) Foundation. Étant donnés is developed in partnership with the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the United States, with lead funding from the Florence Gould Foundation, the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, the French Ministry of Culture, and Institut Français.

MSU Broad opened on November 10, 2012 on the Michigan State University campus. The dynamic 46,000-square-foot museum serves as a gateway between the campus and the world, providing a habitat for various community and operating as a lab for the museum of tomorrow, where develop new ideas are developed about museums, exhibitions, and art in a changing world. MSU Broad believes in the idea of the museum as open-source software: Constantly evolving and improving. Collaboratively developed. Flexible and interdisciplinary. Freely shared. A tool-kit for reinventing not just the museum, but our individual and collective identities.

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