

# MAC

# VAL

Full details of exhibitions and programming at MAC VAL at [www.macval.fr](http://www.macval.fr)

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Musée d'art contemporain du Val-de-Marne

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## Opening hours

Tuesday to Friday, 10 am – 6 pm. Saturday, Sunday and public holidays, noon to 7 pm. Last admissions 30 minutes before closing. Closed on 25 December and 1 January.



Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 October 2015 4 pm

“Quand j'étais petit, je ne faisais pas grand”  
[“When I was little, I didn't make it big”]

Invented exhibition tour seen through the offbeat prism of mathematical logic.

Sundays 3 January, 7 February and 6 March 2016 4.30 and 5.30

“Les spécialistes”

A show by Emilie Rousset.

Sunday 6 March 3 pm

Theoretical picnic: artists, art historians, gallerists and visitors share their experiences of François Morellet's work and bring to the festive table their point of view on “Seven Corridors”.

Young visitors

20–23 October 2015 9.30 am–4.30 pm

Creative workshop for children with possibility of reserving for a day.

Children aged 6 to 10, 2€ per person per session.  
Information and enrolments: [reservation@macval.fr](mailto:reservation@macval.fr) or 01 43 91 64 23

29 and 30 December 2015 10 am–4 pm

Creative workshop for children with possibility of reserving as a family for a half-day.

Parents and children upwards from age 6, 2€ per person per session.  
Information and enrolments: [reservation@macval.fr](mailto:reservation@macval.fr) or 01 43 91 64 23

Saturday 9 January 2016 3–7 pm

Artist's book workshop with graphic designers Virginie Diner and Martin Bachelier.

Parents and children upwards of age 5, free  
Information and enrolments: [reservation@macval.fr](mailto:reservation@macval.fr) or 01 43 91 64 23

# Seven Corridors

# Exhibition by François Morellet

Curated by: Frank Lamy, assisted  
by Julien Blanpied

# English

François Morellet (born 1926, Cholet), is a major figure in contemporary art and a friend of MAC VAL ever since its opening. The museum collection includes several of his works (*Carrément décroché n°1*, 2007 currently features in the new hanging, “L’Effet Vertigo”).

Famous and known around the world (with over 450 solo exhibitions to date), he is taking over the 1,350 square metres of the temporary exhibition room with an *in situ* project that puts the visitor at the centre of the work.

Since he began making art in the early 1950s, his work has explored the combination of abstraction and humour. This “precisionist punster” as he is nicknamed has produced a radical body of work that combines rigour and humour. From a very early stage he worked to distance any kind of subjectivity or romanticism, those qualities traditionally associated with the artist as demiurge. Setting himself methods and constraints to both apply and subvert, he asserts his freedom by following rules.

Elementary forms (straight lines, squares, circles, triangles etc.), absence of figures,

all-over, accented compositions, simple principles (grids, patterns, superimpositions, variations, systems, juxtapositions, fragmentations, integrations etc.), mathematical progressions, analytical breakdowns of the vocabulary of art, stripped-down language, puns and wordplay — such are the elements that impel his search for active neutrality. Square canvases, adhesive tape, neons, natural elements and hi-tech — anything can be used to pursue this programme which plays on randomness, and the infinite power of combinations and chance in the neutrality of materials and anonymity of finish against the patter of an amused conversation with art history.

“François Morellet has pulled off the paradox of mixing geometrical abstraction, which is thought austere or, in any case, always rigorous, with the freedom and impertinence of those artists who, since Dada and, before that, the merry band of Les Arts Incohérents, have managed to overturn established norms.”<sup>1</sup>

Following his projects in Lyon and Nantes (“Échappatoire,” from

6 June to 5 August 2007, Musée d’Art Contemporain de Lyon, curator: Thierry Raspail; “Ma Musée”, November 2007—February 2008, Musée des Beaux-arts de Nantes, curator: Blandine Chavanne and Alice Fleury), “Seven Corridors” is the title of this new site-specific installation. As is his wont, Morellet imposes the constraints and the system that is applied automatically generates the work’s design. Often the title, in the form of a tautological, self-referential quip, offers a key to the system, which here is used to define seven corridors according to the principle of “random” lines, determined on the basis of the letters from two alphabets randomly laid out around a square.

7 corridors, 14 entrances / exits. Visitors are invited to explore this enlarged painting, this labyrinthine sculpture with sides of nearly 20 metres, thereby activating the work by their own movement.

Frank Lamy  
Head of temporary exhibitions  
at MAC VAL

“For a period of about twenty years I very doggedly produced systemic works whose guiding principle was

to minimise my arbitrary decisions. To limit my ‘artistic’ sensibility, I got rid of composition, removed all interest in execution and rigorously applied simple, obvious systems that can be developed, either through actual chance, or through the participation of the viewer.”<sup>2</sup>

“The visual arts should allow viewers to find what they want, that is to say, what they themselves bring. Works of art are picnic areas, potluck zones where everyone consumes what they themselves have brought. Pure art, art for art’s sake, is made to say nothing (or say everything).”<sup>3</sup>

“Morellet, the monstrous offspring of Mondrian and Picabia, has, since 1952, been developing a whole programme of systems as rigorous as they are absurd, using the simplest geometrical figures (straight lines, angles, planes, etc.) in the most diverse materials (canvases, mesh, neons, steel, adhesive, branches, etc.) on all kinds of supports (canvases, walls, statues, architecture, “landscapes”).”<sup>4</sup>

Select biography

1926 – Birth of François Morellet in Cholet, Maine-et-Loire  
1937 – His family moves to Paris  
1950 – First solo show at Galerie Raymond Creuze, Paris  
1951 – First strip to Brazil  
1952 – First *systems*  
1958 – First *random distributions*  
1960 – Foundation of Groupe de Recherche d’Art Visuel (GRAV) with Horacio García Rossi, Julio Le Parc, Francisco Sobrino, Joël Stein and Jean-Pierre Yvaral  
1963 – First *neons* as part of GRAV’s participation at the third Biennale de Paris in his *Labyrinthe*  
1968 – End of GRAV and first *ephemeral adhesives*  
1971 – First *architectural disintegrations*  
1973 – First *destabilised paintings*  
1983 – First *Geométrées* (Introduction of natural elements: branches, twigs)  
1988 – First *Défigurations*  
1992 – First *systèmes à travestir, relâches* and *free vol* [travesty systems/releases/flighty pieces]  
1996 – First *lunatiques* (introduction of the “curve”)

1998 – First variations around the number  $\pi$   
2000 – First *Décrochages* [Unhanging/overhangs]  
2001 – First *Strip-teasing*  
2005 – First *Lamentables*  
2007 – “Blow-up 1952-2007: Quand j’étais petit je ne faisais pas grand,” Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris  
2007 – “Échappatoire,” Musée d’Art Contemporain, Lyon  
2007 – “Ma Musée,” Musée des Beaux-arts, Nantes  
2008 – First *Négatifs*  
2010 – “L’Esprit d’escalier,” Musée du Louvre, Paris  
2011 – “Réinstallations,” Centre Pompidou, Paris  
2015 – “Seven Corridors,” MAC VAL – Musée d’art contemporain du Val-de-Marne

1 — Alfred Pacquement, in *François Morellet, Réinstallations*, Centre Pompidou, 2011, p. 13.

2 — François Morellet, “Du spectateur au spectateur ou l’art de déballer son pique-nique,” 1971, reproduced in François Morellet, *Mais comment taire mes commentaires*, Ensba, 1999, p. 44.  
3 — François Morellet, “Du spectateur au spectateur ou l’art de déballer son pique-nique,” 1971, reproduced in François Morellet, *Mais comment taire mes commentaires*, Ensba, 1999, p. 47.  
4 — François Morellet, “Réduire à une phrase trente-cinq ans de travail,” July 1987, reproduced in François Morellet, *Mais comment taire mes commentaires*, Ensba, 1999, p. 42.