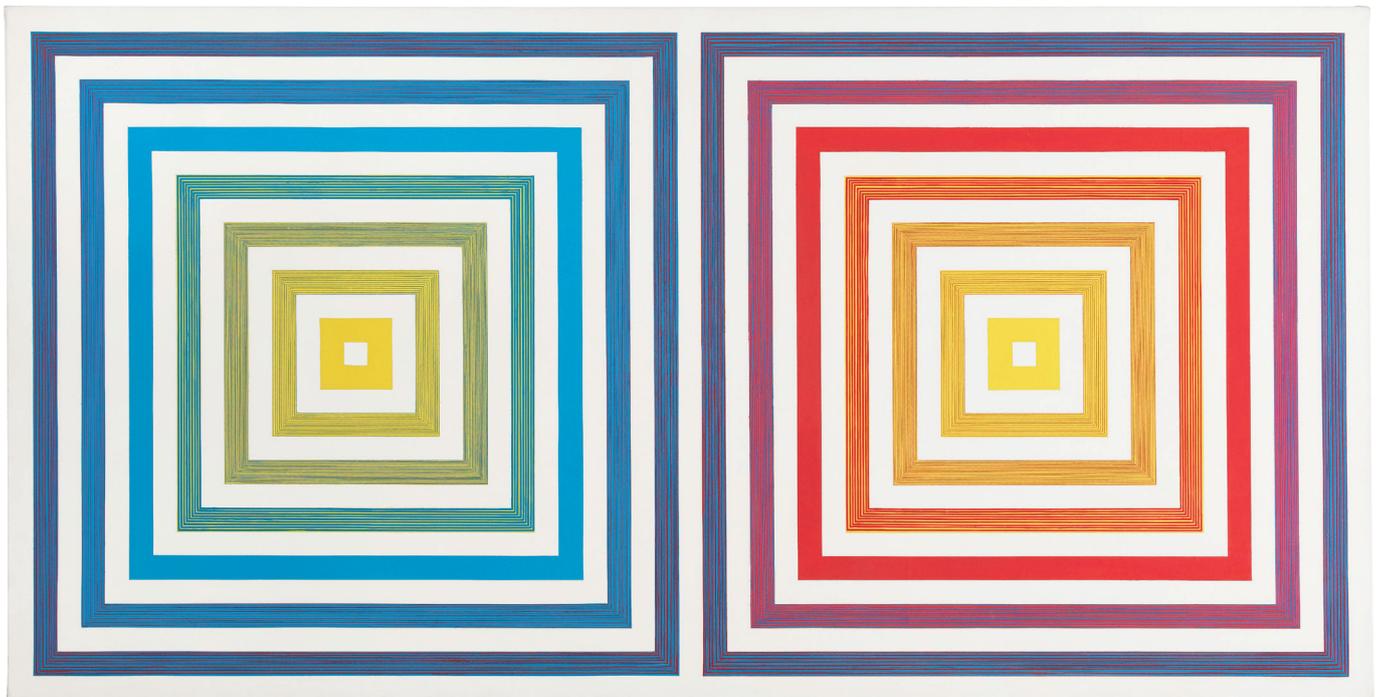


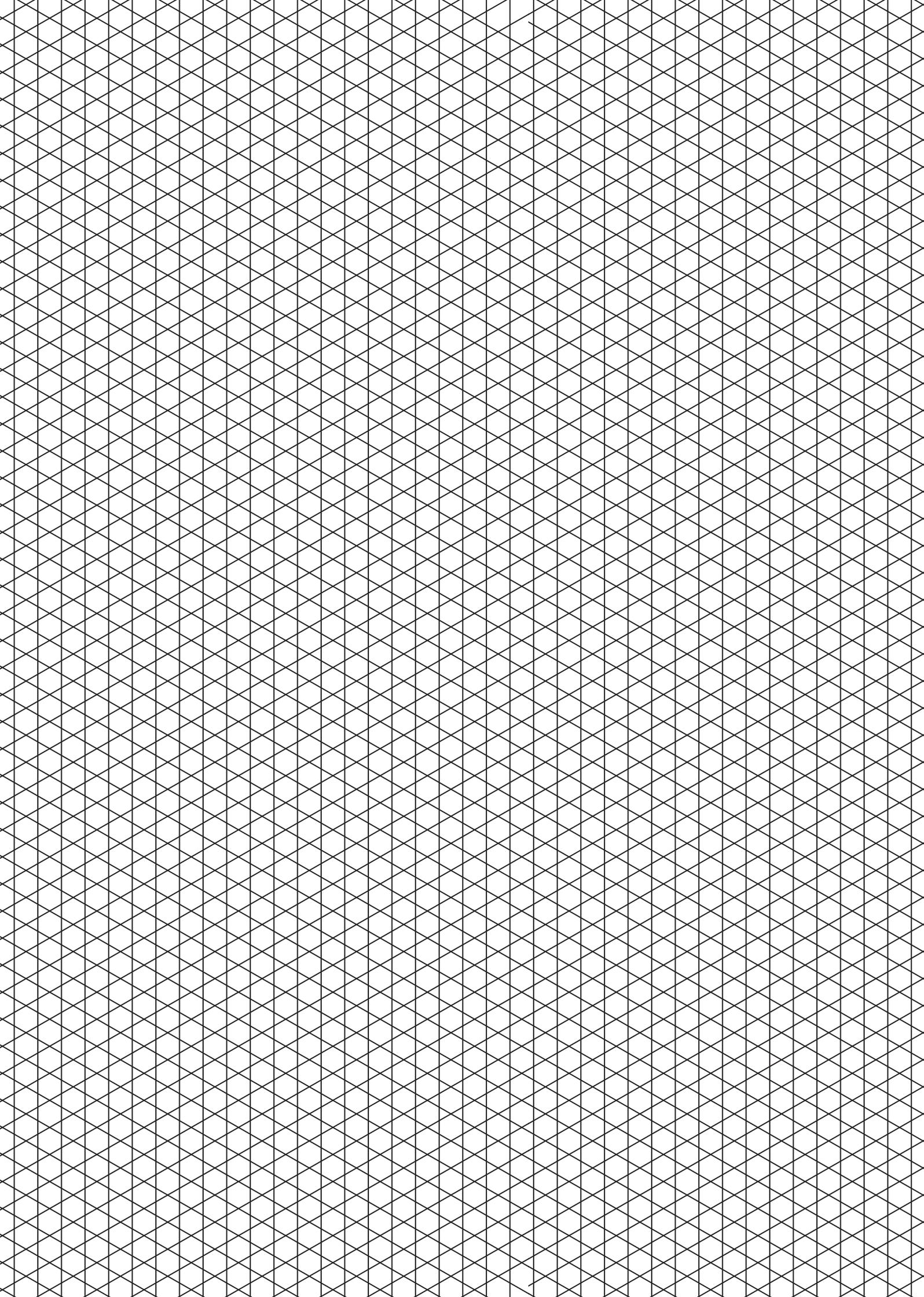
PRESS KIT

# François Morellet

100 Per Cent

03.04 - 28.09.26





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**1. INTRODUCTION**

**2. BIOGRAPHY**

**3. EXHIBITION JOURNEY**

**4. A WORK IN PUBLIC SPACE**

**5. ASSOCIATED PROGRAMMING**

**6. CATALOGUE**

**7. FRANÇOIS MORELLET CENTENNIAL**

**8. PARTNERS**

**9. AVAILABLE VISUALS**

# 1.

## PRESENTATION

### FRANÇOIS MORELLET. 100 PER CENT

From April 3 to September 28, 2026

Gallery 3 and SNCF Technicentre, Metz

**Curators:** Michel Gauthier, Curator of the Contemporary Collection, Centre Pompidou, Musée National d'Art Moderne, in collaboration with Marion Guibert.

2026 marks the centenary of the birth of François Morellet (1926-2016). To commemorate it, the Centre Pompidou-Metz presents a retrospective in 100 works ranging from 1941 to 2016 — the most comprehensive retrospective to date of François Morellet.

Morellet is unique in that he was both the leading French figure of geometric abstraction and the one who most decisively contributed to destabilising it. Through the selected works, this major retrospective explores **the ambivalence between reason and unreason, between the legacy of Francis Picabia and that of Piet Mondrian, whom the artist liked to refer to.**

Within the 1,200 square metres of Galerie 3 of the Centre Pompidou-Metz, the exhibition offers the public the chance to experience this ambivalence through **two chronological paths**, from Morellet's early pictorial experiments from the 1940s, rarely shown until now, to his baroque neon works from the 2010s. The first path reveals Morellet's work within the **prevailing rules and the glories of pictorial materialism**. The other path focuses on Morellet's **optical irrationality and Neo-Dadaist distance**. One of these two aspects alone would have been sufficient to establish Morellet's historic grandeur. The Centre Pompidou-Metz will therefore offer visitors the chance to see the two sides of Morellet's greatness.

After discovering the work of Max Bill during trips to Brazil in 1950 and 1951, Morellet decided to pursue the path opened by concrete art. In 1952, a visit to the Alhambra convinced him to abandon all ideas of composition. From then on, he adopted **an elementary geometric vocabulary, and developed**

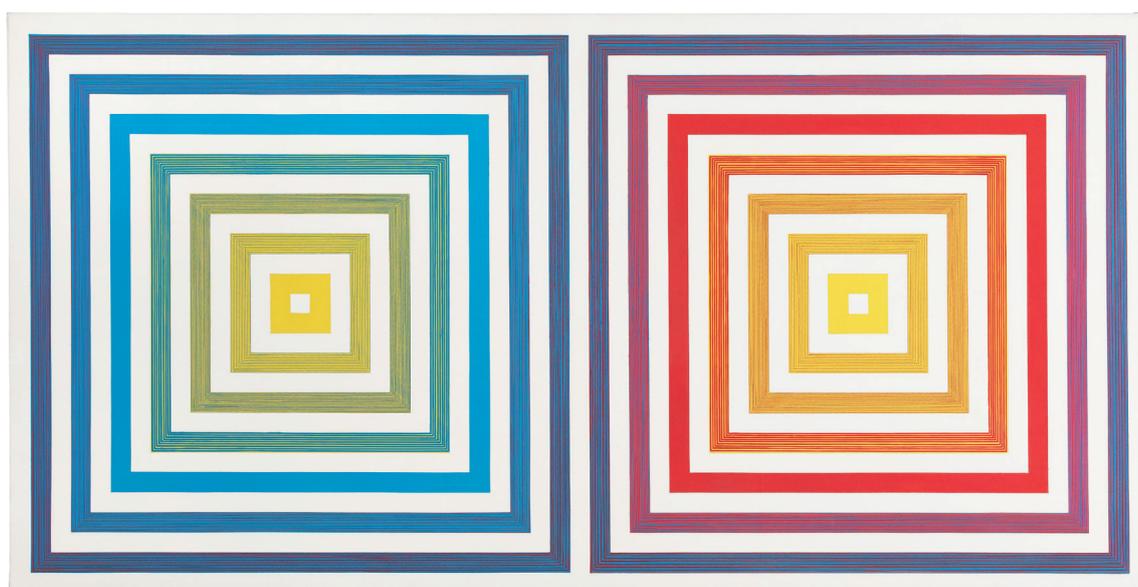


François Morellet, *Mask King Tape*, 1985  
© François Morellet Archives / ADAGP, Paris, 2026

**creative methods that left no scope for subjectivity**, using pre-established procedures, applied in a neutral and precise manner. Reacting against the lyrical abstraction that was dominant at the time, he sought to keep all expressiveness at bay, thus embracing a programmed, systematic art. Rejecting the figure of the inspired artist, he sought to limit both his sensitivity and the number of decisions to be made in the conception of the artwork, which logically led him to rely on chance. Over the decades, in a narrative that would lead him to dialogue with concrete art, then with minimalism, of which he was a precursor in many respects, Morellet gradually became interested in the painting as an object, placing it in relation with the wall, and later, with the surrounding space. In this sense, he can be considered as **one of the main proponents of the powers of rules, advocating for the poetics of reason.**

However, as early as the 1960s, Morellet observed that his elaboration programs sometimes resulted in optical aberrations, and ended up **joining the experiments of the GRAV** (Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel, Visual Art Research Group), **becoming one of the major representatives of op art, an aesthetic that valued the destabilisation of the gaze and the instability of perception.** With Morellet, the **op movement** found an unexpected ally in a Neo-Dadaist spirit, nurtured by a long engagement with chance and its virtues. In his work, the proud, literalist neon light of minimalism and Dan Flavin thus often turned into an accomplice to deviations that he himself playfully likened to rococo. In other words, optical irrationality and derision were, just like rules, one of the constitutive dimensions of Morellet's art. This retrospective presents Morellet's work as constitutively founded on that ambivalence.

In order to highlight the aspect of Morellet's practice that invests public space through what he designated as his "architectural disintegrations", **the exhibition extends beyond the walls of the Centre Pompidou-Metz over a long period of time,** and invests in the surrounding neighbourhood. One of his ceremonial works, *Trames 30° - 60° - 120° - 150° partant d'un angle du mur. Intervalles : 5,5 m* (1977-2026), is thus **reactivated on the monumental scale of the SNCF technical Center façade, and is visible from Galerie 3.**



François Morellet, *Du jaune au violet*, 1956  
Oil on canvas, 110.3 x 215.8 cm  
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, 1982, AM 1982-15  
© ADAGP, Paris, 2026  
Photo: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI / Georges Meguerditchian / Dist. Grand Palais RMN

# 2.

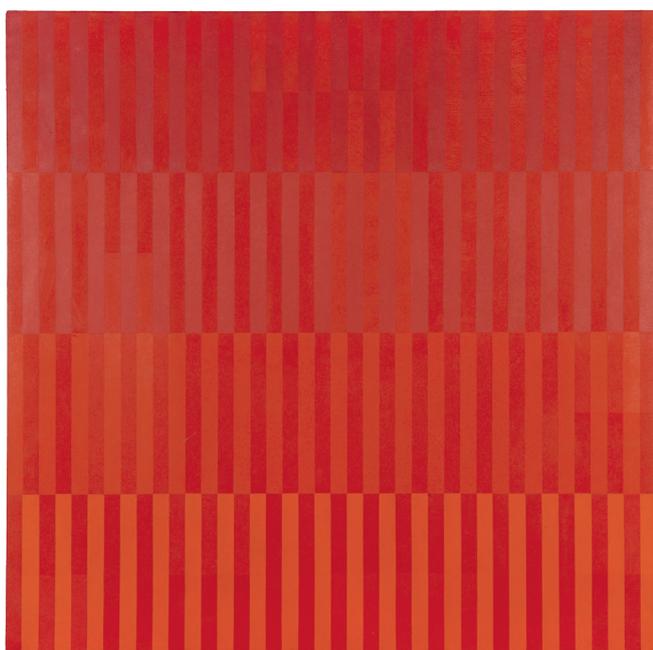
## BIOGRAPHY

**A major figure in French geometric abstraction, François Morellet lived and worked between the region of Angers and Paris from his birth in 1926 until his death in 2016. After studying languages, he joined his family's toy manufacturing business in 1948, initially overseeing model design. For 25 years, this work provided financial stability, providing him with the tremendous freedom to pursue self-taught artistic experiments in parallel.**

For over six decades, Morellet developed his practice within a context marked by a questioning of traditional conceptions of art and the artist. The myth of the artist as demiurge, expressing their genius through painting, in particular, was then the subject of intense debate. Sensitive to these debates and following his discovery of Max Bill's concrete art in Brazil, Morellet began in 1952 to eliminate traces of his own subjectivity from his work. From then on, his work was governed by protocols that removed arbitrary artistic choices. In the 1950s, this approach was embodied in abstract geometric painting — a legacy of Piet Mondrian and Theo van Doesburg.

By the late 1950s, he discovered Jean Arp and Sophie Taeuber-Arp's Duo-collages and followed their example in adopting chance as a creative force. He then conceived works that formally translated sequences of random numbers drawn from the telephone directory or the decimals of Pi. In 1961, he founded the *Groupe de recherche d'art visuel* (Visual Art Research Group, GRAV) alongside Julio Le Parc, Horacio Garcia Rossi, Francisco Sobrino, Joël Stein and Yvaral, and traded paint for neon tubes and stainless steel. With GRAV, he explored kinetic art, emphasizing the interaction between the artwork and the viewer as the primary condition of art. The pursuit of a dialogue between artwork and viewer remained a constant in Morellet's work. From 1970 onward, it took shape in his numerous installations using diverse materials — neon tubes, adhesive tape, steel, wood, and canvas.

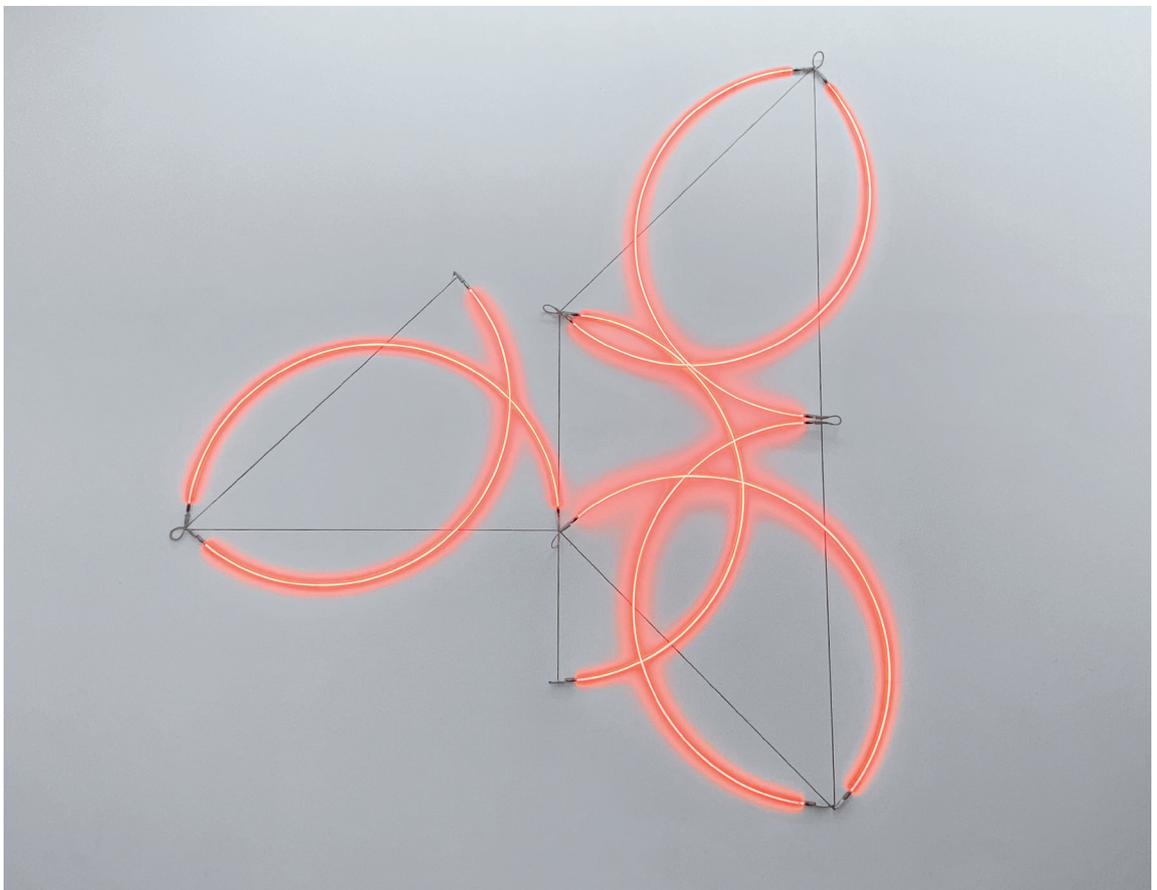
As his projects progressed, these installations increasingly took their environment into account, eventually permeating architecture and the city itself. His first monumental intervention was inaugurated in 1971 on the facades of buildings on the Plateau de la Reynie, the site of what is now the Centre Pompidou in Paris. Among the numerous site-specific works commissioned from him throughout his life is the series of stained-glass windows entitled *L'Esprit d'escalier* (The staircase spirit), inaugurated at the Louvre Museum in 2010. He thus entered the select group of artists to be exhibited there during their lifetime. The exhibition François Morellet. Cent Per 100 at Centre Pompidou-Metz aims to integrate this architectural dimension of the work by disseminating the artist's visual installations outside the exhibition space.



François Morellet, *5 rouges différents*, 1953  
Oil on wood, 80 × 80 cm  
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, AM 2021-565  
© ADAGP, Paris, 2026  
Photo: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI / Hélène Mauri / Dist. GrandPalaisRmn

Morellet's work was featured in numerous landmark exhibitions, including documenta in Kassel in 1964, 1968, and 1977, the Venice Biennale in 1970 and 1990, and *The Responsive Eye*, a seminal exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York that launched the Op Art movement in 1965. His first solo exhibition was held in 1971 at the Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, Netherlands, before touring throughout Europe. In 1975, he won the Grand Prize at the São Paulo Biennial, and his European recognition grew thereafter — other exhibitions were organised in Germany, then in France, and internationally. His work is now held in major institutional collections. French public museums, in particular, display a unique breadth of examples that represent the great diversity of Morellet's practice.

The Centre Pompidou has dedicated two major exhibitions to him, in 1986 and 2011. Furthermore, the Musée National d'Art Moderne (National Modern Art Museum) benefited from the artist's significant donation (acceptance in lieu) in 2020, as well as subsequent purchases and gifts. This retrospective exhibition, organised by the Centre Pompidou-Metz, will highlight this substantial collection, in dialogue with major works from the Morellet estate, and installations reactivated for the occasion.



François Morellet, *π baroco no 1 rouge, 1 = 45° (angles du même côté), 7 éléments*, 2001  
Grease pencil on wall, red neon tubes and electrical system, 330 x 278 cm  
Cholet, Estate of François Morellet, 01037  
© ADAGP, Paris, 2026  
Photo: © Archives François Morellet

# 3.

## EXHIBITION LAYOUT

---

## MORELLET BEFORE MORELLET

François Morellet began painting in 1940, at the age of fourteen. In the immediate postwar period this self-taught artist devoted himself mainly to still life, using muted brown tones that reflected the pessimistic mood of the time. However, these paintings reveal a real concern for geometry (the grid pattern of the tablecloths or the precise placement of objects). Over the course of 1948, the young artist's style evolved toward a form that, unlike any form of realism combined zoomorphic and plant motifs, with a spirit close to that of the Cobra artists. Like them, Morellet was interested in non-Western art, which he discovered at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris. He was particularly drawn to the bark paintings of the Australian Aborigines and the *tapas* of Oceania. In March 1950, at his first exhibition at the Galerie Creuze in Paris, he presented these works, which had given him a taste for freedom.



François Morellet, *Peinture*, 1947  
Oil on canvas, 27 x 41 cm  
Cholet, Estate François Morellet, 47006  
© François Morellet Archives / ADAGP, Paris, 2026

# RATIONAL

---

## EARLY ABSTRACT PAINTINGS

In 1950 and again in 1951 Morellet travelled to Brazil, and for a time considered settling there. During his second trip he heard about the Swiss architect, designer, painter, and sculptor Max Bill (1908–1994), the founder of concrete art. Bill's work had recently been the subject of a retrospective in São Paulo, which had a lasting impact on an entire generation of Brazilian artists and art critics. For Morellet this was nothing short of revolutionary, convincing him to embark on the path of abstraction. Although the paintings of 1951, produced by the 25-year-old artist on his return to France, are decisively rational and controlled, they retain a formal intuitiveness in their muted colour palette largely made up of blue and yellow.

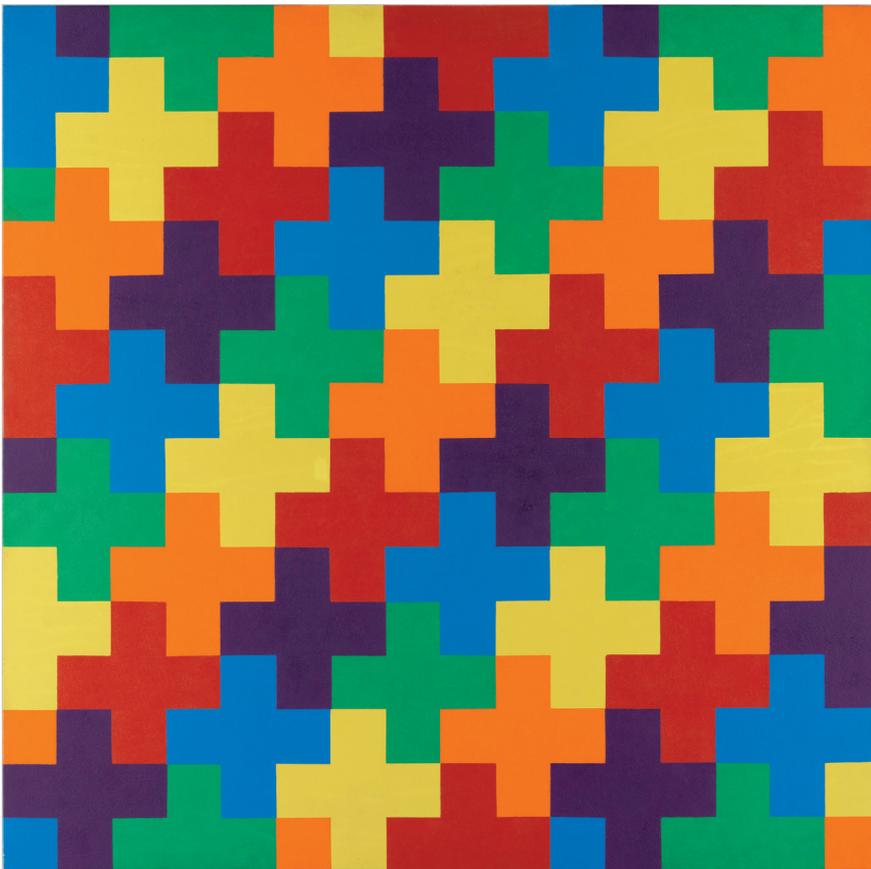


François Morellet, *Peinture*, 1951  
Oil on canvas, 81 × 60 cm  
Cholet, Estate François Morellet, 51002  
© Archives François Morellet / ADAGP, Paris, 2026

---

# SYSTEMATIC PAINTINGS

In 1952 Morellet's mode of abstraction veered into the systematic, a move that rendered it quite distinctive on the European painting scene of the time. Moreover, it was not contemporary painting that Morellet drew on for his radicalism, but rather the mosaics of the Alhambra and their all-over patterns, which he had just discovered. In addition to its systematic style, his painting was characterised by its absolute literalism (it was devoid of any representative or symbolic dimension), the abandonment of composition, and a neutrality of execution (no room for subjectivity of gesture). This often led him to ditch canvas in favour of wooden panels. In 1957 he decided to resort to chance to create his works, so as to better undermine the romantic myth of the inspired and creative artist.

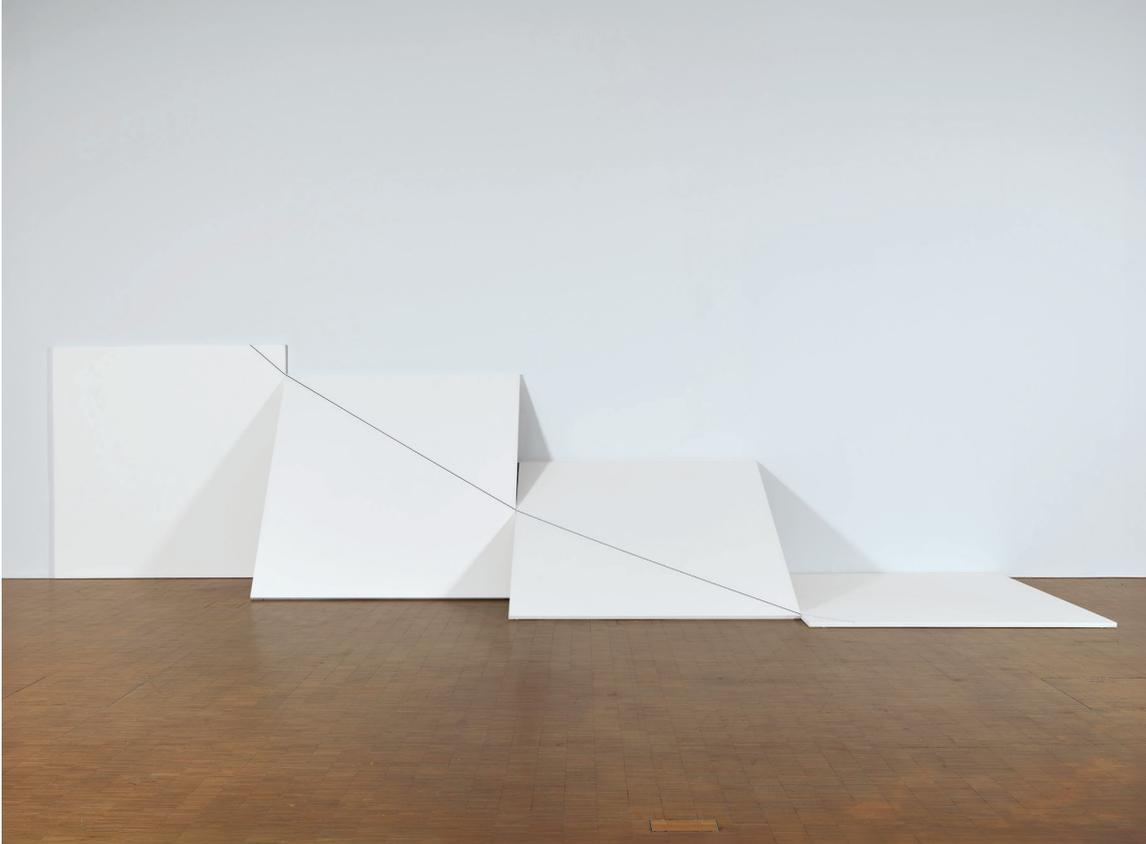


François Morellet, *Violet, bleu, vert, jaune, orange, rouge*, 1953  
Oil on wood, 80 x 80 cm  
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, AM 1985-494  
© ADAGP, Paris, 2026  
Photo: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI/Audrey Laurans/Dist. GrandPalaisRmn

---

# OBJECT-PAINTINGS, PAINTINGS IN SPACE

In some of his works from the second half of the 1970s and the decades that followed, Morellet took anti-illusionism a step further. The canvas was no longer just the support for the form; it became the form itself, sometimes leaving the wall for the third dimension. Within the Modernist framework, a painting no longer seeks to detach itself from real space or to conceal its dimension as an object. These works draw attention to the position of the painting in space. Spatialisation, however, does not only apply to paintings; Morellet also implemented it with neon lights, as in the four-sided figure *1 rayon de 1/8 de cercle*: two sides on the wall, two on the floor, two in neon, two drawn with the electric wires that power the neon tubes.



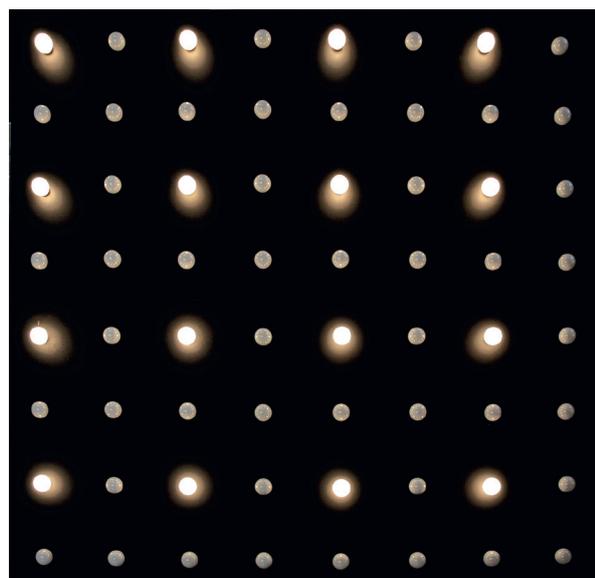
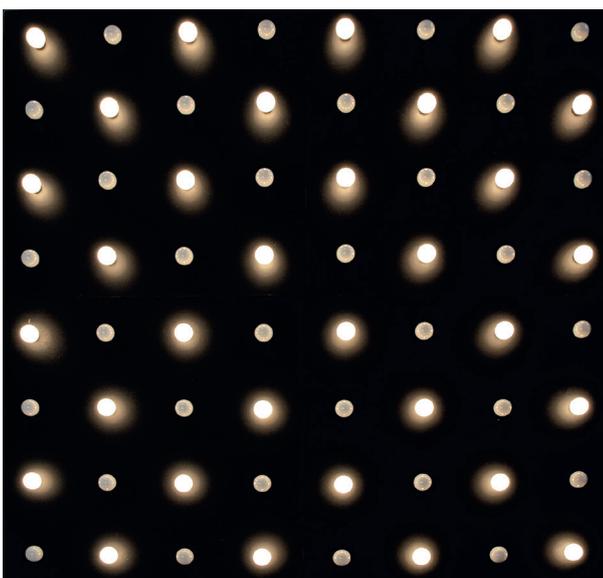
François Morellet, *Ligne continue sur 4 plans inclinés à 0°, 30°, 60°, 90°*, 1978  
Acrylic on canvas, 200 × 800 cm (each canvas: 200 × 200 cm)  
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, AM 2021-574  
© ADAGP, Paris, 2026  
Photo: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI/Bertrand Prévost/Dist. GrandPalaisRmn

# IRRATIONALAL

---

## THE "OP" MOMENT

In the late 1950s Morellet began to incorporate multiple grids in his paintings, shifting them about relative to each other in ways that generated weird visual effects. In 1961 he was one of the founding members of the Visual Arts Research Group (GRAV), together with Horacio García-Rossi, Julio Le Parc, Francisco Sobrino, Joël Stein, and Yvaral, and went on to become a leading figure in the optical and kinetic art movement. He then discarded his brushes in favour of electric light and industrial materials. GRAV's ambition was to "highlight visual instability" and promote a form of optical irrationality that would thwart the observer's mastery of the gaze. Using flashing neons and strobe lights, Morellet produced a number of pieces that effectively destabilised vision. When GRAV disbanded in 1968, he resumed his work on grids, in search of new blurring effects and optical interference.



François Morellet, *64 lampes, allumage avec 4 rythmes superposés*, 1963  
Bulbs and acrylic on wood, electrical system, 160 × 160 cm, edition 2/2  
Cholet, Estate François Morellet, 63006  
© ADAGP, Paris, 2026

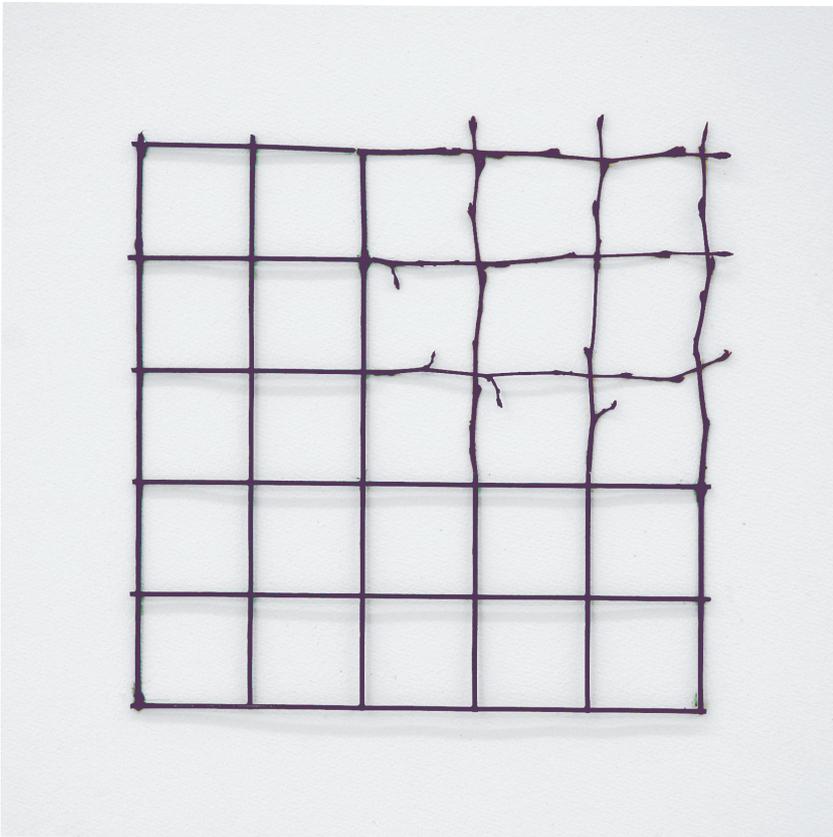


François Morellet, *GRAV III*, Biennale de Paris, 1963  
16 mm black-and-white film, silent, 6'30"  
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, AM 2012-F2  
© Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / image Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI  
© ADAGP, Paris, 2026

---

# WELL DONE/BADLY DONE

In 1983 Morellet began work on his *Geometrees* series. Now the dualism that characterises his creative vision was on display in a single work: Mondrian and geometry on the one hand, Picabia and irony on the other. The principle behind *Geometrees* is simple, but open to infinite variations. It involves producing a geometric figure or arrangement using one or more flawlessly drawn lines and one or more tree branches necessarily less regular in shape. When it is not a branch that disrupts the geometry, it may be a line drawn by chipping away at the paint covering a plywood support. Thus, the aim is to produce hybrid entities in which the purity of geometry is immediately challenged by the impertinence of rough approximation.



---

# DISTURBED SPACE

While the spatialisation of the picture was initially undertaken in a spirit of Modernist rationality, Picabia's disciple quickly gave it an unorthodox slant. The work is spatialised not out of a desire for radical anti-illusionism, but to better destabilise the viewer. Thus the painting is hung far too high, or lopsided, or it jolts our sense of horizontality with a line that crosses and overreaches it. In the same way, Morellet uses a mirror not to produce a stable reflection of the surrounding space, but to deconstruct both our visual perspective and the geometry of the object's mirror-image. Thus, *Vanishing Point of View no 2* draws the blank canvas—no longer merely the support for a form—into a deliberately illusionistic play of perspective. This spatial effect is articulated through a white parallelepiped, a sheet of paper, and a hole.



François Morellet, *Carré (miroir) plié (coupé) à 90° en 2 parties égales. Angle de la pliure (coupe) avec le côté 67°5*, 1982  
Mirror, 91 × 167 × 91 cm  
Cholet, Estate François Morellet, 82008  
© Archives François Morellet / ADAGP, Paris, 2026

---

# GEOFOLLIES

During the last two decades of his career, Morellet used the concept of the Baroque to explore the ironic dimension of his work and further destabilise geometric classicism. Neon then became one of his preferred materials. Depending on the work and the indications in the titles, neon could bow and scrape, weep, or misbehave, when it was not being outright crazy. Morellet's art borrows certain features—overload, tension, contrast, exuberance—from the Baroque aesthetic. One of the mathematical tools of this Baroque penchant is  $\pi$ , an irrational number because its repeating decimal is infinite. In his desire for freedom from a certain dogmatism inherent in concrete art, Morellet even goes so far as to humorously weigh in with a touch of Rococo.



François Morellet,  *$\pi$  Weeping Neonly n° 3*, 2003  
White-powdered argon tubes, cables, and electrical system, dimensions variable  
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, AM 2008-148  
© Archives François Morellet / ADAGP, Paris, 2026

# 4. A WORK IN PUBLIC SPACE

From his first "architectural integration" (*2 double grids + 3° / -3° red on blue*), executed on the wall of the La Reynie plateau, facing the future Centre Pompidou in Paris in 1971, to suspending a neon work from the "Lamentable" series on the hand of the Dea Roma statue at the Villa Medici as part of the Festival of Lights "Ouvert la nuit" in 2017, François Morellet created numerous works in public spaces or in remarkable heritage sites.

Some of these works follow protocols that can be adapted to new contexts. It is in this spirit that the work *4 Grids 30° - 60° - 120° - 150°, starting from a corner of the wall, with intervals corresponding to the wall height* (1977–2026), will be reactivated on the façade of the SNCF Technicentre in Metz, visible from Gallery 3, where the [François Morellet. 100 Per Cent](#) exhibition is presented

For the first time, this monumental space adjacent to the museum is thus invested with an artistic gesture, extending the experience of the exhibitions.

WITH THE SUPPORT



François Morellet, *4 Grids 30° - 60° - 120° - 150° starting from a corner of the wall. Intervals: 5.5 m, 1977–2026*  
Black adhesive tape  
Rendering simulation  
© Adagp, Paris, 2026

# 4.

## ASSOCIATED PROGRAMMING

### LECTURE

#### Behind the Scenes of the Exhibition

#### François Morellet. 100 Per Cent

By Michel Gauthier, curator of the exhibition

THU. 26.03.26

Auditorium Wendel | 18:30

During this lecture, which previews the opening of the exhibition François Morellet. 100 Per Cent, its curator Michel Gauthier traces the artist's career while developing the idea underlying this major retrospective: Morellet is unique in that he is both the foremost French representative of geometric abstraction and the one who has most decisively contributed to destabilizing it. This lecture explores, through selected works, the ambivalence between reason and unreason, and between the legacy of Francis Picabia and that of Piet Mondrian, whom the artist enjoys invoking.

### CONCERT

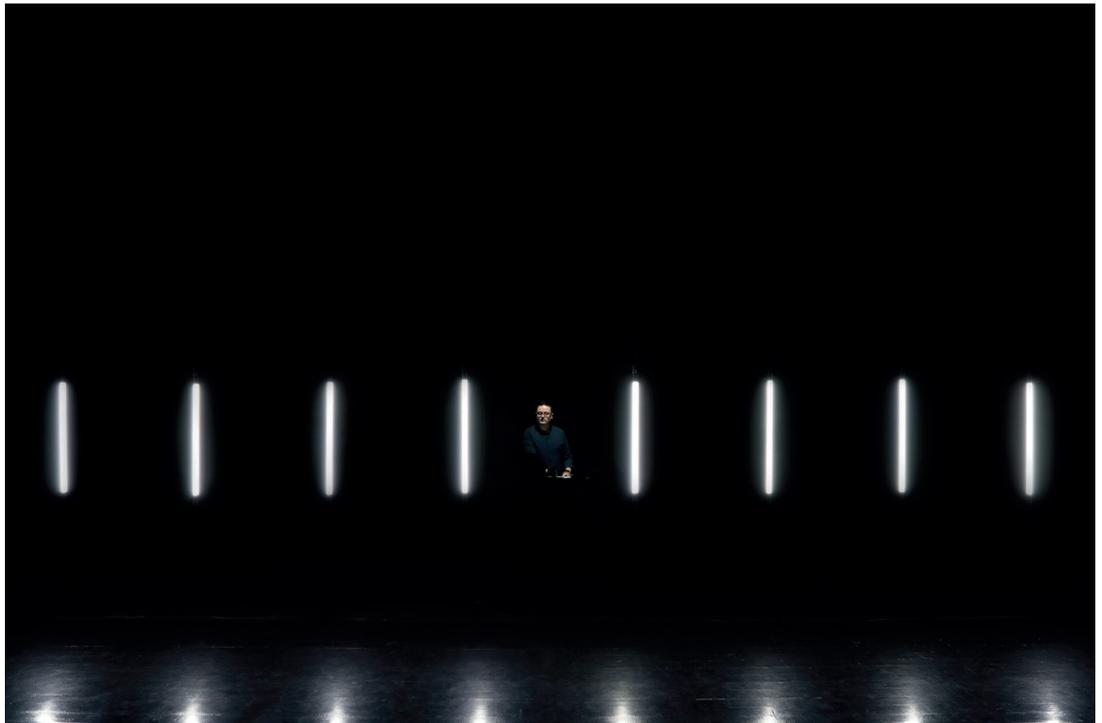
#### Des Éclairs

By Hervé Birolini, composer

SAT. 25.04.26

Studio | 16:00

In the manner of late 19th-century inventors and physicists, who showcased the progress of their knowledge during scientific lectures, Des éclairs plays with electrical energy. The piece attempts a "raw" approach to the musicality of electricity by reflecting the energy itself, revealed directly through the scenography, pulsation, wave, potential difference, and electron flow. It gives rise to sound through electroacoustics, thereby allowing the audience to both see and hear the electric matter at work—a true return to the origins of sound.



## **DANCE**

### ***Learning (For Claude Shannon)***

**By Liz Santoro and Pierre Godard**

**SAT. 25.04.26**

**SUN. 26.04.26**

**Gallery 3 | FROM 14:00**

*Learning (For Claude Shannon)* is a piece originally created for the stage. The score, which determines the choreography, space, and music of this "machine," is based on a constraint randomly drawn for each performance, generated by an algorithm and derived from connections between the words of a sentence taken from Claude Shannon's famous essay, *A Mathematical Theory of Communication* (1948), the founder of information theory. Just before each performance, the dancers learn a new choreographic sequence from the billion possibilities contained in the sentence. The result is a piece of fascinating rigor, with minimal and precise gestures, inviting the audience on a journey that sharpens attention and the senses.



Liz Santoro et Pierre Godard, *Learning (For Claude Shannon)*

## YOUNG AUDIENCE

### THE INTENTION OF GESTURE

Attandi Trawalley

FROM 30.05 TO 06.09.26 | 11:00 - 15:00

SAT. SUN. + PUBLIC HOLIDAYS | 90'

Open Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday at 3:00 PM during school holidays in Zone B

The workshop is centered on image, symbol, and gesture. Inspired by the works in the exhibition or by their family memories, participants create a pattern on a hanging fabric that reflects their personal universe and the meaning they give to their gesture.



© Florent-Michel - 11h45

## THE CAPSULE

The Capsule has been conceived as an intermediate space, between exhibition gallery and workshop, where the public is invited to take part in participatory activities linked to the museum's programming. A space of great freedom, the Capsule is a place for experimentation, a creative laboratory for emerging or established artists who are invited to work there.

### 2/4 FLEA MARKET

Javier Carro Temborry

FROM 30.05 TO 06.09.26 | 14:00 - 18:00

WED. SAT. SUN. + PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Born in Madrid in 1997, Javier Carro Temborry is a sculptor whose practice combines found objects, craftsmanship, and participatory protocols. Based in Paris since 2015, he graduated from the Beaux-Arts de Paris in 2021 with honors. The project *2/4 Flea Market* takes the form of an installation composed of life-size recreated flea market stalls. A serrated line crosses the space, rigorously dividing it into four quarters, interrupting tables and objects that are intentionally left incomplete. This boundary suggests a tension within the piece: two quarters are filled with an accumulation of objects typical of these markets, while the other two are left empty, revealing a radical friction between the museum space and the commercial.



Javier Carro Temborry, *Intercontainers (Confessions of a mask)*, 2025  
Used ceramic, industrial cut. 100 x 50 x 25 cm  
Galeria Campeche  
© ADAGP, Paris, 2026

## ACCESSIBILITY

### Shared Mediation

As part of its commitment to public speaking and learning mediation as a tool for empowerment and reintegration, the Centre Pompidou-Metz has entered into an unprecedented partnership with the agency France Travail - Grand Est. A series of six workshops with a group of long-term unemployed people is organized to prepare them for mediation in front of museum visitors. The focus is on developing speaking skills, verbal and non-verbal communication, self-confidence, and a sense of legitimacy—accompanied by the work of the artists and to guide visitors.

### Metz - Plage

As part of its commitment to speaking skills and learning mediation as a means of empowerment and reintegration, the Centre Pompidou-Metz has entered into an unprecedented partnership with the agency France Travail - Grand Est. A series of six workshops with a group of long-term unemployed people is organized to prepare them for mediation in front of museum visitors. The focus is on developing speaking skills, verbal and non-verbal communication, self-confidence, and a sense of legitimacy—accompanied by the work of the artists and to guide visitors.

### Institut national des jeunes sourds de Metz

17.06 AND 18.06.26 | Studio

For the third consecutive year, the Centre Pompidou-Metz is hosting the “Art Visuel” theater performance by the INJS as part of its program. This event, led by deaf and hard-of-hearing students, offers the public a unique theatrical experience in an art center.

## SCHOOL AND STUDENT AUDIENCES

### Special Day “Art and Mathematics”

27.04.2026

On the occasion of the exhibition [François Morellet. 100 Per cent](#), a special day dedicated to “Art and Mathematics” will be organized on April 27, 2026, led by Béatrice Bernardoff, visual arts facilitator, for 120 high school students. This event will be an opportunity to explore themes such as the Golden Ratio, Leonardo da Vinci and the Vitruvian Man, as well as Mondrian’s Neo-Plasticism.

### Interest in scientific subjects

Until the end of the school year, regional pedagogical inspectors from scientific disciplines such as mathematics, physics and technology have partnered with the exhibition in order to inform teachers about it, as it may enrich their teaching and learning activities.

### “Geometric Drawings” visits

During their visit, mediators will distribute mediation sheets to students, allowing them to draw freehand geometric compositions inspired by the works of François Morellet.

### “The SNCF Warehouse” project

As part of the exhibition, a work by François Morellet located on the SNCF warehouse, visible from Gallery 3 of the Centre Pompidou-Metz, will serve as the starting point for a workshop proposing the creation of a geometric drawing in public space: the façade of Metz train station, the façade of the former Metz post office, the water tower, etc. (for primary and middle school classes).



## THE CENTRE POMPIDOU-METZ PODCAST

*Et si je te raconte...* The podcasts of the Centre Pompidou-Metz invite listeners behind the scenes of exhibitions through the voices of all those involved in their conception and implementation: curators, research coordinators, exhibition designers, editors, registrars, restorers, and more.

Next episode:

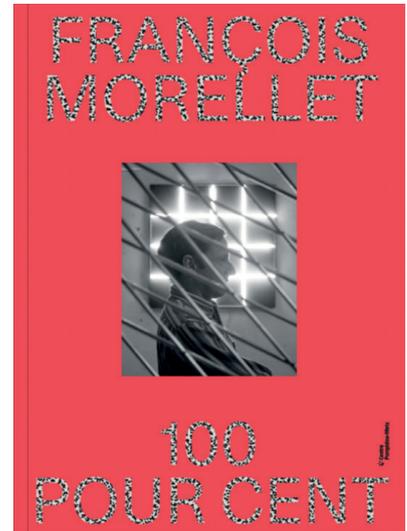
[François Morellet. 100 Per Cent](#)

# 5.

## CATALOGUE

### François Morellet. 100 Per cent

A richly illustrated catalogue, published by Éditions du Centre Pompidou-Metz, accompanies the exhibition. Introduced by an essay from the curator, the volume includes contributions from Domitille d'Orgeval, Marion Guibert, Roxane Ilias, Sonja Klee, Victor Vanoosten, and Erik Verhagen, and examines in particular the international dimension of Morellet's career, while paying tribute, in its graphic design, to the artist's systematic yet playful methods.



Centre Pompidou-Metz Editions  
Book directed by: Michel Gauthier  
Format: 24 × 32 cm  
Number of pages: 224  
Price: €35  
Publication date: April 1, 2026

Excerpt from the selective anthology, published in the *François Morellet. 100 Per Cent* catalogue  
François Morellet, "To reduce thirty-five years of work to a single sentence" [1987]

"I have been asked to reduce thirty-five years of work, a reflection of my unique, complex, and elusive 'self' (like all the 'selves' in the world, of course), to one single sentence. So here is this grotesque, mutilating, minuscule sentence, already far too long to ever be used in a dictionary or a radio quiz:

Morellet, the monstrous offspring of Mondrian and Picabia, has since 1952 developed a whole programme of systems as rigorous as they are absurd, using the simplest figures of geometry (straight lines, angles, planes...) with the most diverse materials (canvases, wire mesh, neon lights, steel, adhesives, branches...) on all kinds of surfaces (canvases, walls, statues, architectures, 'landscapes'...)."

François Morellet, "Reason and Derision" (excerpt) [2008]

"I pair the word 'Reason', which designates a serious faculty, with the word 'Derision', which applies to a carefree attitude. These two words, moreover, falsely suggest a common root, whereas their slight resemblance is merely due to their pronunciation. [...]

I do want to keep 'Reason' on its impressive, pure, unyielding pedestal, although only to better undermine it with the insidious, careless, elusive, rebellious, insolent force of 'Derision'.

Derision is the ultimate and ludicrous weapon of my frivolity, which I was once ashamed of, but now proudly claim. Moreover, I found solace and justification in essayist and moralist Emil Cioran, a master of cynicism and pessimism, who wrote in 1949:

"No one achieves frivolity straight off. It is a privilege and an art; it is the pursuit of the superficial by those who, having discerned the impossibility of any certitude, have conceived a disgust for such things; it is the escape far from one abyss or another which, being by nature bottomless, can lead nowhere."

# 6.

## FRANÇOIS MORELLET CENTENARY

100<sup>0</sup>  
x MORELLET

The retrospective François Morellet. 100 Per Cent marks the centenary of François Morellet's birth, an occasion in which numerous institutions are coming together to pay tribute to one of the major figures of contemporary art, under the initiative of the Centre Pompidou.

Present in the most important French public collections as well as in many international institutional collections, Morellet also made a lasting impact on public space, with more than a hundred works visible in our cities—on façades, in gardens, train stations, and public squares. Through the freedom and humor with which he engaged the vocabulary of geometric abstraction, he created a lively dialogue between art, architecture, and the public. In resonance with the retrospective François Morellet. 100 Per Cent presented at the Centre Pompidou-Metz, a wide-ranging national program has been launched by the Centre Pompidou, in collaboration with the François Morellet Estate and numerous partner institutions. This large-scale project unfolds across France through new installations, rediscoveries of works in various collections and in public spaces, as well as a series of meetings and lectures. The goal is to revisit Morellet's legacy, his place in art history, his relationship to heritage and architecture, and the influence he continues to exert on contemporary artists.

---

### PARTICIPATING LOCATIONS

Centre Pompidou-Metz  
Château de Montsoreau – musée d'Art contemporain  
Château de Versailles  
Cit  de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Paris  
 cole Nationale Sup rieure d'art de Bourges  
Espace de l'Art Concret (eac.), Mouans-Sartoux  
Frac des Pays de la Loire, Hellcity, Clisson  
Galerie de l'H tel de Ville, Chinon  
Galerie Mennour, Paris  
Grand Palais RMN, Paris  
[mac] mus e d'art contemporain, Marseille  
MAC VAL, Vitry-sur-Seine  
Mus e d'Art et d'Histoire, Cholet  
Mus e d'arts de Nantes  
Mus e de Grenoble  
Mus e des Beaux-Arts d'Angers  
Mus e des Beaux-Arts de Caen  
Mus e des Beaux-Arts de Rennes  
Mus e du Louvre, Paris  
Mus e national Fernand L ger, Biot  
Villa M dicis, Acad mie de France   Rome

Centre Pompidou Francilien – Fabrique de l'Art, Massy,  
at its opening

# 7. PARTNERS

The Centre Pompidou-Metz represents the first example of decentralizing a major national cultural institution, the Centre Pompidou, in partnership with local authorities. As an autonomous institution, the Centre Pompidou-Metz benefits from the experience, expertise, and international reputation of the Centre Pompidou. It shares with its parent institution the values of innovation, generosity, interdisciplinarity, and accessibility for all audiences.

It also develops partnerships with museum institutions around the world. In addition to its exhibitions, the Centre Pompidou-Metz offers dance performances, concerts, film screenings, and lectures.

It receives support from Wendel, its founding patron.



Partners



Media Partners





W E N D E L

MÉCÈNE FONDATEUR

## WENDEL, FOUNDING PATRON OF THE CENTRE POMPIDOU-METZ

Since its opening in 2010, Wendel has been committed to supporting the Centre Pompidou-Metz. Wendel wished to support an iconic institution whose cultural influence reaches the widest possible audience.

In recognition of its long-standing commitment to culture, Wendel was awarded the title of “Grand Patron of Culture” in 2012.

Wendel is one of the very first publicly listed investment companies in Europe. It operates as a long-term investor, which requires shareholder commitment, fostering trust, continuous attention to innovation, sustainable development, and promising diversification.

Wendel’s expertise lies in selecting leading companies, such as those in which it currently holds shares: ACAMS, Bureau Veritas, Crisis Prevention Institute, Globeducate, IHS Towers, Scalian, Stahl, and Tarkett. Through Wendel Growth, the company also invests — either via funds or directly — in innovative, high-growth businesses. In 2023, Wendel announced its intention to develop a private asset management platform for third-party clients alongside its own investment activities. As part of this plan, Wendel finalized the acquisition of a 51% stake in IK Partners in May 2024 and announced the acquisition of 75% of Monroe Capital on October 22, 2024.

Founded in 1704 in Lorraine, Wendel expanded over 270 years in various sectors, notably steel, before focusing on long-term investment at the end of the 1970s.

The Group is supported by its reference family shareholder, composed of around 1,300 members of the Wendel family, organized through the family company Wendel-Participations, which holds 39.6% of Wendel’s shares.

### CONTACTS

Christine Anglade  
+ 33 (0) 1 42 85 63 24  
c.anglade@wendelgroup.com

Caroline Decaux  
+ 33 (0) 1 42 85 91 27  
c.decaux@wendelgroup.com

WWW.WENDELGROUP.COM

 Wendel

@WendelGroup

# 8.

## AVAILABLE VISUALS

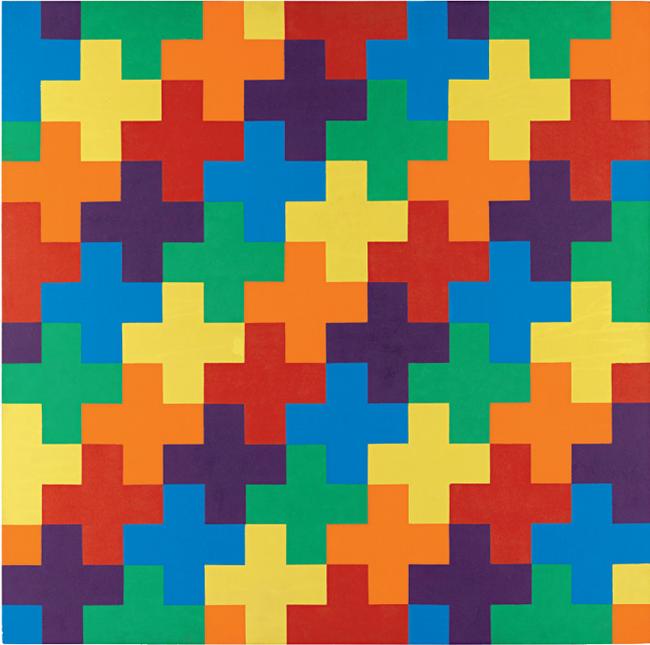
All or part of the works included in this press kit are protected by copyright. Each image must be accompanied by its caption and credit and used solely for press purposes. Any other use must be authorized by the rights holders. Terms of use are available upon request. Works managed by ADAGP are indicated by the copyright ©ADAGP, Paris 2026 and may be published for the French press only under the following conditions: For press publications that have a general agreement with ADAGP: refer to the stipulations of that agreement. For other press publications: the first two works illustrating an article about a current event directly related to them, and of a maximum size of ¼ page, may be exempt from fees. Any additional reproductions or works exceeding this size are subject to reproduction/performance rights. Any reproduction on a cover or front page must be authorized by the ADAGP Press Office.

The copyright to be mentioned for all reproductions is: author's name, title, and date of the work, followed by ©ADAGP, Paris 2026, regardless of the source of the image or the location of the work. These conditions also apply to websites with press status, provided that for online press publications, the file resolution is limited to 1,600 pixels (combined width and height).

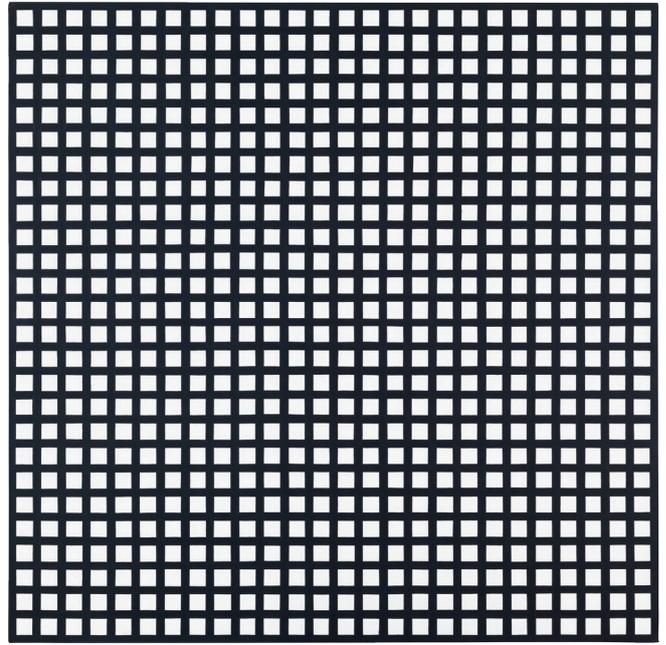
CONTACT: [presse@adagp.fr](mailto:presse@adagp.fr)  
Société des Auteurs dans les Arts Graphiques et Plastiques  
11 Rue Duguay-Trouin, 75006 PARIS  
Tel.: +33 (0)1 43 59 09 79  
[adagp.fr](http://adagp.fr)

To download the visuals, please log in to your press account on our website. If you do not yet have an account, please create one. This simple procedure helps us ensure that the image rights of the authors are properly respected. For any questions or further information, you can contact us at any time at [presse@centrepompidou-metz.fr](mailto:presse@centrepompidou-metz.fr).

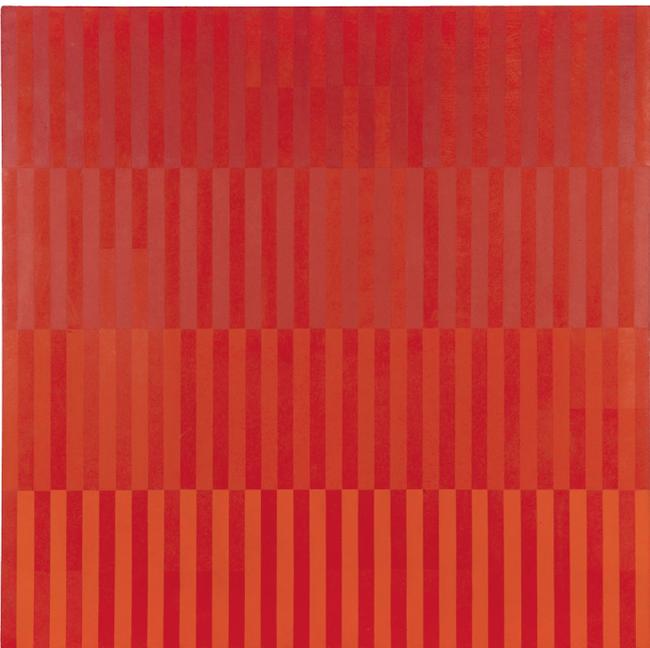




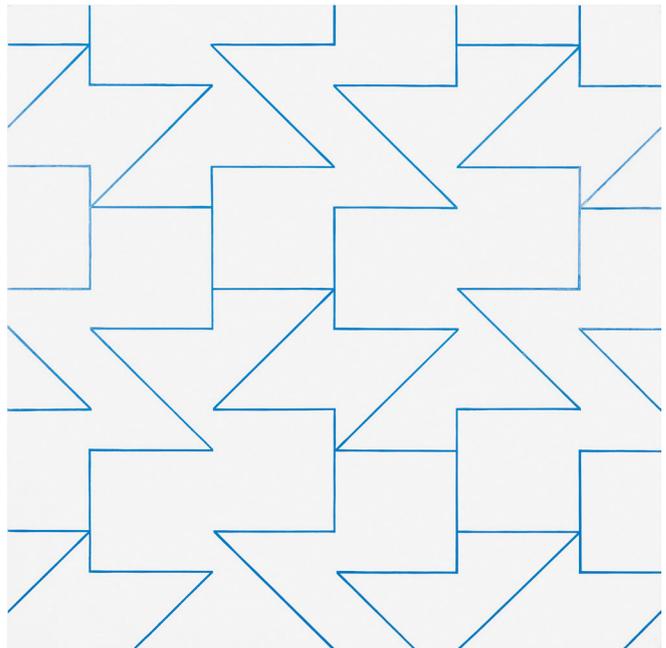
François Morellet, *Violet, bleu, vert, jaune, orange, rouge*, 1953  
Oil on wood, 80 x 80 cm  
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée National d'Art Moderne, AM 1985-494  
© ADAGP, Paris, 2026  
Photo: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI / Audrey Laurans / Dist. Grand Palais Rmn



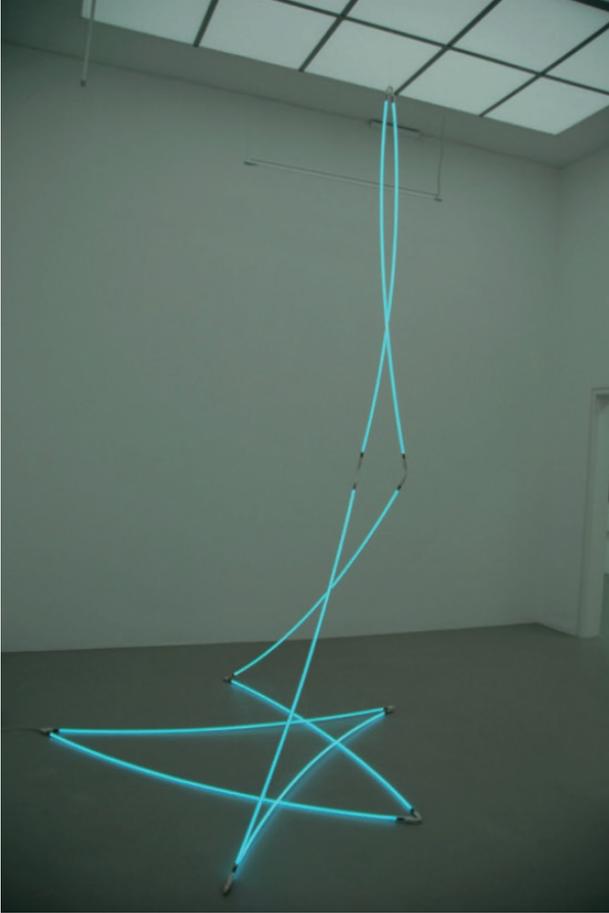
François Morellet, *1 double trame épaisse - 0°*, 1972  
Oil on canvas, 240 x 240 cm  
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée National d'Art Moderne, AM 2021-573  
© ADAGP, Paris, 2026  
Photo: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI / Audrey Laurans / Dist. Grand Palais Rmn



François Morellet, *5 rouges différents*, 1953  
Oil on wood, 80 x 80 cm  
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée National d'Art Moderne, AM 2021-565  
© ADAGP, Paris, 2026  
Photo: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI / Hélène Mauri / Dist. Grand Palais Rmn



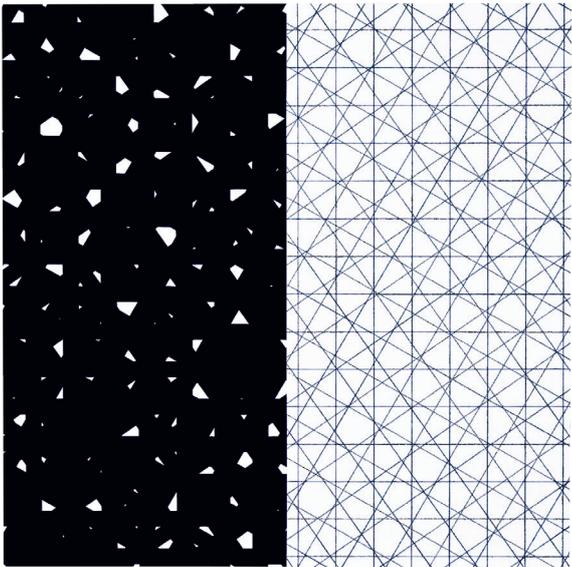
François Morellet, *2 fois 90°, 90°, 45°, 45°, etc. n°1*, 1957  
Oil on wood, 80 x 80 cm  
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée National d'Art Moderne, AM 2021-565  
© ADAGP, Paris, 2026  
Photo: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI / Hélène Mauri / Grand Palais Rmn Distribution



François Morellet, *Lamentable Ø 5 m bleu*, 2005  
Blue argon tubes and electrical system, dimensions variable  
Cholet, Estate of François Morellet, 05047  
© Archives François Morellet / ADAGP, Paris, 2026



François Morellet, *Steel Life n° 3*, 1987  
Acrylic on canvas on wood and flat iron, 112 x 106 cm  
Paris, Mennour Collection  
Courtesy of the Estate of François Morellet, Cholet, and Mennour, Paris  
© ADAGP, Paris, 2026 / Photo: Courtesy of the Estate of François Morellet, Cholet, and Mennour, Paris / Julie Joubert



François Morellet, *3 trames strip-teasing 0°-90°, 30°-120°, 55°-145°*, 2009  
Acrylic on canvas on wood, 150 x 150 cm  
Cholet, Estate of François Morellet, 09021  
© Archives François Morellet / ADAGP, Paris, 2026



François Morellet, *Écran circulaire 20 % 5 fois dégradé*, 1969  
Screen-printed ink on panel, 80 x 80 cm, edition 1/3  
Paris, Mennour Collection  
Courtesy of the Estate of François Morellet, Cholet, and Mennour, Paris  
© ADAGP, Paris, 2026 / Photo: Courtesy of the Estate of François Morellet, Cholet, and Mennour, Paris



François Morellet, *Du jaune au blanc*, 1953  
Oil on canvas, 140 x 140 cm  
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée National d'Art Moderne, AM 2021-566  
© ADAGP, Paris, 2026  
Photo: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI / Hélène Mauri / Grand Palais Rmn Distribution



François Morellet, *3 x 3*, 1954  
Oil on wood, 134.3 x 134 cm  
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée National d'Art Moderne, AM 1985-496  
© ADAGP, Paris, 2026  
Photo: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI / Georges Meguerditchian / Grand Palais Rmn Distribution



François Morellet, *2 doubles trames + 3° - 3° rouge sur bleu*, La Reynie platform wall, Paris, 1971  
© Archives François Morellet  
© Adagp, Paris, 2026



François Morellet, *Lamentable*, ø 8m20 blue, 2006, Villa Médicis, Rome, 2017  
© Photothèque de l'Académie de France à Rome - Villa Médicis  
Courtesy Académie de France à Rome - Villa Médicis  
© Adagp, Paris, 2026

# CENTRE POMPIDOU-METZ

1, parvis des Droits-de-l'Homme - 57000 Metz

+33 (0)3 87 15 39 39

[contact@centrepompidou-metz.fr](mailto:contact@centrepompidou-metz.fr)

[centrepompidou-metz.fr](http://centrepompidou-metz.fr)

 Centre Pompidou-Metz

 Pompidoumetz

## Opening Hours

Every day except Tuesdays and May 1st

01.11 > 31.03

MON. | WED. | THU. | FRI. | SAT. | SUN. : 10:00 – 18:00

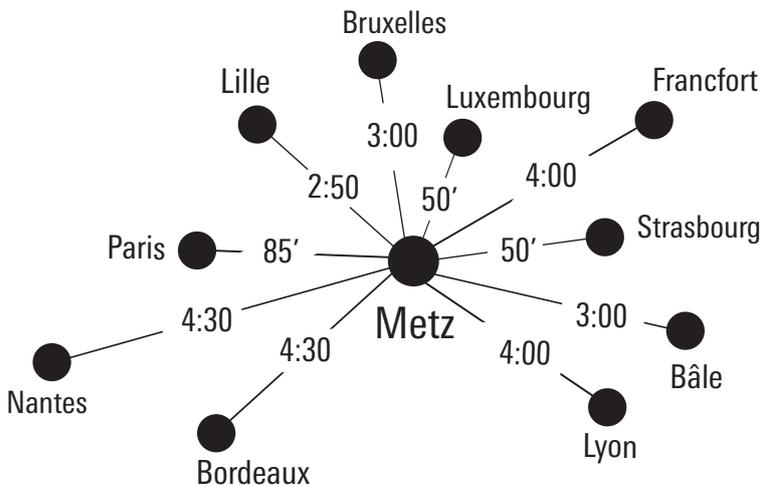
01.04 > 31.10

MON. | WED. | THU. : 10:00 – 18:00

FRI. | SAT. | SUN. : 10:00 – 19:00

## HOW TO GET HERE?

Shortest routes via the rail network





## PRESS CONTACTS

### CENTRE POMPIDOU-METZ

Regional Press

**Elsa de Smet**

Phone : +33 (0)3 87 15 39 64

+33 (0)7 72 24 88 68

[presse@centrepompidou-metz.fr](mailto:presse@centrepompidou-metz.fr)

### CLAUDINE COLIN COMMUNICATION, A FINN PARTNERS COMPANY

National and International Press

**Laurence Belon**

Phone : +33 (0)1 42 72 60 01

+33 (0)7 61 95 78 69

[laurence.belon@finnpartners.com](mailto:laurence.belon@finnpartners.com)

