

Michel Parmentier *Calques – Tracing Papers, 1989-1991*

29.11.2019 – 18.01.2020

Extract from Guy Massaux, “[tracing paper] October 12 1989 – June 14 1991,” in *Michel Parmentier, December 1965 – November 20 1999, A Retrospective* (New York: Ortuzar Projects and Paris: Editions Loevenbruck, 2019), p. 163. Text revised to accompany the exhibition “Michel Parmentier, *Calques – Tracing Papers, 1989-1991*,” Paris, galerie Loevenbruck, November 29 2019 – January 18 2020.

1989

[tracing paper]
October 12, 1989 –
June 14, 1991

After the works on paper, in which the *degree zero of painting* (of the gesture of painting) proved fertile but also, to say the least, problematized by Parmentier, the artist started using tracing paper, a translucent and semi-transparent support.

1990

Tracing paper leaves the work's support visible¹ and its transparency makes this an active part of the conditions of showing and perceiving. Its degree of opacity veils the wall but does not conceal it.

The first works on tracing paper with rubbed charcoal² are *9 décembre 1989 (December 9, 1989)* and *14 décembre 1989 (December 14, 1989)*. In both, the charcoal is applied with the same circular movement, but the density is different in each work.³ Parmentier even saturates and exhausts the transparency of the tracing paper. On the surface, the rubbing makes evident the relief of the folds situated inside the apparatus (*24 décembre 1989 (December 24, 1989)*). In many of the tracing paper works, the relief and grain of the support (panel, wall) on which the work is produced appear on the surface, the support being literally *traced [calqué]* by the rubbing of the medium (graphite, charcoal, pastel, oil-bar) and the pressure exerted on the strips.

1992

In the first works in white pastel, the traces are “penciled and rubbed” (*13 décembre*

1993

1989 (December 13, 1989)), “with *plats* not rubbed” (*18 décembre 1989 (December 18, 1989)*), “neutral with *plats* not rubbed” (*5 janvier 1990 (January 5, 1990)*), and “with *plats* scribbled and erased” (*20 février 1990 (February 20, 1990)*).

The term *plats* (“flats”) is applied to the pastel sticks and oil bars that Parmentier cuts into regular cylinders that are between 1.5 and 5 cm long, depending on the medium used, and then split lengthways in order to obtain two half-cylinders each with one flat side. Painting “with flats” means applying the flat side to the support, thus obtaining a regular trace of equal width. Starting with *6 mars 1991 (March 6, 1991)*, a work that Parmentier describes as “lines with almost joined and vertical *plats*,” the latter reintroduces the notion of “*traits*” (strokes, marks) in white pastel applied à *plats* with the cut side of the pastel. Each stroke is applied/traced beside and after another stroke, “almost joined and vertical,” from top to bottom, and of equal length, and from left to right, so as to cover the whole surface, as in *5 avril 1991 (April 5, 1991)*.

1994

1995

Subsequently, the same principle is applied using sticks of oil bar in *6 mars 1991 (March 6, 1991)*; *5 mai 1991 II (May 5, 1991 II)*; *5 mai 1991 IV (May 5, 1991 IV)*; and gray pastel: *19 avril 1991 (April 19, 1991)*; *25 avril 1991 (April 25, 1991)*; *28 avril 1991 (April 28, 1991)*; and *4 juin 1991 II (June 4, 1991 II)*.

1996

Despite the seeming seriality of the work, each new piece is seen not as part of an ensemble but as a singular value, and several works may be dated to the same day. For example, *5 mai 1991 (May 5, 1991)*, from *I* to *V*, is a series of variations on the same gesture (“8 sequences. white oil-bar/tracing paper 90/95, almost joined and vertical strokes, 304 x 300, Brussels”), with the same paper, the same formats, and the same place⁴ in a set of five; with the indication “idem” written in the notebook as many times as the work is executed. It is the same for the works that are dated *31 mai 1991 (May 31, 1991)*, from *I* to *V*, which were all produced for the “Buren Parmentier” exhibition, held in Brussels at the Palais des Beaux-Arts between June 7, 1991 – July 20, 1991.

1997

The works on tracing paper end with *6 juin 1991 (June 6, 1991)*, a “tracing paper folded and left blank, then unfolded.” These work shows the tracing paper “blank,” with only the folds and the marking from the date stamp.

1998

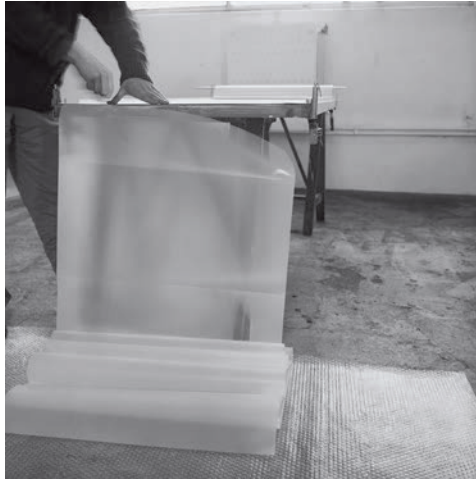
1999

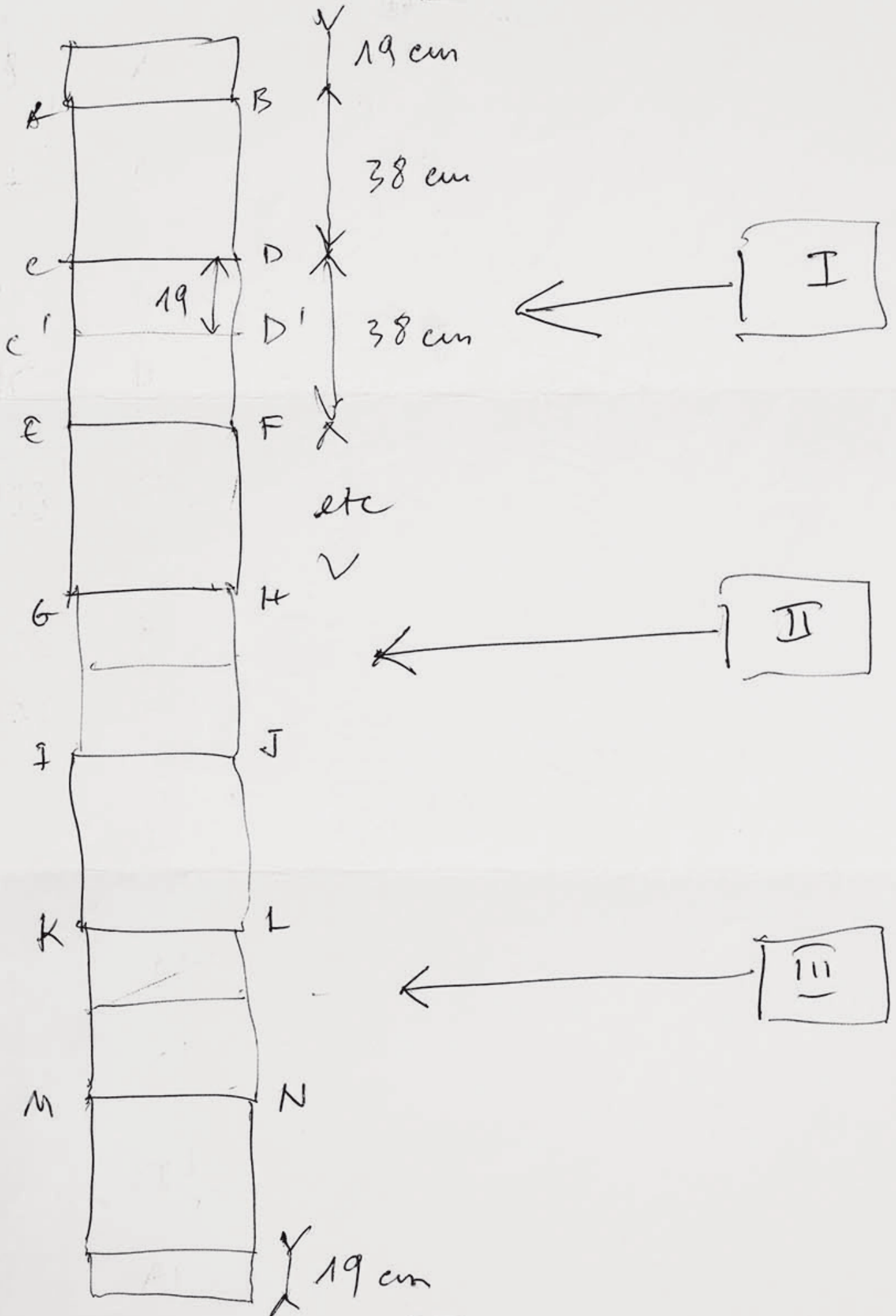
¹ The works on tracing paper and calque polyester are conceived in order to be exhibited only on white walls.

² These details are written by Parmentier in the notebook, in which he records details of his works.

³ *24 décembre 1989 (December 24, 1989)* and *14 février 1990 (February 14, 1990)*. The latter is the largest work that Parmentier left us. It comprises an ensemble of 36 strips in a progressive sequence from 1 to 8. Apart from the first strip, which situates the hanging of the ensemble, each sub-ensemble comprises between 2 to 8 strips. When hung, these sub-ensembles are separated by the width of one strip (37.5 cm), extending to 16.875 meters long in total. It was made for the exhibition “Buren Parmentier” at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels.

⁴ Starting in April 1991, Parmentier traveled regularly to Brussels to prepare the exhibition “Buren Parmentier.” He completed a number of his works in the studio of Guy Massaux at 123, rue Marconi, Forest (Brussels (Belgium)).









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Michel Parmentier 9 décembre 1989 (December 9, 1989), 1989

Fusain rubbed on tracing paper, 7 horizontal bands alternating 38 cm wide (4+3) and, at the top and bottom, 2 blank partial bands
119 11/16 × 73 13/16 in
Inv. No. : MP891209

Provenance

2014 The Estate of Michel Parmentier Paris

Exhibitions history

2019 "Calques – Tracing Papers, 1989-1991" Galerie Loevenbruck Paris FR

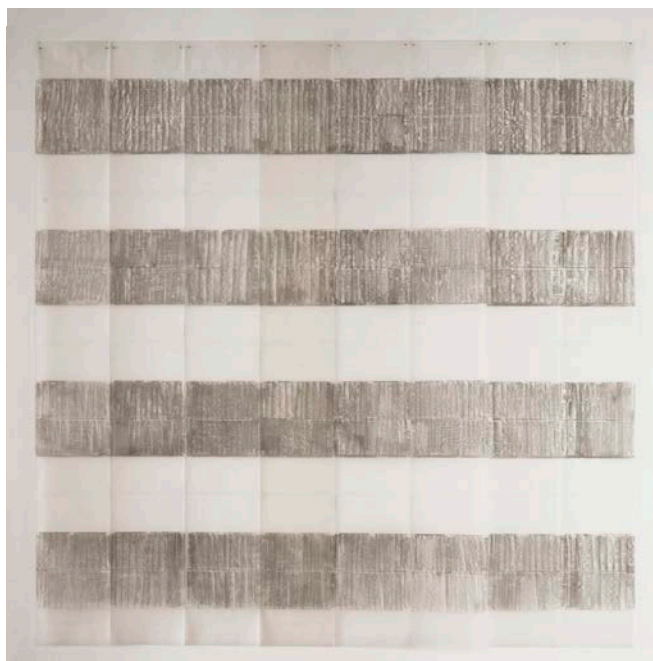
Bibliography

- 2019 *Michel Parmentier, December 1965 - November 20, 1999: A Retrospective* New York, Ortuzar Projects , Paris, Éditions Loevenbruck p. 143, 163
- 2016 *Michel Parmentier. Décembre 1965 — 20 novembre 1999. Une rétrospective* Éditions Loevenbruck Paris p. 137, 151









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Michel Parmentier 19 avril 1991 (April 19, 1991), 1991

Gray pastel applied flat, vertically, on calque paper, 7 horizontal bands alternating 38 cm wide (4+3) and, at the top and bottom, 2 blank partial bands 19 cm wide

119 11/16 × 118 1/8 in

Inv. No. : MP910419

Provenance

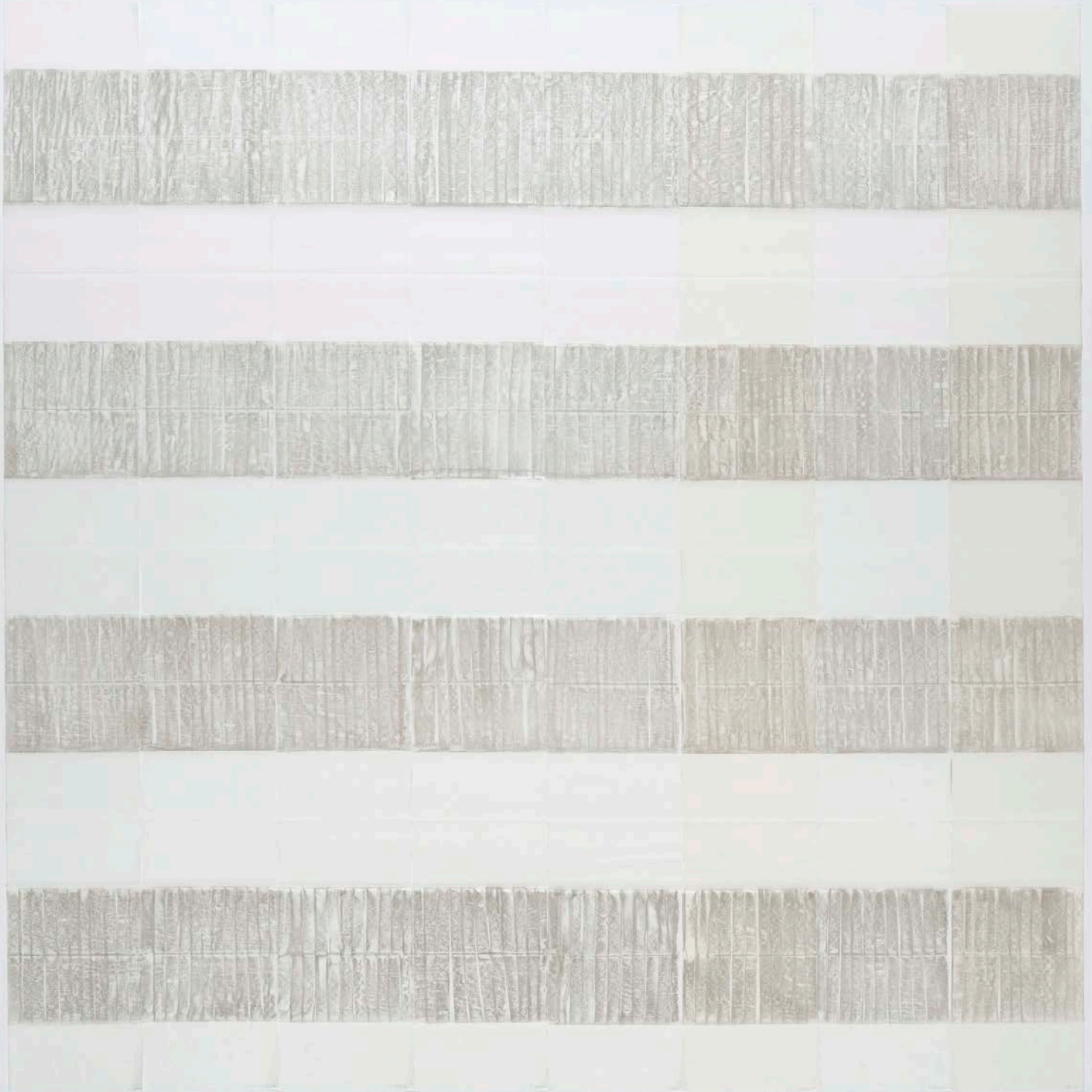
1991	Galerie Liliane & Michel Durand-Dessert	Paris
2014	Durand-Dessert Collection	Paris

Exhibitions history

2019	"Calques – Tracing Papers, 1989-1991"	Galerie Loevenbruck	Paris	FR
2014	"Michel Parmentier, déc. 1965 – 20 nov. 1999, une rétrospective."	Villa Tamaris Centre d'art	La Seyne-sur-Mer	FR
1991	"Buren Parmentier"	Palais des Beaux-Arts	Brussels	BE

Bibliography

2019	<i>Michel Parmentier, December 1965 - November 20, 1999: A Retrospective</i>	New York, Ortuzar Projects , Paris, Éditions Loevenbruck		p. 163, 171, 225, n°114
2016	<i>Michel Parmentier. Décembre 1965 — 20 novembre 1999. Une rétrospective</i>	Éditions Loevenbruck	Paris	p. 151, 159, 168, n°114
2015	<i>Les Cahiers du Musée national d'art moderne, N°132, été 2015</i>	Centre Pompidou	Paris	p. 33







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Michel Parmentier 28 avril 1991 (April 28, 1991), 1991

Gray pastel applied flat, vertically, on tracing paper, 7 horizontal bands alternating 38 cm wide (4+3) and, at the top and bottom, 2 blank partial bands 19 cm wide
119 11/16 × 118 1/8 in
Inv. No. : MP910428

Provenance

2014 The Estate of Michel Parmentier Paris

Exhibitions history

2019	"Calques – Tracing Papers, 1989-1991"	Galerie Loevenbruck	Paris	FR
2018	"Michel Parmentier: Paintings & Works on Paper"	Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum	East Lansing	US





ENGAGEMENT

Le soussigné, **Monsieur Isy Brachot**

acquéreur (ci-après dénommé l'ACQUEREUR) de l'oeuvre suivante (ci-après dénommé l'OEUVRE) de Monsieur Michel PARMENTIER (ci-après dénommé l'ARTISTE) :

↳ sans titre : 31.05.91
papier calque libre en 8 séquences
rehaussé de peinture blanche
dimensions totales : 304 x 300 cm
daté 31.05.91

déclare prendre les engagements suivants envers l'ARTISTE :

- 3 H**
1. L'ACQUEREUR n'exposera ni ne laissera exposer l'OEUVRE en public sans autorisation préalable, écrite ~~ou~~ expresse de l'ARTISTE.

Le soussigné lui reconnaît le droit de refuser son autorisation sans avoir à justifier d'un motif, ou de fixer à sa convenance toutes conditions matérielles d'exposition autres que financières.

Cet engagement lie l'ACQUEREUR et tous les ayants-droit entre vifs ou à cause de mort, pour une durée de 21 ans à compter du décès de l'ARTISTE.

2. L'ACQUEREUR s'engage à ne pas altérer ni modifier l'OEUVRE et s'interdit notamment de faire tendre la toile sur châssis.

Cet engagement étant lié au droit moral de l'ARTISTE, est souscrit pour une durée illimitée.

3. L'ACQUEREUR s'engage à subordonner la cession de l'OEUVRE à la souscription par le cessionnaire d'un engagement identique en faveur de l'ARTISTE et se chargera de lui en transmettre l'original.

Fait à Bruxelles
le 21 avril 1993
en deux exemplaires originaux dont
l'un est conservé par l'acquéreur

l'ACQUEREUR



© ADAGP, Paris. The Estate of Michel Parmentier. AMP – Michel Parmentier Archives, Brussels / Loevenbruck, Paris. Photo: Roberto Ruiz, courtesy Parra & Romero.

Michel Parmentier 31 mai 1991 III (May 31, 1991 III), 1991

Oil bar blanc applied flat, vertically, on tracing paper, alternating 7 horizontal bands 38 cm wide (4+3) and, at the top and bottom, 2 blank partial bands 19 cm wide

119 11/16 × 118 1/8 in

Inv. No. : MP910531c

Provenance

Isy Brachot Collection

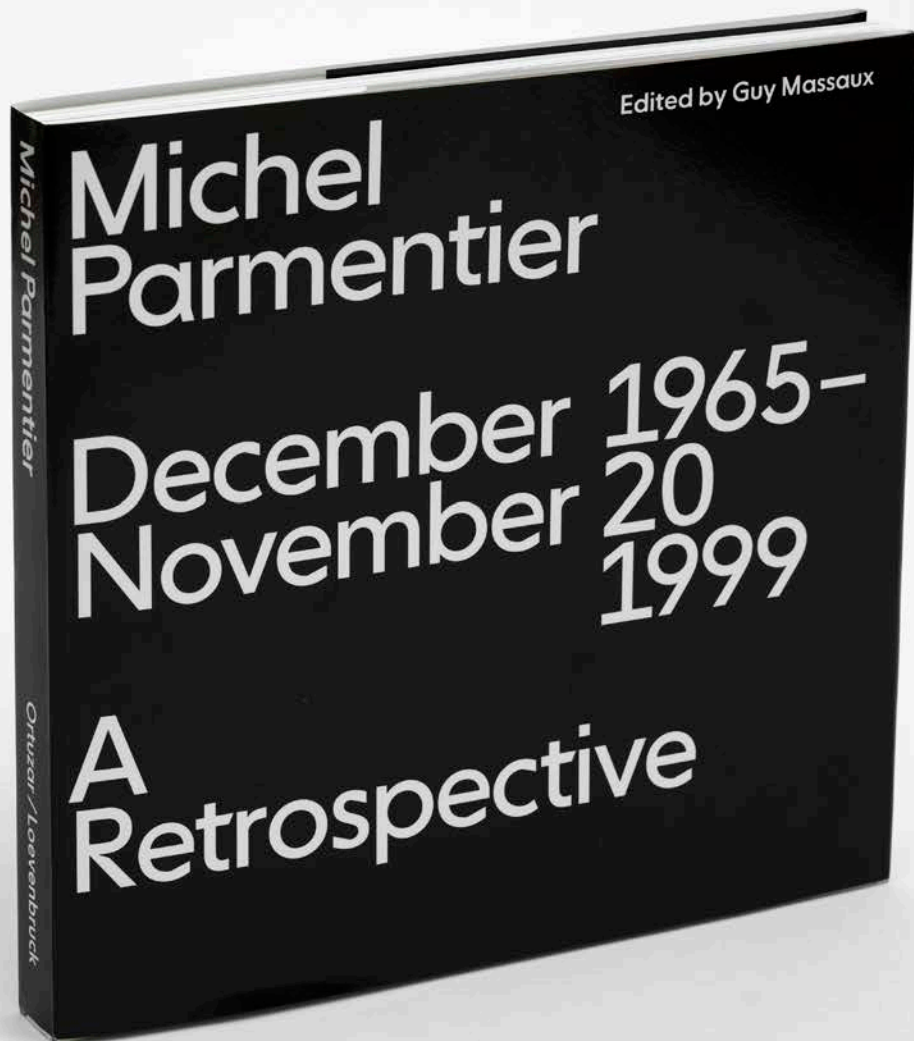
Brussels

Exhibitions history

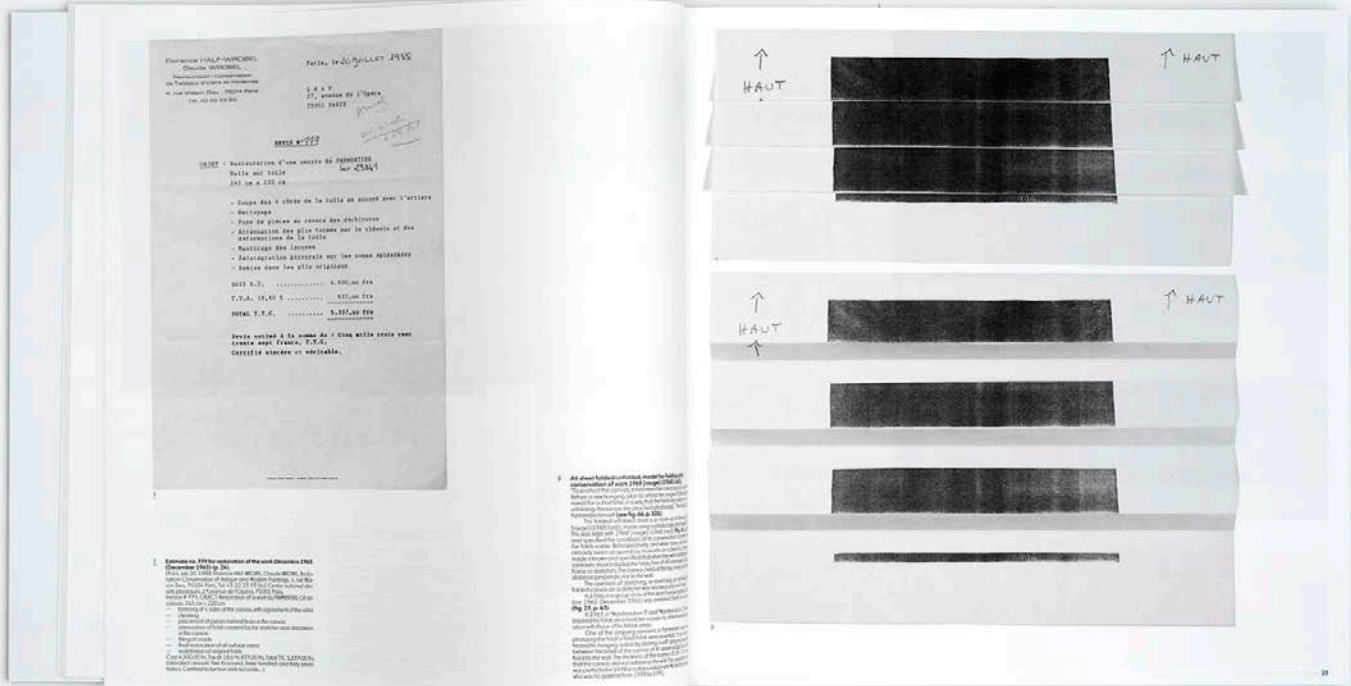
2019	"Calques – Tracing Papers, 1989-1991"	Galerie Loevenbruck	Paris	FR
2017	"Philippe Decrauzat - Michel Parmentier"	Parra & Romero	Madrid	ES
1992	"Michel Parmentier"	Galerie Christine and Isy Brachot	Paris	FR

Bibliography

2019	<i>Michel Parmentier, December 1965 - November 20, 1999: A Retrospective</i>	New York, Ortuzar Projects , Paris, Éditions Loevenbruck		p. 190,191, n°125, 126, 127
2016	<i>Michel Parmentier. Décembre 1965 — 20 novembre 1999. Une rétrospective</i>	Éditions Loevenbruck	Paris	p. 178, 179, n°125, 126, 127



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		1984		1991	1998
		1985		1992	1999



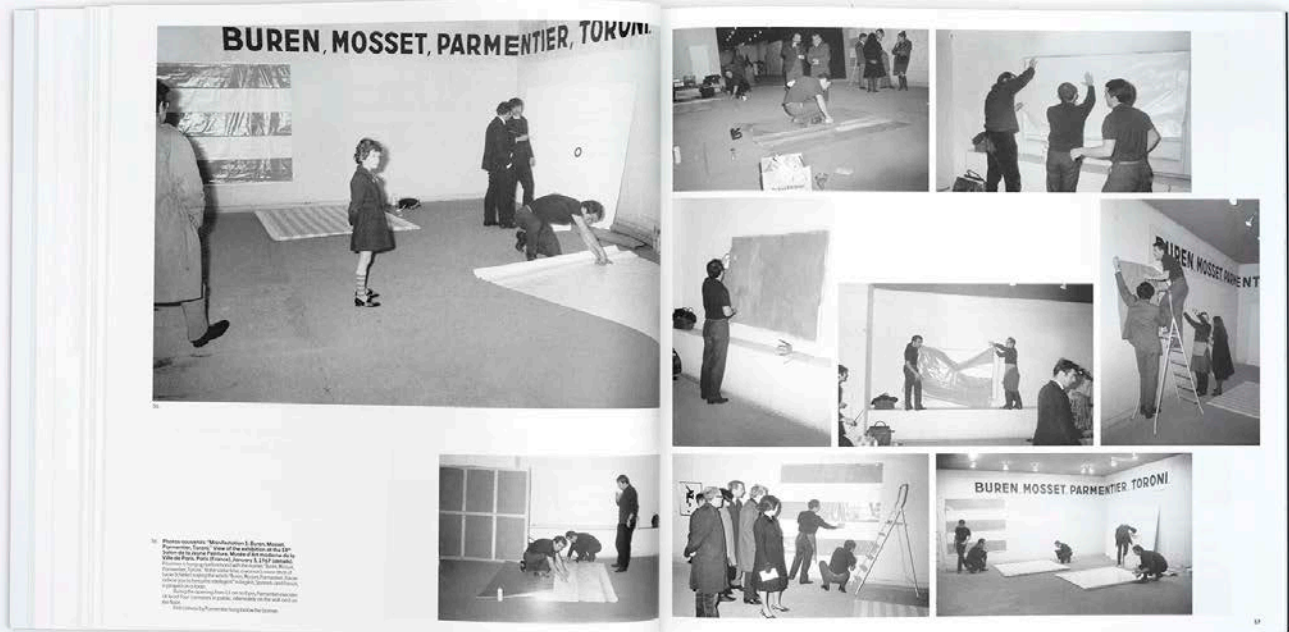


Photo: Loevenbruck - Manifestation 3, Buren, Mosset, Parmentier, Toroni. Une œuvre d'art présentée au sein d'un espace d'exposition. Musée de l'Art Moderne et de la Ville de Paris. Photo: Loevenbruck - Manifestation 3, Buren, Mosset, Parmentier, Toroni. Une œuvre d'art présentée au sein d'un espace d'exposition. Musée de l'Art Moderne et de la Ville de Paris. Photo: Loevenbruck - Manifestation 3, Buren, Mosset, Parmentier, Toroni. Une œuvre d'art présentée au sein d'un espace d'exposition. Musée de l'Art Moderne et de la Ville de Paris.



IL NE S'AGISSAIT ÉVIDEMMENT QUE DE REGARDER DES TOILES DE BUREN-MOSSET-PARMENTIER-TORONI

Il faut y voir :

Une toile de 2,50 m x 2,50 m divisée en 29 bandes égales et verticales, rouges et blanches, dont les deux extrêmes sont recouvertes de blanc. (BUREN).

Un cercle (1) noir au centre d'une toile (2) blanche. (MOSSET).

Sur une toile de 2,50 m x 2,50 m des bandes horizontales alternées grisées (3) et blanches (4) de 0,38 m x 2,50 m. Partielle, la septième (et dernière) bande mesure 0,22 m x 2,50 m. (PARMENTIER).

85 empreintes bleues d'un pinceau plat (n° 50), à intervalles de 30 cm, sur une surface blanche de 2,50 m x 2,50 m. (TORONI).

C'ÉTAIT MANIFESTATION 3. 2 JUIN 1967

BUREN - MOSSET - PARMENTIER - TORONI.

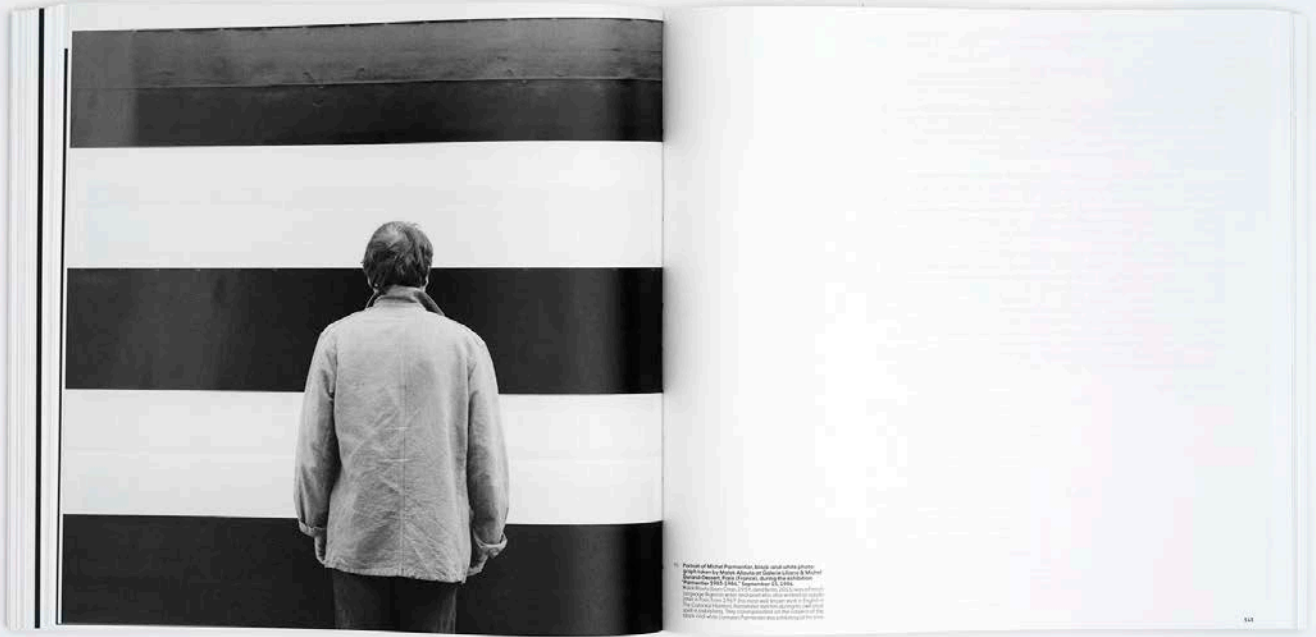
- (1) Diamètre intérieur 4,5 cm, diamètre extérieur 7,8 cm.
- (2) 2,50 m x 2,50 m.
- (3) Cône pinceau Inond Krayon.
- (4) Broyé cellulosique Letravan.

Exp. Loevenbruck - Paris

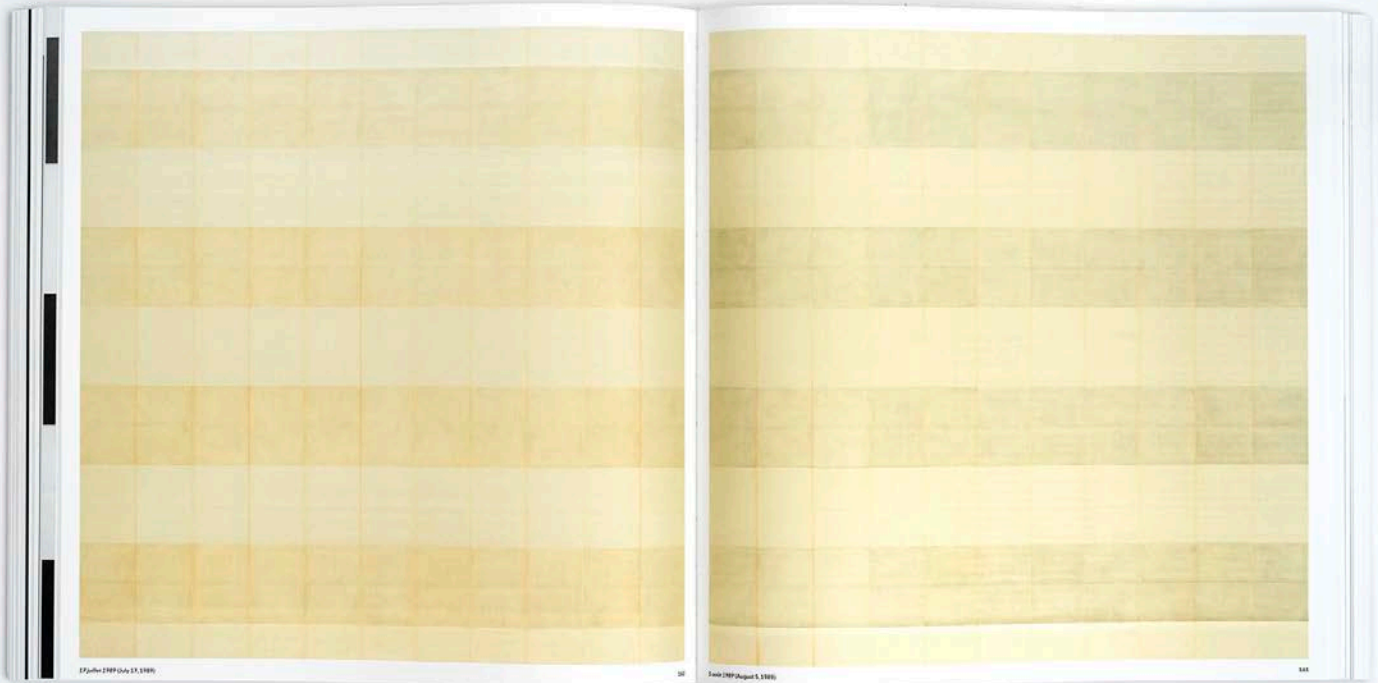
Photo: Loevenbruck - Manifestation 3, Buren, Mosset, Parmentier, Toroni. Musée de l'Art Moderne, Centre d'Art Jacques-Lacan, Paris. Photo: Loevenbruck - Manifestation 3, Buren, Mosset, Parmentier, Toroni. Musée de l'Art Moderne, Centre d'Art Jacques-Lacan, Paris.

12 Photo: Loevenbruck - Manifestation 3, Buren, Mosset, Parmentier, Toroni. Musée de l'Art Moderne, Centre d'Art Jacques-Lacan, Paris. Photo: Loevenbruck - Manifestation 3, Buren, Mosset, Parmentier, Toroni. Musée de l'Art Moderne, Centre d'Art Jacques-Lacan, Paris.

13 Photo: Loevenbruck - Manifestation 3, Buren, Mosset, Parmentier, Toroni. Musée de l'Art Moderne, Centre d'Art Jacques-Lacan, Paris. Photo: Loevenbruck - Manifestation 3, Buren, Mosset, Parmentier, Toroni. Musée de l'Art Moderne, Centre d'Art Jacques-Lacan, Paris.



Portrait of Mikael Pernerman, single and contemporary
by Mikael Pernerman, 1984, oil on canvas, 100 x 150 cm,
Collection of the artist, Paris, France. © Mikael Pernerman
1984. All rights reserved. www.loevenbruck.com



1999 (July 13, 1999)

1999 (August 5, 1999)



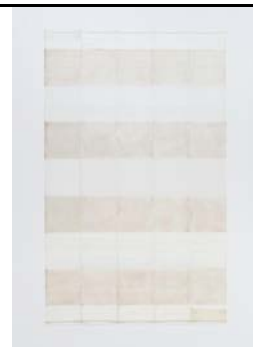
Exhibited artworks list

Michel Parmentier

***9 décembre 1989* (December 9, 1989), 1989**

Fusain rubbed on tracing paper, 7 horizontal bands alternating 38 cm wide (4+3) and, at the top and bottom, 2 blank partial bands
119 11/16 × 73 13/16 in
Inv. No. : MP891209

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Michel Parmentier

***19 avril 1991* (April 19, 1991), 1991**

Gray pastel applied flat, vertically, on calque paper, 7 horizontal bands alternating 38 cm wide (4+3) and, at the top and bottom, 2 blank partial bands 19 cm wide
119 11/16 × 118 1/8 in
Inv. No. : MP910419

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Michel Parmentier

***28 avril 1991* (April 28, 1991), 1991**

Gray pastel applied flat, vertically, on tracing paper, 7 horizontal bands alternating 38 cm wide (4+3) and, at the top and bottom, 2 blank partial bands 19 cm wide
119 11/16 × 118 1/8 in
Inv. No. : MP910428

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Michel Parmentier

***31 mai 1991 III* (May 31, 1991 III), 1991**

Oil bar blanc applied flat, vertically, on tracing paper, alternating 7 horizontal bands 38 cm wide (4+3) and, at the top and bottom, 2 blank partial bands 19 cm wide
119 11/16 × 118 1/8 in
Inv. No. : MP910531c

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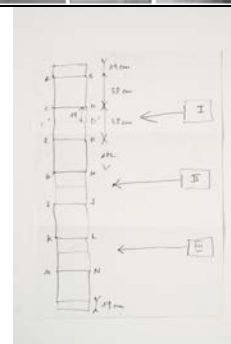
List of documents

Michel Parmentier in Guy Massaux's studio, 123, Rue Marconi, Forest (Brussels).
Author: Philippe Simon
Black-and-white photographs, reproduction from negatives, 6 × 6 cm each.
Inv. No. : AMP : 10178–10186, 10189–10190, 10192



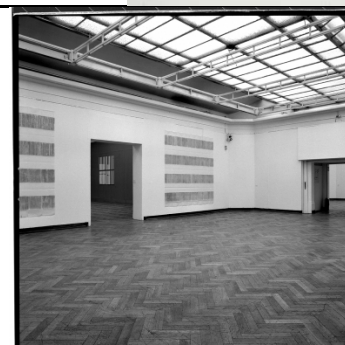
© ADAGP, Paris. AMP – Fonds Michel Parmentier, Brussels. Photo : Paris, archives Philippe Simon.

Handwritten letter from Michel Parmentier to Guy Massaux, March 25, 1992, letter paper with "Jeand'heur Extra Strong" watermark and sketch-diagram of a strip, 4 pages, p. 4.
29,7 x 21 cm (11 7/16 x 8 1/4 in)
Inv. No. : AMP03935-4



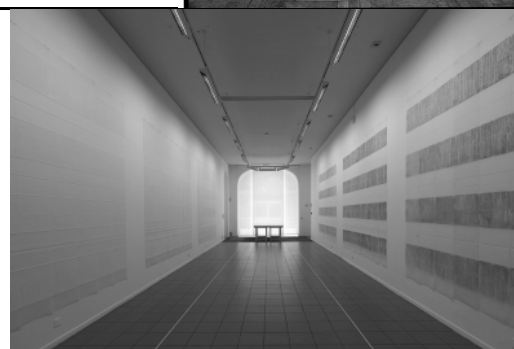
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Photo-souvenir: exhibition "Buren Parmentier," Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels (Belgium), black-and-white photograph, black-and-white reproduction from negative
6 x 6 cm (2 3/8 x 2 3/8 in)
Inv. No. : AMP10146



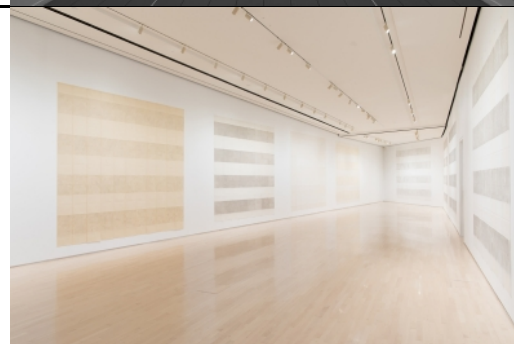
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Exhibition view, "Michel Parmentier, déc. 1965 – 20 nov. 1999, une rétrospective.", La Seyne-sur-Mer, Villa Tamaris Centre d'art, FR
Inv. No. : MPDOC191102



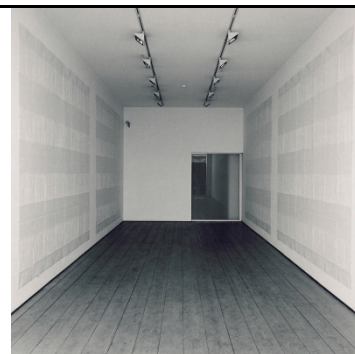
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Exhibition view, "Michel Parmentier", East Lansing, Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, US
Inv. No. : MPDOC191101



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View of the exhibition "Michel Parmentier," Paris, Galerie Christine et Isy Brachot, April 29 – May 30, 1992, black-and-white photograph
6 x 6 cm (2 3/8 x 2 3/8 in)
Inv. No. : AMP10151



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Contract with Isy Brachot, dated April 21, 1993, concerning the work *31 mai 1991 III* (May 31, 1991 III).
Paris, Galerie Loevenbruck
Inv. No. : MPDOC191103



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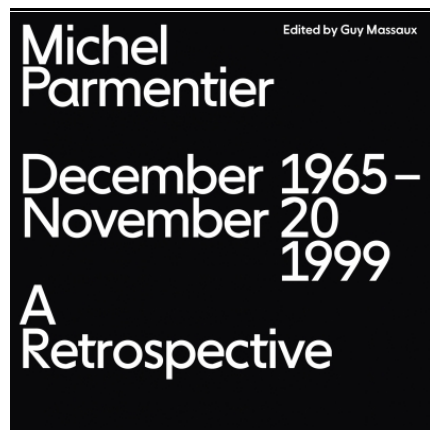
Michel Parmentier, December 1965 - November 20, 1999: A Retrospective

New York, Ortuzar Projects

Paris, Éditions Loevenbruck

11.2019

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The title of this long-overdue monograph references two key works by legendary French abstract painter Michel Parmentier (1938–2000): the one that the artist considered the origin of his oeuvre (“Décembre 1965”), and his last work, made on 20 November, 1999. In between those two works lies Parmentier’s career, his years of systematically and rigorously exploring the conceptual and aesthetic possibilities of painting by means of the ostensibly simple striped painting. This volume offers a selection of 31 major works by the artist and seven new essays on his work, contextualized by nearly 300 documents (most of them never previously published) from the Michel Parmentier archives, libraries, and public and private collections.

[More information](#)