

GALERIE MITTERRAND

FRANCISCO SOBRINO

ESPACES VIRTUELS

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PRESS RELEASE

Galerie Mitterrand is pleased to present *Espaces Virtuels* a new solo exhibition by Francisco Sobrino to be held in Paris, from March 16 to May 20. Francisco Sobrino is a Spanish artist who explores the limits of the visual and the material. Known for both his paintings and his geometric sculptures, his art is inspired by the phenomenology of perception and is in line with European kineticism and North American minimal art.

After studying at the School of Arts and Crafts in Madrid where he was introduced to drawing and sculpture, Francisco Sobrino left for Argentina in 1949 to finish his studies at the National School of Fine Arts in Buenos Aires. He became interested in the cognitive sciences and their visual representation and developed a systematic and modular method that differed from the formalist tendencies of geometric abstraction of his time. Heir to the Russian constructivists such as Alexander Rodchenko, Vladimir Tatlin or Naum Gabo, as well as the modernism of Piet Mondrian, Sobrino stands out by creating a pictorial interface where the virtual perception imposes itself on the geometric construction.

In 1959, Francisco Sobrino moved to Paris and began his studies on movement. He started experimenting on two-dimensional works, first in black and white, and concentrated afterwards on green, red, blue or yellow compositions, where the shapes, sometimes square, sometimes circular, produce a kinetic rhythm. These "chessboards" refer to Vasarely's theory and create the illusion of coming and going, of an instability of the gaze, or even, of a sort of sensorial hypnotism.

The exhibition "Virtual Spaces" brings together a group of exceptional paintings and gouaches produced between 1959 and 1970. They invite the spectator to question his perception of reality. Composed of vertical and horizontal axes, of fulls and empties, the paintings presented here stimulate the viewer's gaze by providing him with a feeling of imbalance which is in turn compensated by the visual depth of the work. The viewer is thus invited to an optical journey through the weaves that seem to make readable a reality hidden beyond the pictorial surface.

Born in 1932 in Guadalajara, Spain, Francisco Sobrino is an emblematic artist of kinetic art and one of the founders of the GRAV (Research Group for Visual Art). His works are held in the most important collections: the Tate in London, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid, among others. In 2008, the artist signed a protocol for the creation of the Francisco Sobrino Museum with the city council of Guadalajara. The following year, a collection of works was established in collaboration with the artist and his heirs. The museum was officially inaugurated in 2015, a few months after the Francisco Sobrino's passing, who unfortunately could not see the completion of this project of which he was the initiator.

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