

Press Release

Daniel Buren

PILE UP: High reliefs. Situated works

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67 Lisson Street, London

Daniel Buren has pursued an uncompromising site-specific style since the 1960s, choosing to make work *in situ* and in response to a particular location. While his ubiquitous 8.7cm wide vertical stripe, used as a ‘visual tool’ to prompt a reading of the work’s surroundings rather than just the work itself, remains a recognisable and intrinsic element of Buren’s practice, his more recent works are notable for developments in terms of architecture and form. Following his presentation of ‘Hauts-Reliefs, situated works’ at Lisson Gallery in 2007, Buren’s latest exhibition ‘PILE UP: High reliefs. Situated works’ debuts a number of wall-based structures, all of which highlight the complex process behind the artist’s practice.

Playing with depth, surface and space, the works on display are an amalgamation of forms, constructed out of two types of aluminium rectangular blocs, one covered with paint and the other treated in order to have a reflective, mirror-like surface, joined together to create a unique three-dimensional shape. The reliefs are carefully arranged in a myriad of configurations on the gallery’s walls – a space for which Buren has created work since the 1970s. Coloured in bright monochromes, the individual shapes retain their essential qualities and inherent individuality despite the different arrangements, testament to Buren’s ability to portray the physical components of the artwork while pointing to the ideological context in which the work is made.

Buren is considered one of the world’s most influential and important figures in contemporary art, contributing to the development of conceptual art through his adoption in the 1960s of “degree zero of painting”, a response that abandoned all traditional forms of making and adopted the rigorous aesthetic of exclusively using vertical stripes. By reducing painting to its simplest elements – the canvas and its support – Buren was able to draw attention to the relationship between art and context. Questioning how we look, perceive and reveal the social characteristics and physical aspects of a space, Buren’s work always relates to the space around it, the pieces limited and defined by what encases and rules them. In an interview with Suzanne Pagé in 1986 when he represented France at the 42nd Venice Biennale, Buren states, the works “take into account the place in which they are presented as part and parcel of the visual result... They are explicitly dependent on the place for which they have been built or rebuilt. They change it to the same extent as they are changed by it. This is their very reason for being.”

‘PILE UP’ offers further insight into this specific aspect of Buren’s practice and how his radical conceptual aesthetic has developed over the past four decades. The exhibition coincides with the recent launch of *Diamonds and Circles, works in situ*, a permanent installation at Tottenham Court Road station in London, commissioned by Art on the Underground.

About Daniel Buren

Daniel Buren has punctuated the past 50 years of art with unforgettable interventions, controversial critical texts, thought-provoking public art projects and engaging collaborations with artists from different generations. Throughout his career Buren has created artworks that complicate the relationship between art and the structures that frame it. In the early 1960s, he developed a radical form of Conceptual Art, a “degree zero of painting” as he called it, which played simultaneously on an economy of means and the relationship between the support and the medium. In 1965 he began using his 8.7cm-wide vertical stripes as the starting point for research into what painting is, how it is presented and, more broadly, the physical and social environment in which an artist works. All of Buren’s interventions are created *in situ*, borrowing and colouring the spaces in which they are presented. They are critical tools addressing questions of how we look and perceive, and the way space can be used, appropriated, and revealed in its social and physical nature. In his work life finds its way into art, while autonomous art is able to reconnect with life.

Daniel Buren was born in Boulogne-Billancourt (Paris), France in 1938. His work has been the subject of major exhibitions at the Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, Belgium (2016); the Solomon R Guggenheim Museum, New York City, NY, USA (2005) and the Centre Pompidou, Paris, France (2002). Recent solo exhibitions include Museo - Espacio, Aguascalientes, Mexico (2016); Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK (2014); Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Strasbourg, France (2014); and the Centre Pompidou-Metz, France (2013). Buren has exhibited in the Venice Biennale, Italy more than ten times and was awarded the Golden Lion for his French Pavilion in 1986. That same year, he produced his first and most controversial public commission, *The Two Plateaux*, for the main courtyard of the Palais-Royal in Paris, France. In 2007, he received the Praemium Imperiale for Painting from Japan and was selected for the site-specific Monumenta 2012 commission at the Grand Palais in Paris, France. Buren’s 1994 installation *The Arches*, permanent work *in situ*, is on view at the Southampton City Art Gallery, and in May 2017, he launched another permanent installation in the UK – *Diamonds and Circles, works in situ* – at Tottenham Court Road station in London, commissioned by Art on the Underground.

About Lisson Gallery

Lisson Gallery is one of the most influential and longest-running international contemporary art galleries in the world. Established in 1967 by Nicholas Logsdail, it pioneered the early careers of important Minimal and Conceptual artists, such as Art & Language, Carl Andre, Daniel Buren, Donald Judd, John Latham, Sol LeWitt, Richard Long and Robert Ryman among many others. In its second decade the gallery introduced significant British artists, including Tony Cragg, Richard Deacon, Anish Kapoor, Shirazeh Houshiary and Julian Opie. It is also responsible for raising the international profile of a number of prominent Asian artists such as Liu Xiaodong, Lee Ufan, Rashid Rana, Ai Weiwei, and Tatsuo Miyajima, as well as a younger generation of artists led by Cory Arcangel, Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, Ryan Gander and Haroon Mirza. Today Lisson Gallery supports and develops 53 international artists across two exhibition spaces in London and two in New York.

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