

GALERIE KARSTEN GREVE

PIERRETTE BLOCH

....the dotted line



Untitled, 1988, China-ink on paper, 48 x 62 cm / 19 x 24 1/2 in

July 31st – September 26th 2020
Opening, Friday Juli 31st 1 to 7 p.m.

Karsten Greve Gallery St. Moritz is pleased to host the first solo exhibition by Pierrette Bloch, one of the most renowned French Post-War Abstract artists, born in Paris in 1928. The majority of the works shown in the exhibition are drawn directly from the estate of the artist. In addition to a number of works that were part of Pierrette Bloch's most important museum exhibitions during her lifetime, we present in „...*the dotted line*“ works that have never been shown to the public before. Many of these works were hidden in the studio of Pierrette Bloch for years, where Karsten Greve saw them again and again. For a long time, he tried to convince the artist to sell, but it was only after years of effort and patience that he succeeded. The current exhibition is a unique opportunity to discover this exquisite selection of works of truly outstanding quality.

Throughout her career, Pierrette Bloch resorted to poor materials and reduced motifs. Working with collages, ink on paper, hardboard, rope and horsehair, she developed her favorite forms of reference – dots, lines and hyphens. Exploring the limits between drawing and sculpture as well as the relationships between emptiness and fullness that stem from her spontaneous gestures, Pierrette Bloch would go off on an “adventure”.

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To begin with, her attraction to the play of shadowlight and relief developed through thick textured oil paint. From 1952, wanting to work with other mediums, she applied herself to collages. These very large format works are composed of a variation of torn and cut Canson and Bristol papers that are then fixed to hardboard, itself worked in black ink. For the past dozen years, Bloch has in fact rediscovered hardboard. This medium, which she had already experimented with earlier on, nevertheless offered unexpected results.

Apart from collages, Bloch has also been working with China ink on paper since 1971, confronting black and white through marks, spots and squirts. These produce scriptural, rhythmic drawings. The work of ink on paper – white, ivory, black and grey – form a kind of writing, the secret of which, only the artist possesses. All these works bear this stamp and also offer the possibility of using scraping techniques.

In 1973 the artist produced her first large hair mesh while continuing ink drawings with dots on paper. These two grand series are characterised by a repetitive movement, as though woven and uninterrupted. Dots and mesh then echo each other, like murmurings of the artist.

The artist began working with horsehair sculpture around 1984, like writing retranscribed in space, undulating and taking over the dots, which give way to lines. The first lines of paper were created in 1993. They were inspired by linear horsehair compositions, and in particular, those called “Boules” which were produced between 1988 and 1989, where Bloch aligned rough knots of horsehair on nylon thread. By adopting the sensation of movement, rhythm and continuity, she strives retroactively, after her success in liberating the line from the two-dimensional through the use of horsehair, to accentuate the tangible, three-dimensional character of paper. By dint of transforming the medium into a motif of the line itself, which can reach lengths between 1 and 12 meters, Bloch explores a new possibility for a promenade through a material that is nevertheless already known. By repeating her gestures in linear space and time, she knows the properties of paper by heart, but also knows how to introduce surprise through new corporal displays.

The internationally renowned work of Pierrette Bloch has been exhibited in prestigious museums and belongs to numerous public and private collections such as the MoMA in New York, the Yokohama Museum of Art in Japan, the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, the Maeght Foundation, Saint-Paul-de-Vence, the Museum of Jewish Art and History, the Pompidou Centre and the Museum of Modern Art of the city of Paris. Pierrette Bloch died in July 2017 in Paris, France.