

## ► Charlotte Posenenske: *Work in Progress*

**Press Conference:** 17 October

**Opening:** 17 October, 19:30h

**Dates:** 18 October 2019 – 8 March 2020

**Curated by:** Jessica Morgan, Nathalie de Gunzburg (Director, Dia Art Foundation) and Alexis Lowry (Associate Curator, Dia Art Foundation)

*Charlotte Posenenske: Work in Progress* presents an in-depth look at the practice of the German artist between 1956 and 1968, a short but intense period, when she was active in making art. Posenenske (Wiesbaden, 1930 – Frankfurt 1985) was born Liselotte Henriette to a Jewish family. She studied at the State Academy of Fine Arts in Stuttgart with Willi Baumeister, who introduced her to modernism and Soviet Constructivism.



Charlotte Posenenske, *Vierantrohre (Square Tube)*, *Series D*, 1967–2018. Installation view, Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich, 2010. © Estate of Charlotte Posenenske. Photo: Dr Burkhard Brunn, Frankfurt am Main. Courtesy: Estate of Charlotte Posenenske and Mehdi Chouakri, Berlin

Posenenske's works can be described as oscillating between Minimalism and Conceptualism, participatory art and performance, social practice and institutional criticism. The exhibition brings together her first drawings and paintings (her earliest experiments with mark making), aluminium wall-reliefs, and her last and best-known modular sculptures. The MACBA show includes a new production, *Drehflügel Series E*, based on drawings by the artist never produced in her lifetime

Using construction materials, serial repetition and industrial manufacturing, Posenenske developed a form of mass-produced Minimalism that addressed the social and economic concerns of her time, circumventing the art market and rejecting established formal and cultural hierarchies. Her modular sculptures enabled the 'consumer' – the curator, viewer or owner – to decide and change the configuration of the installation according to their preference, thus surrendering some of the artist's authorship and opening up the work to others. In a statement published in *Art International* in 1968, Posenenske asserts: 'The things I make are variable, as simple as possible, reproducible. They are components of a space, since they are like building elements, they can always be rearranged into new combinations or positions, thus they alter the space. I leave this alteration to the consumer who thereby again and anew participates in the creation.'



*Square Tubes: Series D* (1967/2010) in the exhibition 'Sota la superfície', Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 2017. Photo: La Fotogràfica

This openness was also reflected in the fact that Posenenske intended her works to be replicated and did not limit them to a finite edition. Moreover, she offered them at their material cost, thus undermining the economic imperative of the art market. In her view, 'art is a commodity of transient contemporary significance... It is difficult for me to come to terms with the fact that art can contribute nothing to solving urgent social problems.' In 1968, owing to her disillusionment with the limits of art, Posenenske abandoned her artistic

work to devote herself to sociology, specialising in the study of labour and industrial production.

While Posenenske exhibited widely during the years that she worked as an artist – alongside figures such as Hanne Darboven, Donald Judd and Sol LeWitt –, her contributions to the discourse of Minimal and Conceptual art remain largely ignored. This retrospective is the most comprehensive exploration of Posenenske’s work since her death and recovers the artist’s legacy as a critical and prescient voice within contemporary art.

The exhibition will be the first major presentation dedicated to the German artist to be held in Spain. It is on view at Dia:Beacon (USA) from 8 March to 9 September 2019, before embarking on a European tour to MACBA, then Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen Düsseldorf (4 April – 2 August 2020) and Mudam Luxembourg – Musée d’Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean (2 October 2020 – 10 January 2021).

MACBA will publish the book in Spanish. This book vindicates Posenenske’s important legacy for future generations of artists, historians, and audiences. The propositions and provocations contained in this book recontextualize the artist’s contributions to the discourse of Minimal, Conceptual, and participatory practices.



**PHOTOS POSENENSKE** [www.macba.cat/press/charlotte-posenenske7894](http://www.macba.cat/press/charlotte-posenenske7894)

## ► TAKIS

**Press Conference: 20 November**

**Opening: 21 November**

**Dates: 22 November 2019 – 19 April 2020**

**Curated by: Guy Brett (critic and independent curator), Michael Wellen (Curator of International Art, Tate) and Teresa Grandas (Curator, MACBA)**

The Greek sculptor Takis (Panagiotis Vassilakis) pioneered new art forms using magnetism, light and sound. Takis was born and lives in Athens in 1925, but much of his artistic career and activity was focused in Paris, London and New York, as well as Athens, between 1950 and 1970. This exhibition will be the first solo presentation of his work in Spain.



*Telelumière 4, 1963–64*

Iron and mercury lamp, 109 x 30 x 30 cm. Private collection, London

Over a 70-year career, Takis has created some of the most powerful, innovative – as well as playful – works of twentieth-century art. With these he reinvented the formats of painting, sculpture and music in relation to energy. Takis was one of the pioneers of advanced, experimental art of the 1960s and in particular his work investigated the relation

between artistic, scientific and philosophical research. While his earliest sculptures make explicit reference to ancient Greek culture, he later became an innovator in incorporating natural forces into his work, most centrally magnetism, light and electricity, in sculptures and paintings as well as in performances. Similarly, he moved from figuration to work that was more closely allied to experimental abstraction.

Among his most significant contributions, are the sculptures he called *Signals*, inspired in part by railway signals and often displaying flashing lights, and the tele-magnetic sculptures, which were begun at the end of the fifties and first exhibited at Galerie Iris Clert in Paris, involving metal objects suspended in space by means of magnets. In 1964, his work was the source of the name for the radical gallery Signals London; in 1968 he was among the first artists invited to the Center for Advanced Visual Studies, founded by György Kepes at MIT; and in 1969, his removal of one of his works of art from the Museum of Modern Art in New York was the catalyst for the creation of the activist group, the Art Workers Coalition. Sound, light, electrical and magnetic energy are the main elements of a rich and very personal language, which is presented through a selection of the most significant works of his trajectory.

This exhibition seeks out the essential poetry and beauty of the electro-magnetic universe explored by an artist who was interested in making the viewer recognise the power of the invisible forces that animate the world. Embracing technology, Takis used industrial debris and scientific technologies in his work, which he invested with an existential meaning. Throughout his career, he produced the antenna-like *Signals* that could be imagined to be receiving and transmitting messages of far-off, cosmic events, and musical devices using magnets, electricity and viewer participation to generate resonant and random sounds. Such inventions earned Takis the admiration of the international avant-garde, ranging from the American Beat poets to artists such as Marcel Duchamp.

At MACBA visitors will encounter forests of *Signal* sculptures, works incorporating salvaged aircraft dials and magnetic objects inspired by radar. The thunderous sounds of Takis's *Musicales*, his slow-moving *Silver Musical Sphere* and his *Gong* will complete the presentation.

This exhibition is organised by in collaboration with Tate Modern and the Museum of Cycladic Art, Athens.



PHOTOS TAKIS : [www.macba.cat/press/takis2901](http://www.macba.cat/press/takis2901)

## ► MOSTREIG #3

**Opening:** september 25

**Dates:** september 25, 2019 to january, 2020 (to determinate)

**Curator:** Estel Fabregat

Artists' books have been around as an expression of artistic language since the 19th century, but it was only in the 1960s that a number of artists began to regard them as artworks in themselves. In his 1978 essay "Book Art", art critic Richard Kostelanetz used the terms *antibook* and *nonbook* to refer to contemporary artists' books. This artistic option was in keeping with the conceptual movements of the time, which aimed to make access to art more democratic and to dematerialise artworks, as well as to demystify works of art as unique, one-off pieces. The increased print runs and reduced costs offered by industrial processes brought books to a far wider audience.

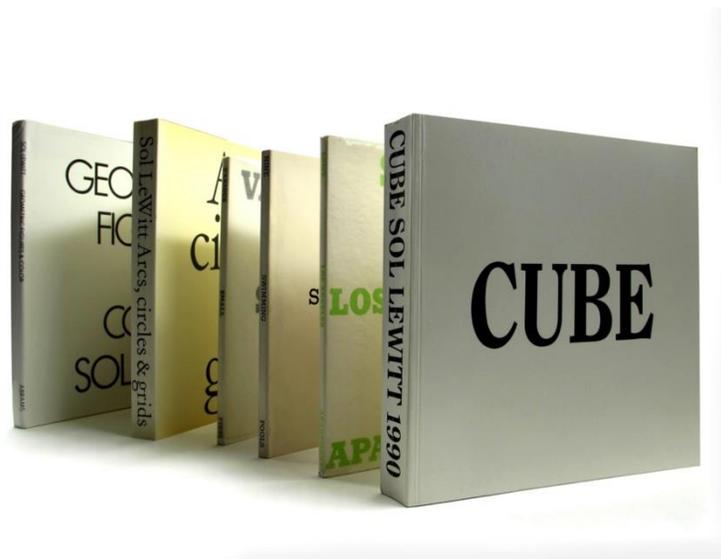


Artist's books by Sol Lewitt and Dieter Roth.  
MACBA Collection. Centre d'Estudis i Documentació MACBA

In addition, the sequence of movements involved in turning the pages of a book gave artists the opportunity to explore geometric and colour series, creating variations and combinations of geometric forms and colour palettes. Others developed numerical series using mathematical calculations or musical notations inspired by the notion of time inherent to page turning. There were also more conceptual approaches, where artists experimented with distances and positions in space.

The characteristics of this format, that is, the need for readers to have direct physical interactions with the artwork, are an added difficulty when it comes to displaying artists' books. Conventional resources at exhibition spaces (display cases, plinths, frames, etc.) fall short in this regard. Keen not to turn books into sculptures, here we have used other resources, such as making facsimiles and hanging copies of pages on the gallery walls—thereby giving readers a sense of the linear flow of the book by rethinking the book's original order and rhythm—as well as visualising works by means of digital devices that recreate the experience of turning the pages of a book.

**Sampler #3. Anti-books** is the third in a series of shows produced by the MACBA Study Centre to promote its collections and documentary holdings. On this occasion, the focus is on a selection of artists' books from the 1960s and 1970s taken from the more than 4,000 artists' books in the MACBA Archive influenced by conceptual and minimalist movements.



Imatge Lidia Parera

The exhibition shines the spotlight on work by three artists. German artist Hanne Darboven created numerical series to describe the passage of time. These series were the result of complex mathematical operations based on calendar periods (days, months and years). Sol LeWitt saw books as an excellent form of artistic expression for his work and created an extensive collection of books over the course of his life. The sequencing of pages let him progressively develop his concepts, either through evolving geometric drawings or by creating chromatic variations on a given theme. Finally, although Dieter Roth was best known for his work based on the use of organic materials that degrade over time, some of his pieces from the 1970s centre on forms of expression of the minimalist movement such as combining geometric forms with primary colours, black and white, and in other cases he even added transparencies or cut-out figures to add depth to pages.

In addition, ***Sampler #3. Anti-books*** presents books by **John Baldessari, Robert Barry, Stanley Brouwn, Chuck Close, Agnes Denes, Peter Downsbrough, Jackie Ferrara, Marco Gastini, Robert Jack, Richard Kostelanetz, Jeffrey Lew, Bruce Nauman, Edda Renouf, Fred Sandback and Paul Zelevansky.**



**PHOTOS Sampler #3. Anti-books:** <https://www.macba.cat/press/mostreig3-antibooks/>

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■ **MORE INFORMATION AT** [macba.cat](http://macba.cat) and @MACBA\_Barcelona

■ **MACBA:** Plaça dels Àngels, 1, 08001 Barcelona, [macba.cat](http://macba.cat) ■ **TIMES:** Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 11 am – 7.30 pm. Tuesdays except public holidays, closed.

Saturdays, 10 am – 8 pm. Sundays and public holidays, 10 am – 3 pm. ■ **Ticket valid for one month**

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