

PETER FREEMAN, INC. 140 GRAND STREET NEW YORK NEW YORK 10013

212 966 5154 / fax: 212 966 5349

PRESS RELEASE

exhibition: **Mel Bochner: *Proposition and Process: A Theory of Sculpture (1968-1973)***

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Peter Freeman, Inc. is pleased to present its fourth solo exhibition of work by Mel Bochner, which will be the largest survey of Bochner's sculpture ever assembled. All from the years 1968 to 1973, these works represent the complete range of the artist's investigations into the underlying conceptual foundations of sculpture; most have not been shown in New York since 1972.

About these works, Bochner wrote "Thoughts Reinstalling A Theory of Sculpture":

A Theory of Sculpture is sculpture-as-self-representation. In these "self-representations" any material (pebble, nut, coin, match stick, glass shard, etc.) is replaceable without changing the intention. When an object loses its uniqueness, identity is denied an equivalence with presence. Any individual piece exists only as an "example of itself". Paradoxically, without the object there would be no idea, but without the idea there would be no object.

Number constitutes a mental class of objects. Numbers do not need concrete entities in order to exist. In Latin the word for counting is "calculus", which translates, literally, as stone. By juxtaposing the numbers with the stones *A Theory of Sculpture* forces a confrontation between matter ("raw" material) and mind (categories of thought).

Sculpture, as opposed to painting, is defined by its alteration of the real world. In Latin the word for number is "digit", which translates, literally, as finger. *A Theory of Sculpture* represents the hand (or agent of alteration), by the use of the numbers 5 and 10. Therefore, even though nothing is carved, cast, welded, constructed, or assembled, the manual aspect of sculpture is thematized.

The concerns in *A Theory of Sculpture* are not abstract. I am not interested in sculpture in any formal sense. The numbers and the stones exist on parallel but contradictory planes. While they appear to demonstrate the same thing there is a rupture between them. The map is not the landscape. An enormous abyss separates the space of statements from the space of objects. *A Theory of Sculpture* is the intention not to bridge that abyss.

(Mel Bochner, New York)

Mel Bochner was born in Pittsburgh in 1940, and received a BFA in 1962 from the Carnegie Institute of Technology. The work is represented in many public collections around the world, including Tate Modern (London), MoMA (New York), Whitney Museum (New York), Pompidou (Paris) and MUMOK (Vienna). Recent solo museum exhibitions include MAMCO (Geneva, 2003), the Art Institute of Chicago (2006) and the National Gallery of Art (Washington, 2011). A major retrospective is currently on view at Haus der Kunst in Munich (until June 23) and will travel to the Museu Serralves in Porto (12 July – 13 October). Coinciding with this year's 55th Venice Biennale curator Germano Celant will recreate Harald Szeemann's seminal exhibition *Live in Your Head. When Attitudes Become Form* (Kunsthalle Bern, 1969) at the Fondazione Prada, where Bochner will reinstall "Thirteen Sheets of 8 ½ Inch Wide Graph Paper (from a nonfinite series)". Also on view now in New York, located at 180 Bowery until September 29, Bochner has created a mural for *After Hours 2: Murals on the Bowery*, a project organized by the Art Production Fund.

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