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PRESS RELEASE

exhibition: Mangelos: a retrospective of exhibitions 1972-1981
dates: 14 April – 27 May 2016

Peter Freeman, Inc. is pleased to present *Mangelos: a retrospective of exhibitions 1972-1981*. Curated by French art critic François Piron and commissioned by Peter Freeman, Inc., New York and Galerie Frank Elbaz, Paris, this show will explore the artist's wry exhibition practice, as well as his conception of his own exhibitions as total artworks.

Dimitrije Bašičević (Croatian; born 1921 in Šid, died 1987 in Zagreb, both in the former Yugoslavia) pursued a career as a writer and curator at several Zagreb arts institutions while separately and privately cultivating an artistic practice he began in his 20s during World War II under the name Mangelos. Although he took part in the Yugoslavian avant-garde scene, and was one of the founders of the Gorgona artists group, he kept his own work secret for over three decades until finally convinced to exhibit, and then evidently with great enthusiasm. Each time he mounted shows of his own work, over the last ten years of his life, he reexamined his practice, creating new bodies of work and conceiving each new exhibition as a comprehensive artwork, designing the display, the invitation cards, posters, and catalogues entirely himself. Although his exhibitions reflect his own idiosyncratic approach to the art practice, they also share key elements with work by other conceptual artists working at the time in Western countries, particularly that of Marcel Broodthaers.

This exhibition focuses on five exhibitions conceived by Mangelos in the 1970s in the former Yugoslavia, namely: *Fenomen Picasso* (Tribina mladih, Novi Sad, 1972); and four exhibitions all in Zagreb: *Manifesti* (Atelier Toše Dabac, 1978); *Šid Theory* (Podroom, 1978); *Mangelos no. 9 - Energija* (Galerija Dubrava, 1979); and *Mangelos no. 1-9 – Retrospektiva* (Galerija, PM, 1981). Through important artworks as well as documents, photographs, historic printed material, and partial recreation of some aspects of the original presentations, key aspects of these five exhibitions will be brought to light.

Mangelos' controversial practice—situated between painting, philosophy and poetry—elaborated his skeptical views toward history, its senseless wars, and the notion of cultural progress as having contestable value. He took opportunity of the exhibitions he organized to intertwine more closely his art and his philosophy, unfolding statements and manifestos expressing his views on art, history and society. However, a sense of humor fueled most of his projects. In one exhibition, he converted the whole space into a strange showroom/office room, improvising pedestals out of refrigerators and filing cabinets. In another, invited by the artist Mladen Stilinovic to exhibit at his PM Gallery in 1981, he suggested an ironically ambitious title--*Mangelos no. 1-9 – Retrospective*—but only showed one work: a single school slate on which, before the opening, he wrote his invented word “noart” with a piece of chalk and left the rest of the room perfectly empty.

François Piron is the cofounder of the independent art space castillo/corrales in Paris, and heads the postgraduate program of the École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts de Lyon. Recent projects have included *Mangelos: Black Mirrors*, (Galerie Frank Elbaz, Paris, 2014), *The President of the Republic of Dreams* (Galerie Buchholz, Berlin, 2013, and New York, 2015), *Locus Solus, Impressions of Raymond Roussel* (Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid and Serralves Foundation, Porto, 2011-2012). He is the curator of the Rennes biennial 2016 and is preparing a monograph dedicated to the writings of Guy de Cointet, to be published in 2016.

A conversation between the curator and Rachel Haidu will take place at the gallery on Thursday, 14 April, at 5pm. A reception will be held from 6 to 8 pm. Rachel Haidu is Associate Professor of Art History at the University of Rochester. She is a contributor to *Artforum*, *October*, *Texte zur Kunst*, and the author of *The Absence of Work: Marcel Broodthaers 1964-1976* (October Books/MIT Press, 2010).

Parallel to this exhibition, Peter Freeman, Inc. is pleased to present *Medardo Rosso: Ten Bronzes*.

For reproduction requests, interviews with the curator and general inquiries, please contact the gallery at 212-966-5154 or info@peterfreemaninc.com.