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PRESS RELEASE

exhibition: **Robert Filliou**
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Peter Freeman, Inc. is pleased to present the first New York solo exhibition by the French artist Robert Filliou (1926-1987) in over ten years.

Filliou, whose credo "Art is what makes life more interesting than art," was cheerfully obsessed with the idea of art that could be infused with notions of chance, error, misunderstanding and playfulness and that the value of art was not in its being a high-minded codification of empirical thought but a celebration of intuition and interaction. Working contemporaneously with the Fluxus movement, Filliou championed objects and undertakings—whether esthetic or emphatically non-esthetic—that would present art as primarily a form of investigative play that could occur in any number of media or even as a series of unrealized notions. He preferred to work with whatever everyday materials were at hand—cardboard, string and bits of metal and wood and, as had the artists of Dada before him and punk artists years later, asserted a strongly anti-commercial, "Do-It-Yourself" ethic; he thumbed his nose at the conventions of the art market in favor of the handmade, the evanescent and the indeterminate qualities of on-going creative practices, which in turn, shifted the emphasis from what an artist makes to the artist's personality, actions, and opinions and underscore the importance of the viewer as much as the art-maker. Much of his work included collage, sound, video, and poetry.

This exhibition, drawn entirely from the estate of the artist, presents a broad selection of the artist's unique works on paper, photographs and assemblages, including a variant of *The Eternal Network*, the 1962 interactive piece *Danse-poème collectif* and the collaborative 1968 work *Galerie Légitime*, made with Olivier Mosset, Al Hansen, Daniel Spoerri and Chieko Shiomi. Also on view will be several of Filliou's charming and highly idiosyncratic constructions made from cardboard boxes adorned with bits and scraps of personal detritus and everyday objects.

Filliou originally studied economics at the University of California at Los Angeles from 1948 to 1951 before working as a playwright during the second half of the 1950s. He was self-taught as an artist and it was while living in Paris in the 1960s when he began a series of performances into which he incorporated poetry. He was soon collaborating with the major Fluxus artists, including Emmett Williams, Joachim Pfeufer and George Brecht. A large retrospective exhibition "Robert Filliou, Un génie sans talent," was shown at MACBA, Barcelona in 2003 which travelled to Kunst Palast, Düsseldorf and Musée d'art Moderne, Lille.

"I am not just interested in art, but in the society of which art is but one aspect," said Filliou. "I am interested in the world as a whole, a whole of which society is one part. I am interested in the universe, of which the world is only one fragment. I am interested primarily in the Constant Creation of which the universe is only one product."

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