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PRESS RELEASE

exhibition: **Marcel Broodthaers: Ne dites pas que je ne l'ai pas dit –  
Le Perroquet (1974)**

date: **5 November - 23 December 2009**

Peter Freeman, Inc. is pleased to present the first American exhibition of Marcel Broodthaers's installation "Ne dites pas que je ne l'ai pas dit – Le Perroquet" ("Don't Say I Didn't Say So – The Parrot"). The installation is comprised of a caged African Grey Parrot, two palm trees, a vitrine containing his catalogue from a 1966 exhibition along with a reprint from 1974, and a recording of the artist reading the poem "Moi Je dis Je Moi Je dis Je..."

"Ne dites pas..." was created in 1974 as one of the earliest of Broodthaers's "Décors," a series of retrospective installations begun that year with "Un Jardin d'hiver." As art historian Rachel Haidu has noted in her work on Broodthaers, the series of "Décors" plays on the aspects of repetition and artificiality that were critical to Broodthaers's practice from the beginning. Using as his title the French term for interior design as well as a film set, Broodthaers's installations, often with palm trees, nineteenth-century furniture, and antiquated prints, mock the retrospective as a form by reducing the artist's production to a trite arrangement. In her forthcoming book (MIT Press, 2010), Haidu writes that the inclusion of a live parrot in "Ne dites pas..." emphasizes the notion of the retrospective as repetition more than any of the other "Décors": "By highlighting the species of tropical bird famous for repeating itself as well as what others say, Broodthaers underscores, pathologizes and parodies the aspect of repetition intrinsic to the artistic retrospective."

"Ne dites pas..." was first presented at Wide White Space as the opening exhibition in the gallery's Antwerp location, and it coincided with "Catalogue-Catalogus," Broodthaers's major retrospective at the Palais des Beaux-Arts. Only a few days after the opening of this work the artist installed the similarly themed "Room of the Parrot," or "Dites partout que je l'ai dit" ("Say Everywhere I Said So"), as part of his exhibition "Eloge de sujet" at the Kunstmuseum Basel. For both installations Broodthaers appropriated his own 1966 Wide White Space catalogue for the exhibition "Moules oeufs frites pots charbon."

Marcel Broodthaers (1924-1976) was a Belgian poet who turned to the visual arts in 1964 when he was forty. In the brief 12 years before he died, Broodthaers created a broad and influential body of work dealing with object, text, history, museology, and identity (particularly Belgian identity) within a Europe that was being profoundly redefined through new, radical art and politics. Broodthaers rapidly established himself as one of the most original artists of his day, and his influence on younger artists both in Europe and the United States is still present.

For more information, please call Chris Moss at Peter Freeman, Inc. at 212-966-5154.