

Galerie Micheline Szwajcer and Bureau des Réalités are pleased to present a solo project dedicated to Guy Mees (1935-2003) featuring works, documents, photographs and videos dating back to the late 1960's and leading up to his last watercolours on coated paper.

The exhibition at Galerie Micheline Szwajcer constitutes an attempt to trace the path and follow the gaze of an artist who gave the name « Lost Space » (*Verloren Ruimte*) to his two largest ensembles: the lace works realized between 1960 and 1966 and the reliefs cut out of colored paper pinned to the wall, which he began in 1983.

The selected works presented in the exhibition shed light on the program and poetics of Guy Mees' unique approach and allow us to better grasp the unfolding of his oeuvre through time.

Thanks to recent archival research and the uncovering of precious photographic material, a group of works which remained unseen since their initial conception and public presentation in 1970* have been reactivated in the gallery space. This ensemble highlights Mees' specific and non authoritarian intentions regarding notions of seriality, rationalism and industrial material, which were the order of the day at that time.

Indeed, Mees' working method was modular in essence, allowing permanent structures to become precarious. Each piece could be moved around the room, indicating or revealing the exhibition space, while the "positive" representation of these same structures faced their "negative" counterparts (the metal bars were mirrored by their soft and fragile white felt protective covers).

This gesture follows on from a series of very particular and sensual aluminium objects named "*Verloren Ruimte*" (Lost Space), whose minimal, geometric shapes were occasionally lit by a neon and covered in a thin layer of lace. Dating from 1960, these pieces also foreshadow a system where inside and outside are combined.

Mutability, fragility and the impermanence of things have always been tangible in each stage of Guy Mees' practice. From his structuralist work and his specific conceptual process parodying all hierarchical systems to his first works on paper with colored horizontal stripes; from the free expansion of pattern into space (including the series *Imaginary Ballets*) through to his last colored paper cutouts, the specificity and intricacy of his work reside in the subtle relationship between construction and randomness, durability and the ephemeral.

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