



de-finition/method: change / invariance 3, 1975 - 2013. Paint on canvas. Variable dimensions according to the actualization. Courtesy of the artist and Perrotin.

Claude Rutault

de-finitions/methods from the 70s

Opening Thursday April 25, 5pm - 8pm

April 25 - June 8, 2019

“my paintings have a short life, but they have several of them” – Claude Rutault

Perrotin New York is pleased to present a collection of five historical works by Claude Rutault, marking the artist’s second show at Perrotin New York and his fifth show with the gallery. For this exhibition, titled *de-finitions/methods from the 70s*, we are proud to reintroduce Rutault’s famous works, which have not been on view since the 1980’s. These *de-finitions/methods* have been included at the Biënnale van de kritiek, Antwerp, Belgium (1979); documenta 7, Kassel, Germany (1982); the Biennale of Sydney, Australia (1982); and the Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, France (1983).

In 1973 Rutault made a radical decision to paint his canvas the same color as the wall on which it was hung. Since then, Rutault’s work has dealt with painting as a concept in itself, rather than painting as a finished and autonomous object. He takes the space in which his works are presented into account, allowing them to evolve according to their installation space. The canvases and colors are constantly changing depending on where the work is shown. Rutault’s practice is the writing and issuing of texts indicating protocols and procedures called “*de-finitions/methods*,” according to which a gallery, collector, or institution—known as the “charge-taker”—agrees to “actualize” a given work. Rutault explains the practice: “the hyphen after ‘de-’ eliminates or at least lessens the ‘finition,’ i.e., the definitive, frozen authoritarian nature of the word, which doesn’t suit my work.” Rutault’s paintings are no longer unalterable objects, but rather works in progress.

The first of his *de-finitions/methods*, created in 1973, provided the seed for hundreds of unique works to follow. This exhibition will feature *de-finition/method 14: repainted [1973] / de-painted [2012]*, which reads “a simple diptych: two paintings hung very close together. a canvas from before 1973 is repainted the same color as the wall. to its right, a canvas also from before 1973, unpainted. before repainting or unpainting them, the original paintings have been photographed in color as well as in black and white. the photographs will not be shown, but will be kept available for consultation.” This work highlights the ability for Rutault’s works to be reborn, as the charge-taker must repaint existing canvases.



de-finition/method 98: to be continued, 1978. Paint on canvas. Variable dimensions according to the actualization.
Courtesy of the artist and Perrotin.

Claude Rutault considers himself a painter, although he does not physically touch paint or his canvases, nor does he oversee their production. Rather, he allows his de-finitions/methods to guide the works, keeping himself at a distance from their actualization. As he describes, "I write paintings."

Claude Rutault has taken part in multiple projects in the United States. He was asked to take part in a residency at MoMA PS1 during the winter of 1978-1979. Also in 1979, his *definition/method 107: 2 plans/ 3 dimensions* was presented at Peter Downsbrough's space in New York. In 1998, Rutault participated in a group show, titled *Premises*, at the Guggenheim Museum, Soho, New York. And, in 2015, his *de-finition/method: listening to painting/looking at music* was actualized at the Festival Soluna by the Meyerson Symphony of Dallas, Texas.

About the artist

Claude Rutault (b. 1941 in Trois-Moutiers, France) lives and works in La Celle St Cloud, outside of Paris. Since the 1970s, he has developed over 600 de-finitions/methods, many of which have been actualized in museums, galleries, private collections, and as public works. Currently, he has an exhibition at Museum Picasso in Paris, titled *Picasso-Rutault. Grand Écart*, three years after a retrospective exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art Centre Pompidou in October 2015. A permanent installation, inaugurated in 2015, may be seen in the Pavillon Dufour, Château de Versailles, France.

Claude Rutault's work can also be found in leading private and public collections in France and Europe, including Collection Billarrant: Le Silo, Cergy, France; SMAK Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Gand, Belgium; CAPC Musée d'art contemporain. Bordeaux, France; FRAC Bretagne, Le Consortium, Dijon, France; FRAC Nord-Pas de Calais, Dunkerque, France; FRAC Lorraine, Metz, France; Château d'Oiron, France; Espace de l'art concret, Mouans Sartoux, France; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; FNAC Fonds National d'Art Contemporain; MNAM Musée National d'Art moderne Centre Georges Pompidou; Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain de Strasbourg, France; Mamco, Musée d'art moderne et contemporain, Geneva, Switzerland.

More information about the artist >>>

Below are the works presented in *de-finitions/ methods from the 70s*.

***de-finition/method 14:
repainted [1973] / de-painted [2012]***

a simple diptych: two paintings hung very close together. a canvas from before 1973 is repainted the same color as the wall. to its right, a canvas also from before 1973, unpainted. before repainting or unpainting them, the original paintings have been photographed in color as well as in black and white. the photographs will not be shown, but will be kept available for consultation.



de-finition/method: repainted [1973] / de-painted [2010]. Paint on canvas. 92 x 183 cm | 36 1/4 x 72 in. Courtesy of the artist and Perrotin.

de-finition/method 55: positive/negative 1, 1975

de-finition/method: a canvas mounted on a stretcher frame, or other materials such as wood, metal or glass, where the surface of the canvas equals half the surface of the wall on which it is hung, painted in the same colour as the wall. the person undertaking the work has a choice whether to select the vertical or horizontal half of the wall, or even split it diagonally. only one choice can be carried out at a given time. the final hanging is, at the person's discretion, explicit or implicit.

de-finition/method 98: to be continued, 1978

de-finition/method: the requisites: three canvases whose shapes are imposed but whose formats are free. one square canvas, one round canvas, one triangular canvas. the round canvas and triangular canvas are to match in size the square proportions. the three canvases are hung close together, at the beginning or at the end of the wall. the canvases are painted in the same color as the wall. the person undertaking the work can continue the piece within the limitations of the wall with canvases whose forms can be determined freely, on the condition that they all match the sizing of the initial square. the same constraints are applicable to the person undertaking the work if three canvases are placed to the far right of the wall, they have the possibility of adding canvases that are within the sizing set by the initial square, but this choice changes the meaning of the work. when hung on the left side, at the beginning of the wall, the canvases added seem to end the piece, whereas hanging them on the right, at the end of the wall, indicates that the work continues and extends beyond the wall, or may not have even begun.

de-finition/method 164: covering 1, 1978

de-finition/method: a painting that progressively covers a wall and that is destroyed once it is entirely covered. the person undertaking the work chooses the duration and number of phases in which the covering of the wall occurs. he takes charge of the paint and insures the completion of each phase. the amount of times in which the wall is covered is not limited. each time must be different. these starting points can be modified, in the true spirit of the covering, which itself defines the lifeline of the work. the person undertaking the work chooses among five mediums already tested, canvas wood glass metal rock, can choose a new one. the material can be different from one phase of the covering to the next. each phase must be comprised of one medium only, meaning that each new phase includes and erases the preceding one. several methods of covering can be chosen, vertically, horizontally or diagonally, all are equally as good to the artist, so indifferent as to method. during each phase of the work the medium and the wall must be identical when it comes to the colour. in case of a change of location or resale, the work must be redone according to this same process but without taking into consideration the previous phases.

***de-finition/method 107:
2 plans/3 dimensions, 1979***

de-finition/method: two identical canvases, rectangular or square shaped, one above the other, adjoining, hung at either side of an angle of the wall. the dimensions of the canvases can vary from one execution to the next, each canvas is painted the same colour as the wall on which it is hung. the two walls may differ colors.

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