

# Untitled

By Jean Guiraud

Galerie Léon Keuninckx, Grand Rechain 2004<sup>1</sup>

Meurant has brought something special to art, bringing together space and time in such a way that neither predominates and they never merge. For his early work he used movable elements: small painted surfaces on magnetic blocks that he could move around at will. In this way he could create a virtually unlimited range of combinations and commutations but which at that time were dictated solely by the artist (or a temporary 'assistant'), and not by the work itself.

What fascinates him most is devising tactics or strategies that will initiate prolonged developments, where what counts above all is germination and generation, with the final work not being the end of the process. He endeavours to anticipate and then live with the consequences of each act, as in chess – which he plays in fact – and to set in motion unending cycles of generation.

To achieve this he has to maintain a fine balance between the compatible and incompatible, the symmetrical and unsymmetrical, assimilation and contrast. Furthermore, he needs to 'test' his hypotheses, trying them out experimentally, given that their outcome depends only partly on him, but also on factors that he cannot dictate but must nevertheless be coped with.

He is concerned partly with form (or *gestalt*), even if the forms are multiple, and partly with time (as a successive phenomenon), which means he is faced with unpredictability given the large number of elements in play and the myriads of combinations possible. He is also to some extent involved with intentions and decisions, in a constant battle between consciousness and unconsciousness, each taking turns, taking the lead but never taking over completely; for he never abandons immanence in favour of transcendence. The processes or functions of assimilation and contrast do not eliminate the artist's role, any more than the concentrations do away with the individual forms – the 'field' in this case being simply the system whereby they form groupings.

Thus space and time are harmonized and congruent in his work rather than integrated, merged or unified. The artist seems to be sounding out the relationship between the marks he makes and the resulting work, as if trying to locate their common border. He is at the core of the mechanism that may dictate both the (spatial) coming together of the forms and the (sequential) connections of language, and this may well prove to be the most mysterious – and most important – of his contributions to art.

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