

The logo for S.M.A.K. consists of the letters 'S.M.A.K.' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, centered on a solid black rectangular background.

10.10.2009 - 10.01.2010

Michel François
Plans d'évasion

Practical Information

period: 10.10.2009... 10.01.2010

opening date: 09.10.2009

location:

S.M.A.K.

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Michel François

The fact that the meaning of a sculpture or installation is transformed or changed according to the constellation in which it is combined with other sculptures in a certain space, is irrefutable. For Michel François however this is the basis for a body of work that has been arranged, transformed and developed for more than twenty-five years. "Plans d'évasion" is the first retrospective study of this exchangeability which is anything but ambiguous.

The exhibition in S.M.A.K. originates in Michel François' ambitious plan to take the time and space necessary to develop a project around "Faux Jumeaux", and over a period of more than a year. In concrete, each time this involved the changing constellations of two artists who conceived a work separately and simultaneously, but when we compared them they showed a striking number of similarities. We could describe this as a prelude to what followed, the launching of a mode of thought that generated "Plans d'évasion".

Over the last twenty-five years Michel François has built up a comprehensive body of work that is arranged in a number of thematic clusters. In it one sculpture or different variations of one sculpture can be a part of various clusters. The underlying idea is the variable 'meaning' of each sculpture depending on its confrontation with other sculptures in accordance with the space in which it is displayed and the way in which it relates to this space.

François' work consists of snapshots within a process of stratification in which individual works acts as elements of language. These are nomadic building blocks which create new associations in ever-changing relationships. What is important within this first retrospective exhibition is the study of the constant evolution of these clusters, the way in which recent sculptures acquire their place in this and how these clusters can be presented in their multiplicity.

François' work has already been presented in various exhibitions such as the Biennale of Sao Paulo in 1994, Documenta in 1992 and in the Centre Georges Pompidou in 2002. For the first time S.M.A.K. will be presenting a fairly comprehensive retrospective – or if you prefer, prospective – exhibition in which we can see photographic, video and sculptural work in relation to heterogeneous material from everyday life and elements the artist has collected on his many travels and encounters.

Curated by Philippe Van Cauteren & Guillaume Désanges