

Per Kirkeby: Matter is Light

4 November 2018 - 21 January 2019

Château La Coste and Michael Werner Gallery are pleased to present *Matter is Light*, an exhibition of paintings and sculptures by Danish artist Per Kirkeby. *Matter is Light* also inaugurates a new permanent outdoor sculpture, *Brick Labyrinth*, that will be installed on the grounds of Château La Coste. Conceived in 2009, *Brick Labyrinth* is the artist's last completed sculpture: Kirkeby died in May this year, shortly before seeing its installation at La Coste completed. *Matter is Light* aims to celebrate the life and legacy of this major figure in European art.

The foundational importance of the natural sciences to Kirkeby's art is well established: the artist traveled extensively in the Arctic and Greenland in the early 1960s while working towards his master's degree in geology. Equally important to his development as a painter and sculptor are the many experiments with architecture and performance Kirkeby carried out during his student days and into the 1970s. At Copenhagen's Experimental Art School, several of Kirkeby's Fluxus-inspired activities seized upon notions of shelter and the interrelationship of interior and exterior spaces, both natural and man-made. The brick became an important pictorial and sculptural device in Kirkeby's paintings and performances and eventually led the artist to complete his first outdoor brick sculpture in 1973. Kirkeby's concurrent travels in Central America exposed him to Mayan art and architecture, further intensifying his interest in the possibilities of structural form.

In 2006, Kirkeby visited Château La Coste, a vineyard near Aix-en-Provence in the South of France. The importance of visiting Paul Cézanne's homeland was not lost on the artist: Kirkeby spent time in the city of Aix-en-Provence to visit the markets and walked the land of La Coste to decide upon a location for *Brick Labyrinth*. For this work, Kirkeby reduced the notion of a labyrinth to a tower with two basic interior spaces. Both the labyrinth and the tower are conceptually rooted in European Romantic tradition, but this sparse approach suggests Kirkeby's interest in confronting the minimalist geometry of artists such as Carl Andre and Donald Judd. Elsewhere in the structure, the delicate recesses and finer details can be seen as Kirkeby celebrating craft in concert with the work's structural minimalism. His choice of a thinner, "Mediterranean-style" brick is intended to honor the Roman heritage of Château La Coste and the surrounding region. *Brick Labyrinth* invites the viewer within to physically experience the artist's dialogue with the art historical canon and walk the realm between architecture and sculpture, form and function.

Per Kirkeby is one of the most important artists of his generation. His first exhibition coincided with the completion of his studies in geology, in 1964. Kirkeby represented Denmark in the 1976 Venice Biennale and later participated in documenta VII and documenta IX. Important solo museum exhibitions include Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven; Kunsthalle Bern; Whitechapel Art Gallery, London; Museum Ludwig, Cologne; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk; Tate Modern, London; BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels; and most recently the Beaux-Arts de Paris. A major retrospective of painting and sculpture was organized by The Phillips Collection in Washington, DC in 2012. Works by Kirkeby are found in many museum collections worldwide including Tate, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and Museum of Modern Art, New York, among many others.

Permanent work :

Brick Labyrinth, 2009-2018

Brick

466cm wide x 466cm long x 600cm high

Informations

Exhibition : Matter is Light

Date : 4 November – 21 January

Address : 2750 route de la Cride, 13610 Le Puy Ste Réparate

Opening : Monday – Friday 12pm – 5pm / Saturday and Sunday 12pm – 6pm

Website : <https://chateau-la-coste.com>

Instagram : @chateaulacoste @michaelwernergallery

Press Contact

Daria Darmaniyany | Daria@suttonpr.com | +44 (0) 20 7183 3577 (International Arts media)

Marie Rozet | marie.rozet@chateau-la-coste.com | +33 (0) 4 42 61 92 92



Per Kirkeby ©DPA Alliance Archive Alamy. Courtesy Michael Werner Gallery New York and London.