

Galerie Daniel Templon

Paris

Press release

February 17, 2014

BEN

LA THÉORIE DE L'EGO (The Theory of the Ego)

March 1 – April 5, 2014

Opening: Saturday, March 1st from noon to 8 pm



Ben has been represented by Galerie Daniel Templon since 1970, and is presenting a new exhibition at the Impasse Beaubourg space on the theme of the ego. The show combines historic pieces with recent and previously unseen work.

WHY THIS EXHIBITION?

WHO IS BEN? There's a short Ben biography on Wikipedia, although it's not very good and needs correcting. A better idea is to go to the website, online since 1997.

WHY THIS EXHIBITION? This exhibition serves to present my book, *La théorie de l'ego* [The Theory of the Ego], a first step towards explaining the relationship between the universe and the ego.

WHAT WILL YOU BE EXHIBITING? I don't know yet. I'm torn between a traditional hanging approach, alternating an old painting from the 1960s with a mirror, or another possibility, which would involve using an historical series of appropriations from the 1960s. Living sculptures – death – holes – wastelands – mysterious boxes – God – other people – light – other people's paintings, etc.

WHY AT DANIEL TEMPLON? Because whereas lots of galleries see me as merely provocative, Daniel Templon, who has been exhibiting my work since 1970 at Rue Bonaparte, has always considered me to be a pioneer of conceptual art, making use of writing and the truth ahead of lots of other artists in the 1970s. Daniel Templon produced the first edition of appropriations in 1972, which are part of the Staatliches Museum Schwerin collection and that Jon Hendriks from MOMA exhibited during my M.A.C. retrospective in Lyon.

ARE YOU NO LONGER PROVOCATIVE? I've got other projects underway, like spending a night in a box measuring 2 m by 2 m from Chenu, a specialist in transporting art and therefore egos.

Born in 1935 in Naples, in 1949 Ben Vautier arrived in Nice, where he still lives and works. He began to make a name for himself in 1959 thanks to his "hotchpotch shop, a place for meetings and exhibitions." One of the founders of the **Fluxus** movement in the early 1960s, he maintains that **everything is art** and that *everything is possible in art*.

A leading figure on the French artistic scene, provocative and innovative, difficult to categorize, he is mainly known for his **performances**, first shown in the 1950s, and his **calligraphic aphorisms-texts**.

His work features in the world's most important public and private collections, including the Musée national d'art moderne - Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, MOMA in New York, Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig in Vienna and Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. The Musée d'art contemporain in Lyon held a major retrospective of his work in 2010. The artist is closely involved in current affairs and founded a "world centre of questioning" in 2012 the Fondation du Doute in Blois, which organizes exhibitions. The Galerie Templon show, featuring new pieces on the theme of the ego alongside work from 1960 to 1977, coincides with the publication of his book *La théorie de l'ego* [The Theory of the Ego] by Editions Favre.

Address : 30 rue Beaubourg 75003 Paris. **Hours** : Monday - Saturday, from 10 am to 7 pm

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