ALMINE RECH

Per Kirkeby
Brick Sculpture

Oct 20 — Dec 22, 2017 | Palais des Beaux Arts, Paris

Born in 1938 in Copenhagen, Per Kirkeby developed a unique body of work rooted in art history—from the German and French masters of the 19th century to the expressionist movements of the Eighties—and inspired by his studies in geology. Although he considers himself a painter, Kirkeby is also a sculptor, architect, film director and the author of about sixty books.

Since the very beginning of his career Kirkeby introduced large brick sculptures into his practice, which have since punctuated his whole artistic trajectory. Whereas about a hundred of these pieces were actually built and the artist's archive comprises many plans and drawings of unrealized brick projects, there has never been an exhibition entirely and solely dedicated to this corpus until now. For the Beaux-Arts de Paris glass courtyard, Kirkeby selected twelve pieces including a monumental construction, a group of three floor sculptures and an original series of eight steles.

Stemming from the Minimalism of the mid-Sixties and built in a highly symbolic material, these sculptures quickly reflect the zeitgeist of the post-Minimalist position. Borrowing architectural techniques and playing with scale, many of his brick sculptures were initially conceived for museums and galleries, and later became known from installations populating parks and streets of many European cities, especially Germany, the Netherlands and Scandinavia.

In the colourful setting of the glass courtyard, the twelve brick works by Kirkeby will dialogue with a place closely relatedto the history of sculpture. For about a century (1874- 1971) this grand space was indeed dedicated to the presentation of plaster copies from ancient statuary used as models for drawing classes, which was central to the education of young artists for over a hundred years.

A book will be produced in collaboration with the Cahiers d'Art in French and English editions as a companion to the exhibition.