

François Morellet

π Weeping Neonly, 2001

The 48 argon tubes in light blue that comprise François Morellet's π Weeping Neonly are linked together by their wiring, all of the same length. More or less loosely hanging down, they are arranged in eight vertical sets, each one connected to a transformer affixed high on the wall. The position of the tubes, six in each set, was determined by drawing lots and using the number π . The effect of these precise straight lines which head off in every direction – and by these loose, hanging wires – is one of great disorder.

The title π Weeping Neonly was inspired by the appearance of a weeping willow tree, which the work may call to mind. The installation is designed to be affixed on a wall painted in a dark grey color.

A co-founding member of Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel, Morellet was a key figure in abstract and conceptual art from the 1950s onwards. His use of obvious and simple systems in his work was a way of reducing his own personal input to an absolute minimum. As he once said, 'Whatever more you will find, apart from my simple systems, belongs to yourself.'

Artist | François Morellet

Born 1926, Cholet, France; died 2016 in Cholet, France

Project | π Weeping Neonly, 2001;

neon; 400 × 1750 cm

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