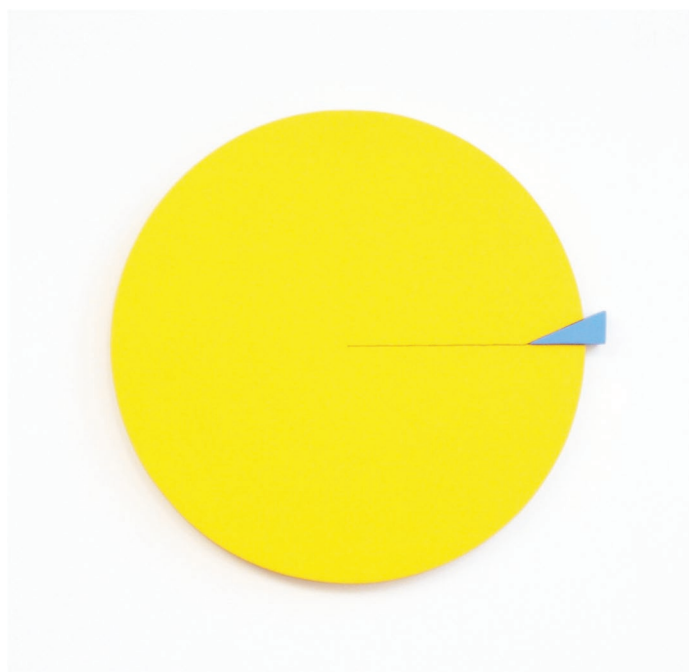


ANDRÉ STEMPEL  
*An Amsterdam Retrospective*

15 April – 23 July 2023



*swip*, 2004, acrylic on canvas mounted on wood, 60 cm in diameter.

The French artist André Stempfel (1930) is an inspired and ingenious practitioner of monochrome geometries. Since the 1970s he has focused almost exclusively on one color—yellow—and has made the yellow monochrome richly pictorial, signifying, and objective all at once. TMH is pleased to collaborate with the artist on his first solo show in Amsterdam, which assembles nearly 70 works. A tribute to his extraordinary 50-year practice, the show presents an opportunity to rethink painting, sculpture, and even architecture from the perspective of minimalism. For more information: [www.merchanthouse.nl](http://www.merchanthouse.nl)

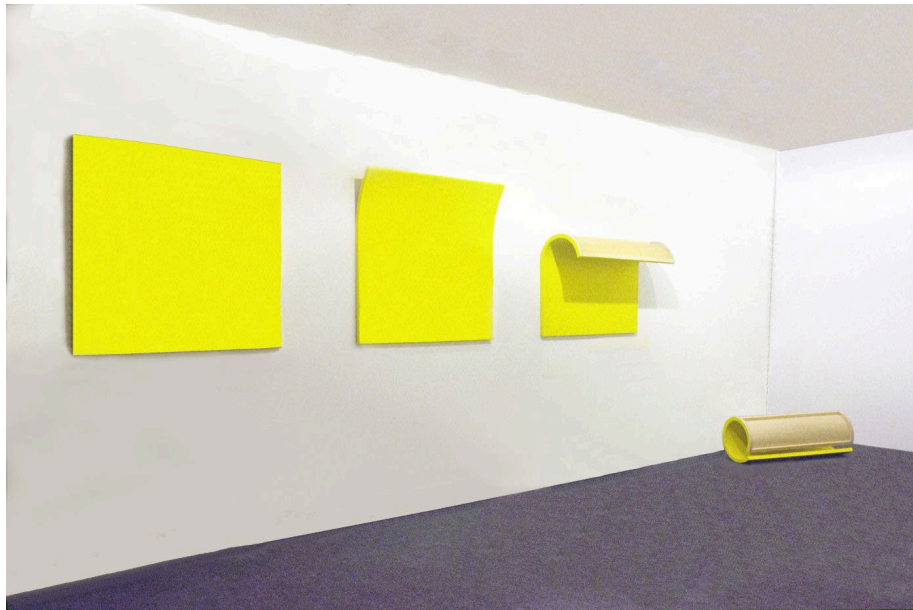


*vloop*, 2003, acrylic on canvas and wood, 3 elements and 3 pedestals, 108 x 33 x 33 cm (approx.) x 3.

At the age of 92, Stempfél is vigorously prolific and no less innovative than in the past. The TMH installation finds resonance in the works' relational plays—art/artist, artist/viewer, art/viewer—and uses the layout of the gallery to highlight their novel take on abstraction. In the front gallery, a group of humorous and self-referential paintings-sculptures take up all available space and use it as material; in the historical back space six curvilinear tableaus (two-dimensional or three-dimensional or both?) and several wall-defying sequences vie with the curvaceous Flora of the 18th-century ceiling painting. Throughout the space, a myriad of newer and older objects and object-like works on paper complete the picture of an inexhaustible play on the simplest of means. The large number of works in the show actually echoes Stempfél's very first solo show in Grenoble in 1968.

In the words of the art writer, Hubert Besacier, who has followed the practice of Stempfél for many years: "Lightness and playfulness remain the main characteristics of this work, proving that humor can thrive everywhere, even on the most minimalist of terrains... Not taking painting seriously means devoting yourself fully to it with all the necessary care, rigor and precision." There is great conceptual depth and energy to these constructions. The reference to traditions is clear—yes, it is painting, sculpture, and drawing in concrete terms. But Stempfél has complicated the effect and possible meanings of geometric art (and of geometry *tout court*) and leaves it to us to categorize his venture.

**The exhibition is organized by Marsha Plotnitsky, Founder of TMH, in collaboration with the artist and the art writer Hubert Besacier.**



*l'endroit l'envers déboulé*, 1998, acrylic on canvas mounted on wood, 4 elements, 100 x 100 cm, each.

### The artist

André Stempfél (1930, FR/CH) is known as an iconoclastic reinterpreter of geometric abstraction. After he lost his works in a fire in 1970, his practice centered on the visual language of the monochrome, primarily in yellow, and he extended his work to urban sculpture. Stempfél was already a determined painter at the age of 10 and chose art as his *métier* at the age of 17. He has been part of the international art scene from the late 1960s, showing in museums and galleries in Paris and abroad, and becoming an honorary member of the international MADI movement in 1989.

His works are part of important collections such as that of the Mondrian House in Amersfoort (NL), Pompidou Center and Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (FR), the Mathematics Museum (Arithmeum) in Bonn (DE), Satoru Sato Museum (JP), Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes in Buenos Aires, Museum Ritter (DE), and Museum of Geometric and MADI Art, Dallas (USA), among others. The Merchant House highlighted his work at Art Rotterdam and in the group show *The Indispensable Experience of Art* in 2021. In Paris, he is represented by Galerie Lahumière and has regularly been showcased in their shows of geometric abstraction, including at Art Paris 2022 and as part of their *Motionless Mobility* survey, 2022-23. His works were shown at important art fairs such as Art Basel, Art Cologne, FIAC, and Art Paris. Stempfél lives and works in Paris, where he shares his studio with his wife, the poet Evelyne Wilhelm, who collaborates with him on his artist's books.

### Opening

Sat 15 Apr, 19:00-21:00, in the presence of the artist

### TMH Open Sunday

Sun 16 Apr, 13:00-18:00

### TMH Talk on André Stempfél & JCJ Vanderheyden

Sun 4 Jun, 15:00-17:00 with Amsterdam Art Week

Please RSVP: [info@merchanthouse.nl](mailto:info@merchanthouse.nl)

**Entry to our exhibition and events is free. Program funded by art sales.**

### About The Merchant House

The Merchant House presents contemporary art projects with sales of art as a funding strategy. Each project, curated by TMH's Founding Artistic Director Marsha Plotnitsky, brings together an extended exhibition, cultural and research events, and a dedicated catalogue/artist's book.

TMH has showcased international and Dutch innovators, such as John Coplans, André de Jong, Bepie Gielkens, Hilarius Hofstede, Craigie Horsfield, Rini Hurkmans, Dennis Oppenheim, Henk Peeters, Pino Pinelli, Judit Reigl, Carolee Schneemann, Jan Schoonhoven, André Stempfel, and Leo Vroegindeweij, as well as young talent, including Sylvie Bonnot, Kokou Ferdinand Makouvia, Mary Sue, Elsa Tomkowiak, Mengzhi Zheng en Zhu Hong. Since it opened its doors in a historical canal house in Amsterdam in 2013, it has become known as a modern take on the Dutch tradition of a merchant—a vibrant art space freely open to the public.

The Merchant House  
Herengracht 254  
1016 BV Amsterdam

Opening hours: Friday & Saturday, 13:00-18:00  
Or by appointment: [info@merchanthouse.nl](mailto:info@merchanthouse.nl)

[www.merchanthouse.nl](http://www.merchanthouse.nl)



Façade of TMH  
with the *Flag of Compassion* of Rini Hurkmans