



BERNAR VENET

(Château-Arnoux 1941 - lives and works in Le Muy)

Indetermined Line. 1987.

Charcoal, pastel and collage on paper.

Titled, signed and dated lower right: Indetermined Line Venet Bernar 87.

127 x 96.7 cm.

The authenticity of this work has been confirmed by the Archives of the Bernar Venet Studio. The work is registered there under the number: bv87d68. We thank Jacki Mansfield for her kind support. Provenance: By descent to the present owner, since then private collection Switzerland. The French conceptual artist Bernar Venet handles steel so brilliantly, that he manages to impart the most improbable forms to the heaviest and hardest

of materials. The material he uses is invariably corten steel, like that used by Richard Serra: a weatherproof structural steel with either a shiny layer of rust, or an untreated anthracite-black surface. Most of his sculptures consist of sections of forged steel square beams. Similar to rhythmic gymnastics ribbons, the steel beams swing in rings in front of each other. His sculptures circle loosely, like a progression of acoustic rings, always somewhat counteracting the force of gravity. Sometimes the artist opts for closed circles or spirals, sometimes he cuts the beams almost abruptly. Some seem to be searching for balance while moving. He began producing his monumental, linear metal works in the early 1980s. Among them, 'Arcs', 'Straight Lines' and 'Indeterminate Lines' are among the best-known series. The variety of his works across a wide range of media means that his oeuvre is very multifaceted. His series include drawings and paintings, as well as sculptures and installations. The formations may all look somewhat similar, but there is no repetition. Venet's forms are entirely free from purpose and function and from any kind of architectonic sculptural role. However, the artist does play with ideas of gravity, tectonic properties and the mathematics of order and chaos. As in the work before us, 'Undetermined Line' from 1987, the artist often tries to check a certain imbalance by means of support on the opposite side, thereby lending equilibrium to the whole piece. In our work, for example, the beam on the right seems to serve as a support for the left part of the volume. As Venet himself says, his works are often about 'resisting the metal', as if it were a 'trial of strength' between him and the metal. Venet was born in 1941 in Provence, France. After leaving school in 1958, he began his studies in Nice at the city's School of Creative Arts, worked as a stage designer at the Nice Opera house to support himself, and began to work resolutely as an artist in the 1960s. In 1964 he took part in the Salon Comparaison of the Musées d'art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, and in 1966 he moved to New York. At the age of just 25, he was already taking part in the avant-garde fair 'Prospect 68' in Dusseldorf. Venet's work is represented in many renowned institutions, including the MoMa in New York, the Art Institute of Chicago, The National Gallery of Art in Washington and the Fotomuseum Winterthur, to

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name but a few. The artist currently lives and works between New York and Le Muy, in the South of France.

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