

LKFF Art Projects presents

DRIVE

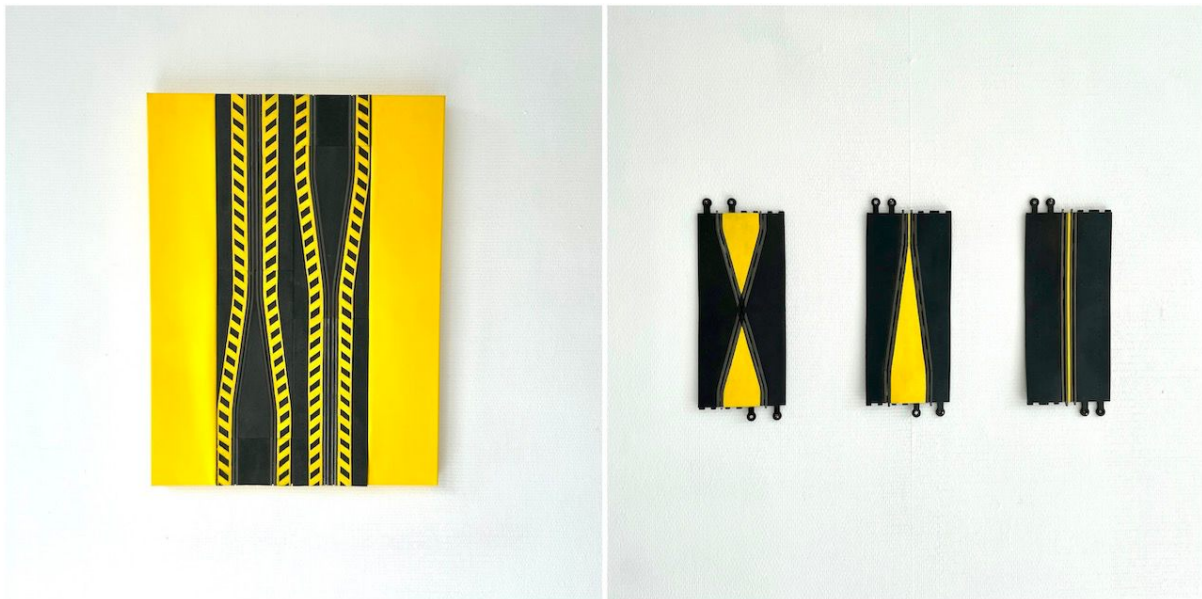
Solo Exhibition – Michel Tombroff

MERCERIE

70 Rue Van Artevelde – 1000 Brussels

November 16-25, 2023

Vernissage on November 16 from 6 pm to 10 pm



DRIVE is the continuation of the 2022 [Suburban Sublime](#) project, an attempt to apprehend the singular event that took place one evening in 1951 when architect and sculptor Tony Smith took an unmarked stretch of the New Jersey Turnpike under construction, somewhere between Manhattan and New Brunswick. It was an experience that shook Smith to the core, so much so that fifteen years later, in 1966, he described it in an interview published by *Artforum*. Here is an extract:

"The drive was a revealing experience. The road and much of the landscape was artificial, and yet it couldn't be called a work of art. On the other hand, it did something for me that art had never done. At first, I didn't know what it was, but its effect was to liberate me from many of the views I had had about art. It seemed that there had been a reality there which had not had any expression in art. [...] There is no way you can frame it, you just have to experience it."

This anecdote, one of the most celebrated in the history of art in the second half of the 20th century, had a profound effect on the artists of the 1960s. Some critics even claimed that it precipitated the transition from the modern to the postmodern, from the modern to the contemporary. *Suburban Sublime* was my first attempt to grasp the significance of this event. Here is the text written by James Voorhies in 2022 (then Director of the Tony Smith Foundation in New York, now curator at the Bass Museum of Art in Miami Beach) at the occasion of that exhibition:

"Brussels-based artist Michel Tombroff explores the legacies of modernism and postmodern art in his work. [...] Tombroff has created a series of three-dimensional paintings drawing on Smith's references to the intersections of art, urban planning, and the sublime, inhabiting the aesthetics of 1960s monochromatic shape paintings by artists such as Frank Stella."

Suburban Sublime was indeed three-dimensional and monochromatic. *DRIVE* extends this research by replacing the third - spatial - dimension with another: color.



[Mercerie](#), the former warehouse of Magasin Absalon located behind Les Halles Saint-Géry in Brussels, an astonishing place for its history, architecture and immense interior volume, offers the ideal environment to approach the conditions of f this singular 1951 event.



New Jersey Turnpike (1951)

Mercerie (2023)

Beyond its impact on the visual arts, did Smith's epiphany have an influence on the other arts, music in particular? We invited two musicians to reflect on this theme, and to perform in the heart of the imposing acoustic cube that is Mercerie. They accepted. We are therefore delighted to announce that Nicolas Thys (electric bass) and Todor Todoroff (electroacoustic music), two musicians at the cutting edge of avant-garde jazz and contemporary music in Europe, will be giving exceptional concerts on the following dates:

- Nicolas Thys: Saturday, November 18 at 8 pm
- Todor Todoroff + Stéphanie Laforce: Thursday, November 23 at 8pm
- Todor Todoroff + Tymocaine 200: Saturday, November 25 at 8pm



Nicolas Thys

Todor Todoroff

The *DRIVE* exhibition will be open to the public from Nov 16 to 25 on Thursday, Friday and Saturday (6pm to 10pm on Thursday and Friday; 4pm to 10pm on Saturday). The vernissage will take place on Nov 16 from 6pm to 10pm. There will be two guided tours (with conference) by Michel Tombroff, on Saturday Nov 18 and 25, at 5 pm.