

## **Daniel Buren**

AUTHOR: JEAN-MAX COLARD

*06.26.02-09.23.02 Centre Pompidou, Paris*

“The Museum which didn’t exist.” With this somewhat utopian title, already critical, Daniel Buren anchors his first major exhibition at the Centre Pompidou and prepares his confrontation with the mothership of institutional French culture. Rather than mounting an impossible retrospective of a body of work that has been largely impermanent, Buren offers an open-ended view on the entirety of his production. He does so by deploying a myriad of spatial propositions: an exhibit resembling an open checkerboard, a labyrinth in which to get lost, rooms made entirely of mirrors, others enclosed by wire netting, brightly colored surfaces, collapsing walls, exploded cabins, and imploded rooms. He’s also installed a room full of surveillance monitors to aid the museum guards in their duties. Set in the center of the space, the mirrored room gives the Pompidou the openness and transparency it originally had before being sectioned off by walls. Buren has enclosed the sixth floor of the museum with high walls to mitigate the ever-present power of Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers’s building, but he’s also left rooms empty to allow visitors time to rest their eyes. In short, Buren has created a game of infinitely varying spaces all equal yet all different and has infiltrated nearly every space of this building, including the parking lot and the escalator tubes that sit so famously on its facade. Not even the permanent collection has been spared: Buren has hidden five works behind pieces among its masterpieces. If he’s taken over the museum, however, it’s only to better transform it, criticize it, reformulate it—in effect, to invent his own ideal Beaubourg.

*Translated from French by Saul Anton.*