

MAUREEN PALEY.

press release

LIAM GILLICK

The Night of Red and Gold

29 September – 17 November 2019

private view: 29 September 2019, 5.30 – 7.30pm

Maureen Paley is pleased to present the fourth solo exhibition at the gallery by Liam Gillick.

The Night of Red and Gold is a fictional nightclub event described by French philosopher Gilles Châtelet in his complex and passionate book *To Live and Think Like Pigs: The Incitement of Envy and Boredom in Market Economies* (1998). In the first chapter we are taken to Le Palace in Paris on a night in 1979 where a new constellation of social relationships is falling into place.

"...a festive equilibrium, the cordial boudoir of the 'tertiary service society' which would very quickly become the society of boredom, of the spirit of imitation, of cowardice, and above all of the petty game of reciprocal envy—'first one to wake envies the others.'" Gilles Châtelet*

For this exhibition a series of new abstract forms are presented alongside various films made by Gillick since 2008. The works are archetypes of the various structures that have appeared in his work over the last few years, precisely engineered abstractions that are all silver anodized and wall based. The titles of the works, from *Festive Self Regulation*, 2019 to *Resentment Industry*, 2019, pay a tribute to Châtelet's insights and his prescience. The main focus of the films and the structural works is cultural production and workplace aesthetics under the conditions mocked and raged against in Châtelet's book.

Since the mid-90s Gillick has consistently deployed forms that offer a critical reflection upon the aesthetic underpinnings of our tertiary economies. These have been combined with writing, graphics and films that explicitly outline his interests. The films also question the position of the artist in relation to this aproductive context. This exhibition is focused and precise. There are no lights, music or dancing. Instead we are invited to reflect upon the smooth surfaces of the contemporary interface and the circling narratives that evoke conditions of production rather than consumption. The *Cyber-Wolves* and *Gardeners of the Creative* of Châtelet's book have long moved on from the nightclub where they first met. Everything has been cleared away and the lights are bright white. We are left with a space where everything is infrastructure.

To celebrate the launch of Liam Gillick's latest monograph *Half a Complex* (Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2019) copies will be available for sale at the opening and throughout the duration of the exhibition.

Liam Gillick lives and works in New York. Selected solo exhibitions include *Standing on Top of a Building: Films 2008-2019*, Madre Museum, Naples, Italy, 2019; *The Lights are No Brighter at the Centre*, CAC, Vilnius, Lithuania, 2017; *Campaign*, Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art, Porto, Portugal, 2016; *All-Imitate-Act*, Stedelijk Museum/Holland Festival, Amsterdam, 2015; *From 199C to 199D*, Le Magasin, Grenoble, France, 2014; *From 199A to 199B: Liam Gillick*, Hessel Museum of Art, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, USA, 2012; *Muzeum Sztuki w Łódź*, Poland, 2011; *One long walk... Two short piers...*, KAH, Bonn, Germany, 2010; *How will you behave: A kitchen cat speaks*, German Pavilion, 53rd Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy, 2009; *Three Perspectives and a Short Scenario*, Witte de With, Rotterdam, The Netherlands / Kunsthalle Zürich, Zürich, Switzerland / Kunstverein Munich and MCA Chicago, 2008; *A short text on the possibility of creating an economy of equivalence*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France, 2005; *The Wood Way*, Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK, 2002.

Collaborative projects include *Gelatin and Liam Gillick, Stinking Dawn*, Kunsthalle Wien, 2019; $\sum(\text{No}, 12k, \text{Lg}, 17\text{Mif})$ *New Order + Liam Gillick: So it goes...*, Manchester International Festival / OGR, Torino / Halle E, Vienna, 2017-2018; *Development*, Okayama Art Summit, Okayama, 2016; *Confessions of the Imperfect*, 1848-1989-Today, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, 2014; *To the Moon Via the Beach (with Philippe Parreno)*, Luma Foundation, Arles, 2012; *Liam Gillick and Lawrence Weiner: A Syntax of Dependency*, M HKA Museum van Hedendaage Kunst Antwerpen, Antwerp, Belgium, 2011.

Selected group exhibitions include *BAU [SPIEL] HAUS*, Neues Museum, Nuremberg, Germany, 2019; *The Log-O-Rithmic Slide Rule: Trix and Robert Haussmann*, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany, Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham, UK and ETH, Zurich, Austria, 2018; *True Faith*, curated by Matthew Higgs, Manchester City Art Gallery, Manchester, England, 2017; *2116, Shanghai Project 2016*, curated by Yongwoo Lee and Hans Ulrich Obrist, Shanghai Himalayas Museum, China, 2016; 14th Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul, Turkey, 2015; *Adventures of the Black Square: Abstract art and society 1915-2015*, Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK, 2015; Swiss Pavilion, 14th Architecture Biennale, Venice, Italy, 2014; *DLA Piper Series: Constellations*, Tate Liverpool, UK, 2013; *Looking Back for the Future*, Kunsthalle Zürich, Zürich, Switzerland, 2012.

**To Live and Think Like Pigs: The Incitement of Envy and Boredom in Market Economies*, translated by Robin Mackay, Urbanomic/Sequence Press, 2014

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The films within the exhibition are also currently on view at *Liam Gillick, Standing on Top of a Building: Films 2008-2019* at the Madre Museum, Naples, 22 June – 14 October 2019.

Everything Good Goes (2008, 14:48 min) was filmed at the artist's desk in New York and shows his working environment: desk, computers, eyeglasses and bags. The soundtrack is the artist on the phone describing the conditions of production necessary to make this film to the director and cameraman, who are from a collective of designers. As the artist speaks we see his method of creation and design using 3D computer graphic software. The computer screen shows him building a digital model of the complex cutaway set for the 1972 film *Tout va bien*, by Jean-Luc Godard and Jean-Pierre Gorin. *Tout va bien* was made four years after the uprisings of May 1968, that had gradually ebbed away culminating in the rejection of De Gaulle in June that year. Godard and Gorin's film is set during a strike at the French Salumi sausage factory witnessed by a commercial film director and his wife. *Tout va bien* can be interpreted as a self-conscious lament for the failure and limitations of 1968. Suspension and repression are the two keywords, now as then. Suspension of time, critical thought and future planning; repression of any generational emotion, generating a continual potential tension in its turn.

Filed at a bar in New York, **1848!!! (Film)** (2010, 38:12 min) is set to a score that is a complete restructuring of Steve Reich's *Music for 18 Musicians*. The rhythmic complexity of the music acts as a counterpoint to an account of the key events related to the failed Revolutions of 1848 that began in Sicily and eventually took place in various European countries. These revolutions against various European monarchies called for universal voting rights and the end to feudalism. Clementine Coupau recites the events following their chronological sequence, however, we only hear music and do not hear her voice. The events are not represented through documents or historical images, but just the image of Coupau learning and reciting the key events. Gillick and Coupau worked together on the process of remembering and the entire process was witnessed by artist Uri Aran. The disenchantment of progressive thinkers following 1848 is a reminder from history of the complexity and history of modern Europe prior to the emergence of its modern nations. The film is an unreliable guide to those events and instead shows a process of exchange, remembering and overlaid with complex structure.

Margin Time (2012, 24:43 min) is a science fiction film shot from the artist's apartment in New York City. The film shows the various journeys taken by an unseen character – possibly a curator – as they move between three different zones, each represented by an iconic example of modernist architecture visible from the artist's building: the sculpture gardens at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, the adjacent Roosevelt Island master plan for middle-class modern housing by Philip Johnson and the recently completed F. D. Roosevelt monument by Louis Kahn at the tip of Roosevelt Island. The film focuses on these three specific sites of power in a form that deconstructs specific approaches from developed science fiction in the Sixties and the Seventies, specifically, the writings of Stanislaw Lem (*Solaris*, 1961) and Christopher Priest (*The Inverted World*, 1974). The film is a narrated series of shots that develops a revised language that reconsiders representations of power, memorial, connections, renovation, and the temporary displacement of bureaucracy.

Margin Time 2: The Heavenly Lagoon (2013, 23:32 min) was filmed at Laguna Gloria gardens in Austin, Texas. The film is divided into four sections, alternating between black and white and color. Each section has a different subtitle and combines specific soundtracks with the film footage. The first section, titled *A Production of Microprocessors*, is set to a soundtrack recorded at a microprocessor plant in Taiwan. In the second section, titled *Structural Verification*, we hear Lawrence Weiner being interviewed during the installation phase of the exhibition *When Attitudes Become Form* at the Kunsthalle in Bern, Switzerland, in 1969. The third section is titled *Preflight Checks*. We hear two pilots of a 737 go through their final preparations for takeoff. For the final part of the film we hear Gilles Deleuze speaking about animals from the film *L'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze*. The footage that accompanies Deleuze has been flipped, and we see the sky as an endless "lagoon" as a car heads back into town. The philosopher, interviewed by Claire Parnet, focuses on the relation between objects, humans, territories, and technologies. The film is about the relation between objects, humans, territories, and technologies. As such, it is a film about art: where it comes from and what constitutes production.

Heckle (2014, 09:10 min) was filmed in Antiparos, Greece. The focus of the film is an old concrete jetty near to a beach. The camera examines this slumped structure as the water laps at its edges and cuts to different establishing shots that show the jetty in the context of a simple beach resort. The endless flowing and breaking of sea waves slowly polish and consume its apparently rough and unbreakable surface, with a perpetual motion of presence and absence. The jetty is "attacked" by the soundtrack which comprises three different forms of heckling. The first is the sound of a Wall Street banker heckling a group of protesters: reverse heckling. The second is a "plant" in the audience at a stage show by a stand-up comedian: fake heckling. The third is the sound of a group of young musicians grinding to a halt under the pressure of an enthusiastic heckler: positive heckling. The disconnection between sound and image is a direct reference to the recent misunderstandings of Greece and its unique economic relationship to the rest of Europe.

A documentary about the British artist Richard Hamilton filmed at the Gillick's apartment in New York, the Institute of Contemporary Arts, and Tate Modern in London. **Hamilton: A Film by Liam Gillick** (2014, 27:43 min) focuses on Hamilton's artistic practice in the context of two posthumous retrospectives. Considered a forerunner of Pop Art, Hamilton's work later extended into installation, photography and the design of computers. The film examines Hamilton's various publications and books, his involvement with early computer graphics, and his pioneering exhibition design in the Fifties. Towards the end of the film we hear a 1959 conversation between Hamilton and Marcel Duchamp, who is in turn a pioneer of the 20th century avant-garde. Duchamp stresses his idea of being an "an-artist", meaning "not an artist at all" in the same way that "anaerobic" means "without oxygen". The two also discuss the lifetime of an artwork with Duchamp asserting that the ideal lifetime of an artwork is twenty years. This conversation between the two artists plays as a background for the lengthy and detailed sequence of close-up shots of the Hamilton's 2014 retrospectives at Tate Modern and the ICA in London, filmed by the artist at night while the museums were closed.

Construction of One (2016, 21:52 min) is a film made from found footage of BMW cars being recycled. The footage has been mirrored and reversed, so the cars appear to be under construction rather than being destroyed. The film triggers various reflections on modes of production within late industrial contexts at the moment mass labor was on the verge of being replaced by automated systems. The work relates to a deliberately incomplete and unpublished book by the artist also titled *Construction of One*. Begun in 2005, it is composed of Gillick's texts and analytical papers, including an appendix on the working practices deployed by Volvo in the early Seventies, and more broadly on industrial production in Northern Europe at some point toward the end of the 20th century. The film makes us consider a fundamental issue for contemporary society: what might happen when identity, culture and society get into a crisis, especially in cultures that are supposed to be beyond crisis? In spite of this question, Gillick is persuaded that actually what is commonly referred to as crisis in consumer goods industry does not exist: basically the idea of crisis is intrinsic to every system of production.

Margin Time 3 (2018, 20:20 min) is the third film in a series shot from the artist's apartment overlooking the United Nations. The first, titled *Margin Time* (2012), was filmed during the construction of a temporary building to house workers from the United Nations while the main building was completely renovated. The United Nations promised that this large temporary building would eventually be removed and an original sculpture garden reinstated. Six years later the building was finally demolished. As with the earlier filming of the construction, the process of demolition was also filmed from the artist's apartment. Just prior to the election of Donald Trump, the artist published the essay *A Long Sentence from an Angry White Man*, a direct critique of the rise of new "strong men" leaders in various countries including the United States. The text is one long sentence written in one sitting. The film *Margin Time 3* combines the footage and the text. As the text moves slowly across the screen, various disembodied hands point at, swipe, and scroll through the text. The soundtrack for the film is "spa music" commonly heard in New York City nail salons and massage studios.

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