

MAUREEN PALEY.

LIAM GILLICK

*The Sleepwalkers*

18 January – 1 March 2025

"Their step was light and they could feel the ball of each foot pushing the earth down from them as they walked."

Liam Gillick, *Literally No Place*, 2002.

Maureen Paley is pleased to present Liam Gillick's fourth solo exhibition at the gallery, *The Sleepwalkers*. The exhibition features five artworks from the 1990s and 2000s and a recent film from 2021 shot in Korea. All the works stem from his interest in the aesthetics of our socio-political infrastructure – the zones of strategy, negotiation, projection, and scenario-thinking – that are the backdrop to daily life in post-industrial society.

The works in the main gallery are bound together by *Introduction* (2002), a text that wraps mid-height around the walls. Three plinths carry pieces that relate to an ongoing critique of systems of mediation and soft control within a neo-liberal context. *McNamara Setting* (1994) focuses on the role of an advisor or political strategist, comprising mid-century men's business apparel heaped into an airport security tray along with fake snow, working torches, cigarette packets, and various strategy papers. *(The What If? Scenario) Spatial Definition Device #2* (1996) is a cardboard box full of many coloured ribbons, one of a number of artworks proposed that offered the tools to create permeable borders or loosely define zones of activity. The third plinth displays *Redaction* (2005), an oversized glass filled with Polish Pure Spirit. These glass works were often situated in exhibitions to function as a visualisation of a fiction brought to life.

The second room includes *Discussion Island Liability Platform #4* (1997) alongside *The Sleepwalker* (2021). The Discussion Platforms are a series of abstract structures Gillick created from the mid 1990s often intended to operate in areas otherwise unsuitable for the display of traditional artworks, overhanging a space where the idea of a semi-autonomous zone of exchange might be theorised and enacted. *The Sleepwalker* (2021) is a film made during two weeks of isolation in a traditional Korean house, featuring a series of rooms surrounding a walled courtyard, in the Bukchon Hanok Village, Seoul. The soundtrack is four early recordings of Bellini's opera "La Sonnambula" where the protagonist reveals the truth of her feelings while sleepwalking. The film was made at various random moments over two weeks, yet the various shots are cut together to create the illusion of logical time despite it being the result of a fractured production process.

Liam Gillick (b. 1964, Aylesbury, UK) lives and works in New York, USA. Working across diverse forms, including installation, video and sound, as a theorist, curator and educator as well as an artist, his wider body of work includes published essays and texts, lectures, curatorial and collaborative projects. Gillick's work reflects upon conditions of production in a post-industrial landscape including the aesthetics of economy, labour and social organisation. His work exposes the dysfunctional aspects of a modernist legacy in terms of abstraction and architecture when framed within a globalised, neo-liberal consensus, and extends into structural rethinking of the exhibition as a form. He has produced a number of short films since the late 2000s which address the construction of the creative persona in light of the enduring mutability of the contemporary artist as a cultural figure, including *Margin Time* (2012), *The Heavenly Lagoon* (2013) and *Hamilton: A Film by Liam Gillick* (2014). The book *Industry and Intelligence: Contemporary Art Since 1820* was published by Columbia University Press in March 2016.

Gillick's work has been included in numerous important exhibitions including documenta and the Venice, Berlin, Shanghai and Istanbul Biennales – representing Germany in 2009 in Venice. Solo museum exhibitions have taken place at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, the Museum of Modern Art in New York and Tate in London. Gillick's work is held in many important public collections including the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Guggenheim Museum in New York and Bilbao and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Over the last twenty-five years Gillick has also been a prolific writer and critic of contemporary art – contributing to *Artforum*, *October*, *Frieze* and *e-flux Journal*. He is the author of a number of books including a volume of his selected critical writing. High profile public works include the British Government Home Office (Interior Ministry) building in London and the Lufthansa Headquarters in Frankfurt. Throughout this time Gillick has extended his practice into experimental venues and collaborative projects with artists including Philippe Parreno, Lawrence Weiner, Louise Lawler, Adam Pendleton and the band New Order, in a series of concerts in Manchester, Turin and Vienna.