

LIAM GILLICK  
FROM 199A TO 199D

CCS BARD HESSEL MUSEUM  
CNAC MAGASIN

## FROM NINETEEN NINETY A TO NINETEEN NINETY D

This book documents two exhibitions. One took place in 2012 at the CCS Bard, Hessel Museum. The other took place in 2014 at the Centre national d'art contemporain, Le Magasin, Grenoble. Both places host curatorial studies programs. These courses are very different. Bard leads to a Masters degree, while the Magasin retains its original open structure. The fact that Bard is part of an academic structure does not mean that it is tied up in text and research. Writing and theoretical work takes place at both institutions in parallel to work directly with artists and structures. While the students have a lot in common, they end up with rather different approaches. Bard is a structure with teachers, the Magasin is more self-organized, with visitors.

It was my desire to work with this new generation of curators on two exhibitions of works I had originally produced in the early 1990s. There were two reasons for this. First, to test some of the often incorrect assumptions that have been made about work from the 1990s, and secondly, to test the changes that have taken place after 20 years spent focusing on different aspects of curatorial potential.

The works included in the exhibitions and this book were originally produced in tension with a new strong spirit of curatorial independence of thought and intention. They were also produced alongside other artists. For these new exhibitions it was the curatorial student's responsibility to frame and reanimate the works – altering the power dynamic that had originally existed. The critical potential of the work has now shifted. The students engaged and disengaged in unexpected ways. What had gone overlooked came to the center, and important structures were broken down.

Liam Gillick, New York, 2015

FROM 199A TO 199B

In collaboration with students and former students of the  
Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College.

Curated by Tom Eccles

Hessel Museum of Art

June 23–December 21, 2012

The installations and projects were produced  
in collaboration with graduate students:

Juana Berrío

Olga Dekalo

Sarah Fritchey

Sarah Higgins

Annie Larmon

Marina Noronha

Karly Wildenhaus

and former students of the program:

Ian Berry

Jose Luis Blondet

Cecilia Brunson

David Ho

Yeung Chan

Vincenzo de Bellis

Jennifer Dunlop-Fletcher

Montserrat Albores Gleason

Ruba Katrib

Nathan Lee

Fionn Meade

Tomáš Pospiszyl

Chen Tamir

Gilbert Vicario

with contributions by: H.E.N.S. (Arlen Austen and Jason Boughton)

FROM 199C TO 199D

In collaboration with participants at the École du Magasin, Grenoble.

Curated by Yves Aupetitallot

MAGASIN–Centre National d'Art Contemporain

6 June–7 September 2014

The installations and projects were produced  
in collaboration with participants:

Claire Astier

Paola Bonino

Giulia Bortoluzzi

Selma Boskalio

Neringa Bumbliene

Anna Tomczak



Liam Gillick 6.

## FROM NINETEEN NINETY A TO NINETEEN NINETY D TOM ECCLES

“He was doing a lot of work, but not doing a lot of objects.”  
—Esther Schipper<sup>1</sup>

*From Nineteen Ninety A to Nineteen Ninety D* is a selected survey of Liam Gillick’s groundbreaking projects and installations that challenged the orthodox presentation and reception of art, its methods, and practices during the 1990s. Considering the relationship between the artist, the institution, and the audience to be mutually codependent in the creation of meaning, Gillick created situations in which the outcome was incomplete without involving the institution and questioning the expanded role of the exhibition visitor.

This book is a record of two exhibitions, *From 199A to 199B* at the CCS Bard, Hessel Museum in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, in the summer of 2012, and *From 199C to 199D* at the Magasin Grenoble in 2014. Given their respective educational roles in the field of curatorial studies and practice, CCS Bard and the Magasin provided uniquely suited environments in which to test what it is to restage exhibitions from another time and place. Both institutions combine the complementary and at times contradictory functions of public exhibition venues and discrete curatorial programs and research facilities.<sup>2</sup> While Gillick is a faculty member at Bard, the exhibition at the Magasin provided a return of sorts to a place that was formative in his early practice.<sup>3</sup>

Resisting the hagiographic function of the traditional retrospective, these exhibitions involved numerous students from their respective curatorial programs. At each venue the students were involved in a profound re-questioning of the works selected, and examined the possibility for re-invention in new spatiotemporal contexts. This publication documents both the original construction of each of the works, and how a new generation of curators came to understand and conceive their (re)realization. In many cases a set of instructions given by the artist would suffice, in others less so. These exhibitions highlighted both the need for re-interpretation and a reexamination of the exhibition as a form of dialogue between artist, artwork, and institution. All this was taking place within institutions that were developing in the early 1990s—a period that experienced a “curatorial turn.”<sup>4</sup>

1. “Esther Schipper Interview Extract,” Session 23 of the École du Magasin, YouTube video, 12:35, from an interview conducted in April 2014 within the context of the exhibition *From 199C to 199D*, posted June 2, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=817jpTLEXH0> (last accessed May 2014).

2. The École du Magasin was founded in 1987 in a former industrial building in Grenoble and provides a combination of research and practice. Each session lasts nine months, from October to early July, and is divided into two stages: from the establishment of a framework and a collective working method, to the production of the final curatorial project. The Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, was founded in 1992 with a facility that included gallery spaces for student exhibitions in addition to exhibitions organized by outside

curators. CCS Bard offers a two-year masters program in curatorial research that includes a final independent exhibition project. In 2006, CCS Bard opened the Hessel Museum of Art.

3. Two notable examples would be *Le Procès de Pol Pot* (1998–1999), co-ordinated by Liam Gillick and Philippe Parreno, supervised by Thomas Muclair, Pierre Huyghe, Rebecca Gordon-Nesbitt, Douglas Gordon, Gabriel Kuri, Jeremy Millar, Josephine Pryde, Carsten Höller, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Ronald Jones, Pierre Joseph, Zeigam Azizov, Adrian Schiesser, Terry Atkinson, and *La fête au quotidien* (1996) with Gabriel Kuri.

4. See Paul O’Neill and Mick Wilson (eds.), *Curating and the Educational Turn*, Open Editions, London 2010.

The recessionary years of the early 1990s were a dynamic period of artistic change. While many artists in the United States were exposing the workings of the gallery and institution, and challenging the traditional status of the artistic persona, in Europe attention turned to the matrix of cultural production within the context of fading public funding and a new freedom to travel following the fall of the Berlin Wall and the emergence of budget airlines.

*From Nineteen Ninety A to Nineteen Ninety D* revisits this formative period of Gillick's production in Europe, particularly in France, Germany, Italy, and England, prior to his move to New York in 1998. Beginning with Gillick's collaboration with photographer Henry Bond, the *Documents* series is an extraordinary portrait of the public realm in transition. From 1990 until 1993, Gillick and Bond operated in parallel to standard media agencies obtaining press releases and attending events organized to promote everything from political platforms to expensive yachts. The resulting series comprises framed photographs of the given event taken by Bond, and texts produced from recordings and notes taken by Gillick. The series as a whole witnesses the transformation of Marcuse's "superstructure" at a moment of ideological collapse for the traditional Left. The most prescient example of works from this period would be the "document" of a forum of the Transport and General Workers Union on January 9, 1993, heralding the coming of "Clinton Economics" 11 days before the inauguration of the incoming president and the emergence of Third Way politics. It was a confirmation of "The End" of certain forms of organized socialism in Britain, as the final issue of the British magazine, *Marxism Today*, so bluntly put it on the cover of its final issue in January 1992.<sup>5</sup>

A telling text piece by Gillick from 1993, combining both humor and pathos states, "The significance of this structure is still dependent upon structures outside art—which I am too lazy to challenge." Traditional politics had reached a seeming aporia. But this state of doubt proved to be a productive space for Gillick to work.

Information, modes of delivery, and language haunt the work of Gillick during this period. It is well to remember, hard as it is, that all this work was produced prior to the "superhighway" of the Internet; there were no search engines, Facebooks, or Twitter feeds. Nevertheless, Gillick is obsessed with networks, power structures, forms of resistance, and the inter-connectivity of seemingly disparate events and people (what he would probably term "parallel"); how information is gathered, distributed, and stored. As an artist, working less from the traditional studio and more from within the structures of smaller galleries and European Kunsthallen, the site (time and duration) of his work became the work itself.

Later, in 1998, perhaps reflecting on this time, Gillick wrote, "I am interested in the establishment of a series of parallel structures, all of which work alongside each other.

I am interested in setting up ways in which it might be possible to understand the complex context within which ideas and visualizations of ideas are made manifest, rather than in constantly refining a series of apparently transgressive visual novelties."

5. A complete set of the monthly magazine *Marxism Today* (1957–1992) was exhibited at the entrance to "Liam Gillick: 199A–199B" underneath the "Pinboard" organized by Tom Eccles.

6. *Technique Anglaise: Current Trends in British Art*, ed. Liam Gillick and Andrew Renton, Thames and Hudson, London, 1991.

Even though he graduated from Goldsmiths College in London and co-edited one of the first public accounts of the YBA phenomenon,<sup>6</sup> Gillick found his most productive context away from the emerging British scene; a context more suited to an artist who applied writing, music, curatorial strategies, and an interest in the structural aspects of conceptual art to his practice. In 1990 Gillick drove to Nice with the specific task of seeing *Les Ateliers du Paradise*, an exhibition that included the work of Phillipe Parreno, Pierre Joseph, and Philippe Perrin. The following summer he met Dominique Gonzalez-Foester while again in Nice during the exhibition *No Man's Time* curated by Nicolas Bourriaud, Éric Troncy, and director Christian Bernard. His early work often involved collaborations with these and other artists, both in the production of the work itself and in the structure of exhibitions, and he has been widely acknowledged as a protagonist in what Nicolas Bourriaud later termed Relational Aesthetics, a concept that is not without its contradictions, misconceptions, and varied polemics.<sup>7</sup>

At Bard, in addition to current students, *From 199A to 199B* involved alumnae of the program who participated in *The Pinboard Project* (1992) which provides explicit instructions for the use of a series of bulletin boards, each one completed independently of the artist, yet consistent with the work's original form. For the restaging of *What if Scenario Part 1* (1995)<sup>8</sup> on the other hand, Gillick's initial proposal in 1995 seemed an absolute impossibility – the instruction to display *all* the Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States and a long list of governmental and non-governmental documents to be shown in a single room under harsh halogen lights; by 2012 this work appeared perfectly possible, while complicated in new ways via use of the Internet.

Texts have formed an important part of Gillick's work and *From 199A to 199B* highlighted his use of the written and spoken word through a radio broadcast, *A Broadcast from 1887 on the Subject of our Time* (1996), taken from his republished edition of *Looking Backward*, by Edward Bellamy from 1887. At Bard, Gillick's *Prototype Erasmus Table #2 (Ghent)* (1994), an oversized plywood table originally conceived as a workspace for Gillick to write, provided a reading room with books and ephemera selected from the CCS Bard Library and Archives. Elaborately collated over an outsized map of London and its suburbs, the landscape of Gillick's upbringing and location for his fictional Erasmus' wanderings, the simple plywood table provided an encyclopedia of Gillick's wide-ranging fascinations at this time: Robert McNamara, the business executive who brought corporate efficiency to the US Department of Defense during the Vietnam War, Masuru Ibuka, the Japanese industrialist and cofounder of Sony, and a cast of characters and events that recur throughout Gillick's work at this time. In the case of the Bard exhibition, the panoply of referents could be overheard in the adjacent room with continuous public book readings of the author's *McNamara* (1992), *Erasmus is Late* (1995), and *Discussion Island Big Conference Centre* (1997).

Gillick's writings and installations of this time questioned the position of the individual at the end of the 20th century, and functioned as a critique of current politics. Here again, we might find ample reference in the work of Herbert Marcuse and the notion of "repressive tolerance." Of particular interest to Gillick in the 1990s was the emergence of

7. See for example Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, Les Presses du réel, Dijon 2002, first published 1998, English translation 2002; Claire Bishop, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics," *October* 110 (2004); and Liam Gillick, "Contingent Factors: A Response to Claire Bishop's 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics,'" *October* 115 (2006).

8. *What If Scenario Part 1* (1995) was originally proposed for the exhibition *This is Today: Trailer*, Mediapark, Cologne, organized by Barbara Steiner

an individualized leisure class and service economy, where collective identities give way to increasingly personalized self-categorization and identification. Particularly prescient at a pre-Internet moment is *Information Room (GRSSPR, Tattoo Magazine, Women's Basketball)* (1993), which in its original form (installed in "Backstage" at the Kunstverein in Hamburg in 1993) displayed copies of *Tattoo Magazine*, *Women's Basketball*, and *The German Research Service Special Press Reports*, making up an archive of leisure, self-identification, and a record of new innovations in science, social-science and technology.

Gillick's *What If? Scenario* series tasks the viewer to participate in various activities. One such, famously first exhibited in Nicolas Bourriaud's seminal *Traffic* exhibition at CNAC, Bourdeaux, in 1996, is undoubtedly the most playful, and made jabs at the evolution of museums and galleries in the 1990s as they transformed into spaces of "leisure," interactive, more comfortable and accommodating to the visitor. Titled *(The What If? Scenario) Dining Table*, (1996), the work features a room with a blue, netless table tennis table, silver glitter, and texts that invited visitors to invent their own rules for a parallel future, and forget about the ball and play the game.

In a recent interview Gillick rejects the notion that the works should be read as producing communitarian experiences within the museum (a common description of the "relational"):

I think a lot of misunderstanding around the work is based on a false conception of its claims. There was no claim to critique capital by reproducing the softer edges of its participatory forms. The work was an exposure of how meaning is produced and what forms and structures offer potential to produce new critical tools.<sup>9</sup>

He is also careful to distinguish the "audience" from the "public":

It is clear that the discussion used to be about audience. When I first started exhibiting work there was a lot of talk about finding an "audience" for an artist's work. We were more interested in a post-modern awareness that it is always possible to create an audience for anything - but not so easy to deal with the multiple publics that take part in developed cultural life. My concern was not so much about the notion of a broad public but a fractured and layered public. The classic neo-avant garde position was to project the semi-autonomous function of art within a context of education and protection. By the time I started to exhibit work I questioned this position. I was not alone - the first generation of new curators also wanted to play with hierarchies too. Not the traditional late modern concern with breaking down hierarchies within art per se but in terms of who speaks and to whom. Meaning that we were all interested in taking possession of the mediating functions of art - specifically I remain as interested in playing with the exhibition context as I do with the "works" in the exhibition.<sup>10</sup>

The exhibition at Bard was conceived in relation to the 2012 purchase of the large-scale installation *Odradek Wall*, (1998) for the "Marieluise Hessel Collection" housed at Bard. Named for the Odradek, an object that has no function or use value in the Franz Kafka short story *The Cares of a Family Man*, is a large pinewood wall embedded with bright

9. "Other People and Their Ideas: An Interview with Liam Gillick," by Tom Eccles, *Art Review* 63 (2012).

10. Ibid.

halogen lights, designating, in Gillick's words "a site where it might be possible to consider negotiation, strategy, and compromise."<sup>11</sup> First exhibited at Bard as part of a 1998 group exhibition,<sup>12</sup> *Odradek Wall* sat at the center of *From 199A to 199B*, around which the other galleries and projects orbited. As Jörn Schafaff states in his ample essay on the Magasin's exhibition: "It put(s) you in the midst of things, offering no outside position. It subject(s) you to a role without giving you insight into the whole story. At the same time, though, you are encouraged to reflect about the conditions of the situation. The environment is structurally determined by its theatricality, by the doubling of thing and sign. You are not merely there but you are exposed, exhibited, and thus your actions take on the status of a performance – even if you are your only spectator. The question that you need to ask yourself is: How am I going to behave?"

*Odradek Wall* becomes critical to the strategy for the two exhibitions, asking the graduating class of 2012 at the Center for Curatorial Studies and the participants of the 23rd Session of the École du Magasin<sup>13</sup> to pose many of the most fundamental questions around curating, exhibiting, and acting in the world, whether given or self-generated. Esther Schipper, Gillick's Berlin gallerist and a student at the Magasin in the late 1980s has noted the specificity of the circumstances in which each of these works was first realized and describes the challenges of "translating" these works for new contexts.<sup>14</sup> The same could be true for any work, but is foregrounded in Gillick's often "parasitic" projects. *From 199A to 199B* and *From 199C to 199D* were just two possibilities among many.

11. Exhibition guide, *From 199A to 199B: Liam Gillick*, Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York 2012, p. 34.

12. *Odradek* was curated by Thomas Mulcaire in collaboration with Kendall Geers, Liam Gillick, and Paul Gregory (September 20– December 18, 1998).

13. *From 199A to 199B* was curated by Tom Eccles with graduate students Juana Berrío, Olga Dekalo, Sarah Fritchey, Sarah Higgins, Annie Larmon, Marina Noronha, Karly Wildenhaus, and included contributions from alumnae Ian Berry, José Luis Blondet, Cecilia Brunson (with Cristian

Silva), David Ho Yeung Chan, Vincenzo de Bellis, Jennifer Dunlop-Fletcher, Montserrat Albores Gleason, Ruba Katrib, Nathan Lee, Fionn Meade, Tomas Pospiszyl, Chen Tamir, and Gilbert Vicario. *From 199C to 199D* was curated by participants of the École du Magasin's 23rd session: Claire Astier, Paola Bonino, Giulia Bortoluzzi, Selma Boskailo, Neringa Bumblien, Anna Tomczak.

14. Extract of interview by Session 23 of the École du Magasin with Esther Schipper, April 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8I7jpTLExH0> (last accessed May 2015).





Liam Gillick 12.

## THE [TAPE RUNS OUT] FROM 199A TO 199B AND FROM 199C TO 199D THE 1990S AS TEMPORAL READYMADE PAUL O'NEILL

### THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF A CONVERSATION

In 2004, I taped an interview with Liam Gillick in his apartment in New York.<sup>1</sup> Transcribed, the two-hour interview ran to 20 pages, but it was the last few lines of the document that stood out, and have remained unforgettable for me.

*If we're sitting here talking about the idea that people, whoever they might be, might think that curatorial structures are too locked down, something too defined or too didactic or too obvious, then we are probably not ... [Tape Runs Out]*

What? "We are probably not" what? What curatorial structures do people think are too locked down? What is about to be said when the [Tape Runs Out]? There was so much more after this – so much so that neither of us noticed the beep of the machine when it ran out – but there, in three parenthetical words, the [Tape runs out].

This text starts at the end of the tape, where three unuttered words indicate the end of the beginning of everything afterwards. The tape and its apparent ending symbolize the notional past as an unrepeatable gap between the unregistered present and the never future. [Tape Runs Out] offers a strange metonym – a "stand-in" for a way of reading Gillick's work, as a continuous "stopgap" in time's progress. The end, the moment after, or the future present are taken as an analogy and as the structural basis for my reading of two survey exhibitions of Gillick's practice.

*From 199A to 199B* at the Hessel Museum at Bard College and *From 199C to 199D* at the École du Magasin reimaged the 1990s in 2012 and 2014 in the form of collaborations between the artist, curators, and students. Reanimating selections of key works from the 1990s, and in many cases reconfiguring them into different works, both projects seemingly move beyond the end of the tape (the 1990s), permitting the work to oscillate in a more recent temporal spool. A whole decade functions as an adjusted readymade without original – not repeated but reconsidered through variant modes of curatorial participation.

### THE 1990S AND ITS TIME

The 1990s are a vague memory of neoliberalism and multiculturalism; of personal computers, Hotmail accounts, CD-Roms and Minidiscs; of supermodels and smiley faces, raves, ecstasy, and Vicks; of grunge, hip-hop, and street wear; of many, many wars (Cold, Balkan, Gulf, and almost everywhere else); of a Good Friday agreement; of endless episodes of Friends. Time coming to an end was a notable concern of the decade. Y2K disasters loomed, the new Millennium would never happen. There would be no more decimal time, no more clock time. The end of the world was nigh.

*From 199A to 199B* and *From 199C to 199D* treat the exhibition form as time capsule. They are Y2K in exhibition-form. The 1990s are erased, or taped over, with a barely

1. An edited transcript of this interview is included within this publication.

visible trace remaining. In these exhibitions, historical time is brought into the present as a constant, continually reimaginable, future tense – an open bracketed, yet unstable concept of past practice, where future ideas and forms are allowed to emerge in the process of doing, speaking, and being together in a different contemporary time.

*From 199A to 199B and From 199C to 199D* highlight the contemporary time of “the curatorial” as an open-ended construct of reconfiguration, collaboration, and post-participation, quite unlike the 1990s of the exhibition über-curator. The curatorial expresses itself as a malleable strand of practice seeking to resist categorical resolution, preferring to function in the Adornian sense as a constellation of activities that do not wish to fully reveal themselves. Eschewing conformity to the logic of inside (art production) and outside (art’s organization) in terms of the distribution of labor, the evolving exhibition is only one of many component parts. Proposing a more juxtaposed field of signification, form, content, and critique, the temporal constellation is an ever-shifting and dynamic cluster of irreconcilable differences, where there is a remaining tension between the universal and the particular, between essentialism and nominalism. Rather than forcing syntheses, this idea of a constellation (as an always-emergent praxis) brings together incommensurable social objects, ideas, and subject relations in order to demonstrate the structural faults and falsities inherent in the notion of the hermetic artwork or exhibition as primarily artistic, curatorial or co-productive work.

The multiple layers of curatorial work in *From 199A to 199B* and *From 199C to 199D* are conceived of as a temporal discursive constellation across two times: then and now. As such, they delimit the time of the artwork as event. Equally, they attempt to resist the stasis of the artist-curator-spectator triumvirate by supporting more semi-autonomous and self-determined aesthetic and discursive forms of practice that may overlap and intersect, rather than seeking a dialectic or oppositional presentation.

As discursive constellations, *From 199A to 199B* and *From 199C to 199D* do not exclude the exhibition as one of many productive outcomes. Rather, the exhibition space symbolizes a collective dimension for art as a socialized and open work, with participation conceived of as taking part in a process of evaluation as much as activation. Implicating student-participants, *From 199A to 199B* and *From 199C to 199D* mirror the art world as a social subsystem produced by multiple agencies—from the artist, to the audience as co-producer of the value of the work, to those responsible for the framing of art’s context or situation and its social and spatial reception. Exhibition making is thus put forth as both an actual as well as a metaphorical relational process. Of course, this argument may be contradicted if we were to really reflect and quantify the value, depth, levels, and degrees of participation (artist/curator/spectator) within the projects, but for now, I would argue for *From 199A to 199B* and *From 199C to 199D* as educational, curatorial models of the post-participatory condition.

## LOOKING BACKWARDS: A SHORT HISTORY (LESSON)

*My work is like the light in the fridge, it only works when there are people there to open the fridge door. Without people, it’s not art.*<sup>2</sup>

The transformative potential considered inherent to art – as audiences moved from

2. Liam Gillick, quoted in Claire Bishop, “Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics,” *October* 110 (Fall, 2004), p. 61.

passive subjects to active citizens – was a key motivation for the relinquishment, by the early avant-garde, of a measure of authorial control. In the 1990s, one of the legacies of the evolution of the modernist “abolition of autonomous art” and its integration into the “praxis of life” was a general move toward more social and situational forms of artistic practice,<sup>3</sup> a relational art intent on transcending the autonomous symbolic space for art.

Underlying Nicolas Bourriaud’s *Relational Aesthetics* was his portrayal of a generalized shift toward relational group work, polyphonic exchanges, and inter-subjective practices. Anglo-American critiques of Bourriaud’s analysis tend to overlook the stated tendency for art to be construed primarily through *public* participation as reception (rather than authorial production), in order to pit the approaches of individual relational artists against each other, focusing on the aesthetic or ethical dimension of their practices with the aim of establishing subjective criteria with which to differentiate between different forms of socially relational practices, and thus curtail the discussion. Consequently, the social rationale behind subject-to-situation encounters within works of art is never fully explored.

By basing the primary experience of relational art on people and their sociality, engagement, and presence, inter-subjectivity becomes a primary medium of artistic investigation.<sup>4</sup> As Jacques Rancière writes, “Relational art [ ... ] intends to create not only objects but situations and encounters. But this too simple opposition between objects and situations operates a short-circuit.”<sup>5</sup> Restricted as it is to either one-off aesthetic experiences of their possible ethical effects, this “too simple opposition” limits any critique of relational art’s efficacy to an analysis of the merits of types of immediate immersiveness, reducing the participant to an ocular-centric figure. Thus, a viewer becomes a constricted component within the framing of constructed situations in which extant social relations are either subverted or reproduced.<sup>6</sup>

While relational art of the 1990s intended a more socialized and collective form of immersive experience, the taking part in art’s social space is largely regarded as merely contributing to a metaphorical form of art’s co-production, its meanings, and its values. What is required, then, is an interrogation of the procedures, forms, and consequences of coproduction, of what constitutes the authorial space of the object of art and its reception, and of how art produces or reproduces the frameworks for different modes of participation with time, not as event, but as degrees of agency.

The 1990s were also marked by a privileging of the group exhibition as the predominant form of rationality. As Elena Filipovic has argued, in the group exhibition a particular physical space with its own parameters is established, “through which relations between viewers and objects, between one object and others, and between objects, viewers, and

3. See Peter Bürger, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 1984, p. 52–54.

4. See Claire Bishop, “The Social Turn: Collaborations and its Discontents,” *Artforum*, February 2006, p. 178–179.

5. Jacques Rancière, “Problems and Transformations in Critical Art,” in Claire Bishop (ed.), *Participation*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Whitechapel, London 2006, p. 90.

6. See Claire Bishop, “Introduction/Viewers as Producers,” in Bishop (ed.), *Participation*, p. 13.

7. Elena Filipovic, “The Global White Cube,” in Barbara Vanderlinden & Elena Filipovic (eds.), *The Manifesta Decade: Debates on Contemporary Art Exhibitions and Biennials in Post-Wall Europe*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts 2005, p. 79.



their specific exhibition context are staged.”<sup>7</sup> Relational art may thus be regarded as a response to the changing conditions for the production, display, and reception of art and the ubiquity of the large-scale group exhibition form.

In the case of *From 199A to 199B* and *From 199C to 199D*, bringing the 1990s into the present is the deportation of a decade as temporal readymade group exhibition form adjusted for the contemporary, where one exhibition-time collapses into another. There is an irreconcilable displacement between the exhibited works in two times, how they are made and how they originated as an idea. Artistic value as a stable form of individual expression embodied in material practice is notionally withdrawn, with the resultant exhibition-work manifesting itself as a rejection of the mimetic capacity of the artist to reflect social life through her or his own hand.

In close collaboration with technicians, fabricators, curators, and students, a type of latter-day incarnation of the readymade is evoked. Based on an understanding of post-autonomous production as the foundation of art after Duchamp, there is a process of production in which the delegation of non-artistic labor to others is aligned with the artist’s intent, resulting in a collapse of the division “between intellectual labor and manual labor as the basis for the future dissolution of art into social praxis” that began with the early avant-garde.<sup>8</sup> Productive labor and immaterial labor dissolve into the artist’s coproductive practice, so that art can extend itself beyond alienated aestheticism. Here, the “dispersal of the artist’s hand into forms of heteronymous labor,”<sup>9</sup> as well as symbolically displacing the artist from the center of authorship, allows for a momentary dissolution of traditional labor forms, with art inviting both productive and non-productive labor into its realm as a means of “reflecting on the conditions of both art and labor under capitalist relations.”<sup>10</sup> The assimilation of workers into the artist and vice versa is expressive of a desire to transform the alienated character of both – a two-way movement, or escape from predetermined identities. Further, through the mobilization of an element of what Miriam Bratu Hansen has called a “temporal disjuncture,” the intrusion of a near forgotten past “disrupts the fictitious progress of chronological time,” potentially revealing entirely new structural formations of identity for the subject.<sup>11</sup>

The movement from passive to active participant in art is increasingly difficult to quantify – contemplation is needed on the issue of time, and specifically on how public time is framed in order that space of coproduction can emerge. If we are to think of participation as more than a closed, one-off, relational, or social interaction with art, we must take account of a temporal process that is immeasurable, unquantifiable, and unknowable from the outset. In this sense, we might think of the duration of a participatory process as having its own extrinsic values, such as mobility, agency, change, or affect.<sup>12</sup>

There tends to be a multiplicity of modes of interaction between people – one that is difficult to capture or represent. In this context, duration behaves as a destabilizing effect, because there is no longer a fixed time and place in which to qualify “the

8. John Roberts, *The Intangibilities of Form*, Verso, London and New York 2007.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. Miriam Bratu Hansen, “Benjamin and Cinema: Not a One-Wall Street,” *Critical Enquiry*, Winter 1999, p. 311. See also Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” in *Illuminations*, Pimlico, London 1999, p. 230.

12. For an introductory analysis on Bergsonisms, see Suzanne Guerlac, *Thinking in Time: An Introduction to Henri Bergson*, Cornell University, New York 2006, p. 1–13.

experience,” or how much we participated in the art-as-event. This is most evident in the fact that a number of people contributing to many durational projects are often unaware exactly what they are taking part in and what the outcome is intended to be; their participation – what has been done, who took part and what was achieved – is not something that can clearly be measured or evaluated. In the case of *From 199A to 199B* and *From 199C to 199D*, the level or degrees of activation by students is never fully disclosed, either within the exhibitions themselves or in their attendant mediation, where different levels of participation by those involved at CCS and the Magasin are difficult to quantify. We know only that some period of time and educational resources has been given to the process of being together, with some objective in mind.

Time surpasses itself in a manner that makes duration the very material of cooperative creative action. For Henri Bergson, duration is not only a psychological experience—a transitory state of becoming—but also the concrete evolution of creativity as a state of being within time, succeeding itself in a manner that makes duration the very material of individual creative action. For Bergson, duration is always evolving by our actions “in time,” allowing for the unknown to be brought to the fore in a manner that does not anticipate its own formation during or within the course of action. Duration cannot “run out” because, by definition, it is something that endures—its substance being change, materialized through a transitional process that is taking place in time. If duration is to be understood as an attribute of participation, something must shift through time for the participant. Like an object dissolving in liquid, duration is perpetually moving forward through a process of succession that is always different, both materially and as an experience of the material transformation that unfolds. Nothing that takes place in time will occur in the same way again.<sup>13</sup>

These values have also opened up a space for rethinking what might be meant by the publicness of “post-participatory art.” The most recent thinking on “participation” in art and its public contexts has been configured through the experience of art’s reception, its objecthood and its active potential to engage with others and transform them in some evaluative way – in other words, the ethics of art. What Gillick’s work appears to argue for is a kind of post-participation that involves being together for a period of time without fully knowing what one is participating in or producing, while nevertheless having some common objective.

By taking account of post-participation with art, and in art, as an unfolding and accumulation of multiple positions, engagements, and moments registered in what we account for as the artwork, then we may be able to move beyond the individual participatory encounter of an exhibition moment.

In order for post-participation to be understood from the perspective of the producer (who participates through artistic processes) rather than the received (who participates in art), we might begin to distinguish between different forms of relationality, and to move beyond the relational as merely another social encounter with art, with its exhibition, or with its objecthood. We might also understand post-participation not as a relation or social encounter with artistic production, but as a socialized process necessary for art’s co-production. Such a shift in the perception of participation must initially consider the different duration-specific qualities of art as something driven by ideas of extending *public* time, rather than space, so that we can begin to understand the complexities

13. Ibid.

of artistic coproduction in terms of the logic of succession, rather than discontinuity in a unitary time and place.

Such a shift recognizes the possibility that the materialization of the past-present-future dialectic is always under dispute. The tape never runs out when in the future present tense. Further, the materialization of a moment in history, of recorded time in the form of a “retrospective” survey show or the abrupt “end” of a taped interview will eventually expire – as idea, as objects, as mechanisms of production, as spatio-temporalities, or as unstable events – while doggedly maintaining their continuum in time. Like *From 199A to 199B* and *From 199C to 199D*, the past as future present is analogous to the tape that sticks around, adheres itself to a time, while never really running out in its time.

Given our current obsession with contemporary-future-time – from the Accelerationists’ optimism in the future of modernization to Paolo Virno’s end of history as a “past of the future,” and from Bifo Berardi’s melancholic “post-futures” to Marc Augé’s call for a common future to live in the “shifting present which we call the future”<sup>14</sup> – where we go to next is under scrutiny as never before, or at least not since 1999. Although seemingly modest in its futuristic proposal, what *From 199A to 199B* and *From 199C to 199D* attempts to proffer in exhibition-time is a belief in the potential of future present tense and a cry for a more recurrent *this will always have been*.

14. See Paolo Virno, *Déjà Vu and the End of History*, Verso, London and New York 2015; Franco Bifo Berardi, *After the Future*, AK Press, Oakland and Edinburgh 2011; Marc Augé, *The Future*, Verso, London & New York 2015.



Liam Gillick 20.

## STAGES JÖRN SCHAFFAFF

There are no partitions, no suspended ceilings, no fins. There is no powder-coated, brushed, etched, painted, anodized aluminum or steel. Hardly any Plexiglas and just a few wall texts, plotted in vinyl lettering. In this exhibition there are hardly any of the materials and formal features that we have become used to encountering in Liam Gillick's exhibitions over the last 15 years or so. This is one of the striking impressions we get as we stroll through the Magasin in the summer of 2014.

Another striking impression is the huge amount of information that can be accessed while spending time in the vast former industrial hall of the Magasin. The exhibition that Gillick has staged together with the participants of Session 23 of École du Magasin<sup>1</sup> is a reminder of the fact that there was a time before his aesthetic that is now so familiar, a time in which he tried out various different answers to the question of what should be visible and what should be functional in relation to the issues and questions he was concerned with. In this regard it is important to note that much of what we encounter in this exhibition is the result of decisions taken or suggested by Session 23. This is not only to acknowledge the impact of the six curators, but, first and foremost, to point to the fact that the involvement of others – exchanging ideas, letting his work be influenced by the thoughts of others – was an integral part of Gillick's artistic methodology in the 1990s. Therefore, it reminds us that information itself – how something becomes information, how information is processed and what it does to those informed – had been one of his key concerns from early on, and that it remains an issue for him until today, although it now takes new forms.<sup>2</sup>

Reconsidering some of Gillick's work from the 1990s, the exhibition *From 199C to 199D* provided information in two different ways: there was information as work and information about work. The ways in which one or the other appeared to dominate reflected the way the makers of the exhibition decided to handle the task of the exhibition in relation to the artworks that were chosen for display. As a consequence, the exhibition as a whole became a reflection of itself as a format of information as exhibition. The visitors to the exhibition were invited to adjust their cognitive behavior to different perceptual modes; they were effectively invited into various modes of aesthetic experience within the works themselves. The interrelations between these factors in turn encouraged a reflection upon the questions that arise in relation to the exhibition's general task: "the reanimation of a selection of key works from the 1990s."<sup>3</sup>

In exploring the results of the reanimation process and by comparing the respective methods applied, one cannot help but ask what the artwork's former life was like. What was the work? What did it look like? How did it function? What did it do? What does it do now? Is it the same as it used to be? If not, in what way is it different? Did the attempt to reanimate the structures succeed at all? How can we know that?

1. Claire Astier, Paola Bonino, Giulia Bortoluzzi, Selma Boskailo, Neringa Bumblien, Anna Tomczak.

2. The important role that questions of information play in Gillick's work has been noticed by others. For a more recent reflection of the issue see Isabelle Moffat, "Liam Gillick's Lure, or 'Why do you tell me you are going to Cracow so

I'll believe you are going to Lvov, when you are really going to Cracow?'" in *Liam Gillick: Ein langer Spaziergang... zwei kurze Stege...*, exh. cat. Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bonn, and Snoeck, Cologne 2010, p. 25.

3. Quoted from the information brochure of the exhibition.

All of these questions point to the fact that, ultimately, the exhibition brought into question what it is that determines the status of works of art on display: is it the material components? Is it the conceptual structure? Or is it the context the works appear in? If the material part plays a role, how important is it that original elements are preserved?

An attempt to reanimate a work of art implies that firstly, it once had a life and secondly, that this life was (almost) over. This in turn indicates that a work of art may not only be specific to a particular place and discourse, but also to a particular moment in history. Consequently, all the works in the exhibition are lacking something, they point to a past that no longer exists, and which needs to be reconstructed in order to understand the complexity of the works on display. Another general question asked by the exhibition is whether it is actually still the (same) work when it is shown 20 years after its initial deployment. Gillick has argued that for various reasons contemporaneity as a category for art is no longer sufficient.<sup>4</sup> One reason is that the category does not give a useful indication of when something stops being contemporary. Another is that due to contemporary art’s inclusive nature it levels everything that is being made anywhere, whereas, according to Gillick, some recent approaches of “engaged art”<sup>5</sup> have worked hard to differentiate themselves from the all-encompassing mass of contemporary art. While he refrains from mentioning his own work, it is possible to read *From 199C to 199D* as an attempt to save his work from the realm of contemporaneity and to lead it (back) into the territory he advocates in his article, the territory of “current art.”<sup>6</sup>

## INTO THE EXHIBITION

We enter the Magasin through a huge metal door painted light blue. “MAGASIN” is written across the entrance in large white capital letters.<sup>7</sup> Behind the door, a huge former industrial hall is dominated by a roof structure of steel and glass. There are two areas reserved for the presentation of art in this building, La Rue and Les Galleries. The former is the open 900 m<sup>2</sup> space you are able to see from the doorway, the latter is a sequence of galleries that occupies the left side of the hall. The wall dividing the two spaces has been painted black by the artist. At the beginning of the wall, four lines of white letters plotted in Helvetica form a text, big enough that it can be read from the every part of La Rue. The text reads “The significance of this / structure is still dependent / upon structures outside art / which I am too lazy to challenge.” As the exhibition brochure explains, it is taken from “a series of text works from 1993 where the artist expressed his anxieties and doubts about the effectiveness of practicing critical art.” Does this mean that, now and here in Grenoble, it represents a former state of mind?

4. Liam Gillick, “Contemporary Art Does Not Account for That Which Is Taking Place,” in *Cultures of the Curatorial*, ed. Beatrice von Bismarck, Jörn Schaffaff, and Thomas Weski, Sternberg Press, Berlin 2012, p. 63–73.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

6. *Ibid.*

7. The moment you pass the threshold you have already missed one part of the show: the building opposite the entrance hosts *An Old Song and a New Drink* (1993–2014), a performance first initiated by Angela Bulloch and Gillick at the Café Beaubourg next to the Centre Pompidou in Paris. The participants met over several glasses of whiskey, while a notoriously sexist reggae song by Prince Buster, *Ten Commandments of a Man Given to a Woman*, played over the sound system. At that time the artists were making a dis-

crete demonstration of a small group of people establishing themselves parallel to a main institutional player in the artistic field, namely the Centre Pompidou. The work’s reactivation within the official realm of the Grenoble art center shifts the emphasis to other aspects. Firstly, it brings to the fore one of the legal restrictions underlying the presentation of art in France, namely the prohibition to serve alcohol within exhibitions, even when it is claimed to be part of a work of art. Secondly, it requires a reconsideration of the grade of publicity allowed relative to the original event. Under the given circumstances it would have appeared pretentious to repeat the same gesture again. Thus the artists and the curators decided to hold small private party in the entrance lobby of the Magasin on the evening before the opening. A camera mounted to a drone filmed the get-together, and the documentary footage was shown on a monitor that can only be viewed from a distance through a window in the wall of the building.

Is it a historical document of an artist trying to sort out his position at the beginning of his career, or rather a commentary on the current situation? Originally it took the form of a collage, with the words spread over the surface in various directions.<sup>8</sup> Now it has grown in size and has been typeset more resolutely, the typeface is different, too. Prominently presented like this, it could be read as a motto for the show. Not a new work, but an update, adjusted to the new situation. Accordingly, this adjustment allows for new interpretations. Who is the “I” when we take into consideration the collaborative character of the curatorial process here? What structures are being addressed? Are we being asked to consider the structure of the text itself? Or the architecture marked by the words? Or the whole institutional framework in which art takes place? At the same time the text could stand for the structural relations between an artist, a curator, a viewer, and the work. Furthermore, the “structures” referred to could be anything from language to culture, economy to politics, or even a general comment on society at large. In addition, it is not at all clear in what way the “I” is too lazy to challenge the structures outside of art. Am “I” too lazy to challenge structures with artistic means within the realm of art itself? Or, rather, am “I” too lazy to challenge structures outside of art directly, followed by the decision to withdraw into the field of art? Something that at first sight might appear a simple, straightforward statement turns out to be saturated with ambiguity. Its informational value depends on prior knowledge, and changes depending on how you relate the possible interpretations of its parts to each other. Seen this way, it is a motto for the exhibition as a whole.

But the wall text might not be what we see first. More likely, our gaze will be attracted by four large rectangular plywood tables of different sizes, and a neon sign that is mounted to a convex bulge of the black wall half way down La Rue. Vertically set white neon capital letters read “McNAMARAMOTEL.” The work brings to the mind the first series of works that Gillick made in relation to the development of a script or scenario. From 1992 to 1997, “The McNamara Papers” served to generate various presentational arrangements, texts, films, and objects. These provisional elements functioned as artworks, they would provide fragments of information about, indicate possible scenes and settings for a film to be titled “McNamara” that was never realized beyond a short trailer produced in 1994 for his first exhibition at Galerie Schipper und Krome in Cologne. Originally, *McNamara Motel* (1997) was installed on the outside wall of Old Debtors Prison in Dublin. Highly conscious of the former purpose of the site, the sign figured as a commentary on Robert McNamara, the US Secretary of Defense during the Vietnam War. Here in Grenoble – and isolated from its original context – it takes on a documentary function, a relic from a movie in a museum of cinematography. At the same time, it addresses the visitors’ imaginative power to transform the whole space into the setting of a barely outlined story, in the same way that a single prop on an empty stage can serve to set the scene.

The stage of La Rue is not empty, however. Oversized tables dominate the space, while leaving enough room to pass by or move around. To those who are familiar with Gillick’s work, these large tables must be versions of the *Prototype Erasmus Tables* that he installed on various occasions between 1994 and 1996. It would seem natural to walk further into La Rue, but since we have already consulted the map on the website of Session 23 we ought to give in to the route suggested alongside the information provided about the works of art, their historical background and the way they have been

8. Made for the exhibition *Surface de réparation I* curated by Éric Troncy, January 28–March 12, 1994, FRAC Bourgogne, Dijon.

adjusted to the current situation. Turning toward the left through a door in a glazed wall we enter the enclosed gallery spaces of Les Galeries.

## THE GALLERIES

Darkness, bright light, semi-darkness: this is the lighting dramaturgy in the first three rooms you encounter. In the first gallery, a single spot forms a circle on the floor, a few meters away from the entrance. In the spotlight stands a small, square side table. As our eyes slowly adjust we can identify some technical equipment with cabling placed upon it – this could be a radio transmitter. From somewhere a female and a male voice can be heard speaking in French. A moment later we discover two loudspeakers that are mounted to the ceiling. This is the set-up of *A Broadcast from 1887 on the Subject of Our Time* (1996–2014). The spoken text is “a francophone version of a sermon by reverend Barton, included in the book *Looking Backwards*, written in 1887 by Edward Bellamy.”<sup>9</sup> Belonging to the science-fiction sub-genre of time-travel stories, the novel describes a socialist utopian vision of society in the year 2000. In one passage reverend Barton’s sermon is transmitted via a technical device – the description of this device clearly indicates that it is a type of closed-circuit radio system – some decades in advance of the invention and general adoption of radio. The work is a staging of a scene, with a significant shift of setting. When Gillick first presented the work in 1996, the radio signal came from Martha’s Vineyard, an island off the Atlantic Coast of the USA that had been a whaling community at the time the book was written, but had since developed into a famous summer residence, first for East Coast academics and writers, and subsequently for several US presidents and finally hedge fund dealers and money managers. The broadcast was originally intended to be received in Christiania, the free-community that during the 1990s had an extra-territorial status within the city limits of Copenhagen.<sup>10</sup> By setting up this link, Gillick ironically stressed the structural relation between the two places, one an emerging symbol of late capitalism and imperial power, the other a heterotopia in the Foucauldian sense. A lived utopia that functions as a counter-placement within the hegemonic order. In this respect, it is worth noting the congruence between the pastoral communicative structure of one speaking to many, and the one-way direction from sender to receiver that became typical for radio as a medium. The fact that the broadcast originated in Martha’s Vineyard – and therefore could be symbolically identified as a message spread by ruling powers – pointed to the ambivalent nature of heterotopia itself. Its potential of being a seedbed of social change, while at the same time sanctioning markers of otherness that are tolerated or even established in order to stabilize the identity of a given culture. It was a particular twist of the work that Barton’s sermon describes a society that in some ways closely resembled the ideal followed in Christiania. But the sermon was built on Christian belief and, ultimately, capitalist logic. Against this background, you wonder what it means when the arrangement of communication has been shifted once more in Grenoble. Now, it is the first room of Les Galeries that serves as the radio station. Is this to say that the institution (or the artist) should be considered part of the establishment? Or is this new placement an attempt to win back the reverend’s message for critically engaged art? Judging by

9. <http://www.ecoledumagasin.com/session23/en/a-broadcast-from-1887/>, last accessed May 2015. In 1998 Gillick republished the German translation of the novel together with Matthew Brannon for Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst in Leipzig. For the exhibition Jan Winkelmann, the curator of the gallery, invited three other curators he had never worked with before to each curate a project. The idea was that throughout the process the four projects would either start to interrelate to each other or remain separate. As the concept was

already a loose speculation about the future, it was fitting that Gillick, having been invited by Susanne Gaensheimer, suggested producing a special edition of the novel. *1 + 3 = 4 x 7*, curated by Jan Winkelmann, Eva Schmidt, Susanne Gaensheimer, Ulrike Kremer, December 14, 1998–January 24, 1999. With Peter Friedl, Liam Gillick, Dorit Margreiter, Stefan Kern.

10. For an exhibition at Globe, an art space in Christiania.

the technical update that the curators have decided upon, the latter seems more likely to be the case. A radio transmitter has been used that evades the legal restrictions of radio communication in France, and was originally designed as a solution to short-distance broadcasting within the activist community. If its signal were to be picked up and rebroadcast by other stations of the same kind, it could create a chain or network of collaborators. This aligns the work to current modes of non-governmental political organization that build on the use of social media.<sup>11</sup> Listening to a radio play makes us first-hand receivers and potential transmitters who can start a chain without any technical equipment. The remarkable absence of light in the room directs attention to the connection between the spoken word and the listening ear. In this way it also serves to tune the visitor into a particular mode of aesthetic experience: the work offers you nothing more than a few clues, some elements that indicate a setting and the outline of a story or scene. They may point to a larger context, fictional or real. But, ultimately, they are all starting points, triggers for the production of thoughts and mental images based on the information offered.

So, what’s the scenario in the second room? We enter through an opening in the left hand wall of the first room and find ourselves blinded by bright light. On all four walls halogen lamps are pointing at us, 96 spots altogether, arranged in random order. They are set into wood paneling that covers the walls from the floor up to the center point of each wall. Lamps set into vertical pine planking and us, are all there is. If the single spotlight in the previous room became a stage for a radio transmitter, light now illuminates the whole space. If the darkness and the broadcast sermon allowed us to be carried to another place, this arrangement forces us back into the here and now. This is a completely different mode of address, the work confronts us with our physical presence in the current situation. In this respect, it represents the other end of the spectrum of aesthetic experience, and yet these two illuminated structures touch each other in that they both put us at the center. As in the first room, it is up to us to make something from the elements that we find. But what should we do in an empty, 100-square-meter rectangular exhibition room surrounded by lights and a wooden wall that looks a bit rustic but does not suffice to clearly define what kind of “set” we might be in? Is the wood meant to resemble a private space, or is it closer to a hoarding? Should it remind us of a sauna or a fancy Scandinavian business lobby from the 1970s? Would it be okay to interpret the random order of the lamps in terms of a stellar constellation? We are pretty much left alone. Yet there is one further clue that might help us out: the work is titled *Odradek Wall* (1998). “Odradek” is a term from a short story by Franz Kafka, “The Cares of a Family Man.” As the exhibition brochure informs us, “[The Odradek] has no clear use and represents the alienated relation between the worker and the commodities produced.” If this is true, we were not mistaken when we were unsure how to relate to the situation we are in. In fact, the environment created by Gillick has affected us in exactly the way it was supposed to. It has put us in the middle of things, offering no outside position. It has subjected us to a role without giving us insight into the whole story. At the same time we are encouraged to reflect upon the conditions of the situation. The environment is structurally determined by its theatricality, by the doubling of *thing* and *sign*. We are not merely in the space but we are exposed, exhibited, and therefore our actions have taken on the status of a performance—even

11. Having made this connection, and been given the task of the reanimation or adjustment of Gillick’s old works to the current situation, we may wonder, though, why the work has not been technically updated to current communication standards like Twitter. What could be the reason to stick to

an archaic technology that gives the arrangement a slightly melancholic feel? Is it an attempt to stay true to the original work, or are there other reasons, e.g. a suspicion against the surveillance aspect of the Internet that has become such a prominent issue in the last few years?





Liam Gillick 26.

if we are our only spectator. The question that we need to ask ourselves is: How are we going to behave?<sup>12</sup>

If *Odradek Wall* pushed the limit of how little information might be enough to create a mise-en-scene, the next work exemplifies the opposite. Tellingly, light is again important, but this room is bathed in semi-darkness, as if it were a mixture of the two preceding ones. We are entering another set, we are placed on another stage, but the work also transports us to another location. Actually, it exposes three places, namely the cyberspace of the Internet, the historical time and place of 9/11, and the scene of the work's first presentation. In November 1995, Gillick was invited by curator Barbara Steiner to participate in an exhibition titled *This Is Today (Trailer)* in Cologne.<sup>13</sup> The exhibition title indicated both that the works in the exhibition would address the relationship between the present and the near future, and that *This is Today (Trailer)* may not really be the exhibition itself, but instead a teaser for an upcoming event. Accordingly, Gillick decided to use the exhibition to announce a new body of work that would deal with the impact of scenario thinking on political and economical development processes. In fact, he had already been working with "scenario" as the concept for artistic production since 1992 when he had started to work on *McNamara*, and had just finished the detailed outline of a potential play, *Ibuka!* (1995). These bodies of work mixed a theatrical understanding of the term scenario with the strategic one that had come into use after World War II.<sup>14</sup> In the 1950s and 1960s, the introduction of cybernetics had helped to make scenario planning the preferred strategic tool of nuclear politics and warfare. This development was part of Gillick's critical focus in his *McNamara* series, and it was this reference that was to become the starting point for his new project. As a first step into his research, the *What If? Scenario (Part 1)* (1995) assigned Steiner to gather an extensive body of archival documents from US government sources, news magazines, and historical literature about the Vietnam War. In 1995, even if the Internet had started to become accessible for private or public research purposes, the task would have been extraordinarily time-consuming, and would have demanded a huge effort from the curator. In this respect, the work proposed

12. *HOW ARE WE GOING TO BEHAVE?* was the title of more than one exhibition in the 1990s. It neatly sums up the attitude of many of the artists and structures that motivated the texts in this book. It was a key question for some in the early 1990s, and the legacy of such an inquiry is still playing out in an increasingly striated art context." Liam Gillick, "Preface: How Are We Going to Behave?" in *Proxemics: Selected Writings, 1998–2006*, ed. Lionel Bovier, JRP|Ringier, Zürich, and Les presses du réel, Dijon 2006, p. 9.

13. *This Is Today (Trailer)*, curated by Barbara Steiner, November 11–November 19, 1995, Mediapark, Cologne. Already in 1989, Nicolas Bourriaud had argued that art that had emerged throughout the 1980s had taken on the status of trailers, its function being "the promotion of an event-to-come [ ... ] the trailer announces what has not yet arrived, the work in its virtual state." Nicolas Bourriaud, "The Trailer Effect," *Flash Art*, no. 149, 1989, p. 113f.

14. Andreas Wolfsteiner, Markus Rautzenberg, "Tiral-and-Error-Szenarien. Zum Umgang mit Zukünften," in *Trial and Error. Szenarien medialen Handelns*, ed. Andreas Wolfsteiner, Markus Rautzenberg, Wilhelm Fink, Paderborn, Nordrhein Westfalen 2014, p. 7–29. There are numerous texts from the 1990s in which Gillick reflects about scenario thinking. For Gillick, working with and about scenarios was not only

a question of developing fictive situations or negotiating the modalities of the decision processes by which the future is shaped in the realms of military, politics, and economy. In the same way it was always a way to reflect the parameters by which art is being made, presented, and perceived. This becomes most explicit in a passage of a text he wrote for the catalogue of an exhibition with Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Philippe Parreno, and Pierre Huyghe: "The scenario as a construct is inextricably linked to a specific set of ideologies. It is best used for the control of situations where there is the requirement to disguise control [ ... ] Scenarios offer an attractive mirage of choice and options while often proposing limited solutions; it is unclear whether such thinking requires defeat or merely greater attention and awareness. In any situation where one is faced by a lack of consensus, scenarios are used in order to predict various permutations and potentialities in relation to the development of society. As such it is essential for an artist to be aware of the temporal and strategic games that take place in and around the pre- and postproduction phases of their work, the way it fits into the scenario mentality, and the way it is used in order to back up a specific ideology." Liam Gillick, "Prevision. Should the Future Help the Past?" in *Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Pierre Huyghe, Philippe Parreno*, exh. cat., Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris 1998, p. 9.

was also a play on the reassessment of the relations between curator and artist proclaimed by protagonists such as Steiner, who considered making exhibitions to be a collaborative process between artist and curator. Therefore, interpreting the instruction according to the logic of her exhibition concept, Steiner decided not to carry out Gillick's request, but opted to show the assignment itself printed out on an A4 sheet of paper. A spotlight directed at the sheet on the wall directed the visitors' attention to the proposal, leaving it up to their imagination what new work might result from research into the requested information. Twenty years later, the updated version of *What If? Scenario (Part 1)* demonstrates that the way in which an excess of information is now made available, how it is accessed, and how research has paradigmatically shifted.

The room is painted orange, there is a desk placed slightly off-center, but instead of books or binders there is a computer work station on the table, consisting of an Apple Mini hard drive, an external screen, a keyboard, a mouse, and a desktop printer. Underneath the table, the cabling is protected by a rectangular wooden box from which cables lead to four halogen construction lamps. The lamps are the only light source in the room. As in Cologne, the lights highlight the assignment. On the wall to the left of the desk a text announces the title of the work, followed by four lines of instructions: "A room should be brightly lit using halogen construction lights. / A number of documents should be obtained and placed in a position / where they can be considered by users of the place. / If the original documents cannot be obtained then the list should be displayed." As in Cologne, there are no original documents, and as in the earlier presentation there is a list, but it is not the one that Gillick had originally put together. Instead, there are web links applied to the walls to your left and to your right that guide you to information about the terror attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 9, 2001 – both official and conspiratorial.<sup>15</sup> The setup reminds us that research today starts with the Internet, even in libraries and archives. Yet, while access to information has become so much easier, the new challenge is to navigate through and select from a seemingly endless space of information.<sup>16</sup> On some level, the introduction of web links might also be understood to represent a subtle critique of the relations between curator and artist established by the work. At first sight it seems that, unlike Steiner, the curators of Session 23 have compliantly carried out the task demanded by the artist. Yet a closer look reveals that, in fact, they have gently rejected their role of serving by showing the artist how to serve himself. In any case, if *Odradek Wall* poses the question of how little information suffices to create a mise-en-scene, the *What If? Scenario (Part 1)* asks how much information is required for a precise picture of a given historical event to appear. What both works have in common is that they demand that we consider the way in which we are involved in any of the solutions we might find.

The same is true for the fourth room. On both its long sides the walls are covered by yellow panels that have been installed right above the baseboards and reach up to the top level of the doorways. The panels are constructed from bright yellow jute stretched onto plywood panels, and serve as giant pinboards running the full length of the walls. Photocopies of documents, printouts, magazine clippings, brochures, and photographs are attached to the panels, and the items are loosely grouped into clusters. A close

15. The curators of Session 23 have decided to substitute the topic of the Vietnam War for that of 9/11. In sync with the paradigmatic shift in the handling of information represented by the Internet setup, the new topic reminds us of the paradigmatic shift that the events of 9/11 have caused in US foreign politics.

16. In this respect, it is also interesting to compare the sources used in 1994 and 2014: for example, the original list included George C. Herring's *America's Longest War: The US and Vietnam, 1950–1975* (Knopf, New York 1986), a critical revision of the Vietnam War written by a renowned historian. In the Grenoble list, instead of a historical monograph there is a link to Wikipedia and Wikileaks.

inspection reveals that some of the documents directly refer to the current exhibition, while others are related to the history of the Magasin and the École du Magasin. Pages and images from the brochure produced for *From 199A to 199B*, the first version of this exhibition realized at Bard College in 2012, provide information about the exhibition's forerunner, and allow for a comparison between the curatorial approaches and the choice of exhibits. A photocopied text provides background information about the radio transmitter system developed by Tetsuo Kogawa that is being used for *A Broadcast from 1887 on the Subject of Our Time*. There is detailed information about older exhibitions at the Magasin in which Gillick was involved, such as *Le Procès de Pol Pot* (1998), an exhibition structure that he realized together with Philippe Parreno.<sup>17</sup> And there are documents that help to reconstruct *19&&*, the exhibition curated by the participants of the first session of the École du Magasin in 1988. Among the participants were Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, and Esther Schipper, who became Gillick's German gallerist in the early 1990s. The official documentation of their attendance at the school can be found alongside documents relating to the student years of Florence Bonnefous and Edouard Merino who participated in the second session from 1988 to 1989 and then founded the Galerie Air de Paris before starting to work with Gillick in 1991. The pinboards gather bits and pieces of information that, when linked by us, give insights into the context of *From 199C to 199D*. This is also the case with further clusters that refer to the "personal archives or areas of interest"<sup>18</sup> of Session 23, even though it is impossible to distinguish them from yet another group of items that seems to have no relation to the local situation at all.<sup>19</sup> There are two groupings, one on each side of the room, of photocopied pages from tattoo magazines. As with the contributions of Session 23, the function of these clippings is to indicate an informational sphere in which information from apparently unrelated areas can be experienced existing on the same hierarchical level, parallel to each other and ready to be associated by the user or reader. In addition, they serve as a direct link to the content of the first version of the work.

*Information Room (GRSSPR, Tattoo Magazine, Women's Basketball)* (1993) was originally made for *Backstage*, a group exhibition curated by Stephan Schmidt-Wulffen and Barbara Steiner to inaugurate the new space of the Kunstverein in Hamburg. As he would do some months later for the exhibition *This Is Today (Trailer)*, Gillick conceived his work in reaction to the leitmotif of the show. An early example of what later became known as New Institutionalism, *Backstage* was meant as a self-critical view behind the scenes of the art institution.<sup>20</sup> Every room of the Kunstverein, from the maintenance area to the director's office, was opened for the display of art. Placed in a transitional zone between the main galleries and the storage areas, Gillick's *Information Room* symbolically stressed a close relation between the two spaces. By providing background information about the exhibition, it could be read as a practical commentary on the curators' agenda. But the display of "secondary information"<sup>21</sup> from sources as diverse

17. *Le Procès de Pol Pot*, November 8, 1998–January 3, 1999, coordinated by Liam Gillick and Philippe Parreno, supervised by Thomas Muclair, Pierre Huyghe, Rebecca Gordon-Nesbitt, Douglas Gordon, Gabriel Kuri, Jeremy Millar, Josephine Pryde, Carsten Höller, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Ronald Jones, Pierre Joseph, Zeigam Azizov, Adrian Schiesser, Terry Atkinson.

18. <http://www.ecoledumagasin.com/session23/en/information-room/>, last accessed May 2015.

19. For example, there is a series of photocopied images that show a human chain along a highway, together with an

image of a medal with the engraving "Baltijos Kelias." Like the photocopies from articles on science-fiction animations taken from an Italian magazine, it invites you to speculate which of the biographies of the participants that you can access on the Session 23 website might fit with its content.

20. For a critical revision of New Institutionalism, see Simon Sheikh, "Burning from the Inside: New Institutionalism Revisited," in *Cultures of the Curatorial*, p. 361–373.

21. <http://www.ecoledumagasin.com/session23/en/information-room/>, last accessed May 2015.



as the German Research Service Special Press Reports, *Tattoo Magazine*, and *Women's Basketball* magazine expressed the need to open the focus even further to other fields in the culture that seem to exist parallel to the art world, if only to test the effects that their introduction has on the issues that “Backstage” wanted to put on the agenda.<sup>22</sup>

Due to its title and the information it provides about *From 199C to 199D*, the *Information Room* appears to be the center of the exhibition. And at the center of the center, in the middle of the room, stands a blue table-tennis table. The playing area and the floor around it are covered with silver glitter. Some of the glitter covers the floor around the table. Dozens of yellow table-tennis balls are scattered on the table and floor, four bats invite the visitors to play, but there is no net. When Gillick originally installed (*The What If? Scenario*) *Dining Table* (1996) in the *Traffic* exhibition at the CAPC in Bordeaux, it was in part a reaction to a generational conflict. For Gillick, the people in charge of the institution misunderstood his the artistic approaches as well as those of most of the other artists involved by reading their works in terms of the earlier artistic practices they had supported so successfully for a number of years. While artists such as Rirkrit Tiravanija, Philippe Parreno, Angela Bulloch, and Gillick certainly made use of some of the Conceptual and situational strategies of Lawrence Weiner, Michael Asher, and Douglas Huebler, they nonetheless pursued different aims and addressed different questions. The main misunderstanding, according to Gillick, was that the institution considered *Traffic* to be about “improvisation and interactivity.”<sup>23</sup> As a self-conscious gesture, (*The What If? Scenario*) *Dining Table* was not so much an actual invitation to play, but rather a contemplation about claims toward interactivity: there were no bats or balls, but instead a text outlining ideas from Gillick’s speculative work *The What If? Scenario* sat on the table protected by a sheet of glass. It was exactly this lack that potentially made visitors aware of the informative nature of much game-play, namely the fact that – like many so-called interactive devices – the real table-tennis demands that its players submit themselves to material conditions, rules, and modes of action defined by someone else. In this respect, it also could be read as “an ironic commentary on the introduction of distracted leisure activities in the information/culture industry work place in the 1990s.”<sup>24</sup>

With the emergence of casual work environments in the 1990s, one of the calculated effects of the distraction provided by games was to motivate employees to stay and work longer.<sup>25</sup> In a similar way in the 1990s artists around Gillick self-consciously

22. To be fair, the observation that artists increasingly expanded their focus to other cultural fields was at the heart of Schmidt-Wulffen’s and Steiner’s objective. In the catalogue they explicitly discuss how a new generation of artists follows their interest in those fields not only by appropriating and rearranging the respective semiotic order, but by adapting typical modes of behavior and introducing them into their artistic practice. Gillick, for example, took on the role of a journalist and researcher in order to follow his interest in parallel structures of information. *Backstage*, ed. Stephan Schmidt-Wulffen, Barbara Steiner, exh. cat., Kunstverein in Hamburg, Hamburg 1993.

23. Liam Gillick, “III Tempo. The Corruption of Time in Recent Art,” in *Proxemics*, p. 100. The description of the work on the website of Session 23 indicates the argument, but does not go into detail. <http://www.ecoledumagasin.com/session23/en/dining-table/>, last accessed May, 2015.

24. <http://www.ecoledumagasin.com/session23/en/dining-table/>, last accessed May, 2015.

25. Hence probably the obscure title of the work. It is likely that *Dining Table* was not only meant to indicate a potential multi-functional use, but also as a friendly joke in the direction of the work of one of his close colleagues, Tiravanija, who at that time was famous for offering meals to exhibition visitors in varying settings. His *untitled 1994 (recreational lounge)*, made for the first leg of *Surface de Réparation*, had been a combination of lounge chairs, a fridge filled with beverages, and a table soccer table. Tiravanija had installed it at the beginning of the production phase as a meeting point for the artists and staff, and it had remained functional throughout the whole exhibition. Jörn Schafaff, “Challenging Institutional Standard Time,” in *Timing: On the Temporal Dimension of Exhibiting* (Cultures of the Curatorial 2), ed. Beatrice von Bismarck, Rike Frank, Benjamin Meyer-Kramer, Jörn Schafaff, Thomas Weski, Sternberg Press, Berlin 2014, p. 189–208.

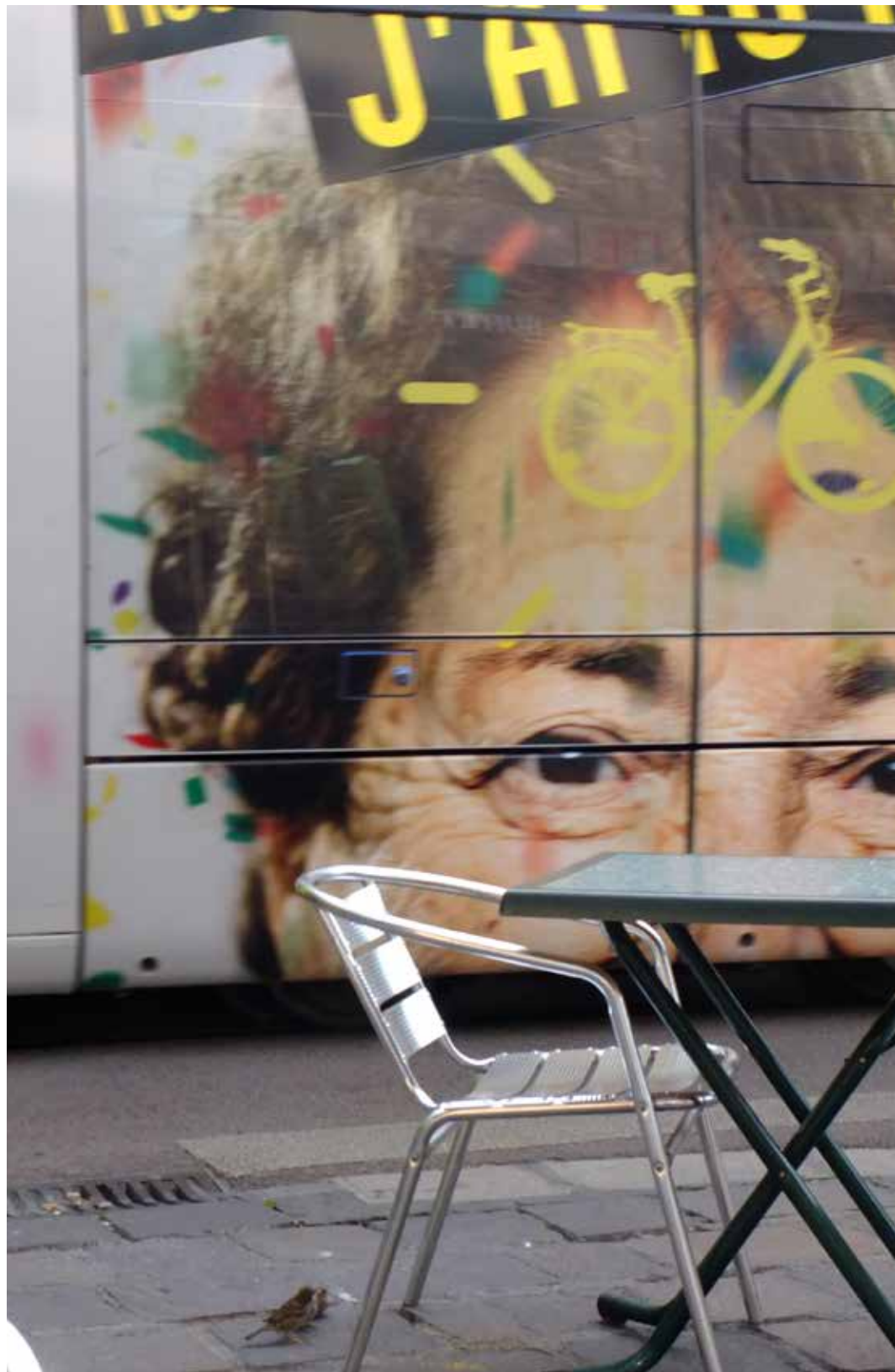
deployed usable works in order to tie the visitors’ attention to their work a little longer than usual.<sup>26</sup> The way that (The What If? Scenario) *Dining Table* was installed in Grenoble could therefore be interpreted as an attempt by the curators to challenge some of the skepticism inherent in its original presentation. As if to say that to be a little more inviting and fun is not so bad after all. At the same time, the activated work shifts attention to its dialogical and emancipative aspects – you can play by your own rules but, at least if you visit the exhibition alone, you will need to ask someone else to play along. Either way, the moment you get yourself involved you are distracted from the mass of information on the walls – allowing you to move from the center of the center toward the outside again.

From Odradek Wall to Information Room you have passed through a succession of galleries situated one after the other. The last room in this sequence hosts a video recording studio. There are two stools – derived from Max Bill’s Ulm Stool and found elsewhere throughout the exhibition – and a MiniDV camera on a tripod. Two studio lamps on stands with white umbrellas are the only light sources. The equipment is placed in a studio set made up of rectangular sheets of cardboard, each sheet approximately 80 x 120 cm. While some of the sheets lay flat on the floor in one corner of the room, others are suspended at different heights from the ceiling. The sheets on the floor are placed on top of each other in up to four layers, slightly staggered and at right angles to each other. Accordingly, the suspended rectangles are aligned in landscape format (or 16:9) and in varying positions relative to the walls. Taking into consideration the informational context of the exhibition and the proximity of the arrangement to a TV setting, the set design could be interpreted as a cloud of computer windows or TV screens, similar to the ones that you would find in an animated representation of web content or the opening credits of a news magazine. At the same time, we are reminded of the pictorial space in a constructivist painting, or even of the suspended Plexiglas panels that comprised Richard Hamilton and Victor Pasmore’s important 1957 artwork/exhibition *An Exhibit*. This association is not only justified by the admitted importance that Hamilton has for Gillick’s artistic practice, but also because Hamilton’s description of the exhibition reads like the perfect definition of the spatial qualities that Gillick may have had in mind when he proposed *McNamara Papers: Towards a Documentary* (1997) for exhibitions at Forde, Geneva, and Transmission Gallery, Glasgow. “No theme, no subject; not a display of things or ideas – pure abstract exhibition.”<sup>27</sup> In Gillick’s case the work was intended to designate a space in which discussions could take place and be filmed. A set design with no significant qualities of its own seemed to provide the right conditions for such a purpose. Even though its title classifies the work as part of the *McNamara* series, it was structurally closer to the platforms, partitions and suspended ceilings that Gillick had already started to produce as demarcations of potential sites for *What If? Scenarios*. As with those constructions of aluminum and multicolored Plexiglas, the cardboard set clearly designated an area for an intersubjective exchange that remained itself in the background and did not stipulate what the exchange should be about. In Grenoble,

26. Other artists close to Gillick worked in a similar way. For example, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster describes that, in part, the goal of her environmental practice in the 1990s was “to build a trap for the viewer” in order to make her spend more time with the work. Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster in Lynn Cooke, “Frameworks, with a Commentary by Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster,” in *Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster: Chronotypes & Dioramas*, Dia Art Foundation, New York 2010, p. 57. Likewise Philippe Parreno repeatedly already stressed how important it was for artists to take control of the visibility of their art. For more on this issue see *ibid.*, or my monograph on Philippe Parreno’s work of the

1990s, Jörn Schafaff, *How We Gonna Behave? Philippe Parreno. Angewandtes Kino* [= applied cinema], Walther König, Cologne, 2010.

27. Richard Hamilton, *Collected Words 1953–1982* Thames & Hudson, London 1982, p. 26. In both its former versions, the cardboard set was much smaller in scale than it is here in Grenoble. In addition, simple halogen construction lamps were used instead of proper studio lighting, and at least at Forde, some of the suspended cardboards were used as projection screens.



Liam Gillick 32.

the setting is reserved for use by Session 23. As in 1997, Gillick has not exerted any influence on the selection of who is being filmed or any of the filming processes. As with (The What If? Scenario) Dining Table, the work is a critique of the new zones of self-regimented freedom that started to proliferate in the 1990s.

We have entered the exhibition's zone of discussion and negotiation. In an alcove opposite the cardboard set we can see a new version of Street Corner (London/Hamburg) (1993), Gillick's second work included in Backstage. Originally an analog slide show of photographs randomly taken at a street corner in London while Gillick was discussing the work of the German Research Service Special Press Reports with another person, the Grenoble update comprises projected digital images of passers-by taken by Gillick at a Grenoble street corner while discussing the crisis in Ukraine with Session 23.<sup>28</sup> The images show no indication of the alleged topic, but it is exactly this discrepancy between what you see and the information you are given that points to what the work is doing. While the photos have no particular visual quality, the informational text serves to invest them with meaning. The images are evidence of an event that occurred elsewhere. In what may appear as a reversal of the desired effect of the set design behind us, the situation seems to have been conceived in order to test how a location and a set task might influence a discussion. In the same way, we may wonder in what way the discussion may have influenced the production of the images. Two elements that apparently have no relation to each other are brought together to influence each other nonetheless – a methodology that Gillick would develop even further in the following years.

The next room continues this game of information and distraction. In the penultimate room of Les Galeries, Documentary Realisation Zone #1 to #3 (DIJON) (1997) gives evidence of the second purpose of the cardboard set of McNamara Papers: Towards a Documentary. A space for discussion on the one hand, it also served as the starting point for potential documentaries Gillick wanted to make, namely auditions for realizations of the books, Erasmus Is Late (1995) and Ibuka! (1995), that had been published two years before. Since he asked the artists running Forde and Transmission Gallery to carry out the filming without getting involved himself, the videos became documentaries in more than one respect: firstly, they documented the readings and acting activities of a number of people, and, secondly, the videos were a factual documentation of how his request had been carried out. When they were first presented at Le Consortium in Dijon in 1997<sup>29</sup> their display became yet another documentation, for they represented a possible approach to the documentation of recent work while resisting the fetishization of the "original." Gillick had been invited to present an overview of his recent work; his decision not to show any of the objects that had emerged from McNamara, Erasmus Is Late, Ibuka!, and The What If? Scenarios could also be understood as a reference to their temporal dimension; an acknowledgment that these works were of their time and part of a process that had only been temporarily contracted into a reified form. As Gillick stated in an interview given to Éric Troncy, one of the curators at le Consortium at the time of his exhibition, Gillick's understanding of these forms (the things presented in exhibitions) was not that of a "resolution of ideas and objects," but rather the opposite, a means to "encourage people to work in a series of parallel directions."<sup>30</sup> Consequently, he installed

28. It is worth noting that the update also includes a change in photographic technology. In Grenoble, Gillick used a digital camera, thus taking two hundred images, compared to 40 analog photos of positive slide film in 1993.

29. "Liam Gillick," July 11–August 14, 1997, Le Consortium, Dijon.

30. Liam Gillick, quoted from Éric Troncy, "Liam Gillick: Were People This Dumb Before TV?" *documents sur l'art*, no. 11, Fall/Winter 1997/1998, p. 116.

one TV monitor in each of the three rooms of the exhibition, two of them showing looped videos of men and women<sup>31</sup> engaged in book readings, sitting in the cardboard setting, standing, walking around, or lying down on the floor, separate or as a group. The succession of shots is at one point interrupted by close-ups of copies of *Ibuka!* and *Erasmus Is Late* standing on the floor. The third video consists of a sequence of digitally generated monochromatic color images. The monitors and video players were placed inside Plexiglas cubes that were just slightly bigger than the TV sets. With the back open, the red, blue, and orange color of the Plexiglas changes the hue of the screens, thus distancing the footage from the viewers and, in effect rendering the set-up itself visible for reflection.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, copies of the exhibition catalogue that listed details about all works related to the three<sup>33</sup> series could be picked up from the floor and browsed for more information. In Grenoble, as in Dijon, the catalogues were tied to long climbing ropes that have become ever more entangled over the course of the exhibition. One of the differences between Dijon and Grenoble is that the original catalogues were been exchanged for copies of a publication that documents the activities of the Magasin from 1986 to 2006.<sup>34</sup> Documentary Realisation Zone #1 to #3 (DIJON) is not identical with the work from Dijon. Moreover, the Magasin publications indicate that From 199c to 199D is an exhibition about the history of the art center just as much as it is about Gillick's work. The presence of a book containing the history of the Magasin distracts us from the monitors and the original state of the work by introducing new content.

The introduction of new content was the basis of *The Moral Maze / Le Labyrinthe moral* (1995) now situated in the last room of Les Galeries, a work that was Gillick's first major collaboration with Philippe Parreno. As with the 1998 exhibition *Le procès de Pol Pot* it was originally conceived as an exhibition format. Initially, an invitation to exhibit had been expressed to Gillick alone, and it would have been his first solo exhibition at Le Consortium (which subsequently took place in 1997). A second shift occurred when the two artists decided that, rather than just putting together an exhibition, they should focus instead on creating the right conditions for gathering information about their current area of interest. The simple reason for this, explains Gillick, was that "we felt we needed some new ideas. We had already been showing a lot, running around all these group shows, and a lot of which where a bit frustrating."<sup>35</sup> From this starting point, the project developed into a group show, instituted by a week-long session of conversations with experts from various fields. The other artists that Gillick and Parreno invited were first asked to contribute to the creation of the setting in which the conversations would take place, and then invited to participate in the sessions.<sup>36</sup> During the interrogation sessions the whole venue was used as a site of artistic production. The sessions started on the first day Le Consortium had scheduled for the exhibition, parallel to the installation and production of works of art. As Parreno remembers, the reason for that was to test to

what extent the provision of information might influence artistic processes.<sup>37</sup> Likewise, the updated version in Grenoble builds upon the pairing of information and distraction, however this time it is not aimed at other artists – there are none – but at the visitors to the exhibition. There had been no opening reception in Dijon, and the door to the galleries had been painted white as if the site were under construction. The deliberately ambiguous state of accessibility made sense in that exhibition. The original iteration was intended to focus on the conditions of its own making rather than the presentation of results of a preceding process. In Grenoble we now see a discussion area consisting of a low table made from a sheet of plywood on wooden pallets accompanied by two yellow and two blue double-seater Djinn chairs designed by Olivier Mourgue in 1964 – the year of Parreno and Gillick's birth. The work has become a reconstruction of the setting from 1995.<sup>38</sup> As with the table-tennis arrangement and the video recording studio, it now sits in a permanent state of potentiality, a set for actions that might take place or may have already happened. On several unannounced occasions, however, Session 23 activated the set for conversations with a number of experts they had selected according to their interests.<sup>39</sup> If we happen to come by during one of those sessions, we might feel we are interrupting a private performance. We may even feel exposed to pairs of eyes that have turned toward us. In this case we may want to leave the room as unobtrusively as possible. Or if we overcome our reservations, we might find ourselves a place nearby and listen.

When we entered this final room we might have noticed words on the long straight wall to our right, horizontally aligned in black capital letters. The ones closest to us form an equation of well-known acronyms: FBI+CIA = TWA+PAN AM. The next three short texts are neologisms: SOVIETCONG, MAOART, CINEMARXISM. The final texts, placed at the far end of the wall, convey their message on a symbolic level: HILTON and STALIN are set like the horizontal and vertical beams of a Christian cross, symbolizing death. The rear third of the room is dominated by a huge conical bonfire that has been erected from logs, laths, stakes and trunks. Some of the elements almost reach up to the ceiling and the base has a diameter of approximately three meters. Its circular shape corresponds to the curved back wall (it must be the backside of the wall with the neon sign). Left of the bonfire the floor is sprinkled with silver glitter, but unlike the glitter around the table-tennis table this adheres to the concrete ground. The bonfire, just like the seating area, indicates a potential event, but within the context of the exhibition space it is unlikely that the wood will be set on fire at any time. Therefore, bracketing the route through Les Galeries, this room, just like the first one, addresses the visitors' imagination rather than their bodily involvement. When do we need more tractors? *Five plans* (1999) is an arrangement of loosely linked elements that serve as coordinates of a semiotic territory, rather than the resolved formation of a clear message. The title of the work refers to the Socialist system of planned economy that apparently had proved to be less efficient than the speculative economy of the West.<sup>40</sup> The bonfire, the glitter, and the wall text have

31. One the videos shows Douglas Gordon, Sarah Morris, and Martin Boyce. Gordon was a member of Transmisson Gallery's committee at the time.

32. Of course, the Plexiglas could also be read as a reminiscence of the objects created in the course of *The What If? Scenarios*.

33. The catalogue lists *Erasmus Is Late* and *Ibuka!* as belonging to the same group of works.

34. *Magasin 1986–2006*, ed. Yves Aupetitallot, JRPIRingier, Zurich 2006.

35. In an unpublished conversation with the author recorded in Berlin November 25, 2006.

36. A fax sent to the artists on May 29, 1995, suggests a slightly different division of the tasks, stating that the interviews will be led by Gillick and Parreno (and possibly Xavier Douroux and Franck Gautherot, the directors of Le Consortium who also signed the fax), whereas the artists should think about how to disseminate the gathered knowledge. In the end, some artists just sent some work or instructions while others spent time working on their art; it was mainly Gillick, Parreno, and Tiravanija leading the sessions. Schaffaff, *How We Gonna Behave*, p. 209.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 208.

38. While the table has been made new, the chairs are the same ones that were used in Dijon, taken from the inventory of the cultural department of the city of Dijon. Chairs similar to the ones used in Dijon and Grenoble had prominently served as part of the set design of Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*. The science-fiction reference fitted with the idea that the gathered information might influence the participants' artistic work in the near or medium-term future. Parreno had already used such chairs for another work in 1992.

39. The list can be viewed on the Session 23 website, but without dates: <http://www.ecoledumagasin.com/session23/en/moral-maze/>, last accessed May 2015.

40. "Our vision of the future is dominated by the 'What If? Scenario' rather than the 'When do we Need More Tractors?' plan," Gillick had stated in 1998. Gillick, "Should the Future Help the Past?" p. 8.

been realized following three of the five plans or assignments that Gillick suggested for the execution of the work.<sup>41</sup> Originally, he conceived the work against the background of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall, thus it seems justifiable to interpret the bonfire and the glitter as symbols of festivity. You could even go as far as to think that the glitter, having been dispersed over the floor in a mix with Coca-Cola, alludes to the shallowness or falseness of the hopes and desires that many people from the East associated with the arrival of capitalism. The only thing you can be sure about, though, is that the slogans on the wall are representations of graffiti shown in Jean-Luc Godard's 1968 movie *One+One*.<sup>42</sup> Also known as *Sympathy for the Devil*, the film is partly a documentary about the creation of the famous song by the Rolling Stones, shot in a recording studio in London over three days in June 1968. In further sequences, actors perform scripted scenes that in one way or the other relate to the political uprisings of that time. Godard's film is important for the understanding of the structural logic of much of Gillick's work, both formally and in terms of how meaning is produced. Firstly, the film is a parallel montage, bringing together two apparently unrelated narratives. Secondly, it uses attractive visual material that appeals to the taste of a large public (the footage of the Stones) to promote another, more complicated subject (a reflection on political counter culture). Thirdly, it constantly deconstructs and self-reflects its own status of being documentary or fiction, focusing on the means and process of making rather than a final, seemingly transparent result (for example Godard's resistance to the producer's decision to let the film end with the completed version of *Sympathy for the Devil*; the montage of documentary and staged footage; the non-professional acting in the staged parts; the sequence where a film team interview a woman named Eve Democracy). And fourthly, its suspicion of ideological closure (countering the slogans and counter-cultural revolutionary agenda with inappropriate and rather lame gestures of their proclamation). Forty-six years after the movie's release and 25 years after the fall of the iron curtain, the slogans on the wall in Grenoble set the discursive context of the indicated scenario. However, they are not representations of vanished Socialist state ideologies, but of a Western cultural Marxism that underwent a crisis in the course of the events around 1989 and has been renegotiated ever since. It is important to notice that the way they are presented in From 199C to 199D does not indicate any particular judgment, but seems content to suggest a reconsideration of the isolated components.

In this respect, it is also notable that *When do we need more tractors? Five plans* was originally conceived for the final exhibition of Session 8 of the *École du Magasin*. The structure of the work – its instructional character in the style of Conceptual art – can in part be explained by the fact that Gillick did not travel to Grenoble himself. A second explanation can be derived from the work's reference to planned economy, in particular to the five-year-plans that were at the heart of the state-run organization of economic production. Gillick connected his suggestion to the topic of the exhibition. According to the press release, *Pl@ytimes* was intended to investigate the impact of the dominant culture and leisure industry on social behavior and identity-construction.<sup>43</sup> Focusing on functional modes of role play and the dichotomy of leisure and labor, the idea was to consider artistic strategies of play that go beyond the mere reproduction of

41. <http://www.ecoledumagasin.com/session23/en/when-do-we-need-more-tractors-five-plans/>, last accessed May 2015.

42. *One+One* (1968), 93', color, sound. The film was retitled *Sympathy for the Devil* reedited by the producer of the film shortly before its London premier. For further details see Wheeler W. Dixon, *The Films of Jean-Luc Godard*, State University of New York Press, New York 1997, p. 104–109.

43. [http://www.ecoledumagasin.com/IMG/pdf/Com.presse-pl\\_ytimes.pdf](http://www.ecoledumagasin.com/IMG/pdf/Com.presse-pl_ytimes.pdf), last accessed May 2015. It is worth noting that the exhibition did not take place at the Magasin, but at the art school of Grenoble: "*Pl@ytimes*," curated by the participants of Session 8 of the *École du Magasin*, January 16–February 2, 1999, *École Supérieure d'Art de Grenoble*.

cultural norms, namely an evolving and dynamic understanding of behavior and the co-authoring of scenarios.<sup>44</sup> Fifteen years after its first presentation in Grenoble, *When do we need more tractors? Five plans* is once again part of an exhibition generated within the framework of the curatorial course program of the Magasin. Its copresence with the adjusted version of *The Moral Maze / Le Labyrinthe moral* in the last room of *Les Galeries* calls to mind once again that which is being staged in *From 199C to 199D*. Not only a set of suggestions about how to deal with art and its involvement with time, but also an educational process situated in-between heteronomy and self-determination.

## THE STREET

We leave *Les Galeries* through a steel door and step back in to the open space of *La Rue*. Daylight. In front of us is the largest of the four tables that we saw when we first entered the Magasin. Its size is impressive: the tabletop is made up from 20 uncut sheets of veneered pine plywood. The sheets rest on square-cut wood legs. According to the website, this table is *Prototype Ibuka! Coffee Table/Stage (Act 3) (1995)*, but it does not resemble the original one at all. When it was first presented at *Basilico Fine Arts* in New York it was made from two sheets of birch plywood and wood legs.<sup>45</sup> The tabletop was just 20 cm above the floor, rounded off at the corners, 240 x 240 cm in size. Its shape resembled a coffee table in a private home, whereas the size and height likened it to a stage one might find in a small theatre or club. On top of it there had been displayed two copies of *Erasmus Is Late and Ibuka!*, along with the outline of act 3 of *Ibuka!* printed out on standard US letter paper and secured beneath a rectangular glass sheet that was 5 mm thick. At the Magasin the table is used for the display of 13 early artworks by Gillick, placed and displayed alongside the four edges. Only one is directly connected to the former presentation, a bundle orange printouts of tied up with packaging string (*Erasmus Is Late Complete Prototype Manuscript File (1995)*) that is centered on the side you first reach after leaving *Les Galeries*. In clockwise order, the other objects are: a small brown cardboard box filled with diverse smaller objects such as lightbulbs, pencils, fruit, and bottles of alcoholic beverages (*Del Charro (1994)*); an even smaller open plastic box that contains a CD by Mike Oldfield, a fuzzbox and cabling (*Tubular Scenario (First Version) (May 1996)*); a stack of bundles of newspapers tied up with string (*Just Out of Time (July 1998)*); several round blue stickers with white writing and some confetti (*La Fête au quotidien (1996)*); a blue bell-shaped tent from which "*The Chain*," a song by Fleetwood Mac, can be heard (*Grand Prix Viewing Place (1994)*); a brown paper bag with ribbons in various colors (*The What If? Scenario Spatial Definition Device #1 (May 1996)*); a larger brown cardboard box filled with white clothing, towels, and sheets (*Elsie McLuhan's Wardrobe (October 1995)*)<sup>46</sup>; another box of the same size filled with brown clothing (*J.K. Gabraith's Wardrobe (1996)*)<sup>47</sup>; a copy of Gillick's book *The Big Conference Centre*, opened at a chapter titled "*Delay*" and lit by a bundle of transparent glowing light-bulbs with white sockets hanging from the ceiling on white cables (*Big Conference Centre Focal Point (1998)*); a transparent glass vase filled with transparent liquid, its title being a quote from the very page that is opened in the book you just saw (*The continuing sequence of events must have started and then spun off from this place. Seven-up colored curtains? (June 1998)*); a pile of objects consisting of torches, eyeglasses, a box

44. To introduce Godard's film to such a context was informative also in that it presents the creation of a piece of pop music as an act of labor, while arranging the *mise-en-scène* of the revolutionary activities like the production of an amateur theater group.

45. "Part 3," November 1995, *Basilico Fine Arts*, New York.

46. Another work from the series related to *Erasmus Is Late*: *Elsie McLuhan* is one of the characters that appear in the book, a historical figure placed in fictional setting and story.

47. A character from the *McNamara* scenario.





of cigarettes, some dark blue and black clothing, a piece of white plastic, all of which are half-covered by artificial snow (A Voidance Apron (1995) and McNamara Setting (1994)); finally, to the right of the bundle of orange paper sheets, a small stack made from several layers of rectangular pieces of felt in various colors (A Day with No Sun is Night, 2001)). What do these objects have in common that they have been presented together in this way?

It is curious to realize that one work exceeds the decade (or even: millennium) determined by the exhibition title. It is possible that it is meant to express a suspicion against the common curatorial habit of grouping works according to a specific, but ultimately arbitrary period of time. Another conventional criterion, the grouping of works by region or geographical proximity, does not apply either. Some works were originally presented in Germany, others in Ireland, Austria, England, and France. *La Fête au quotidien* (1996–2014) has the closest ties to Grenoble. It was originally made for an exhibition of the same name at *Le Magasin*, a collaboration with Gabriel Kuri. We are invited to pick up confetti and little round stickers that say “*La Fête au quotidien*” in white on blue. Maybe we realize that the typeface and the colors are the same as colors on the door through which we entered the *Magasin*. The reason for this is that – in a remarkable parallel to *When do we need more tractors? Five plans*, the other work previously presented with the *Magasin* – the work mainly consists of the assignment to organize a series of holidays that celebrate accomplishments, peculiarities, or groups of people from current everyday culture. It is deliberately left to the responsibility of the institution to decide what to celebrate and how to design the festivities, yet the announcements should be in sync with the institution’s image. In addition to the sticker, the design team of the *Magasin* has produced what looks like an enlarged page from a calendar. Applied to the wall in proximity to the confetti and the stickers, the wall text lists all events that potentially could be celebrated throughout the duration of *From 199C to 199D*, the “*Day of the Remix*,” for example, or the “*Day of Pussy Riots and Blonde Wigs*.” Session 23 have added new holidays to the ones from 1996, leaving it up to us to trace back aspects of “the evolution of ideas and political or social concerns”<sup>48</sup> over the last 20 years.

#### INTERMISSION

As we circled around the table we passed another work that has been taken over by Session 23; it is the second sound piece in the exhibition. During its first presentation, *Stoppage* (1995) had been placed in the bookshop of the CCC Tours. As part of the work, the bookshop had been renovated and refurnished, placing a coffee table similar to the one at *Basilico Fine Arts* in the center of the room. On it, a sound system playing the audio part of *Stoppage* was accompanied by selection of books further contextualizing the recording that Gillick had made on behalf of a number of artists invited for the project. The work was intended to provide “an endless soundtrack for an institution,” thereby contributing to the institution’s self-image.<sup>49</sup> At the same time, it served as a potential distraction in a place designated to the distribution of information and knowledge. Additionally, the work’s extensive duration encouraged a reflection upon the amount of time one usually grants to the reception of art. For Grenoble, Session 23 used the opportunity to create a group exhibition within the exhibition by each inviting one artist to contribute to a new *Stoppage*. This time, there are four pairs of loudspeakers instead of one, and they are mounted to the wall in various places of *La Rue*.

48. <http://www.ecoledumagasin.com/session23/en/every-day-holiday/>, last accessed May 2015.

49. *Liam Gillick. From 199A to 199B*, exh. Guide, Bard College The Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson 2012, p. 54.

## THE STREET 2

Another irregularity that stands out from the collection of works on Prototype Ibuka! Coffee Table/Stage (Act 3) is the apparent mixing of A Voidance Apron and McNamara Setting. Could this be a hint concerning the material and formal integrity of the works? Each work on the table is accompanied by an A4 printout of what appears to be an archival data sheet: the title of the current exhibition on the upper left, and framed entry fields containing an individual code number and information about the date and title of the work, its dimensions and materials, a short description, and an exhibition history. At the bottom of each sheet there is a field that lists how the work has been documented, followed by an unframed field indicating the latest modification of the respective record.

A closer inspection of the text/work arrangements reveals that apparently all works on the table have been made anew for the exhibition. Some of them are explicitly conceived to be produced each time they are presented, leaving some freedom to the executor while at the same time offering specific guidance for particular aspects. The descriptions of other groups of works are not so clear. Their texts read like the one for the brown cardboard box of Elsie McLuhan’s Wardrobe placed at the far end of the table. The archival sheet only lists the elements that are part of the work, accompanied by a short contextualization: “A lukewarm memory of the potential parallel wardrobe of Elsie McLuhan, public speaker, dissatisfied person and mother of Marshall McLuhan.” In contrast, the instruction for J. K. Galbraith’s Wardrobe is more explicit: “Cardboard box (size variable) / A quantity of brown clothing / Size and location of the work can be determined by the user. / The work should only be exhibited in one place at a time.” Another example: according to the archival sheet, the Big Conference Centre Focal Point is supposed to come with four lightbulbs, yet there are eleven hanging from the ceiling of the Magasin. The mixture of A Voidance Apron and McNamara Setting seems to be the culmination of all eventualities that have been gathered within the frame of Prototype Ibuka! Coffee Table/Stage (Act 3): the delegation of aesthetic decisions to whoever presents the work, a certain variability regarding the choice of materials or elements, and the possibility of disregarding even the loose instructions that have been given. According to the material information field of A Voidance Apron, the rubber sheet (not plastic) and the artificial snow should be accompanied by the word “Funf.”<sup>50</sup> It is nowhere to be seen in La Rue. The installation instruction for McNamara Setting subscribes to the deliberate ambiguity that is common to all the works: “Materials to be selected by the person who installs the work based upon a specific script supplied by the artist that relates to certain scenes from the full length version of the film ‘McNamara.’”

The archival sheets underline the deviating status of the works gathered on the Prototype Ibuka! Coffee Table/Stage (Act 3). Most of the works in the exhibition directly alter or shape the spaces through which the visitors move. They are situational, even if the elements that frame the situation point to an elsewhere (their own past or a fiction). In contrast, the works on the table appear to be restricted to triggering the visitor’s imagination alone. Some appear to be leftovers from former situations, like the tent from Grand Prix Viewing Place that was once placed on a mountain above Monaco to function as a suggested place to watch the Formula 1 Grand Prix while at the same time keeping a distance. But it is not the tent from 1994, it is similar, and therefore it is less of a relic or document, but rather a stand-in that serves to trigger but also influence the imagination of how it may have been when first left on the mountain. At the same time the work makes it clear that the image created does not show history as it was. Other objects come straight out of Gillick’s stories, so in a sense they function the other way around.

50. “Fünf” is the German word for “five.”

The difference between the works on the table and the other works in the exhibition is that, whereas the works in the exhibition determine specific settings of scenarios you may actually try out, the works on the table function as links to scenarios in the stricter sense of the term: they are speculations upon the potential development of events, precisely directed toward a time that has not yet arrived. It is this status that justifies their common presence on the Prototype Ibuka! Coffee Table/Stage. The definition of the large table as stage grants the exhibits the status of props. But unlike the stages you entered in Les Galeries, this one is exactly there to delimit an area to which you have no access.

Maybe this emphasis on potentiality is also the reason why the *Prototype Ibuka! Coffee Table/Stage* looks just like the three *Prototype Erasmus Tables* displayed in La Rue. As we move back toward the entrance of the Magasin, the first table we reach is *Erasmus Table #1* (1994); it is much smaller, made up of only four sheets of plywood.<sup>51</sup> Nonetheless, it serves its function. As a contribution to the group exhibition *Surface de Réparations II*,<sup>52</sup> Gillick had conceived it for a symbolic takeover of one of the most powerful discursive tools that exist within the field of art, the catalogue. He presented a dummy of the planned but not yet existing exhibition catalogue, wrapped in a dust cover he had designed himself. The catalogue was placed in the middle of the table, keeping it out of reach of anybody attempting to take a closer look. Still, one could identify a photocopied collage of photographs showing scenes from *Monthy Python* on the cover. For Grenoble, Gillick has repeated the gesture. He designed another cover, only this time it is for his own exhibition. Therefore, the update also points to how the relations between the artist and the institution have changed. It is bigger in size and, unlike in Dijon in 1994, the content and design is now pretty much under the artist’s control.<sup>53</sup>

With the first version of the *Prototype Erasmus Table* Gillick had claimed the importance of taking a share in the production and distribution of the information that accompanies the presentation of art (and that is usually in the hands of the institution). In return, Gillick used the *Erasmus Table #2* (1994) to let himself be influenced by the flow of information

51. It is worth noting that on the website of Session 23 the allocation of the titles of table #1 and table #3 got mixed up. However, the mistake is nonetheless informative of Gillick’s artistic practice in the 1990s: on various occasions he introduced alternatives to the official discourse mediated by the exhibiting institutions, based upon the understanding that the kind and amount of information you have informs the reception and understanding of the work on display. A good example is *The Lost Paradise Information Service* that he established alongside the group exhibition “Lost Paradise” in Vienna. One of its elements, the *Lost Paradise Information Service (Window Piece)* (1994) was a set of simple, text-only A3 printouts of alternative exhibition titles, the list of participants, directions to the venue, and a Viennese telephone and fax number through which to contact Gillick for information about the show. In Grenoble, the work consists of three A3 text/image posters that only suggest one title each. In various ways they establish links between the work’s history (an enlarged facsimile of a diagram of the participants of Lost Paradise, drawn by Gillick and reprinted in the exhibition guide booklet) and the collaborative process that preceded the current exhibition (entitled *Smells Like Team Spirit*) while also pointing to some of the general trajectories of Gillick’s concerns (entitled *Art in Times of Crisis*). In contrast to *Lost Paradise*, the posters are now installed in various places in the city of Grenoble. The telephone contacts have been

replaced by a skype line and thus updated to the current standards of communication. It is a remarkable twist of the story that 20 years later it is the curatorial team of Session 23 who is in charge of the information service, as if the power relations between artist and curators have been reversed, and it is now the latter who are in need of defending their territory in the realm of information. Of course, a second reflection might bring to mind that the original work had been generated in relation to a curator who was less a representative of the evil empire of the institution, than someone who herself considered the critical reflection of the constitutive conditions of exhibiting to be integral to her work. On the other hand, placed in between Yves Aupetitallot and Gillick, the participants of the École du Magasin may indeed have felt the need to communicate that their own perspectives are in some cases different from those of the school’s director on the one hand, and the central figure of public attention, the artist, on the other.

52. *Surface de réparation II*, curated by Éric Troncy, October 29, 1994–January 14, 1995, FRAC Bourgogne, Dijon.

53. Admittedly this information is not available to the visitors, but the book you are holding in your hands confirms the argument.

channeled by the exhibiting institution. Conceived for On-Line,<sup>54</sup> an alternative art fair that took place in Ghent in December 1994, the table served as a workspace and display device for Schipper & Krome gallery. Papers, reviews, information sheets, and office materials were presented on the same plain as small works by Gillick and other artists. While the gallery staff carried out their usual business, Gillick sat at the table working on his forthcoming book *Erasmus Is Late*. It was the time when the Internet started to become more popular, therefore in context of the fair's title the nonhierarchical display could also be likened to the informational structure of the new digital data space. Whoever sat down at the table became a user navigating the information displayed at their leisure. This Internet connection is even more obvious in Grenoble. The table is a bit bigger than table #1; it is made up of nine plywood sheets. From a hole in the middle, 12 black extension cords reach to the edges of the tabletop. Several stools derived from Max Bill's Ulm stool, but made from MDF, invite you to sit down, thus marking the table as a potential space for work or study. In contrast to the former version, there are no papers or works displayed. Instead, the cables indicate how the typical setting for professional work has changed since 1994. Everyone is now being expected to bring their own laptop or tablet computer. As they did with the *What If? Scenario (Part One)*, Session 23 have chosen to update the work by focusing on the technological aspect of the informational context that the work referred to in its original state.

Information technology is also at the center of the last table in La Rue, the first one that we encountered when we entered the Magasin. *Prototype Erasmus Table #3* is the same size as table #1. On the website it says that Session 23 offered it to Yves Aupetitallot, the director of the Magasin, who in turn gave it to collector and philanthropist Maja Hoffmann, who helped fund the exhibition, and who in turn passed it on to French writer and editor Charles Arsène-Henry. He decided to present a version of *The Library Is on Fire*, an experimental reading room/library that is destined to become the library of the LUMA Foundation art and research center in Arles.<sup>55</sup> Three paperback novels are each placed on three sides of the table alongside an open black cardboard archive box containing A4 photocopies of a text and a drawings of a "speculative gaming controller."<sup>56</sup> The text is projected onto the inside of the open box, which contains a set of black, white, red, and blue plastic objects that could be parts of some machine, possibly the controller. The text describes the scenario for a film – there's Homer and Odysseus and memories of a Playstation game – but contrary to expectations this scenario is not from *Erasmus Is Late*. When Gillick first presented the table in a gallery exhibition in London, it served as a promotional device for the book that had just been released. He placed the book in the center of the table and added sheet music dating from 1930 to 1960. There was no further information as to what the sheets were for, but it was likely that they provided potential soundtracks for a future stage or film production. The table in Grenoble also points to a project that has not yet been realized. A vision of how information may be accessed, processed, and reassessed in the future appears to be an adequate finale for a visit to *From 199C to 199D*, as if it is placed both as a summary and a prospect of some of the considerations underlying the exhibition.

54. On-Line, December 9–14, 1994, Ghent.

55. For another version see <http://www.aaschool.ac.uk/VIDEO/lecture.php?ID=1867>, last accessed May 2015. Liam Gillick is a member of the Core Group of the LUMA Foundation for Arles that is in charge of developing the

project. The LUMA Foundation is also the main sponsor of *From 199C to 199D*.

56. <http://www.ecoledumagasin.com/session23/en/prototype-erasmus-table-1/>, last accessed May 2015.

## INFORMATION/STAGES

In the catalogue for Liam Gillick's exhibition at the Frankfurter Kunstverein in 2000, Michael Archer stated: "Spaces, interventions into those spaces, objects placed and/or arranged in those spaces, activities, texts, sites for planned or imaginable events and occurrences – all of these together constitute a complex, a constellation of possibilities. Gillick uses the term 'scenario' to describe this complex. The word holds within itself the idea of a scene with its attendant theatrical of filmic overtones, but while it is true that the placement of a screen or a false ceiling does define a certain area of floor or ground, distinguishing it from the surrounding space and designating it as a place on and in which something might happen, to insist on the notion of the stage or set would be to distance things too much from that other construct, 'reality.'"<sup>57</sup> In contrast to the opposition suggested by Archer, an extended walk through the exhibition in Grenoble shows us that allusions to theater and theatricality can be found almost everywhere in the artistic strategies that Gillick developed throughout the 1990s, sometimes even in the titles of the works themselves. Why, then, does Archer suggest that they should not be taken into account? The answer seems to lie in a particular understanding of theatricality that forms the basis of his argument. By opposing "the notion of the stage or set" to that of "reality," he indicates that theater is the sphere of that which is not real, therefore irrelevant, artificial, and ultimately false. This, in turn, reveals a somewhat conservative and even conventional attribution that has served as a popular, if not populist, trope of cultural critique. It was at the heart of Michael Fried's famous critique of Minimal Art, and has been used as a weapon to defend a particular modernist idea of autonomy against art forms that are situational and overtly concerned with time. Therefore, it came as no surprise when, ten years later, Nicolas Bourriaud referred to Fried's article in a text for another of Gillick's catalogues to point out "the extent of the aesthetic damage perpetrated by Michael Fried's [ ... ] text 'Art and Objecthood,' in which he rails against the 'theatricality' of Minimal art."<sup>58</sup> "This theory," Bourriaud continues, "is predicated upon an almost obsessive rejection of the anthropomorphic [ ... ] in favor of an aesthetic that might be described as antisituational."<sup>59</sup> Against this ideology of an art purified by any traces of human activity, Bourriaud positions his own understanding of Gillick's work: "Gillick's work is by no means limited to the purely 'conceptual,' but proves to be a narrative reference work scattered with stage directions. However [ ... ] his protagonists congregate on empty stages or in fragmentary frameworks, thereby effecting a permanent toing and froing between the text and his topological structures that serve as supports, stages, or recipients – a context in which the questions emerge of who determines the organization of human society and how it is done."<sup>60</sup> There should be no doubt that the questions addressed by Bourriaud have been central to Gillick's art ever since the early 1990s. In a lecture he gave at the Antonio Ratti Foundation in Como in 1998, Gillick explained how certain practices derived from theater may be useful for the artistic exploration of social reality. Drawing on Erving Goffman's sociological research around role-play he stated that, "the 'scenario' can become a potential for artists, no matter whether they present [themselves], represent, or are presented. It has to do with play. The desire to develop a series of ideas or scenarios in order [to gain] a better

57. Michael Archer, "Parallel Structures," in *Liam Gillick*, ed. Susanne Gaensheimer, Nicolas Schafhausen, exh. cat., Frankfurter Kunstverein, and Oktagon, Cologne 2000, p. 139.

58. Nicolas Bourriaud, "And Why Should There Be A Title? Liam Gillick's Discursive Typology," in *Liam Gillick: Ein langer Spaziergang*, p. 17.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid., p. 14.



understanding of a situation or social conditions.”<sup>61</sup> The understanding of theatricality that Gillick’s words reveal is not that of Archer or Fried, but closely related to the one developed in drama studies throughout the same period of the 1990s. Theatricality, in this understanding, is not restricted to the stage alone, but rather needs to be regarded as an anthropological constant. As Matthias Warstat writes: “Every actor – whether a professional performer or simply someone acting in the everyday – who wants to adapt to a person opposite, will model or stage his behavior in a certain way.”<sup>62</sup> It is easy to see how information plays a role in this respect: to communicate with each other means to pass on information that goes way beyond that which is exchanged in words. Moreover, to a large extent, communication in modern societies is not carried out face to face, but through products, media, and institutionalized protocols that nonetheless inform – literally: *give form to*<sup>63</sup> – the ways we relate to each other. In Gillick’s art, some of these ways can be traced, imagined, reflected, and sometimes even acted out.

#### POSTSCRIPT

There are two more works in the exhibition: *Vicinato* (1995) and *Vicinato 2* (2000). Placed in the auditorium at the rear end of Le Magasin, they are the only works in the exhibition that have not been updated in any way. Both films are collaborations between a number of artists, and they both revolve around the question of what it is that justifies the mutual proximity of those involved. In this respect, they could provide further insight into the network of people that Gillick moved among between 199A and 199D. But that would be a different story.

61. Liam Gillick, “The Why? Scenario,” in *Liam Gillick: McNamara Papers, Erasmus and Ibuka! Realisations, The What If? Scenarios. Drei Dokumentationen, produziert: Forde, Genf und Transmission Glasgow, Präsentiert im Le Consortum, Dijon, und im Kunstverein in Hamburg*, exh. cat., Kunstverein in Hamburg, Hamburg 1998, p. 56. Translated by Jörn Schafaff.

62. Matthias Warstat, “Von der Pflicht, Schauspieler zu sein – Darstellunf und gesellschaftliche Disziplinierung,” in *Schauspielen heute. Die Bildung des Menschen in den performativen Künsten*, ed. Jens Roselt, Christel Weiler, transcript, Bielefeld 2011, p. 205. Translated by Jörn Schafaff.

63. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1980), University of California Press, Oakland 2011.



## PAUL O'NEILL AND LIAM GILLICK IN CONVERSATION, NEW YORK, MARCH 5, 2004

PAUL O'NEILL:

You often refer to the notion of the “middle-ground” in relation to your work, as well as using terms such as “backdrop” and “foreground.” I often structure the exhibition form around “background,” “middle ground,” and “foreground” works. For me, the background can be the primary layer of the exhibition, where the white walls of the gallery space are converted into a dominant aesthetic experience. The neutral effects of the “white cube” are reduced to a minimum and replaced by a visual backdrop, and propose a distraction for the visitor. Whereas the “middle ground” acts as “in-between” spaces of experience, where design elements, layout, furniture, and display structures produce particular modes of behavior for the visitor and can be employed to (im-) mobilize the viewer to behave in particular or even prescribed ways. Would you like to elaborate upon what you understand as the “middle ground” of the exhibiting space?

LIAM GILLICK:

I am interested in the middle ground of social and economic activity. These are the spaces in our socio-economic and psycho-sociological space that are somewhat ill defined. These enormous gaps can only be described with difficulty, but they need some degree of analysis if their effects are to be understood. Many artists find productive territories within a search for fundamental moments and effects. Others remain within a purely analytical play with the products of complexity. I was interested to develop a sequence of parallel relations with the areas of our life that are most vulnerable to exploitation and control. The implicit freedoms implied in the notion of discussion are not value free. They are complex and offer an alternative set of tools toward making dilemmas and disagreements less dangerous.

This zone was traditionally seen as problematic in relation to creating functional art. Whereas in the past many artists flirted with the central zone of administrative activity, I was more interested in looking at some of its environmental effects. The notion is elaborated in the work around my book *Discussion Island/Big Conference Centre*, just before and just after publication. The book was an attempt to address some of the structural social and political implications of my earlier texts and scenarios like *McNamara* (1994) and *Erasmus is Late* (1995). I wanted to look at the notion of how the near future is controlled in a post-utopian context, at how the legacy of 18th-century thought produced a battle between planning in speculation. I always wanted to escape the “eureka” moment, where art is based on a revelatory singularity, and I found that the creation of a condensed core of ideas could lead to a more complex set of parallel starting points. Yet when I began the book, I found that there were some collapsed narrative problems. So initially, for *The What if? Scenario*, I attempted to create a series of backdrops and contingent structures that could shift around the emerging narrative. At one point, I put the text away completely and concentrated on addressing some out-of-focus ideas. I began to make work around the ideas of discussion, negotiation, compromise, and strategy. Not structures that might illustrate these ideas, but things that could designate a provisional space where it might be possible to consider and reassess such effects. This process of aestheticization of the abstract middle ground unlocked the text and allowed me to write a book without worrying about what kind of space it might be taking place in. The book runs parallel to a sequence of structures but does not describe them.

Equally, the work itself spun free and became a productive series of visual markers.

I realized that it might be possible to take some of the prototypical thinking that had emerged in the earlier work and develop it further. In order to address certain ideas from the center of action and thinking, I began to create a series of overhead platforms and related work that could offer up a space where it might be possible to consider key issues before too many words had been written. The objects really work “toward” the text. They are not emptied out because no one is expected to fill up some notional sublime void with complex thinking; instead it might be possible for the work to act as a backdrop within which a series of scenarios may be played out. We are no longer dealing with mute object meets profound thought; the relationship is more functional and brittle. A constant flickering of idea, intention, and potential toward an excess of access and a reclamation of the middle ground. Permission to play out some undefined scenarios within a visual context that mashes design and dogma.

If anything my work is anti-structural in the sense that there is no unitary logic to all the elements of a particular project. At all times elements spin off and affect the reading of the work. My interest in time and the middle ground ensures that hierarchies are corrupted but not suppressed into useless structural equivalence.

PON: Can you talk more about the relationship between curating and art making as an ongoing critical component within your practice?

LG: I have always been more interested in a legacy of the critical thinking around Conceptual art, where you could argue that there had been a definite merger of moments of authorship. I was very conscious that a dynamic, interesting interface between artistic production and the context around art seemed to be something from the past. The inclusiveness of ad-hoc alternative spaces left them not mobile or agile enough to really take on the genius of the bourgeois world to absorb and take over everything.

I decided to side step the question of alternative spaces, and in 1992 I organized an exhibition in a private gallery, Giò Marconi Gallery in Milan. It was really a way of avoiding doing a traditional exhibition. I wanted to complicate certain questions of authorship and the idea of the show was to question the return of the word “conceptual” to refer to any art that was being produced that wasn’t painting. So I used the old model of doing an instruction show. The exhibition was titled Instructions, but it had another name in Italian, *The Mystery of the 100 Dollar Bill*. This meant that Italians approached the exhibition in a totally different way. I invited a number of younger artists that I knew from Britain, many of whom weren’t really known at the time – Gillian Wearing, Jeremy Deller, and Giorgio Sadotti for example – to give me an instruction that I could carry out in the gallery on their behalf. It was a testing process that was a very self-conscious replaying of something to see what the new conditions would produce, and what the new situations it would provoke. The most profound discovery was that the absence of the artists was a crucial lack. Their work didn’t really sustain any conceptual rigor as we would understand it, because so many of the instructions involved doing things like printing a photograph or building something. It became purely an exercise in making someone else’s artwork, which isn’t particularly profound. What was missing was the presence of the artist. Subsequently, I think every single thing I did involved some kind of discourse or some kind of presence. It involved some kind of absolute condition that the artist must be there in exchange with others – especially emerging curators.

PON: Why was that your solution, what was your reasoning?

LG: The Magasin in Grenoble and the Whitney Independent Study Program had already been producing curators for a few years prior to 1992. There is a certain moment where it might be useful for the artist to absent themselves from the situation in order to allow another kind of discussion to have a higher temperature or a higher tone in the mix, and I felt that the subsequent projects I was involved in were somewhat more reduced in terms of their formal presence, but the presence of the artist as a minder of interface could be a more important role. The fact that I might have asked for it or demanded it didn’t mean it necessarily happened, but I was interested in that question. In Tours at the CCC in 1995 I organized an exhibition titled *Stoppage*, referencing Duchamp’s stoppages. I invited a number of artists to create of an endless soundtrack for the city. My request that all the artists be invited created a problem. This was something I came across a lot when I was first working. On an organizational level the question of the presence or absence of the artist during the moment of exhibition and the question of what is seen to be relevant or useful work at the moment of exhibition in relation to the institution – these were the kinds of things that I was very interested in.

PON: Exposing the mechanics of production/authorship and the dynamics behind the mediation of art within exhibition-making is central to some of the shows you were involved in during the 1990s, which were in stark contrast to the thematic exhibitions that were prevalent at the time. Can you expand upon a few of these shows and your involvement with them?

LG: The really important thing to me was an exhibition titled *Les Ateliers du Paradise*, which was at Air de Paris in 1990. The people who ran the gallery had attended the curating course in Grenoble and everyone I worked with early on – and often still work with – had been through that Grenoble course, but they hadn’t decided to work within an institutional frame. They thought that the question of what an exhibition is could also be examined more rapidly and more quickly through the idea of a private gallery of a new kind. Florence Bonnefous, Edouard Merino, Esther Schipper, Louise Neri, and Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster had all done the Grenoble curating course. The implication that doing a curating course would lead you toward a didactic or clearly authored exhibition structure wasn’t the case at that time. They were interested structurally in how you can make an exhibition. How long should you spend with work? What kind of structure should it be? They didn’t come with a passive relationship to the idea of what the artist would do or could produce. In *Les Ateliers du Paradise* a group of artists asked for all the things they would need to have a perfect holiday, studio, free association in Nice during one summer, and the galleries’ role was that they functioned as co-conspirators, problematizing the role of the mediator alongside the artist without becoming a slave to the artist, yet also without becoming didactic. It was very hard with that exhibition to tell who was who, who was the gallery, who were the artists, who were the curators. Another exhibition that was very important was titled *No Man’s Time* at the Villa Arson in 1991. That was an interesting conceit. It was curated by Nicolas Bourriaud and Eric Troncy and was probably one of the last occasions they worked together. It was an exhibition about time, as was *Les Ateliers du Paradise*. This was the thing that I picked up in France, taking ideas from cinema theory and from contemporary French poststructural theory in an activated way. The exhibition was literally a “no man’s time,” in the way that you might have no man’s land. It was a structure where you could think about whether the exhibition is a documentary or a fiction, how long you should spend addressing questions of time without using time specific media. France at that point became an

incredible meeting place for people. It was where you met people because that was one of the functions of the institutional set-up post Jacques Lang's decentralization process. Allen Ruppertsberg was around, as well as Karen Kilimnik, Philippe Parreno, and Felix Gonzalez-Torres. It felt very different from the idea of an artist's organized exhibition that was self-serving, or something connected to the market but also very different from some other kind of exhibition about some formalist aspect of the work. In a strange way it presented a kind of rather cloudy and out of focus conceit, and everything could swoop around it. It brought up the possibility that you were obliged to offer a decent conceit and you could trust the artist to address the conceit rather than trying to match the work to the idea or the idea to the work. In a way the work stood on one side, and the artists used the exhibition moment to think in a semi-autonomous space of ideas, which was not derived from the work but works in parallel to the idea of art.

The next important exhibition was *Backstage* in 1993 at the Kunstverein in Hamburg. *Backstage* was the opening exhibition of the renovated Kunstverein in Hamburg. They opened up the entire institution, and the exhibition occupied and infiltrated both the front of house and back of house. Two years later in the *Moral Maze* at Le Consortium in Dijon in 1995, the whole question of the occupation of the institution and the passage of time and ideas and information, and who gets the information and how it is passed around were also at the center of the project. The artists were both the audience and the producers and the distractors of things in that project. With that exhibition, Philippe Parreno and I made the space of the institution ambiguous by using white paint smeared on the glass doors so it seemed to be under renovation. We never really publicized whether it was open or closed. We left it in a state of ambiguity and during the week that most of us were there – Lothar Hempel, Carsten Höller, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Maurizio Cattelan, Angela Bulloch, Xavier Veilhan, myself, and maybe Dominique was there for a while. We invited a sequence of middle-ground specialists – people that don't produce initial ideas but process information – to visit us one by one during the week and be looked after and fed and be and asked questions. In the gaps between the guests, the artists made art provisional works, which of course would be affected by the thinking and the talking throughout the week. The artist as the interrogator rather than the interrogated – it turned that role. It was also based on the premise that what you do to an artist during an institutional restructuring changes art, because we didn't write anything down or record or document anything. The idea was that we would be inherently different afterward because if we sat there for a week and spent eight hours asking questions to a political strategist, asking questions to someone who takes the ideas for advertising and tries to make them real, or someone who works on economic systems for education within developing countries, and we sat and asked many questions, we would always be different after that.

PON: The exhibition in this case is ultimately the manifestation of a model of discursive space imported from somewhere already happening elsewhere, but by folding two discursive sites onto one another, there is an interesting infection, or doubling up, whereby a discursive para-site potentially emerges, and art intervenes within the institution as its own para-institute.

LG: Absolutely, but rather than the idea of a free non-specific area of discussion, or evidence that there can be discussion, we actually tried to functionalize the space and actually find out something and do something. The tension it created between us and the institution was quite precise. Le Consortium in Dijon is run by people who are very affected by a post 1968 position. They had worked early on with Michael Asher,

Daniel Buren, Niele Toroni, Olivier Mosset, John Armleder, and other artists who had questioned the function of art. While we'd found that incredibly interesting and inspiring, we needed to find another way to do things and maybe the obligation that we had was to use the exhibition moment as an enlightening tool for artists as well as the public, and view artists as equally obliged to use the moment of exhibition as a time to inform themselves and to question their motives. Most of the things that I have organized as a pseudo-curator have had this aspect – either trying to correct a sense that artists are lacking in pressure or push to question themselves and their own role within structures, or where the notion of the artist's presence and critical presence has been otherwise repressed.

One of the things that happens when you are the artist doing structural projects is that people are used to the idea of an artists' permission to be involved in moments of refusal. So they allow moments of refusal to enter into the curatorial realm. I was interested in exposing some moments for people to register the subtle differences between structures. Take the exhibition *What If: Art on the Verge of Architecture and Design* (2000). We made the exhibition nondemocratic in terms of space because there is usually an assumption, possibly quite correctly for historical reasons, that one should be somewhat democratic in terms of the distribution of space to artists within an institution. If not, give space appropriate to what the work requires. I was in a position, because I am an artist, to have one of these soft moments of refusal alongside Maria Lind. So we could say Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, let's give her a sixth of the whole space and play with some of the hierarchies like that. This is very difficult to do often within the constant settling feeling that you get within an institution. Institutions want to find moments of arrest within a structure and an artist can function within that framework to question these moments of arrest, question moments of clarification, keeping things in a state of movement or shimmer.

PON: Do you think these curatorial relations are so significantly different within more stable institutional structures, whether it is an artist or the curator, from so called independent positions or codependent positions from outside the institution?

LG: It is very rare that an independent curator is given the opportunity to do such a big show in a large institution or a big museum. It has been a constant dilemma for people of my generation who are working more as critics or curators than they are as artists. It's a big question. On one level they don't want to be involved in the big institutions and museums, and I can understand that, but on another level without them some of these questions will not proceed.

The second phase of curatorial processes has been my role as conspirator with curators, often within a larger institution, where I can stand alongside them and we can work together in order to achieve things that one or the other of us alone can't achieve. I can also take the role of the rogue individual as represented by the notion of the artist.

PON: Were you involved in the selection of the works on any level at the Moderna Museet?

LG: I believe in the potential of a curatorial structure that can include and accept certain work that an artist who is trying to find space in society to work in, and find their own place might not find so easy to deal with. The idea that artists are inherently generous and friendly toward one another and open to the international community of artists is of

course not entirely the case. From an institutional perspective or from an art historical perspective there might be an interesting reason to put them in, and I didn't want get involved in that thing, of arguing why someone should be in it or not.

PON: You mentioned a number of artists who were involved in institutional critique in the 1970s and 80s, and there is an argument to suggest that your work and the work of artists of your generation such as Rirkrit Tiravanija, Philippe Parreno, et al., and others are an extension of that critique, with a key difference being that the myth around the earlier version of institutional critique was that they were working against the institution, while I would say that your work is working from within the institutional framework and with these structures themselves, and acknowledging that working with that infrastructure can be critically coproductive rather than asserting reification, particularly if we are to take account of the curatorial as a series of cooperative mechanisms operating within art practice in the 1990s.

LG: We are talking about a period from 1987 onward. It is not that art changed, curating changed. I always had a strong interest in this whole question of the context-orientated work around Galerie Christian Nagel in the early 1990s, and you could suggest that a lot of the projects that I have been involved in have a similar aspect to them, at least structurally, but the execution of them and the way they get laid out as an exhibition structure is very influenced by the question of the exhibition as a site that was developed around some of the artists showing in France like Philippe and Dominique. I didn't share the "kontext kunst" belief in transparency within the work or the exhibition structure. As far as I was concerned, transparency was part of an emerging problem related to neoliberalism. I don't believe you can have transparency in that way. I was interested in Derrida and Deleuze and there is nothing about transparency in there. You could say that the Nagel artists were more interested in Pierre Bourdieu and the discussion about the cultural sphere and the corporate sphere. I was more interested in the psychology of economy. If you want to change something and you give people all the tools to understand what you have done it is a bit tricky, because my experience of dynamic groupings has always been sometimes they have to hide, they sometimes they have to veil themselves, they sometimes have to evade transparency. It is all very easy for a privileged, white, middle-class person from London to say it is good for everyone to be transparent, but what if you are doing something that you are not supposed to be doing or that the culture doesn't want you to be doing. In that case the last thing you want to be is transparent.

PON: Visibility politics in the 1990s shifted away from the idea that transparent representation was necessarily a productive force for a potentially more radical culture, because obviously those mechanisms can be used to make transparent certain forms of representation to be adopted or co-opted as an adaptive image of representation as part of a more widely image-saturated culture. Visibility became more of a question of whose visibility and for whom, rather than what degree of transparency. Within any spectacular culture power lies with the observer not with the seen, and with the producer not the consumer of that visibility, regardless of any transparency. Evidently, transparency within curatorial discourse of the 1990s also produced a greater visibility for the curator, which is not necessarily a bad thing, but a more visibly curatorially aware culture or a more saturated curatorial field doesn't necessarily produce a greater degree of criticality.

LG: Who possesses the critical voice? People who previously might have become critics as a semi-autonomous activity within culture now tend to get involved in curating,

and what does that mean for the critical discourse? I was very interested in this whole question of a desire to retain a critical voice as a semi-autonomous act that might be different to the idea of writing for an art magazine or writing for catalogues alone. The emerging contest now is around critical potential.

PON: Contemporary curatorial practice has been so preoccupied with the mythical boundaries between artistic production and curating, while the question of curatorial authorship as a meta-artistic activity is no longer the real issue. The great divide is the growing distance between the emergence of a more critical yet divergent curatorial field, and a lack of any critically emergent criticism toward these developments. Ultimately, by focusing on a discourse around where the art ends and the curatorial intervention begins produces an inflective discourse – ultimately avoiding the key critical question as to what ultimately defines a good curated art exhibition or what a badly curated art exhibition might now be. The curator has somehow replaced or converged with the critic as a dominant figure within the dissemination of contemporary art and its attendant discourses.

LG: There was an initial idea that the internet might produce a new critical forum and a lot of people who would have started magazines or journals or become involved in that got lost in the Internet at some point early on. I think it is only relatively recently that people have realized that it is not doing the same kind of thing that printed matter does, so there's potentially a new re-questioning of the role of the critic in relation to the Internet. Ten years ago there was this feeling that the only place to find new critical models was via the Internet, and frankly I don't think it has really happened. It has become an informative tool, like with e-flux and these kinds of things, and it remains an academic tool, so you can find essays and so on, but it has not become a critical forum, it never really worked that way, so that tripped things up for a while.

PON: Curating changed in the late 1980s and early 1990s, but not the artwork. This is your claim. Are you suggesting curating became a more progressive activity than contemporary art during this timeframe, and if art has finally caught up in the interim period, do we still have a reductive level of criticism toward curatorial activity?

LG: There is very little assumption in any intellectual discourse that artists are the same or similar. There is an absolute understanding of difference, and in fact there has been incredibly sophisticated discourse around that for the last 30 or so years – the idea of recognizing the difference between one artist and another and having to deal with that. The problem is at the moment that quite intelligent people who wouldn't for a second conflate the idea of "artist" as a singular idea, will do it with the idea of a "curator." In fact, it is quite clear that there are enormously different pressures, factions, and people involved in curating. We live in a time when curating is in a dynamic phase and that doesn't necessarily mean it is good, it means that there is a battle going on for power and control and discourse. The position of the artist now in contemporary discourse is well analyzed. You don't need to get involved in a deep analysis of whether it's interesting for an artist to work alone or in a group or not work at all or any of these things. The important site for these questions is the role of the curator. Yet there is still a tendency to focus on exhibitions, and what was in exhibitions and who the artists were and very little about the idea of the role of the curator or the psychological component of that or a kind of politicized discussion of power structures.

PON: The discourse around curatorial practice is so dependent on vocabulary from



other discursive fields of enquiry, and curators are happier to talk about or through art and artists rather than engaging with some of the deficiencies of curatorial practice and questioning its own narrowing of political agencies. But we have seen a generation of curators from Obrist to Lind who have contributed significantly to an interrogation of their field, which offers much to subsequent generations of potentially self-reflexive curators.

LG: There will be a new generation of curators who will jump over the level of being involved in discursive, ad hoc, temporary, small set-ups, and jump into the bigger spaces because they realize that no one is challenging these spaces. They wait out their time and slowly become the more important people, so in ten years time Hans Ulrich might be the director of the ARC in Paris and it will be interesting to see if he is prepared to enter into the same loose, mutating discourse about curating that he seems to have been able to enjoy around the question of art. I think the next challenge for that generation of curators is to see if they can address what to do with the other curators. There has been some of that due to conferences and discussions, but what tends to happen during these conferences is that people either report on what they have done, which is the kind of classic thing to do, or they use distraction techniques and sidestep things and talk about something else completely different like another model, like Hans Ulrich talking about Cedric Price instead of talking about the idea of curating without an institution. The question is really what they will do with other curators – how will they relate to each other and challenge each other.

PON: In 1992 you published an essay for *Art Monthly* about your concerns about the future and progress of post-graduate curatorial training programs at the same time as the opening of the RCA course in London. One of your main fears was that they might turn into “Betty Ford” style clinics for failed gallerists or art dealers. Do you think this initial fear has been alleviated in some way since then?

LG: One of the other things that I didn't predict at the time was the number of people involved in curatorial teaching who are artists. They tend to be certain types of artists who maybe can write, for example, and who are interested in structures and in various other things. If you look at the Royal College or the Whitney [ISP] or even the course at Palais de Tokyo, there are a lot of artists involved in discussing things within these structures. I wonder about a potential reversal, because when I was teaching at Columbia this last semester I was talking to the group of students about who teaches in art schools, and while the students tended to be what you would call neoconservative in many ways about their expectations in life and what they wanted from their education and being an artist and having a career – and they were fairly open about that in a way – one of the things they were not sure about was whether artists are the best to teach them in an art school. They have Jerry Saltz, who is a teacher there, who is a critic, and they have Dan Cameron coming in who is a curator, but that's about it, and they had quite a strong desire to have much more input from curators as teaching staff. This was very interesting and extremely surprising to me, so in a way I'd be interested in the idea of more curators making the effort to get involved in the processes, not just coming to do a guest lecture, which is the normal model of a curator coming into an art school environment, but really doing some of the daily work of influencing how things are discussed and talked about in an art school, because even the most progressive art schools are strangely retarded when it comes to discussing anything about the way art is understood or contextualized or structured or presented. That's the big surprise for me, the number of artists teaching in curator schools and therefore telling people how to behave maybe, and influencing them, and secondly the fact that a lot of art students

certainly in the US and to a lesser extent in Britain would be interested to have curators involved.

PON: Almost all of these curating courses have a collective exhibition as their end product, coorganized by graduating students. Does this appear to be mimicking the dominant model of the fine art end-of-year graduating show?

LG: At Columbia University in the Visual Arts Department they now bring in a curator to curate the exhibition at the end of the course, so the students do have a little interaction with curating. But they only have it once at the very end, which of course can be very odd and strangely enlightening. I saw a lot of people who felt suddenly, hang on a minute I get it, there are these other people who work alongside you and stand by your side and consider how things might be done and how things can work in context and sort of have a talk about it. There is an essay written about all the artists' work in this year's little catalogue, which is authored by the curator of the show, and this is something that, if you are looking at it cynically, can be said to be merely smoothing the way for people who want to consume and partake in the potential of these artists. But on another level it is an indication of something that maybe should be more involved and embedded in that system. For me the thing is more, if artists at certain moments felt that they could fight for cultural permission to occupy various territories within contemporary culture and affect meaning and play with structures in that way, I don't see why curators shouldn't be doing the same thing. I mean I would want to be doing the same thing. I'd want to be asking questions about the teaching of art. I'd want to ask questions about who possesses the critical voice.

If we're sitting here talking about the idea that people, whoever they might be, might think that curatorial structures are too locked down, something too defined or too didactic or too obvious, then we are probably not ... [Tape Runs Out]

*PROTOTYPE ERASMUS TABLE 2 (GENT), 1994*

First exhibited in *On-Line*, Ghent, 1994

Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012; Magasin, 2014

Plywood, wood

Dimensions as large as possible

*PROTOTYPE ERASMUS TABLE #1 (BOURGOGNE), 1994*

First exhibited in *Surface de réparations*, curated by Eric Troncy, FRAC Bourgogne, Dijon, 1994

Exhibited Magasin, 2014

Plywood, wood

Dimensions as large as possible

*PROTOTYPE ERASMUS TABLE #3 (LONDON), 1995*

First exhibited in *Ideal Standard Summertime*, Lisson Gallery, London, 1995

Exhibited Magasin, 2014

Plywood, wood

Dimensions as large as possible

*PROTOTYPE IBUKA! COFFEE TABLE/STAGE (ACT 3), 1995*

First exhibited in *Ibuka!*, Galerie Emi Fontana, Milan, 1995

Exhibited Magasin, 2014

Plywood, wood

Dimensions as large as possible

A series of tables to be constructed from uncut sheets of plywood, and plain, square-profile wood for the legs. The sizes should be as large as possible in relation to the space and any other work or activity that is also taking place in the same location. The tables should carry objects and papers selected by the artist or another user of the work that somehow reflect the activities and context of the place. As such, the works are displays of "other" or "secondary" material.

Realized by Ann Butler (Hessel Museum); Charles Arsène-Henry; École du Magasin and Liam Gillick (Magasin).







Erasmus Tables at Magasin, Charles Arsène-Henry and Liam Gillick.



Right: Erasmus table at Hessel Museum arranged by Ann Butler.



# PROTOTYPE ERASMUS TABLE #2 CCS BARD HESSEL MUSEUM ANN BUTLER

Similar to a large reading room table in a public library, the Prototype Erasmus Table #2, adhered with the instructions specified by the artist, Liam Gillick, for his solo show, From 199A to 199B, curated by Tom Eccles and Johanna Burton at the Hessel Museum at CCS Bard. The 2012 installation consisted of a large table constructed from uncut sheets of plywood atop legs of plain square profile wood. As prescribed by the artist, “as large as possible bearing in mind the rest of the space and any other work or activity that is also taking place in the same location,” the size of the table, 16 x 16 feet, was almost as large as the gallery in which it was installed. The large table supported over 100 objects, publications, and papers, in this case selected by a small working group consisting of two graduate students from the CCS Bard program in Curatorial Studies, Marina Noronha (CCS 2013) and Karly Wildenstein (CCS 2013), the CCS Bard Associate Librarian Bronwen Bitetti, and myself, the Director of the CCS Bard Library & Archives. The group was invited by Liam Gillick and Tom Eccles to operate the table for this specific installation.

The focus of this iteration of the Prototype Erasmus Table #2 was the 1995 novel by Liam Gillick (Book Works, London) entitled Erasmus is Late. On one level the novel serves as a guide to contemporary London seen through the eyes of a 19<sup>th</sup>-century inhabitant, Erasmus Alvey Darwin (1804–1881), opium-eater and older brother of the better-known Charles Darwin (1809–1882). In some ways the novel is similar to Kathy Acker’s 1982 novel Great Expectations, wherein she populates her retelling of the well-known Charles Dickens novel with contemporary figures including Susan Sontag and Anwar Sadat. Erasmus is Late opens with a dinner party, hosted by Erasmus, which is about to take place and includes, already seated around the dinner table: Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defense under President Kennedy; Masaru Ibuka, cofounder of the Sony Corporation; Murry Wilson, father of Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys; and Elsie McLuhan, mother of Marshall McLuhan. Avoiding his own dinner party, Erasmus is out wandering the streets of London, distracted by sites he associates with the development of free-thinking, all the while maintaining communication with his dinner guests through Gillick’s book, Erasmus is Late. For Gillick, the novel represents an examination of contemporary London in relation to pre-Marxist positions, and “an attempt to cut across the nostalgia for a period that cannot really provide a model for our own.”<sup>1</sup>

The installation of Prototype Erasmus Table #2 was intended by the working group w to serve as a deconstruction of the novel, identifying each of the characters (major and minor), locales, key topics, and events, and a schematic retelling through the selection and display of objects, each related in some way to characters in the book. Occupying over a third of the table and placed dead in the center was an enlarged reproduction of an early 20<sup>th</sup>-century black & white map of London. Surrounding the map, like participants at the United Nations General Assembly, were place name holders for each of the characters in the book. The list of characters was developed collaboratively by the working group based on a joint reading of the novel, and included some of the following:

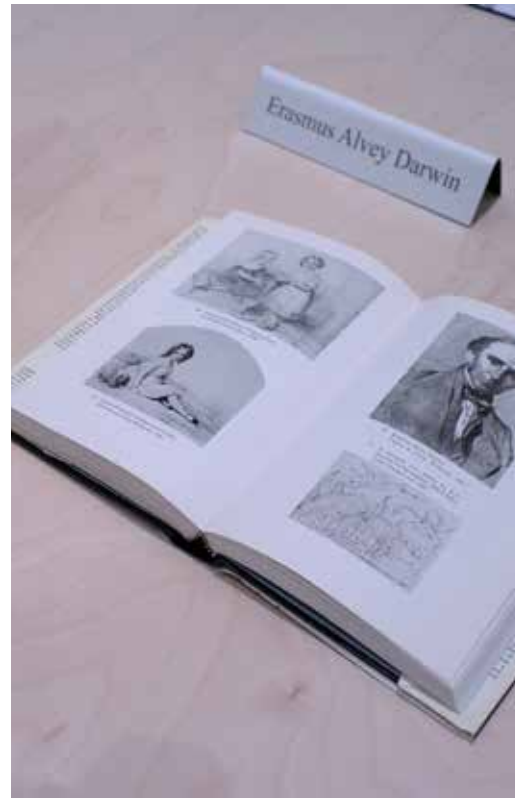
Erasmus Alvey Darwin (1804–1881)  
Robert McNamara (1916–2009)  
Masaru Ibuka ((1908–1997)  
Murry Wilson (1917–1973)  
Harriet Martineau (1802–1876)  
Elsie McLuhan  
Great Marlborough Street (London)  
Tottenham Court Road (London)  
Zoosemiotics  
Joy Division  
Alvin Toffler and Futurology  
Mao Tse-tung and 100 Flowers  
Consoles  
Centre Point – one of London’s first skyscrapers  
Free-thinking  
Opium  
Insomnia  
Fermat’s last theorem

Clustered around each of the vinyl place name holders were objects associated in some way with each of the characters. Many of the objects were purchased from secondhand sources including book dealers and online auctions like eBay. Set at each of the cardinal points of the table were out of print copies of the well-known A-Z Guide to London. Visitors were encouraged to take a seat at the table and peruse the objects and contents in front of them, which provided a range of entry points into Gillick’s novel, Erasmus is Late, being read aloud in an adjacent gallery.

1. Liam Gillick, Erasmus is Late, Book Works, Ltd., London 1995, p. 7.



Erasmus table at Hessel Museum arranged by Ann Butler.



Erasmus table at Magasin arranged by Liam Gillick with a selection of early works produced by the participants of École du Magasin.





## PAOLA BONINO FROM 199A TO 199Z

### 199ARCHIVE

To collect, select, and catalogue the amount of information we are dealing with in order to create structures that lead to knowledge; to archive for the next generations, to allow them to know the past and to interpret it. Of course, they will then update the past, taking into account the archive material they have at their disposal and filtering it on the basis of their present experience. And here the problem of history (and how history is written and rewritten) arises.

### 199BARD COLLEGE

*From 199A to 199B*, 2012. It all belongs to a wider experiment, where we became components, factors, ingredients as well as test drivers. We worked in parallel and against this background, in a temporal and spatial shift; appointments that dissolve in time, frameworks which slip, recur and open forward.

### 199COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIES

“And what we are witnessing now has more to do with the creation of temporary alliances and functional think tanks than earlier attempts to question artistic production by the melding of two or more artists into one artistic persona.”

Liam Gillick, “Collaborative Strategies in a Shifting Context. We just Walked In,” 1999

### 199DISCURSIVE

“The discursive framework projects a problem just out of reach, and this is why it can also confront a socio-economic system that bases its growth upon ‘projections.’ In the discursive art process we are constantly projecting. We are projecting that something will lead to something else ‘at some point.’ True work, true activity, true significance will happen in a constant, perpetual displacement. This permanent displacement provides a location for refusal and collective ennui. The projection of the critical moment is the political potential of the discursive.”

Liam Gillick, “Maybe it Would be Better if We Worked in Groups of Three,” 2008

### 199END

“I remember that, on the subway that morning, there were an impressive number of people reading Western newspapers. ‘This is very strange,’ I said to myself. Once at school, there were just seven students in my class. ‘Oh, such bad flu today ... ’ was my comment. One of my mates stared at me, disappointed. I went slowly to my desk. The teacher came in: ‘The school is closing now. Guys, I know you want to go to the West and discover this whole new world that has just opened to you. You are free now. Go ahead.’ I was in shock. It was unthinkable. It took me ten years to assimilate it.”

### 199FRAGMENT

The power of the fragment that refers to and includes the whole. The possibility of catching just fragments mirrors the awareness of the impossibility of accomplishing our will to catalogue everything ... At some point, the practice of cataloguing and archiving is so hopeless and vain because the experience is too wide and disordered.

### 199GAME

“We have decided to adopt certain protocols of collective work. Our aim is to experiment with different ways of working together, but also to work with possible dynamics of the notion of authorship and its significance [ ... ] Maybe some ideas will be borrowed or will slip from one to another. Maybe other external supervisors will be invited, maybe one of us will change or break the rules of the game. Maybe the artist won’t find the person responsible. We are therefore interested in the process that the dialectic figure of the author will produce in terms of exposure, and what will emerge from all this.”

Session 23 in email exchange with Liam Gillick, January 6, 2014

### 199HISTORY

Over the last few years, the 1990s have become the object of increasing attention and the recurrent topic of articles, exhibitions, attempts at reenactment. Since at that time the current practice of compulsive documenting, filming, recording was not as common as today, what we are facing now is a lack of historical materials and sources about that period. We are dealing with the dissemination of unofficial information, notes, oral testimonies, blurring memories. And now, 20 years later, everybody tries to write their own history. The 1990s are shaped and reshaped and we are witnessing their mythicization, museification, historicization. Coming back to the Magasin, to Grenoble, is part of this. Did history begin here? We have been parachuted into the middle of this process. How can we find our way through this scenario?

### 199INFORMATION

“For our generation, the flood of images and the flood of information is just incredible. Most people use the Internet while watching TV, listening to music, speaking and drinking, all at the same time. And they’re maybe also on the telephone [ ... ] I think this is a kind of schizophrenic cohabitation of one body [ ... ] it’s the battle between personalities to inhabit one body. And I think that the way life is heading, in 1996 toward 2000, is an absolutely schizophrenic experience.”

Douglas Gordon in conversation with Hans Ulrich Obrist, 1996

### 199LOOKING BACKWARD

“ ... those who think about the future affect the future as much as thinking about the past changes what has already taken place.”

Liam Gillick, “Ill Tempo: The Corruption of Time in Recent Art,” 1996, and “Prevision.

Should the Future Help the Past?” 1998

### 199MESMERIZATION

“‘We shall see,’ replied my companion; ‘You say that it was May 30th when you went to sleep?’ ‘Yes’ ‘May I ask of what year?’ I stared blankly at him, incapable of speech, for some moments ... ‘It was the year 1887,’ I said. My companion insisted that I should take another draught from the glass, and felt my pulse ... ‘And yet this is the 10th day of September in the year 2000, and you have slept exactly 113, three months and 11 days.’”

—Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward*, 1888

## 199NINETIES (LONG)

The beginning of the Internet, emails, mobile phones – I do not remember them – fax, communication in unreal time, MTV, the Real World, childhood, the Maastricht Treaty, The Gulf War on TV, the summer by the seaside, the war in Yugoslavia on TV, scattered site exhibitions and the explosion of Biennials, celebrity culture, the visitor as flâneur, the artist as flâneur, killing time ... taking part ... doing nothing, art fairs, art in the apartment and in the kitchen, video games, pretended interactivity.

## 199PLEASURE

“There was a general feeling of transgression, eating soup or playing video-games in the gallery. Everything surrounded by extreme joy and amusement, the pleasure of consumption.”

## 199REACTIVATE – REVISIT – REANIMATE – RE-ENACT

Are these artworks still relevant today? How is it possible to reactivate artworks that are time and context specific? How to present a context? How to address the original and the revisited aspect? If the artwork consists of a process, what happens when one reenacts the process at another time and in another space? What are the boundaries between reactivation and the creation of a new artwork? But, finally, is it not all a contradiction in itself, since an artwork is supposed to be open, addressing questions that are universal and timeless? Or does the artwork have a sell-by date?

## 199SCENARIO THINKING

“Scenario thinking dominates Western cultures within politics, economics, film, television, and literature. At one extreme a destabilized sense of doubt is crucial to the success of capitalist structures. Yet the nature of scenario thinking is deeply rooted in other forms of activity [ ... ] It is crucial to the risk taking and delicate balance sought by those who wish to exploit resources and people, yet it is also the tool of those who wish to propose change [ ... ] Focus upon the scenario as a territory takes artists within the blurry border zone that was kept at a distance by modernist formalism, allowing the proposal of parallel strategies that remain responsive to society and capable of identifying moments of change.”

Liam Gillick, “Prevision. Should the Future Help the Past?” 1998

## 199TWO-THOUSAND-AND-FOURTEEN

“This means that the contemporary is not only the one who, perceiving the darkness of the present, grasps a light that can never reach its destiny; he is also the one who, dividing and interpolating time, is capable of transforming it and putting it in relation with other times. He is able to read history in unforeseen ways, to “cite it” according to a necessity that does not arise in any way from his will, but from an exigency to which he cannot not respond. It is as if the invisible light that is the darkness of the present cast its shadow on the past, so that the past, touched by this shadow, acquired the ability to respond to the darkness of the now.”

Giorgio Agamben, “What Is the Contemporary?” translated by David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella, 2009

## 199UNDERGROUND

“We mustn’t say: ‘Up there!’ anymore, but ‘Below!’ instead. There, below us, lies the future. And a living place for all of us. It is only in this place that there are conquests and discoveries waiting to be made [ ... ] Let’s go down into the depths of the earth. Let’s make the abyss our home. The ancient philosophers had a lot of foresight when they said, ‘From the outer to the inner’ [ ... ] Besides, there is only this alternative. Life underground or death.”

Gabriel Tarde, “Underground (Fragments of Future Histories),” updated by Liam Gillick, 2004

## 199WHAT

If we broke the Internet? What if the web as we know it didn’t exist? A utopia: what would a revised Internet look like?

## 199X

is a free-(lance) worker. He “works” in the free-market of the free art industry. He uses the free services with which the Internet provides him: free phone calls, free email, free exchange of data, free information, free music. His work-time is flexible, he can decide when to start and finish. He is supposed to have a lot of free time for leisure and other activities. But still, he feels caught in a spiral of endless unpaid labor and on-going exploitation, reachable 24 hours a day.

## 199YEAR

“It is common for an artist to declare: ‘I did that artwork for that specific exhibition, for that specific year.’ If on one hand this approach affirms your artwork, on the other hand, it closes it. If you did that artwork for 1992, the meanings you gave to it at that time, for that context, must end there. Thus, you close the possibilities of projection of meaning, of prefiguration in regard to what might come after, to other artworks. At some point I realized that the artworks are unfinished and they have a time of reference which is extended and which comes back. For example, you can be invited to a very important exhibition, the most important of your career, and you make an artwork, you make a big effort, and then you have the feeling that it fell through. Maybe you made a mistake, you got the timing wrong, and you are now frustrated. But, if 20 years later, you speak of the same artwork with someone else, suddenly a new net of meanings appears which projects it into the future. Then I ask myself: ‘Did I do that artwork for the exceptional museum and the amazing exhibition in 1992 or for December 4, 2009, 20 years later, for three people, for this room? When, indeed, did I do this artwork?’”

Cesare Pietroiusti in conversation with the author, author’s translation, Venice, December 4, 2009

## 199ZIGZAG

Words, like art, need time. To sediment and create meaning. Do not rush. Take a word time to time and let it circulate. Do not be rigorous. Allow yourself to digress. Be distracted and do not try to understand too much. Meanings will emerge slowly and quietly while you are observing or doing the most mundane things.



Left: Surrogate Catalogue, 1994  
Right: Del Charco, 1994



Left: A Day with no Sun is Night, 2001  
Right: A Voidance Apron, 1995



Left: Tubular Scenario, 1996  
Right: Just out of Time, 1998



Left: The continuing Sequence of Events..., 1998  
Right: Big Conference Center Focal Point, 1998





McNAMARA MOTEL, 1997

First exhibited on the old Debtors Prison, Dublin in  
*Ireland and Europe*, Sculptors Society of Ireland, Dublin.

Exhibited Magasin, 2014

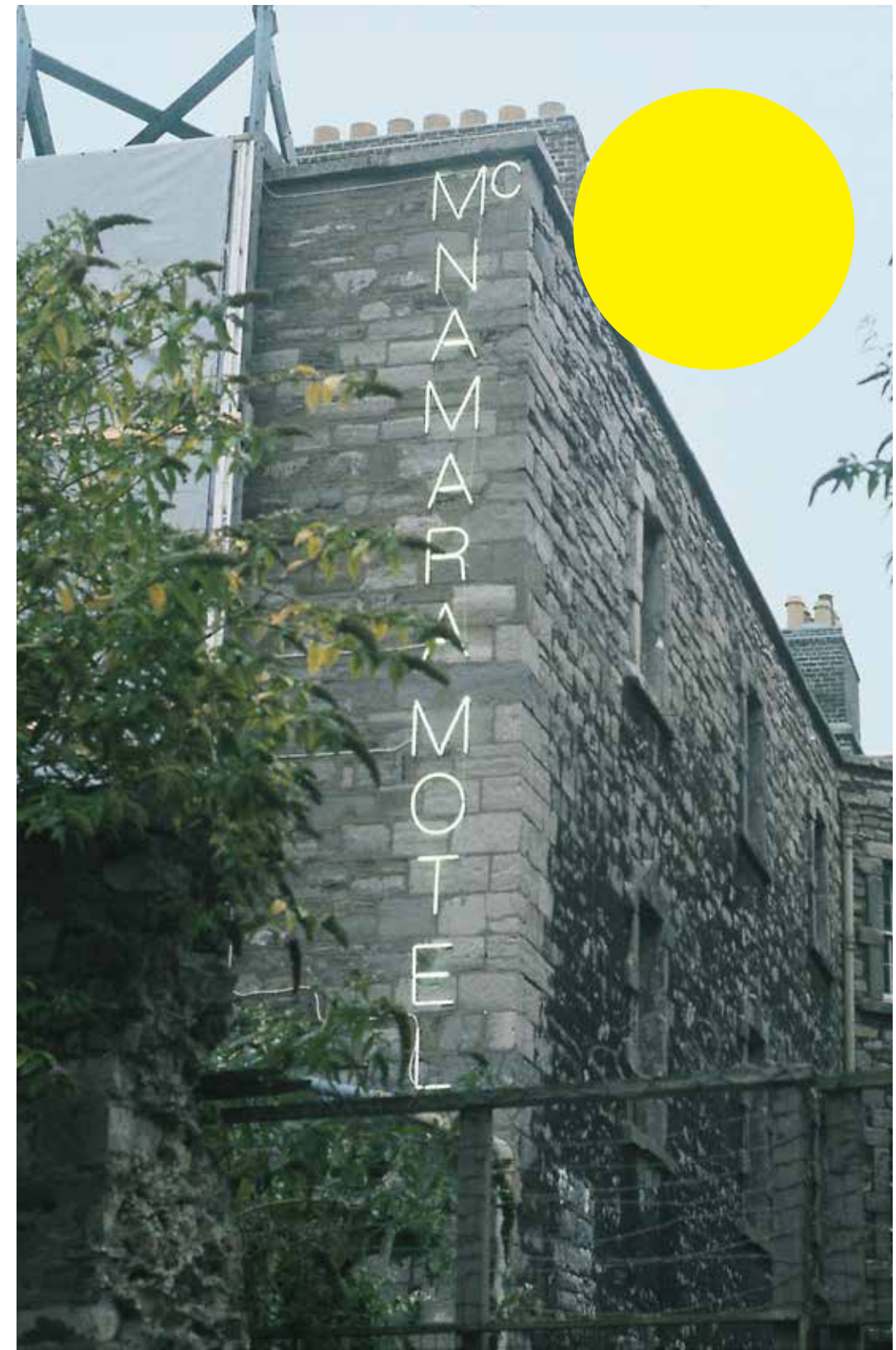
Neon

Dimensions determined by the space.

A neon sign related to the artist's scenario *McNamara*, concerning the former US Secretary of Defense.

“The original version of this project led to the production of three copies of a single movie script. Later versions were completed as a short animated film, again supplied in an edition of three, each with a further rewrite of the original concept. The script concerns the work of Robert McNamara, former Secretary of State for Defense under John F. Kennedy. The film features a number of characters including J. K. Galbraith, Robert McNamara, Herman Kahn, and two characters codenamed “Fiddle” and “Faddle.” Much of the action takes place in tunnel systems that exist under the White House in Washington DC. We follow McNamara and his stormy relationship with Herman Kahn, the head of the RAND Institute. This is an action film and concerns characters close to the President at the time of his assassination. There was no desire to include JFK, yet the decision to base the film around him was partly in order to focus on an area of recent history that a large cross-section of society has relatively sophisticated opinions about. Much of the research material for the film was based on an annotated copy of a biography of JFK that had been marked by someone who was reviewing the book and left in a London house. This annotated copy was discovered at the same time as I was considering writing a film as an extension of my interest in parallel positions between art and similar set ups. The resulting project became a manipulation of history while provoking the potential of examining the parallel histories of certain secondary individuals. The scripts also functioned as a condensed core that allowed the production of a number of specific projects for different exhibition situations.”

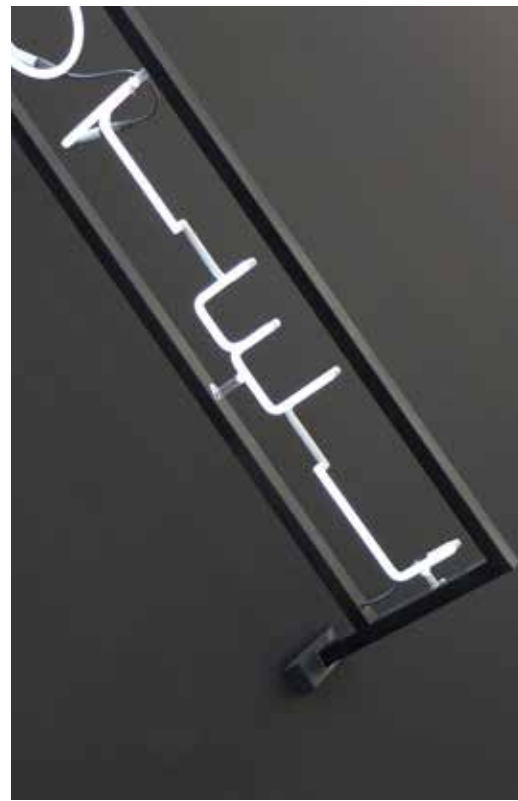
Liam Gillick, 1996







McNamara Motel installed at Magasin



Right: McNamara, 1994



LIAM GILLICK AND GABRIEL KURI  
EVERYDAY HOLIDAY/LA FETE AU QUOTIDIEN, 1996  
First exhibited in *La fête au quotidien*, Magasin, Grenoble, 1996  
Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012; Magasin, 2014  
Institutional signage, confetti, stickers  
Dimensions determined by the space

A large sign designed and presented by the institution is positioned on a wall and indicates the potential for a series of everyday holidays that could take place in a cultural institution. The designation of new holidays is to be facilitated by the host institution or the user of the work. Stickers and confetti are offered to visitors in order for them to begin participation or observation of the potential events. A proclamation rather than a series of performances.

“We outlined a number of quality moments held within the structure of series of holiday/celebrations, and offered the main central space of the Magasin as a site for various groups and individuals to come together and use the place for their own purposes. The creation of a parallel calendar of events, special days that allow a reconsideration of how we commemorate, celebrate, and codify. We proposed a basic physical framework, which should allow convivial use of the space. This framework was provided in close collaboration with the Magasin. We supervised and produced the project rather than constructed it. However, the key part of this work was the allocation of the dates involved as special “Everyday Holidays”. In order to do this effectively, we needed some information from the city about existing events, including Saint’s days and weeks that are set aside to promote one thing or another. We responded to this calendar, amended, and added to it. There was a physical presence in the gallery providing certain key elements, all of this supplemented by a large panel that showed all the different special days, and a space for information about what was happening “today.” In addition, special days that are specific to the Magasin will be commemorated, for example, good exhibitions, birthdays, and celebrations. *Everyday Holiday* is an opportunity to reflect on what has happened and to think about what could be. Maybe these special everyday could become part of a yearly cycle, always present in the collective consciousness of the place. Always available as a point of access for others into the social, political, and organizational structure of the Magasin.”  
Liam Gillick and Gabriel Kuri, 1996

Realized by Sarah Fritchey (Hessel Museum); École du Magasin (Magasin)



EVERYDAY HOLIDAY  
MAGASIN, GRENOBLE, 1996

May

1/5/1996 Labor and Flower Day  
A celebration of workers throughout the world and an opportunity to bring your favorite plants to the Magasin.  
2/5/1996 Circus Day  
A day to think about the circus. Bring memorabilia and organize a show.  
3/5/1996 Athletes Day  
Races, equipment, sportswear, and events.  
5/5/1996 Bicycle Day  
Come and cycle right through La Rue and out through the back door.  
10/5/1996 Airline Pilots and Secretaries Day  
A chance to meet and share stories.  
15/5/1996 Computer Programmers Day  
You don't have to know about computers. Bring knowledge or questions.  
16/5/1996 Memory and Bridges Day  
Don't forget to come. Bridge builders and users also welcome.

17/5/1996 Red Day  
In every possible way  
18/5/1996 Religion Day  
A chance to share your faith with other people.  
19/5/1996 Baby Day  
No adults without a baby  
20/5/1996 Physicists and Pre-School Children Day  
It is never too young to begin thinking about the way the world works.  
21/5/1996 Chemists Day  
Serious discussion and social event.  
22/5/1996 Mathematicians and Teenagers Day  
A celebration of numbers with a young accent.  
23/5/1996 Psychologists Day  
All psychologists should be there.  
25/5/1996 Games Day  
Board games, gambling, light sports.  
27/5/1996 Chance and Luck Day  
A follow-up to Games Day.

June

1/6/1996 Fools and Idiots Day  
Other people also welcome.  
8/6/1996 Skateboard Day  
Demonstrations, equipment, and seminars.  
9/6/1996 Bicycle Day (again)  
Another chance to cycle through the Magasin.  
10/6/1996 Astronauts and Vegetables Day  
For fans of space travel and all types of vegetable.  
15/6/1996 Extreme Sports Day  
Live demonstrations and discussions.  
16/6/1996 Street People Day  
A celebration of life on the road.  
17/6/1996 City Planners Day  
New ideas for Grenoble.  
18/6/1996 Exhibition Organizers Day  
A chance to share ideas and an opportunity

to question the organizers of the exhibition.  
19/6/1996 Remix Day  
In every sense of the phrase.  
20/6/1996 Railway Workers and Passengers Day  
An opportunity to reflect upon the best railway system in the world.  
21/6/1996 Music Day  
Live music, DJs. and Dancing. Show your talent.  
23/6/1996 Reverse Day  
Start at the end and work backwards.  
24/6/1996 Magasin Unwanted Office Goods Day  
A clear out of the Magasin and a chance for you to sell them some of your old office equipment.  
25/6/1996 Clowns and Alcohol Day  
Fun, laughter, and falling over.  
27/6/1996 Volunteers Day  
Groups who need volunteers have their own special day.  
29/6/1996 Mountain Day  
A celebration of the power of the mountains.  
30/6/1996 Snow and Rain Day  
All aspects of the weather come under scrutiny.

July

2/7/1996 Film Directors and Cleaning Industry Day  
Two separate groups sharing the same day.  
Film shows and product demonstrations.  
4/7/1996 Computer Game Day  
Play them and talk about them.  
7/7/1996 Soccer Players Day  
Aspiring, active, or retired. All footballers need celebrating.  
8/7/1996 Sociologists Day  
A chance to think about the whole idea of holidays.  
13/7/1996 Everything Is Free Day  
An attitude as much as a reality.  
14/7/1996 Bastille and Future Day  
The national holiday combined with a new event where you can think about the future.

EVERYDAY HOLIDAY  
BARD CCS, HESSEL MUSEUM, 2012

August

24/8/2012 Lawn Sports Day  
Sometimes it's what's on the outside that counts. Celebrating the potential of outdoor sculpture and museum grounds through sport.

September

7/9/2012 Tie-Dye Labor Day  
Retire your old work shirt, or restyle your current one. Bard's Buildings and Grounds Crew will never have looked so stylish. All are welcome to celebrate our world laborers. Visit the museum as your creation dries.  
12/9/2012 Personal Independence Day  
Come alone, meet someone else who is also alone.  
15/9/2012 Surrealist Circus Day  
Contemplate changing your major, or thinking of majoring in psychology ... errr, English ... or maybe biology? Don't worry, self-help never seemed so fun. Figure out where your strengths really lie with the circus.  
16/9/2012 Appropriated Holiday Protest and Awareness Day  
Contrary to widespread popular belief, Cinco de Mayo is not Mexico's Independence Day – the most important national patriotic holiday in Mexico; Independence Day is actually celebrated on September 16.  
19/9/2012 Hannah Arendt Day  
20/9/2012 Heinrich Bluecher Day  
21/9/2012 Local Legends and Hairy Celebrities Day  
Hey, don't I know you ... or, hey, don't I know your dog? A day to celebrate social animals and social people.  
23/9/2012 18 and Under Day  
Take your parents to the museum day.  
29/9/2012 Folk Music Appreciation Day  
30/9/2012 Riders Day  
Motorcyclists, bicyclists, unicyclists ... Jockeys, cowboys, dressage ... Visit us on your hogs, horses, and tractors ... This holiday is for those that like to ride with the wind in their hair.

October

3/10/2012 Volunteers Day  
4/10/2012 Have a Ball Day  
Can ball cultures really meet? Cross-dressing divas and athletic types unite.  
10/10/2012 Donald Tewksbury Day  
Remembering the Dean that put progressive into higher education.  
12/10/2012 Lumberjacks, Bakers, Hair Cutters, and Delinquents  
Celebrating the art of the perfect cut.  
13/10/2012 Pick Your Battles Day  
Stop by the CCS front lawn to take part in a good old fashioned round of tug-o-war. Work out a grudge, settle a feud, or let your frenemy win.

Individuals and groups welcome.  
24/10/2012 Nearing Extinction Day  
Moderated by Bard's Beekeeping Club (7pm).  
25/10/2012 Vinyl Preservation Day  
Where Luddites embrace Luddites!  
27/10/2012 Au Natural Day  
No makeup, no mirrors.  
28/10/2012 Clothing Optional Day  
Think outside the box to get in. Shoes and shirts required.

November

1/11/2012 Biodiesel and Wine Makers Day  
Sunflower seeds, grape seeds, chicken fat, beef fat, tallow and fish oil to biodiesel. Let's figure this thing out already.  
4/11/2012 The Day of the Undecided  
Still on the Fence? Come talk it out.  
8/11/2012 Radio Rodeo Day  
Broadcasting the wrangle.  
11/11/2012 The Day of Dance  
Rumba, swing, break dance and fire poi in the museum.  
14/11/2012–11/18/2012 The Week of Freud  
Wed.: Anal Day  
Thurs.: Oral Day  
Fri.: Phallic Day  
Sat.: Latency Day  
Sun.: Genital Day  
28/11/2012 Exotic Desserts Day  
Prepare, eat, and share strange treats.  
29/11/2012 Cult Classics Day  
So bad it's good.  
30/11/2012 Mycology and Beekeeping Day  
Let's get in touch.

December

2/12/2012 Retire and Hire Day  
The Business Cycle. Retirees meet rising professionals.  
5/12/2012 World Languages Day  
6/12/2012 The Day of Silence  
No talking allowed. It's just about looking.  
9/12/2012 Church and Science Day  
Bibles and cells. I'll show you mine, if you show me yours.





Everyday Holiday, 1996 at Magasin

Skateboard Day, 1996 at Magasin







Magasin, 2014



Bard College, 2012



Bard College, 2012



199A-199B 81.



# I WILL PRODUCE SOME OF THE PROJECTS, YOU WILL PRODUCE OTHERS, AND WE’LL SEE WHAT HAPPENS.

– LIAM GILLICK, MARCH 14, 2012

SARAH FRITCHEY

In 2012 Liam Gillick challenged my graduate class at Bard to add our perspectives to *From 199A to 199B*. I was particularly intrigued by his premise to restage works he had created a mere 20 years before, an all too soon retrospective. That very aspect seemed typical of Gillick’s penchant for disrupting the standard conventions of art production, and gave the project the potential for humorous and insightful outcomes.

I was assigned *Everyday Holiday*, a project originally realized in 1996 at the Magasin in Grenoble. In France, Gillick had asked Mexican artist/curator Gabriel Kuri to help him conceive and declare a series of new holidays that unfolded beyond the dates of his affiliated exhibition. Thereafter, Gillick left town, and the host institution and its public were left to decide which, if any, of the holidays would be celebrated. Gillick recalled two of the original days that drew a crowd: *Pilots and Secretaries Day*, a day where pilots (presumably men) and secretaries (presumably women) mingled at the museum, and *Skateboarders Day*, a day where the museum allowed kids to ride their bikes and boards through the museum. The majority of the days were designed to pass unnoticed.

Given the project’s short history and open set of instructions, I grappled with the terms of what it meant to “restage” the original version. Normally, I would begin with an intense period of research about the original exhibition; exactly how, when, where, and why the work was shown. I would want to know how the audience and press had received it. But restaging *Everyday Holiday* meant thinking about the meaning of the project in its new location, exploring the interconnectivity between the Hessel Museum of Art, the museum staff, the museum’s audiences, Annandale-on-Hudson’s local public and interest groups, Gillick, and myself. Instead of thinking of the project as “restaged,” I conceived how I might engineer the project to be meaningfully “performed anew” on an American college campus smack dab in the middle of the remote, but bucolic, Hudson River Valley.

I chose to pay homage to two of the original holidays. During the height of the fall bloom, I declared a spin-off *Skateboarders’ Day*, renaming it *Riders’ Day*. I invited everyone and anyone *who liked to ride with the wind in their hair*, hoping to attract a mix of local *motorcyclists, bicyclists, unicyclists ... jockeys, cowboys, horseback riders, and farmers to visit on their hogs, horses, and tractors*. Out of the 2,000+ people I invited, two leather-clad bikers from Woodstock Harley stopped by to drink a beer at noon. I had talked to them on the phone and over email a month before. A museum guard on his day off lugged his two-person antique yellow submarine onto the lawn and stayed until past closing. He had talked to me about curating his sub into a show since my arrival at Bard. Finally, it was seeing its exhibition debut. Next, the gender assumptions of *Pilots and Secretaries Day* irked me, so I responded with an antithetical version of this holiday designed to spur romance. Have a *Ball Day* sought to bring together “ball cultures”; the tag line read *Cross-dressing divas and athletic types unite*. But with baseball out of season and the sports teams away, no one showed up.

Like *Have a Ball Day*, many of my holidays were designed to respond to interest groups in Bard’s undergraduate community. The Surrealist Circus walked across the museum’s

lawn in stilts on the holiday named in their honor; but I was in New York City that day, and my photographer who stayed behind missed the moment. On Lawn Sports Day, incoming freshmen stopped by to chalk-up the cement walkway of the Hessel Museum. But the students could not have avoided “celebrating” if they had tried. I organized the holiday to coincide with their mandatory museum visit. The Dance Department celebrated *The Day of Dance* with eight hours of original student and faculty performances in the museum’s galleries, featuring a performance of Merce Cunningham’s 1967 work *Field Dances*. This holiday was supported by the museum, museum staff, the Merce Cunningham Trust, students, and faculty in Bard’s Visual Art and Dance Departments, and was the one holiday that I hoped would gain enough traction to repeat itself without me in years to come. But in 2013 I was knee deep in my thesis, and the second coming passed unrealized.

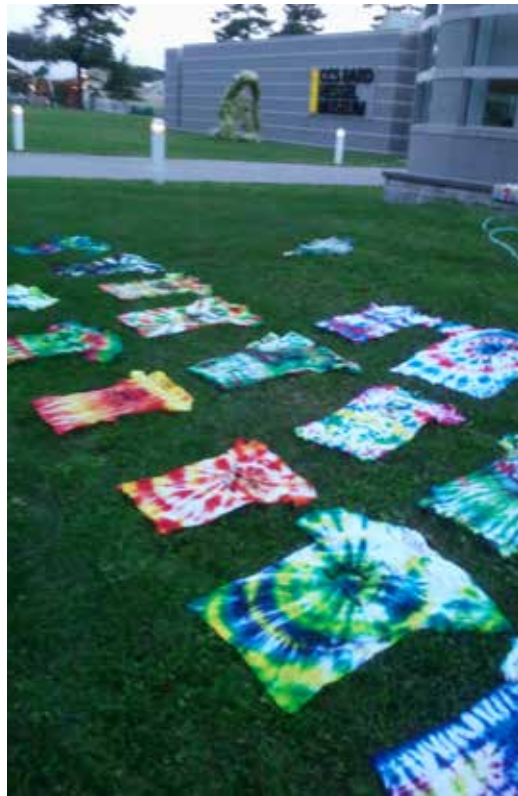
For the most part, the holidays went unnoticed I attribute this to three major factors. First, some holidays were strategically designed to fail. The student residents of *Tewksbury Hall* never celebrated *Donald Tewksbury Day* despite the tag line *Remembering the Dean that put progressive into higher education*. Second, Hessel Museum’s small staff had neither the time nor a financial incentive to support the advertising, organizing, and championing of these holidays. Finally, my tenuous relationship to the individuals and communities who I was trying to cultivate did not create sufficient buzz to impact those individuals and groups. Like Gabriel Kuri in Grenoble, I was a new and temporary transplant.

As I look back, I realize that my proposal to host 40 holidays in 150 days was a premeditated tongue-in-cheek overreach. Seeing which holidays casually failed was part of the plan. And it was easy to fail in my sleepy town ... I wonder how the project would operate differently in a bustling, diversified metropolis. At the bottom of my notes taken during Gillick’s first presentation of *199A to 199B* to my class, I found a quote that might benefit his future collaborators. “You will create your own structures/which may also be your own prisons.” In implementing *Everyday Holiday* I realized that sometimes limiting the scope of a curatorial endeavor can enhance its worth. Also, holidays take a lot of work.





Left: Lawn Sports Day, Bard College, 2012  
Right: Tie-Dye Labor Day, Bard College 2012



Tie-Dye Labor Day, Bard College 2012







Day of Dance, Hessel Museum, 2012



Liam Gillick 86.

199A-199B 87.

# GIULIA BORTOLUZZI

Who was the sculptor and where was he from?

From Sikyon.

And his name?

Lysippos.

And who are you?

Time who subdues all things.

Why do you stride on tiptoe?

I am forever running.

And why you have a pair of wings on your feet?

I fly with the wind.

And why do you hold a razor in your right hand?

As a sign to men that I am sharper than any sharp edge.

And why does your hair hang over your face?

So that he who encounters me may grab it.

And why, by Zeus, is the back of your head bald?

Because nobody, once I have run past him on my winged feet, will ever catch me from behind, even though he yearns to.

Why did the artist fashion you?

For your sake, stranger, and he placed me up in the porch as a lesson.

Epigram by Posidippus in *Greek Anthology* 16.276, translation J. J. Pollitt

Walter Benjamin recounts that during the July Revolution, at the end of the first day of battle, something extraordinary happened: people shot at the clock towers.<sup>1</sup> The second French Revolution revealed its conscience in the explosion of the continuum of history, in the annihilation of the unextended moment, the point of conjunction between the before and the after. The present is, for Benjamin, suspended in time, as the immobile limit separated from the future of Judgment. The present is not a movement from the past to the future, but a non-quantified “now” in which the entire history of humanity finds its place. Time is filled and it is always the present time of revolutions. When thought stands still, revolutionary chance triggers off linear history, and time comes to itself and to history.<sup>2</sup> Benjamin’s critique of quantified continuous time opens a new experience of time for a different conception of history. As Giorgio Agamben explains in his essay “Time and History: Critique of the Instant and the Continuum,”<sup>3</sup> modern political thought has not been able to develop a notion of time corresponding to that of history, leaving a problematic distance between an experience of history directed to revolutionary action and an experience of time as an homogeneous continuum. According to this conception, which goes back to Aristotle’s *Physics*,<sup>4</sup> the instant that goes from the before to the after is conceived as a geometric point, as a continuity, as an otherness taken in its

Walter Benjamin, “Theses on the Philosophy of the History,” in *Illuminations*, Schocken Books, New York 1968, p. 262.

2. Ibid., p. 263–264.

3. Giorgio Agamben, *Time and History: Critique of the Instant and the Continuum, in Infancy and History: On the Destruction of Experience*, Verso, London 1993, p. 91–100.

4. Aristotle, *Physics*, Book IV, chapters 10–14.

paradoxical movement of beginning and ending. According to Agamben, this definition of time is in conflict with a possible experience of historicity; Herodotus indeed was the first to contradict the destructive nature of time in his *Histories*.

Nevertheless, the experience of time in Ancient Greece was not exclusively defined in the excerpt from Aristotle’s *Physics*. Parmenides defines time as belonging to doxa<sup>5</sup> (opinion), as reality is motionless and eternal. Similarly, Plato, in the *Timaeus*, imagines time as the movement of eternity.<sup>6</sup> More generally, in Greek mythology the concept of time is defined by three different meanings or personifications: *aion*, *chronos*, *kairos*. *Aion* is destiny, the eternity or the duration of life; *chronos* is the flow of time according to its division in past, present, and future; *kairos* is the opportune moment or the time that stays in the middle. The Stoics, taking a position against the definition of time as continuous, are the first to approach it in terms of deferment and in relation to praxis, thus using the notion of *kairos* as the sudden moment in which decision and opportunity join together. In Greek mythology according to Pausanias’ *Description of Greece*, *kairos* was represented as a young man with wings both on his back and on his feet, signifying the sudden and fleeting nature of chance. The back of Kairos’ head is bald but for a long forelock that falls to the side, symbolizing the possibility of grasping or catching a moment “by the hair” in order to undertake something whose potentiality is limited in time. Kairos holds an imbalanced scale, whose nature is in constant movement. The scale is metaphor for the passing of time that is owned by man at the precise moment when he may be in a position to unbalance the scale with his finger, to take possession of its fleeting nature and to appropriate it in the action. *Kairos* is the decisive moment at which fate is assumed by the self without any hesitation, it is the moment when an idea becomes real, within a time exposed to any judgment. The scale is also symbolic of the connection between *kairos* and *chromos*, both of which, albeit qualitatively different, require one another. Following Agamben’s analysis, in the *Corpus Hippocraticum* *kairos* is not defined as belonging to another temporal dimension, but always inscribed within time as duration, as a reduced *chronos* or a remaining time.<sup>7</sup> *Kairos* is the time of the experience of a rupture, a difference, an interstice that opens to linear time and that, simultaneously, cancels and exalts past and future. It is not a continuous succession of points, but a blend of opportunities, an openness to difference, the moment of action, the liberation of time itself. In this regard, Agamben mentions how *kairos* is not the time of eternity, but the time of history, the time in which the self takes the chance to decide his own freedom in history. This is the only present time that gives the self the sense and the possibility of creation. In this sense *kairos* is the moment of praxis in which past and present becomes a now that realizes the possibility of the experience of a historical and revolutionary temporality. The self who is able to catch the opportune moment is free to break with unidirectional progress and realize this same freedom in action or language. Being in *kairos*, knowing how to be in time in an active way, therefore constitutes the space of an ethic inscribed in time.<sup>8</sup> Thus conceived, the moment of praxis as manifestation of the self finds its dimension of time as *kairos* in the exposure to fate, in the critical stance and expression of the self.

A conception of *kairos* time is relevant to the idea of temporality as found in the work of Liam Gillick. Unlike the conception of time as a continuum, here it is a matter of

5. Parmenides, *On Nature*, B 8.5–11.

6. Plato, *Timaeus*, 37c–39e.

7. Agamben, *Time and History*.

8. See the notion of *kairos* in connection with the ethical experience as in Antonio Negri, *Kairos–Alma Venus–Multitude. Nove lezioni impartite a me stesso*, Manifesto libri, Roma 2000.

understanding the event as a historical moment starting from a timeless or suspended temporariness. In this sense, past, present, and future are no longer understood according to their chronological meanings but by overlapping one another, opening infinite possibilities of access to history. In several texts, as in “Ill tempo. The Corruption of Time in Recent Art” (1996)<sup>9</sup> or “Should the Future Help the Past?” (1998),<sup>10</sup> Liam Gillick considers time as an element of visual practice.<sup>11</sup> Thinking about the future, imagining possible or parallel scenarios corresponds for him to a temporization of utopia that finds its space in the future, within a discontinuous temporal perception. The freedom of the self, of the artist, thus lies in occupying the space of future-oriented utopian thought, which is time as *kairos*. Gillick’s novel, *Erasmus is Late* (1998) represents this framework of temporal discontinuity best. The text serves as temporal guide to London, set in a time period ranging from 1810 to 1997 with historical protagonists from different eras. A plot featuring Erasmus Darwin and Robert McNamara in dialogue is an echo of the idea of the suspension or rupture of time, and a clear example of how time operates in Gillick’s work. All the protagonists are suspended in a temporal dimension in which past and future are not conceived in their chronological succession of moments, rather they blend into each other and enter time through a movable present that comes from the future and goes back to the past in a circular rhythm. Effectively, within these temporal (ideological) breaks it is possible to have an experience of time as *kairos*, and to access change toward parallel scenarios. The flexibility of time and the interstices made visible will thus lead to a new movement, a revolutionary flux. “As a way to adjust to the complicated material changes that will inevitably take place, it might be necessary to identify the gaps between these alterations. If the gaps are identified then it could be said that stop and start points will reveal themselves: points of entry toward temporary solutions and points of exit away from temporary crisis.”<sup>12</sup> Still, postmodern concepts of prevision as presentiment and that of scenario, strictly connected, are keywords for understanding the narrative structure active in Gillick’s practice and writing.<sup>13</sup>

Not belonging to any defined time, but to every possible moment of rupture, of openness, of *kairos*, the choice of the self enters a context of possibilities apparently limited and already shaped. The concept of scenario developed by capitalist societies is defined by Gillick as being opposed to the planning strategies of communism, and is considered as a constantly mutating sequence of possibilities.<sup>14</sup> The apparently wide range of chances – illusions of capitalism – conceals limited solutions, but the deconstruction of this same narrative or the idea of time as a continuum could actually open the experience of the revolutionary choice to the self. So, coming back to the destruction of the clock towers, “there might be a future and there seems to have been a past.”<sup>15</sup>

9. Liam Gillick, “Ill tempo. The Corruption of Time in Recent Art,” in *Proxemics. Selected Writings (1988–2006)*, JRP | Ringier, Zurich 2006.

10. Liam Gillick, “Prevision. Should the future help the past?” in *Proxemics. Selected Writings (1988–2006)*, “What’s the scenario? A constantly mutating sequence of possibilities. Add a morsel of difference and the results slip out of control, shift the location for action and everything is different.”

11. “But with the most interesting recent artwork we are faced with an attempt to start coming to terms with an understanding of time as an element of visual practice that now truly goes beyond the legacy of John Cage and others who made specific reference to accentuating the moment,” in Liam Gillick, “Ill tempo. The corruption of Time in Recent Art.”

12. Liam Gillick, *Erasmus is Late*, Book Works, London 1995, p. 50.

13. “The fundamental changes that led to our sense of development are connected to the use of projection and scenarios. What happens to you when you realize that every day is not the same?” in Liam Gillick, *Big Conference Centre*, Kunstverein Ludwigsburg, 1997.

14. See Liam Gillick, “Prevision. Should the future help the past?” in *Proxemics. Selected Writings (1988–2006)*.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 208.





Day of Dance, Hessel Museum, 2012



Waren die  
Leute vor  
den Fern  
auß so c



The significance of the  
structure is still depe  
upon structures outsi  
which I am too lazy to







Day of Dance, Hessel Museum, 2012



Liam Gillick 94.

199A-199B 95.

A BROADCAST FROM 1887 ON THE SUBJECT OF OUR TIME, 1996

First exhibited in *Escape Attempts*, Globe, Copenhagen, 1996

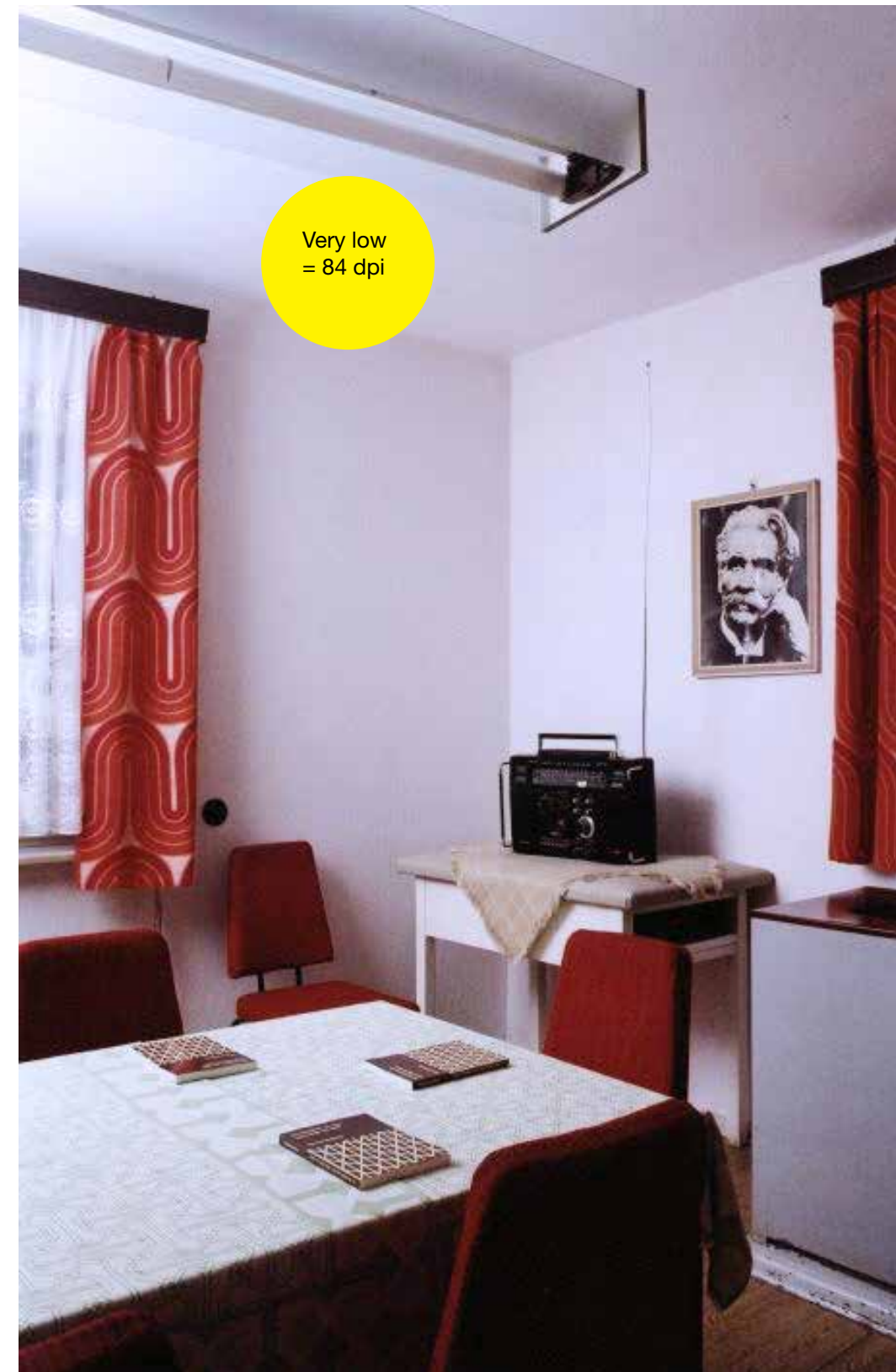
Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012; Magasin, 2014

Radio transmitter, radio receiver

Dimensions variable.

A conceptual broadcast from an “island” to a “utopian community” expressed in any given form in a gallery or other location. A broadcast to the free community of Christiania in Copenhagen, Denmark, from the island of Martha’s Vineyard. The subject of the broadcast is a text from the 1887 book *Looking Backward* by Edward Bellamy. A version of the book was produced in collaboration with Matthew Brannon in 1998 for the Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst in Leipzig. The book includes a broadcast “sermon” which seems to make use of a closed-circuit radio system.

“Mr. West,” he said, “Edith suggests that you may find it slightly embarrassing to listen to a discourse on the lines Mr. Barton is laying down, and if so, you need not be cheated out of a sermon. She will connect us with Mr. Sweetser’s speaking room if you say so, and I can still promise you a very good discourse.” “No, no,” I said. Believe me, I would much rather hear what Mr. Barton has to say.”







Magasin, 2014



Hessel Museum, 2012

## CHAPTER 1 PROSPERITY

The peak of human prosperity seemed to have been reached in the superficial and frivolous sense of the word. The last fifty years had seen the final establishment of the great Euro-Asiatic/American Federation. And its undisputed supremacy over the rest of the world had made sure that all nations, now effectively functioning as provinces, were used to the idea of universal and unshakable peace. It had required one hundred and fifty years of conflict to arrive at this wonderful result. But the horrors of war had now been forgotten. True, there had been fierce battles between armies of three and four million; machines with armour cladding flung at full speed against each other while firing from all sides; engagements between squadrons of submarines which blew each other up with high powered electrical charges; between fleets of iron-clad aircraft, ripped to pieces by air to air missiles that were hurled from the sky with thousands of parachutes which violently opened and enveloped each other in a storm of shrapnel as they fell towards the earth. But for all this warlike mania there remained a vague poetic remembrance. Forgetfulness is the beginning of happiness. Fear is the beginning of wisdom.

Surprisingly following brutal bloodshed, the nations did not experience a collapse that follows exhaustion, but a strange calm that can follow the rise of power. The explanation is easy. For about a hundred years the military selection committees had broken with the short-sightedness of the past and made it a practice to pick out the strongest and best young people in order to exempt them from the burden of military service. War had become purely mechanical so they sent the weaklings to the forces, as they would be good enough to fulfil the reduced requirements of the modern soldier. It was a good piece of intelligent selection and most historians now praise this innovation thanks to which the incomparable beauty of today's people has gradually developed. In fact, when we now look at the antique photographic collections in our museums we can confirm the enormity of progress that has been achieved, if it is really true that we are actually descended from these scare-crows as cannot be doubted by the rigour of our historians.

From this time dates the discovery of the last microbes, bacteria and viruses that had not been analysed by the neo-Pasteurians. Once the cause of every disease was known the remedy was not long in becoming known as well and from that moment a patient with severe disease was as rare a phenomenon as a double-headed monster or an honest barman. Since that time we have stopped the ridiculous questions about health that used to fill conversations. "How are you?" or "How do you do?" Are no more. Short-sightedness alone continued its irritating progress stimulated by the extraordinary spread of journalism. There wasn't a woman or child without reading glasses. This drawback, which was only brief, was compensated by the resulting progress in the optician's art.

Alongside political unity, which broke down barriers between nations, came a linguistic unity, which quickly blotted out the last national differences. Since the Twentieth Century the need of a common language has led intellectuals to use an international idiom in all their writings.

ODRADEK WALL, 1998

First exhibited in *Odradek*, a group exhibition curated by Thomas Mulcaire in collaboration with Kendall Geers, Liam Gillick, and Paul Gregory at the Center for Curatorial Studies in 1998

Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012; Magasin, 2014

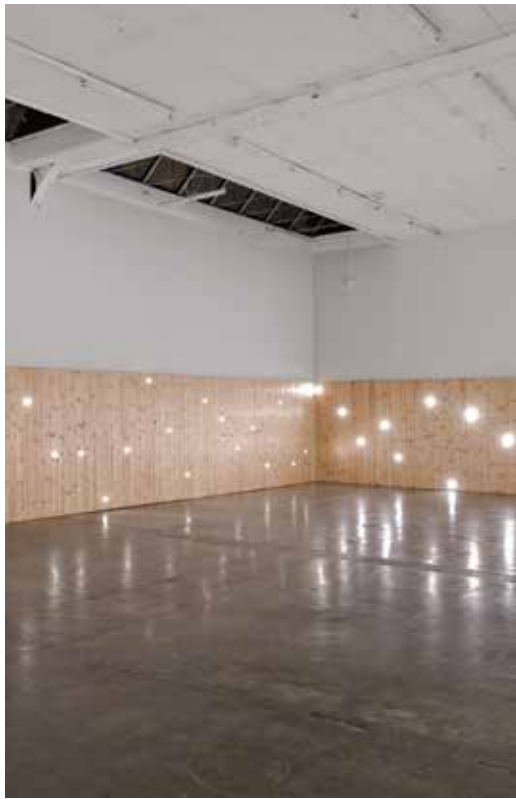
Pine planking, halogen lamps

Dimensions determined by the space

A large wall constructed from plain pine planking. A series of halogen lamps are installed in the face of the wall. The lamps are pointed directly at the viewer of the work. The Odradek is a creature/object from Kafka's short story *The Cares of a Family Man*. The Odradek has no clear function and represents the alienated relation between workers and commodities produced. The work relates to the ideas developed in the book *Discussion Island/Big Conference Centre* (1997).







Hessel Museum, 2012



Liam Gillick 102.

199A-199B 103.

THE WHAT IF? SCENARIO (PART 1), 1995

First exhibited in *This Is Today: Trailer*,

curated by Barbara Steiner, Mediapark, Cologne, 1995

Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012; Magasin, 2014

Texts, halogen lamps

Dimensions determined by the space

A room should be brightly lit using halogen construction lights. A number of documents should be obtained and placed in a position where they can be considered by users of the space. If the original documents cannot be obtained then the list should be displayed.

- 1) The Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, US Govt. Printing Office
- 2) Department of State Bulletins (Various)
- 3) The Journal of American History
- 4) House Committee on Armed Services (US/Vietnam Relations 1945–1967)
- 5) *The Pentagon Papers: The Defense Department History of US Decision Making on Vietnam*, ed. Senator Gravel (Boston, Beacon Press, 1971)
- 6) Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders (US Govt. Printing Office, 1975)
- 7) Old copies of *Newsweek* magazine
- 8) George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The US and Vietnam, 1950–1975* (New York, Knopf, 1986)
- 9) *Foreign Affairs Journal*, Washington, DC
- 10) Foreign Relations of the US, 1964–68, vol. 1, US Govt. Printing Office

Realized by the students of Bard CCS and the École du Magasin.







Magasin, 2014



Hessel Museum, 2012



Hessel Museum, 2012



Hessel Museum, 2012

INFORMATION ROOM (GERMAN RESEARCH SERVICE SPECIAL PRESS REPORTS, TATTOO MAGAZINE, WOMEN'S BASKETBALL), 1993

First exhibited in *Backstage*, curated by Barbra Steiner and Stephan Schmidt-Wulffen, Kunstverein in Hamburg, 1993

Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012; Magasin, 2014

Dyed jute, various papers

Dimensions determined by the space

A large space displaying information of secondary importance alongside any other material that users of the work deem interesting or important. A room lined with dyed yellow jute. The walls function as giant pinboards for the display of specific information. For example, information taken from the German Research Service Special Press Reports, *Tattoo Magazine*, and *Women's Basketball* magazine. Additional information relating to an exhibition may be added to the room, and other material relevant to the ideas in the exhibition as a whole may also be added. It is the responsibility of the user of the work to maintain the work and update the information if they so desire.

Since 1990 I have been in receipt of the German Research Service Special Press Reports (Deutscher Forschungsdienst). The reports are supported by the following organizations: Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung, Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, Deutscher Hochschulverband, Max Planck Gesellschaft, Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft, Stiftung Volkswagenwerk, and Westdeutsche Rektorenkonferenz.

Over the last three years I have reprocessed various material taken from the GRSSPR in order to pass on certain information. This has taken place within the context of art exhibitions and related activities. For Hamburg the work involves the following components:

1) The chosen room will be lined with colored hessian cloth. The hessian should be purchased in rolls and stapled directly to the gallery walls. Selected articles and items of interest from the GRSSPR will be pinned to the hessian. The room should act as a comfortable and quiet space where information can be read. Throughout the duration of the exhibition it is possible that new information will be relayed to the Kunstverein and this should be added to the room. In addition, a German language version of the GRSSPR should be obtained and included alongside the English text.

2) Various slide presentations and other minor research projects are to be carried out in addition to the central work. In the case of Hamburg, the research included investigations into women's basketball in Germany now, people with tattoos of Sean Connery, and other diverse presentations. The first chapter of a new novel based on the film script of McNamara was also made available.

Liam Gillick, 1996

Realized by Fionn Meade (Hessel Museum); École du Magasin (Magasin).







Magasin, 2014

Left: Hessel Museum, 2012  
Right: Magasin, 2014



Left: Magasin, 2014  
Right: Hessel Museum, 2012

Hessel Museum, 2012



(THE WHAT IF? SCENARIO) DINING TABLE, 1996

First exhibited in *Traffic*, curated by Nicolas Bourriaud, CAPC Musée d'art Contemporain, Bordeaux, 1996

Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012; Magasin, 2014

Dimensions variable.

A powder blue table tennis table is constructed with no net. The surface should be sprinkled with silver glitter. Various papers are protected by a sheet of glass.

Realized by the students of Bard CCS and the École du Magasin.







Left: Magasin, 2014  
Right: Hessel Museum, 2012



Magasin, 2014



Magasin, 2014



Magasin, 2014



## FROM Z TO THIRD TIME VINCENZO DE BELLIS

### FARSI IN TRE

Three people are posing for a work entitled *Study for Z* by Pietro Roccasalva. These three people are my twin brother, my father, and myself. The story began in December 2005 when Pietro Roccasalva invited me to participate as curator in his solo show. At that time I was not even a curator, I had barely curated one show in a small private gallery. He approached me out of the blue saying: you are the only one who can do it because I want you to work “three times as hard.” The Italian sentence “farsi in tre” (be in three) explains it well, since it indicates a very big effort that someone makes to do something as well as possible, and I could do it because I had a twin brother, and a father who looks like us. In the end for some reason the show did not happen, but when I moved to New York to participate in a Masters of Art in Curatorial Studies at the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, things changed because for me, being in that context and presenting that exhibition would have meant to really engage my position. I proposed it as the thesis exhibition. The graduate committee made a very controversial decision and the proposal was rejected. Tom Eccles selected the proposal for CCS’s project *High Resolution: Artists Projects at the Armory*, Park Avenue Armory, New York, in February 2008.

### Z

The intervention was composed of a performance/tableau vivant in which I/we were standing still next to a sculpture (the installation also involved a painting and a neon), literally “taking care of the work.”

The most interesting thing to me was the inversion of the normative relationship between curator and curated, which made me deeply question much of what I had always considered to be a given in my professional position, compelling me to take a critical look at the curator’s role, their responsibilities, their “power,” their position in the art world and in the wider society – their tasks, their relationship with artists and their engagement with artworks.

With this project I could put into one image something that others say in words about the relationship between the artist and the curator in the format of a solo show. Here the artist worked very closely with the curator acting as a mediator/producer/collaborator etc. On the other hand the difference here is the inversion of strategy and the volunteer curator that decides to serve the artist: sustaining, presenting, defending their work not from outside but from inside.

### THE KING

All people engaging with the idea of working as curator have to face the king: Harald Szeemann. Regardless what they think of him, a specific photograph of Szeemann should be considered; having become one of the most iconic documents of documenta 5, it encapsulates the huge change and influence that the exhibition had. This photograph, taken casually on the last night of documenta 5, shows the curator on the throne realized by the artist Anatol for the exhibition, while directing questions from the press. This symbolic act links the curatorial innovations and intellectual trends that Szeemann progressed in documenta 5, with their future – the present-day era of the jetsetting *uber* curator. It is thus more than appropriate to appreciate documenta 5 as a type of coronation ceremony for the curatorial figure, the victor of contemporary art.

### THE DANCER/THE BOXER/THE WAXWORK

Among other people who pushed the role of the curator toward an extremely personal and strong position is Jan Hoet, founding director of SMAK Ghent, and artistic director of documenta 9 in 1992. In fact he performed several times with Marina Abramovi in her *The Urgent Dance*, celebrating her 50th birthday, as well with the artist Dennis Bellione, with whom he performed a boxing match in 1999. Hoet was also the subject of a few wax sculptures during his time as curator of documenta 9, which he really turned into a curator persona’s exhibition.

### GO GO DANCING

For those people who know curator Pierre Bal Blanc pretty well, it is not a secret that his interest in contemporary art and his curatorial career began when he was the dancer for Felix Gonzalez Torres’ *Untitled (Go-Go Dancing Platform)*, 1991.

He recounted to me how influential that event was for all his curatorial work, since the act of mediation of an artwork is still the foundation of his curatorial approach. Bal Blanc uses his own persona for mediating artworks, and through the lens of his personal engagement with the works, sometimes even physical, he constantly rethinks the exhibition and display format. In the preview of *Réversibilité* at CAC Brétigny, he played a game of chess with the artist Sanja Ivekovi .

Sanja Ivekovi ’s performance is based on a historical document – the photograph taken by Julian Wasser during the Marcel Duchamp retrospective at the Pasadena Art Museum in 1963. The image, which has become an icon within the art world, was restaged by Ivekovi in the exhibition space at Bétonsalon, and open to the public. In this image, reactivated as a performance, the artists physically takes the place of Marcel Duchamp, and places the curator responsible for inviting her to produce the project naked across the board in front of her.

### LOOKING THROUGH A HOLE

Although I strongly admire and respect and am sometimes “jealous” of these ideas around the shaping of institutions through the push and pull of formats and curator as catalyst, my curating seeks other directions while retaining a strong personal engagement with the artwork. Returning to my starting point, my involvement in Roccasalva’s work makes me think and rethink my role in general, and more specifically the way in which I want to make it. I never could have had so deep an involvement with an artwork if I were merely a curator lacking certain peculiarities that are rare, and which were coincidental with the artists’ work. I realized that what I wanted to do was to take care of artworks. When I decided to found Peep-Hole all of these things came to mind, starting from a name that alludes to the idea of curating without being seen. So even though the ideas are coming from a deep physical involvement with an artwork/artist my perspective is on of invisibility as a curator and the acknowledgment of “choosing” as the curatorial action.

### PEEP-HOLE SHEET

These considerations lead to Peep-Hole Sheet, a quarterly of artists’ writings. Each issue is dedicated solely to one artist, who is invited to contribute with an unpublished text; the content is completely free in terms both of subject and format. The texts are published in their original language, with accompanying translations in English and Italian. All images are deliberately avoided.



Peep-Hole Sheet is meant for those people who want to read the artist's words without any filter, and over time it aspires to build up an anthology of writings that might open up new perspectives for interpreting and understanding our times.

In other words, Peep-Hole Sheet, which is the very first project conceived by Peep-Hole (started in 2009) talks about responsibilities. The curators/editors have the role of choosing the artist, and the choice is at the bottom of every single aspect of this role. The artist has the role of writing without any guidance. They are completely free to write whatever they want.

### THIRD TIME

*Third Time* was the title of Renata Lucas' exhibition project at Peep-Hole realized in November 2011. It consisted of the reproduction of the electricity plan of Lucas' house on Peep-Hole's space, repositioning the lights of this space to the position in which they are placed at the artist's house, so that those used in the everyday life punctuated the exhibition space, transposing to Peep-Hole a sort of choreography based on the movement of invisible actors. Through sophisticated domotic technology the two spaces were directly connected, and whenever a light was turned on or off in the Rio de Janeiro flat, the corresponding one in Milan did the same, creating a spatial-temporal link in which the artist's physical absence was transformed into a "presence" that altered the exhibition space. No other lights worked in the exhibition space for the duration of the exhibition, and each activity performed within the space was influenced by the artist's movements in her own home, at a distance that was not only physical but also temporal (at that time of year there was a three-hour time difference).

*Third Time* marked a crucial turning point in the course undertaken by Peep-Hole, which was established with the intent of focusing all of its activities on the artists and their works. Lucas took this principle to extremes with a project in which the space, the way it functions, and its daily activities were totally in the hands of the artist.

MCNAMARA PAPERS: TOWARDS A DOCUMENTARY, 1997

First exhibited in *Another Shop in Tottenham Court Road*, Transmission Gallery, Glasgow, and *A House in Long Island*, Forde Espace d'art contemporain, L'Usine, Geneva, 1997

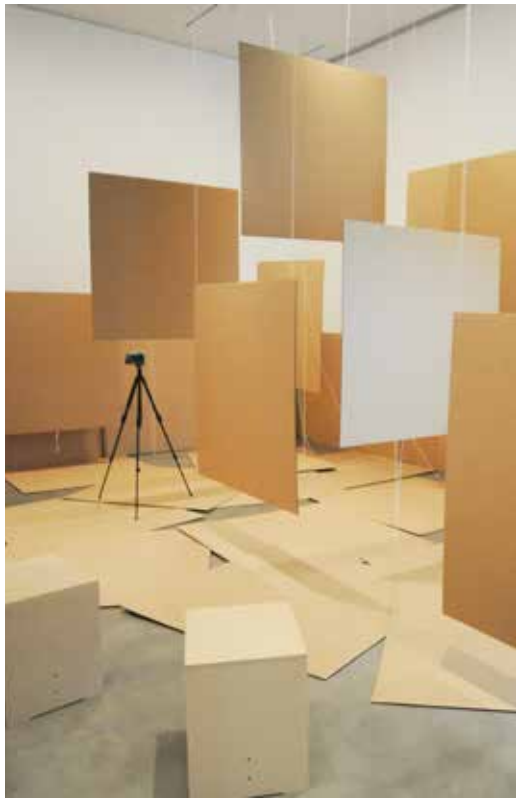
Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012; Magasin, 2014

Dimensions determined by the space.

A set is built using sheets of cardboard cut and strung together, hanging from the ceiling and sitting flat on the floor. The cardboard set is lit by simple halogen lights. It creates a place where it is possible to film discussions and documentaries. The artist does not control either any filming or discussions.

Realized by the students of Bard CCS and the École du Magasin.





Left: Hessel Museum, 2012  
Right: Transmission, Glasgow, 1997



Hessel Museum, 2012



Hessel Museum, 2012



199A-199B 123.

STREET CORNER (LONDON/HAMBURG), 1993

First exhibited in *Backstage*, curated by Barbra Steiner and Stefan Schmidt-Wulffen, Kunstverein in Hamburg, 1993

Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012; Magasin, 2014

Dimensions variable

A slide projector or digital projector displays images of random passersby photographed from a corner spot during a conversation about the work of the German Research Service Special Press Reports or some other subject of contemporary political, scientific, or social importance. The content of the conversation remains restricted to the person(s) who accompany the artist, while the record of the local context is the visible aspect of the work.

Realized with Sarah Higgins (Hessel Museum); École du Magasin (Magasin).







Hessel Museum, 2012

Red Hook, New York, 2012



Red Hook, New York, 2012

Red Hook, New York, 2012





# ARCANA IMPERII: HIDDEN REALMS OF POWER

## SELMA BOSKAILO

Session 23: Have you archived your work in a very regular way since the beginning?

Liam Gillick: Yes. I work on it most days. It is the record of what I have done and what I am doing. It is not possible to distinguish the archive from the work most of the time.

In “The Library of Babel,” Jorge Luis Borges constructs an entire story around the library: its physical space and its contents. This is a library that aims to be the universe. It is infinite because it contains the totality of past, present, and future events; it is a library that contains all interpolations of every book in all the other books.

In this work a nameless narrator describes the titular library as a seemingly endless vertical and horizontal series of hexagonal rooms housing 20 bookshelves each. The contents of the books are revealed to be randomly generated combinations of a set of 25 characters: 22 letters representing all vowel and consonant sounds, the comma, the period, and the space. This library, whose spatial dimensions would vastly exceed those of the observable universe, would by definition contain everything that has been, or possibly ever could be, expressed in writing; yet for every sentence, much less volume, of interpretable language there would exist galaxies of meaningless or indecipherable strings of characters. Despite or perhaps because of this congestion of information, all books are totally useless to the reader, which leaves librarians in a state of suicidal despair. The library of total inclusiveness would contain materials blatantly untrue, false, or distorted – intentionally or unintentionally misrepresenting reality, in which case the universal library could be defined as small islands of meaning surrounded by vast oceans of meaninglessness.<sup>1</sup>

Borges explored similar ideas in his later work “The Book of Sand,” a story about the discovery and disposal of a book whose pages never remain the same from one reading to the next. The book is, in effect, infinite, as it includes every book; it is a total library, which contains the principle of all possible statements, a combination of all of human history and future. The narrator of “The Book of Sand” relates the torments generated by owning the infinite book. He feared it might be stolen, so he guarded it jealously. Then he worried it might not be infinite, so he studied it at length, becoming a prisoner of the book.

In the typically Borgesian lists found in both “The Library of Babel” and “The Total Library,” the author points out that a library of total inclusiveness would contain “[the faithful catalogue of the Library, thousands and thousands of false catalogues are therefore proof of the falsity of those false catalogues and proof of the falsity of the true catalogue.”<sup>2</sup> This absolute relativization of knowledge is indicative of the indifference toward truth evidenced by computational algorithms – whether random, simple, or complex in nature they form the basis of Borges’ total library, but a digital equivalent of today as well. Knowledge is conceptualized in the primarily spatial dimensions of depth and breadth and applied to modes of cognition; information and data are conceptualized

in the spatiotemporal dimensions of fluidity, movement, and speed and applied to modes of communication and calculation. A totality of knowledge is inconceivable, since there are inherent limits to cognitive processes. A totality of information is inconceivable, due to continual variations in data sets.

The utopian idea of the universal library, a repository of every text ever published, is what Foucault defines as heterotopia. Despite their obvious differences libraries, museums, and archives have a similar identity. They are all spaces that contain and influence knowledge and culture. Their expressive strength is based on their function as repositories of knowledge. These heterotopias of time accumulated ad infinitum are places in which time does not cease to accumulate, upon its own summit. The idea of accumulating and organizing everything, of creating a sort of universal archive, with the desire to enclose all times, eras, forms, and styles within a single place that is itself outside time and inaccessible to its ravages in immobile space, belongs to our modernity.<sup>3</sup>

In the theory of cultural semiotics developed by Jurij Lotman, culture is a function of its memory agencies. Lotman has defined culture as a function of its inherent media, institutions, and practices of storing and transferring knowledge. But how is the cultural economy provided with the time it needs to function? How is the archive sustained and secured, and what can guarantee that it will be sustained over longer periods of time? The archive, in other words, is fundamentally under suspicion of being unsecured. And, evidently, this suspicion can be weakened only if one is permitted insight into the nature of the medium that sustains the archive. The longing for infinity is unstable, but this longing, once it emerges, can be satisfied by means of innovation within the archive. A system, a discourse, a structure is thus always traversed by a constitutive ambivalence that [Ernesto] Laclau calls dislocation. In the dislocatory effects to which every structure is subject, he sees a temporal phenomenon, whereas he always sees the structure itself as spatial. Through the practices of spatialization time must be hegemonized constantly, and this works by means of repetition. Thus, articulation is a continuous and continuously failing process that essentially consists in the repetitive connection of elements. It is precisely by means of articulation, by linking different elements that we open up a space. In Laclau’s terminology, this movement simply describes the fixation of meaning in solid topographies that need to be conceptualized as sedimentations of power, and which spatialize the temporal movement of pure dislocation into a precise choreography. Yet inasmuch as these spatial sediments can, on the other hand, be reactivated, there also exists a temporalization of space or an “extension of the field of the possible.”<sup>4</sup> In the words of Laclau, we are confronted with a moment of “reactivation,” with a process of de-fixation of meaning. In this case, more and more elements, levels, and places are perceived as contingent in their relational nature.

The archive has become a universal metaphor for all conceivable forms of storage and memory. In a digital culture, the archive changes from an archival space into an archival time, in which the key is the dynamics of permanent transmission of data. The archive literally becomes a “metaphor,” with all the possibilities this entails. One can argue that this kind of archive has no narrative memory, only a calculating one. The more data is processed in electronic, fugitive form, the more the traditional archive gains authority from the very materiality of its artifacts. On the question of memory in the age of digital

1. Miroslav Kruk, “The Internet and the Revival of the Myth of the Universal Library,” *The Australian Library Journal*, 1999, 48:2, p. 139.

2. Jorge Luis Borges, “The Library of Babel” in *Labrynthos, Selected Stories and Other Writings*. New York, New Directions 1964, p. 64–65.

3. Michel Foucault, *On Other Spaces in Visual Culture Reader*, ed. Nicholas Mirzoeff, New York, Routledge 1998, p. 234.

4. Ernesto Laclau, *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time*, Verso, London and New York 1990.

computing, Lev Manovich has said that data models become dominant, dictating the narrative; databases invert the traditional relation between the paradigmatic and the syntagmatic.<sup>5</sup> Time itself is now being organized by technology. The spatial metaphor of the archive transforms into a temporal dimension just as the static residential archive is being replaced by dynamic temporal storage; the time-based archive is now a topological place of permanent data transfer. The archival data lose their spatial immobility the moment they are provided with a purely temporal index. Critically, the archive transforms from storage space to storage time.

Foucault noted that the border constitutes itself precisely at the moment of its transgression. If we would think of the past not as a “memory,” but as the archive itself, something that is factually present in reality and the future, as the task of expanding the archive, then the present, as we know it, would be something that has not yet been included in the archival collection. What strengthens the utopian potential of the archive and weakens its potential for betraying the utopian promise is the potential that is inherent in any archive, regardless of how it is structured. So-called “reality” is, ultimately, nothing more than the sum of everything that has not yet been collected. Reality is thus not something primary that awaits representation in the secondary space of the archive. Rather, reality itself is secondary in relation to the archive: it is all that which has been left outside of the archive.

The function of the archive is not the illustration or representation of history nor the holding fast to memories of history – the way in which this history took place “in reality.” Rather, the archive constitutes the prerequisite for something like history to emerge in the first place, as the production of history occurs through comparison of the new to the old that is contained in the archive already. But nostalgic desires that attempt to obliterate history and turn it into private or collective mythology are refusing to surrender to the irreversibility of time. The Russian writer and theorist Svetlana Boym defines two types of nostalgia. One is restorative and attempts to reconstruct the lost root that nobody remembers, and the other is a reflexive nostalgia that does not try to reconstruct a space, but rather reflects its strength, power, and time and can thus be, not only retrospective, but also prospectively future oriented. It is a thought of the past as a potential through which we can think about the future. According to Boris Groys, futuristic utopias might be out of fashion, but nostalgia itself has a utopian dimension, only it is no longer directed toward the future. Sometimes it is not directed toward the past either, but rather sideways. A nostalgic feeling stifled within the conventional confines of time and space. So what we are dealing with, when we try to write history, is nothing less than infinite individual memories of any person or event – for these memories are changing all the time. There is, in all normal times, the slow fading that we call forgetting. But what is perhaps more interesting than the weakness of human memory is its infinite creativeness, its ability and compulsion to endlessly rearrange the past in constantly shifting patterns. The utopian impulse is always related to the desire of the subject to break out of its own historically-defined identity, to leave its place in the historical taxonomy. In a certain sense, the archive gives to the subject the hope of surviving one’s own contemporaneity and revealing one’s true self in the future.

This utopian or at least heterotopian promise is crucial to the subject’s ability to develop a distance from and critical attitude toward their own time and their own immediate audience.<sup>6</sup>

6. Boris Groys, “Art Workers: Between Utopia and the Archive,” in e-flux (2013) <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/art-workers-between-utopia-and-the-archive/> (last accessed May 2015).





Grenoble, 2014





DOCUMENTARY REALISATION ZONE #1 TO #3 (DIJON), 1997

First exhibited in McNamara Papers, Erasmus and Ibuka Realisations, The What If?

Scenarios, Le Consortium, Dijon, 1997

Exhibited Magasin, 2014

Video, Plexiglas, 3 TV sets, catalogues, climbing rope

Dimensions determined by the space.

A record of the original video produced on the set of McNamara Papers. The artist sits waiting for a cue to begin speaking and we also see a casting session at Transmission Gallery in Glasgow that features artists Douglas Gordon, Martin Boyce, and Sarah Morris. The films are shown in Plexiglas boxes. Books are tied to the ends of long climbing ropes to both prevent the books being stolen and ensure collaboration – or not – between visitors when the ropes are tangled.





Magasin, 2014





LIAM GILLICK AND PHILIPPE PARRRENO,  
THE MORAL MAZE / LE LABYRINTHE MORAL, 1995  
First exhibited in *The Moral Maze /Le Labyrinthe Moral*, Le Consortium, Dijon, 1995  
Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012; Magasin, 2014  
Various artists producing artworks, table, seating  
Dimensions determined by the space.

A series of interrogation sessions with invited specialists for the enlightenment of the users of the work. A group of secondary people (assistants and mediators) are invited to be interrogated over a set period of days. No recordings are to be made of the discussions. Those invited might include a political strategist, an economist specializing in education models, and a film producer. During the process the artists involved spend time making various artworks and organizing the space.

#### LE LABYRINTHE MORAL TWO INVESTIGATORS MODEL

The proposal is to invite a number of specialist witnesses to submit themselves to questioning at Le Consortium in Dijon. The questioning will be precise, this will not be a "symposium" or a "debate," it is an attempt to cross-examine people from various areas of life, all of whom are engaged in activities of specific interest to us as artists. The people invited to present evidence and react to the questions of the artists will come from various fields. This project will enable a number of artists to put certain other specialists on the spot. Rather than the standard symposium or discussion format, this particular labyrinth is being established in order for artists to question others about a large number of parallel issues to do with the formation of ideas, the physical and mental structure of society, and collective ideas about the artist's place. It is proposed that some of the following people be invited for cross-examination by the organizers of this project:

1) An economist; 2) A neurosurgeon; 3) A historian; 4) A chef; 5) A civil engineer etc. etc.

One of the main spaces in the gallery will become the investigating chamber. The interrogators will sit at a table and invite the various specialists to come and occupy a seat in front of them for a series of questions. The other spaces will perform different functions.

Invited participants:

Douglas Gordon  
Angela Bulloch  
Rirkrit Tiravanija  
Jorge Pardo  
Pierre Joseph  
Lothar Hempel  
Maurizio Cattelan  
Xavier Veilhan  
Pierre Huyghe  
Paul Ramirez-Jonas  
Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster

Realized by the students of Bard CCS and the École du Magasin.





Magasin, 2014

Left: Hessel Museum, 2012  
Right: Le Consortium, Dijon, 1995



Left: Hessel Museum, 2012  
Right: Le Consortium, Dijon, 1995





WHEN DO WE NEED MORE TRACTORS. FIVE PLANS, 1999

First exhibited in *PI@ytimes*, Ecole supérieure d'art de Grenoble, Grenoble, 1999

Exhibited Magasin, 2014

Bonfire, vinyl text/graffiti, silver glitter

Dimensions determined by the space.

A series of tasks to be carried out by users of the work, including:

1. Combine all material required to build a bonfire. Old pieces of wood, paper, trash. Place the pile of material in the middle of a room.
2. Mix 6 cans of Coca-Cola and 500g of silver glitter. Using a piece of cloth, clean the floor at the entrance to a space or in the doorway between two spaces. Swirls of glitter should be left stuck to the floor.
3. Buy a copy of *One Plus One* by Jean-Luc Godard. Watch the film and note the graffiti written on the walls at different moments during the film. If you like you can repeat this graffiti in a chosen space. Examples could include: "maoart," "sovietcong," "cinemarxism."

Realized by the École du Magasin.







Magasin, 2014



Liam Gillick 144.

199A-199B 145.

## STOPPAGE, 1995

First exhibited in *Stoppage*, CCC Tours, 1995.

Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012; Magasin, 2014

Music player, artists' contributions

A curated series of looped soundtracks for an institution. A group of artists invited to produce an endless soundtrack.

“An attempt to consider the possibility of sound works with no specific end point. At the beginning of discussions concerning this project it was decided to use the old bookshop space of the CCC in Tours, France. This was partly due to acoustic considerations, and partly due to the fact that it seemed unnecessary to use a large empty space for a project of sound works. Although the bookshop in its earlier state was quite successful, it seemed a little claustrophobic and was in need of renovation. On arrival in Tours the old bookshelves, built-in furniture, and display cabinets were removed, and the room re-painted in white. At this point we had merely created another empty white space. After further discussions with the people who work at the CCC, it appeared interesting to rebuild a bookshop in this newly cleaned out place. I decided to make a low table to display some of the books previously available in the bookshop, which also served as a base for the sound-system that relays the *Stoppage* project. In order to reduce the feeling of claustrophobia I removed some of the roof panels and also altered the lighting. It is arguable that certain types of open-ended art projects require the recognition that an element of distraction is a key to their potential success or failure. The idea of creating a new bookshop in parallel to an exhibition of potential and realized works by a large number of artists allows for the visitor to the exhibition to participate in a form of multiple browsing. Pushing forward questions about the occupation of time and parallel forms of information transferal. The MiniDisc machine was connected directly to two Yamaha speakers. It functioned a little bit like a CD player. Once the works had been transferred to the MiniDisc machine it was possible to program functions in the same way as a CD. It allowed tracks to be looped with no rewind delay. This permitted the visitor to the exhibition to realize the potential endless quality of the works included in the project. Random or shuffle settings could also be programmed. Artists invited; Pierre Bismuth. Angela Bulloch, Angus Fairhurst, Keith Ford Farquhar, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Lothar Hempel, Pierre Huyghe, Paul Mittleman, Jorge Pardo, Philippe Parreno, Laura Ruggeri, Sam Samore, Georgina Starr, Laura Stein, Sam Taylor-Wood, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Elizabeth Wright, Cerith Wyn-Evans.”

Liam Gillick, 1996

Realized by Annie Larmon (Hessel Museum); École du Magasin (Magasin)



STOPPAGE  
BARD CCS 2012

Pavel Büchler  
Antoine Catala  
Aleksandra Domanovic  
Kim Gordon  
Zin Taylor  
Bik Van der Pol  
Haegue Yang

STOPPAGE  
MAGASIN 2014

Dominique Blais  
b. 1974, France, lives and works in Paris  
3 Standard Stoppages in Rotation, 3', 2014  
For the reactivation of Stoppage by Liam Gillick, Dominique Blais proposed to reverse the experiment by Marcel Duchamp. To create his work 3 Standard Stoppages Duchamp dropped three meter-long pieces of material from the height of one meter from the ground. He then mounted them on canvas. After cutting 3 pieces of different material, each one meter long, Dominique Blais turned for the duration of one minute, one after another [turned what? one after the other what? This does not make sense here]. Moving between two microphones placed in front of each other he created three stereo recordings. Sound signatures of the rotation, which enter both the temporal and the spatial dimension.

Anna Bromley and Michael Fesca  
b. 1971 and 1968, Germany, live and work in Berlin  
It Would Get a Terrific Laugh, 4' 2", 2014  
The work slows down lines from Ernst Lubitsch's famous comedy To Be Or Not To Be (1942). Slowing down the same scene, the voice of a contemporary actor overlaps the original audio. Slowed down speech represents a special challenge for the human body and can cause unforeseen difficulties to both speakers and listeners alike. The work addresses the "art of speaking" as a bodily institution in society, investigating the transformation of its conventions within time, and stressing it to the very limits of the comprehensible.

\*Audio engineering of the vintage film material:  
Manfred Miersch, additional voice: Daniel Brunet

Marco Cecotto  
b. 1982, Italy  
Indetermined, 2014  
Marco Cecotto proposed a generative software that combined various audio recordings of Larsen Tones produced in various spaces and architecture according to random algorithms. Audio feedback was chosen to make use of "impersonal" sounds, which do not allude to anything "human."

Instead they refer, both conceptually and from an experiential point of view, to the acoustic space itself. In this way, different spaces (physical and acoustic) interact with the physical and acoustic space of the Magasin through a "litmus test" of audio feedback.

Ugnius Gelguda  
b. 1977, Lithuania, lives and works in Vilnius and Brooklyn, New York  
Beginnings, 1', 2014  
Beginnings was recorded on a synthesizer named after the scientist and futurist Raymond Kurzweil. Gelguda uses one of the preset sounds from the synthesizer named 2000 Odyssey. The artwork recalls the beginning of a movie. The soundtrack is one minute long, looped in a never-ending culmination, which builds up in the manner of an advertisement. Therefore the artwork can be seen as an endless commercial for an institution.

Anne-Lise Le Gac  
b.1985, France, lives and works in Marseille  
Fatigue-moi (Wear Me Out), 2014

DON'T MOVE  
DON'T HIT ON  
DON'T DOUBT  
DON'T TALK  
DON'T YIELD  
DON'T LEAVE  
DON'T DROP – IT'S B2O WHO WROTE IT.  
DEADLINE / MP3 / SOUNDTRACK FOR LIVING

Mladen Miljanovic  
b. 1981, Bosnia  
One Minute of Infinite, 1', 2014  
The work examines the relation between language, form, and duration. The spoken word "infinite" is recorded and stretched to one minute in length. A very clear narrative word becomes an abstract sound influenced by an extended time of representation. The work explores the border where the meaning of form becomes useless and lost through extension in time and space.

Ceel Mogami De Haas  
b. 1982, Netherlands, lives and works in Geneva  
Dritte Bild, 2014  
The german word Überblendung means superimposition, or cross-dissolve. I heard someone whispering that word the other day at the Deutsche Oper Berlin while she tried desperately to adjust her binoculars. The orchestra had started playing the prelude to the first act. Six long hours later I was home and played the Tristan chord (F, B, D# and G#) on a Roland JP-8000 with the arpeggiator mode set on "updown," attempting another Überblendung.

Ibro Hasanovic  
b. 1981, Yugoslavia, lives and works in Kosovo  
Untitled Recording of Ice Melting, 08' 01", 2014  
The artist proposed a recording of ice melting. The recording was made in a studio using contact (piezo) microphones.

Michele Spanghero  
b. 1979, Italy  
8', La Rue/MAGASIN 2014  
Michele Spanghero proposed an audio recording of the silent ambience of the Magasin and used the architectural structure as a sounding board to amplify and bring out the specific resonance frequencies of the building. The aim was to highlight the acoustic component of the structure designed at the Eiffel workshop and listen to its timbre – its voice. The architecture itself, with its size and forms, shapes the sounds and functions as a great resonant body.

Andrius Svilyls  
b. 1992, Lithuania, lives and works in London  
A Tune to Dance To, 3', 2014  
Dialogue about a possible artwork began with the proposition that a building is an organism. But it appeared that the Magasin has no ventilation ducts, so no respiratory system. The next logical step was to introduce the missing system into the building. The missing architectural/anatomical structure had to take a metonymical turn to survive. Now, a tube to breathe is also a pipe to play. A short trial of negotiations between the artist, the curator, and the building was reenacted musically by Neringa Bumblien (one of the project's curators) with a pipe made by Andrius Svilyls. While we might wonder who danced to whose tune, the work evoked a flux of roles between artist and curator, simultaneously giving a new throat with all its sonic mucus and vocal potentials to an institution.

\*The contributions of Stoppage (1995–2014) are played by a generative software in pure data realized by artist Marco Cecotto. The tracks are reproduced according to random algorithms and in different spaces of La Rue.





Left: Hessel Museum, 2012  
Right: Villa Arson, Nice, 1998



Magasin, 2014

## STOPPAGE 2012 ANNIE GODFREY LARMON

Like any textual element of Liam Gillick's efforts, *Stoppage*, the title of a sound work first produced at the Centre de Création Contemporaine in Tours, France in 1995, is a semantic somersault, succinctly armed with historical citation as it is with philosophical charge. The title is the artist's nod to Duchamp's seminal "joke about the meter," his work *3 Standard Stoppages*, 1913–1914, in which he challenged the standardized unit of measurement with a chance operation. Duchamp dropped three meter-long pieces of thread onto three stretched canvases from the height of one meter, allowing each of them to fall naturally. He then affixed each string to the canvas on which it fell, and cut their variable silhouettes to produce new images of the quotidian length, thereby demonstrating the relativity and indeterminacy of rational systems. In Duchamp's French, the word *stoppage* evokes the idea of mending, or fixing something. In English, of course, a stoppage is an obstruction; it is also a strike – the cessation of labor in protest. If we conflate these inflections, then, we might consider *Stoppage* to be a refusal, one in the service of a revision.

The significant gesture here is that when invited to exhibit at the CCC, Gillick instead curated a small sound exhibition. He asked 15 artists – Pierre Bismuth, Angela Bulloch, Angus Fairhurst, Keith Ford Farquhar, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Lothar Hempel, Pierre Huyghe, Paul Mittelman, Philippe Parreno, Laura Ruggeri, Sam Samore, Georgina Starr, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Sam Taylor-Wood, and Elisabeth Wright – to contribute sound pieces (or in some cases, to provide instructions to be carried out and recorded by Gillick) that together would comprise an "endless soundtrack for an institution," an overarching artwork that would be attributed to Gillick. The work was installed alongside a selection of books on a low plywood platform in the museum's bookshop, which was otherwise emptied out, save for a chair designed by Jorge Pardo. A MiniDisc played Angus Fairhurst's three minute loop of a phrase from the final moments of Pearl Jam's track "Alive," Keith Farquhar's swank, *I Got the CCC Blues*, Rirkrit Tiravanija's recording of Mah Jong pieces being shuffled on a tabletop, and Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster's sonic representations of the colors turquoise, orange, and grey – each bookended by Laura Stein's "subliminal messages."

The project performed two kinds of refusal-cum-revisions – two stoppages. The first had to do with Gillick's longstanding preoccupation with locating the site of primacy in the production of meaning, and with laying bare the economic, relational, and institutional factors that contribute to and dictate its articulation in artworks. By diffusing authorship of *Stoppage* to a group of artists (namely, Gillick's friends, whose cultural capital at the time may or may not have been proximal to his), he upended the established value of the work, likewise granting the participating artists the capital obtained by exhibiting their work in an institutional context. Gillick duly refused the institution – more important than his decision not to contribute an "auratic" artwork to the museum was his assumption of the role of curator and subsequent destabilization of the institution's curatorial structure – while he simultaneously rerouted capital to his artist peers.

*Stoppage* predates, by eight years, Gillick's 2003 essay "Claiming Contingent Space," which might achronologically contextualize the conditions of artistic production that were being addressed with the work. In the text, the artist connects the shift of the privileged

role in arts discourse in recent decades – from the critical (autonomous stances) to the curatorial (speculative and embedded positions) – to the rise of neoliberalism and relativism. In this socioeconomic landscape, the critical stuff of cultural production, he suggests, might now reside in the “matrix of curatorial signification,” a field that is beholden in part to the interests of the institution and in part to the interests of the artist, so that critical distance has become critical proximity – more of a bolstering wingman than a dialectical counterpoint. Gillick suggests, polemically, that artists are mere aesthetic conduits for discussions that are being had in a distributed cultural field. “How can you be involved but not involved simultaneously?” he asks. “How can you be involved in moments of competition (these things are always competitions), yet find a way of coming up with methods of refusal? How can you stop a project? How can you be inside and a corrupting influence simultaneously?” These types of questions have become, in the decade since he asked them, at once increasingly urgent and unanswerable, as divisions of labor have continued to dissolve, and contemporary art has drifted deeper toward becoming an indeterminate genre whose stakes are currently as slippery as the art-market is inflated.

This is all to say that Gillick’s strategy of reorganizing the institutional apparatus is perhaps no less relevant or productive today. So when he requested that I restage *Stoppage* in 2012 at the Hessel Museum of Art with an entirely different group of participants that I was to select (making his authorship of the work more tortuous yet), it was the material and thematic concerns of the work that seemed ripe to take up. This brings me to the second stoppage enacted by the original work.

As “an attempt to consider the possibility of sound works with no specific end point,” *Stoppage* proposed an alternate duration within the exhibition that was meant to challenge or revise conventional experiences with artworks in the museum context. His intervention in the bookshop rejiggered what might be considered a space of display in the institution, but also, as Gillick wrote in the press release, it allowed viewers “to participate in a form of multiple browsing. Pushing forward questions about the occupation of time and parallel forms of information transferal.” The conceit was Gillick’s response to widespread cultural malaise brought on by innovations in media and the ways in which these developments abetted the rapaciousness of capitalism. In the mid 1990s, as the internet was taken over by commercial providers – also note that eBay, Amazon, and Craigslist were founded in 1995 – neoliberalism’s illusion of hyper-choice in conjunction with societally permissible over-engagement with media began to irreparably fracture time and compromise subjects’ capacity for concentration.

It is easily argued that society’s relationship to duration has transformed dramatically since 1995, due largely in part to the integration of the Internet into every aspect of our networked lives and the subsequent fragmentation and pervasiveness of immaterial labor. Likewise, the durational constraints of the arts institution have changed. Gillick’s exhibition text for the 1995 version of *Stoppage* admits his infatuation with the capabilities of the now-obsolete MiniDisc. With its potential to be “recorded again and again,” the platform promised to evade the material restrictions of other audio storage devices, possessing an endless quality itself. Today, online venues such as Vdrome present artworks that might be accessed anytime and anywhere so long as you have Wi-Fi, and *Contemporary Art Daily* assures the infinite afterlives of exhibitions via photo and video documentation. It seemed crucial then, that the restaged project would engage the updated ways in which our experience of duration and our conception of endlessness are impacted by contemporary technics. Moreover, what might a stoppage

look like in this context?

In a 1961 interview with Katharine Kuh, Duchamp described the feeling of liberation that accompanied his exercise of *3 Standard Stoppages*. He claimed that, “When you tap something, you don’t always recognize the sound.” This line served as a prompt for the production of works by Pavel Büchler, Antoine Catala, Aleksandra Domanović, Kim Gordon, Zin Taylor, Bik Van der Pol, and Haegue Yang that make up the 2012 version of *Stoppage*. While Duchamp’s quote is potent here for its connection of the experiment to the media of sound, I deployed it because of its emphasis on physical gesture and sensation, but also because of its sheer celebration of that which is unknowable and indeterminate – it is within the haptic and the incalculable that refusals and revisions of the accelerating attention economy might occur.

The pieces ranged from Catala’s *Jordi Teaches Vicki a Few Things*, in which a man’s steady voice recites a series of words, each echoed by an electronic Siri-like voice, to Domanović’s series of recordings of a Lyrebird, a Sterling, and African Gray parrot mimicking, respectively, construction sounds, a ringtone, and its owner (“Eat your corn sweetie!”) and on to 20 minutes of tonal chaos from Kim Gordon and Bill Nace (collectively *Body/Head*). Büchler’s *4’33” × 33 1/3* revisited another canonical Conceptual gesture by featuring the sound of the lead-out groove from a recording of John Cage’s *4’33”* for a duration of exactly four minutes and 33 seconds, and Zin Taylor employed an analog synth to illustrate a formal analysis of how sounds, represented by dots (notes) and stripes (tones), compose narratives. Bik Van der Pol offered a series of resolutions set to a ticking metronome, and Yang captured the tedious experience of waiting via the sounds of a kettle escalating to a boil. Though the works vary as much as those in the 1995 roster, there is a marked cohesion in the ways in which many of the works highlight instances of spontaneity, failure, irksomeness, and mutation, particularly in the interfacing of bodies and equipment; instances that refuse to fit easily into any index, and are incommensurable with any existing algorithm.

THE INABILITY OF THIS FORM ... 1993

THIS ARTWORK REMAINS ... 1993

FOUR WAY RELATIONSHIP, 1994

SO WERE PEOPLE THIS DUMB BEFORE TELEVISION, 1998

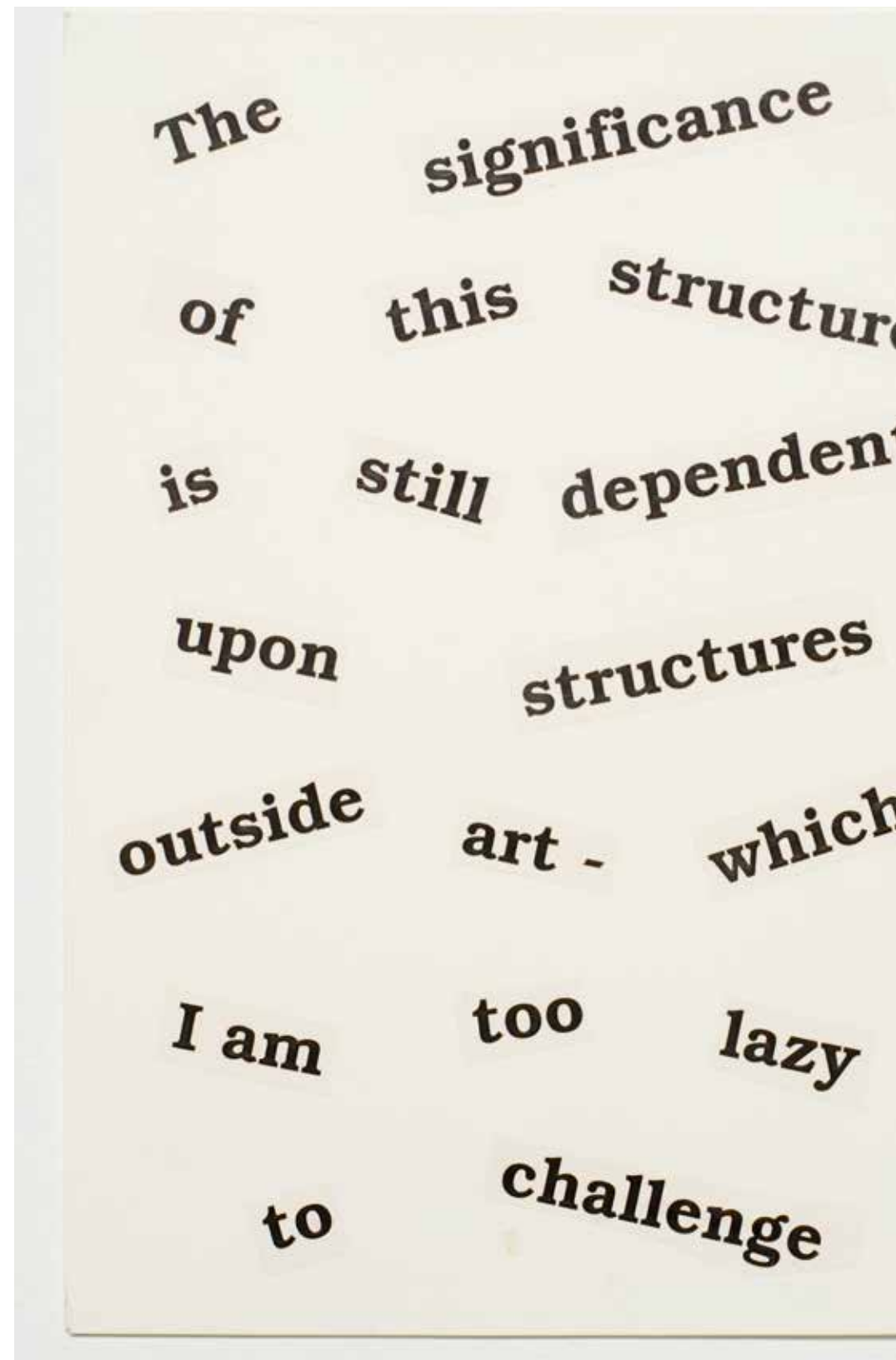
First exhibited in various venues including FRAC, Bourgogne, 1994; Galerie Martin Janda, Vienna, 1998; Galerie Schipper und Krome, 1994, Cologne  
Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012; Magasin, 2014  
Cut vinyl text, collage, and pencil on paper  
Dimensions variable.

These works are announcements or statements concerning the conditions surrounding work in the cultural sphere. Admissions of failure that address an artist's ability to operate effectively in a complex social fabric.

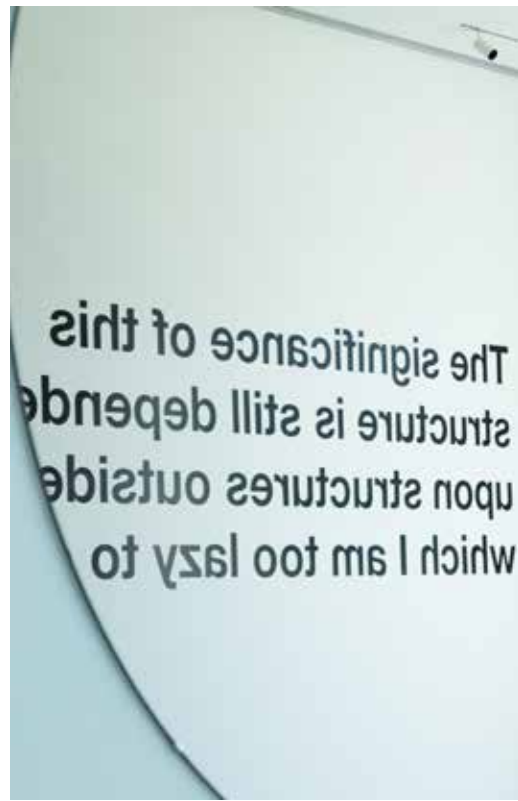
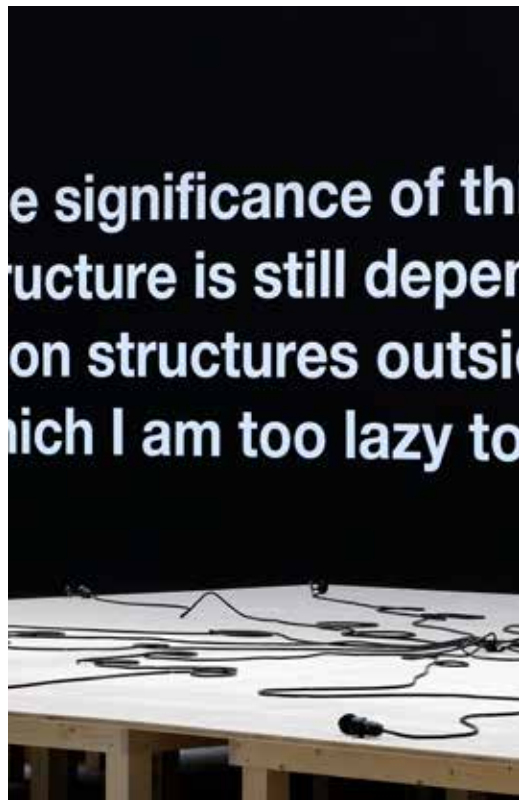
A series of drawings made by printing certain words onto paper with a simple home printing set. Each piece forms the shape of a portrait head. Other works in the series are made using paper collaged onto canvas. The words used tend to allude to the position of the artist in relation to the paradoxical status of the individual within a concept of broader society. A critique of the system of representation is combined with a desire to create work within an accepted tradition of art making in order to emphasize the imploded nature of the project.

"In addition to these works, a number of others exist that use phrases and statements that further explore the position of the artist as an idea. Each one creates a feeling of the peculiar and contradictory nature of attempts to go beyond the formal into a realm where context based practice is seen as a more effective ideological standpoint. The phrases and statements have an essentially melancholic tendency, which is intended to overwhelm any straightforwardly dogmatic interpretation."

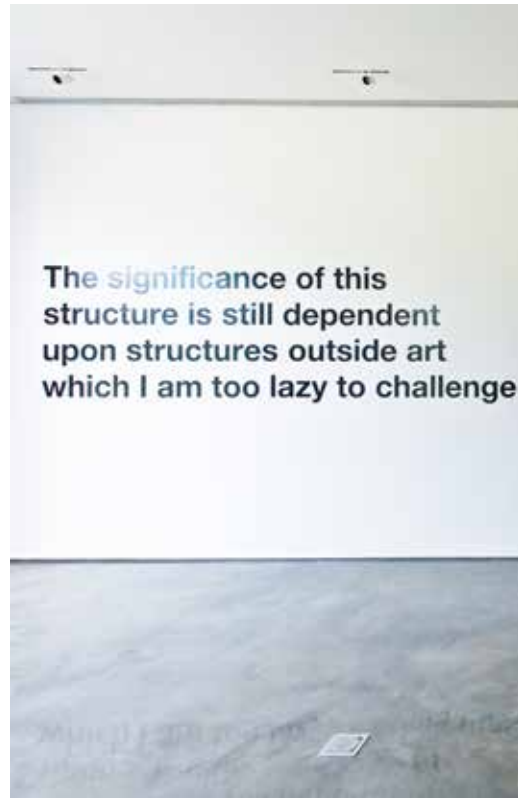
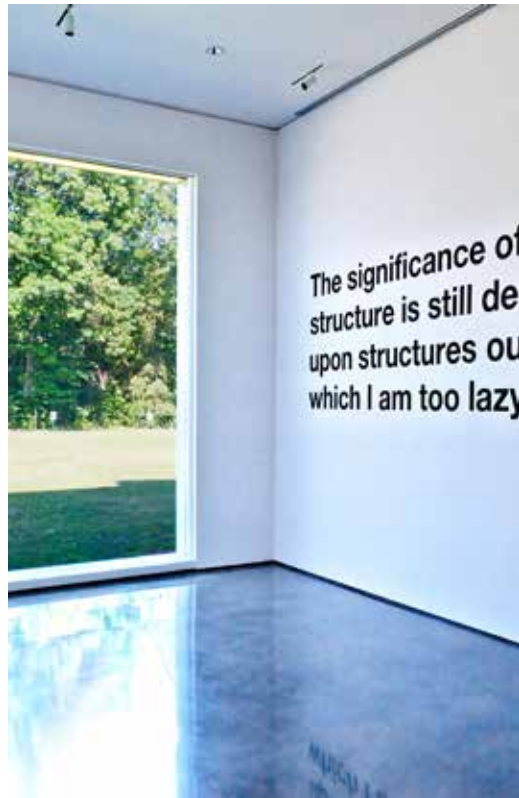
Liam Gillick, 1996







Left: Magasin, 2014  
Right: Hessel Museum, 2012



Hessel Museum, 2012



Left: Four Way Relationships, Bard, 2012  
Right: So were People this Dumb Before Television?, 1998



Hessel Museum, 2012



199A-199B 157.

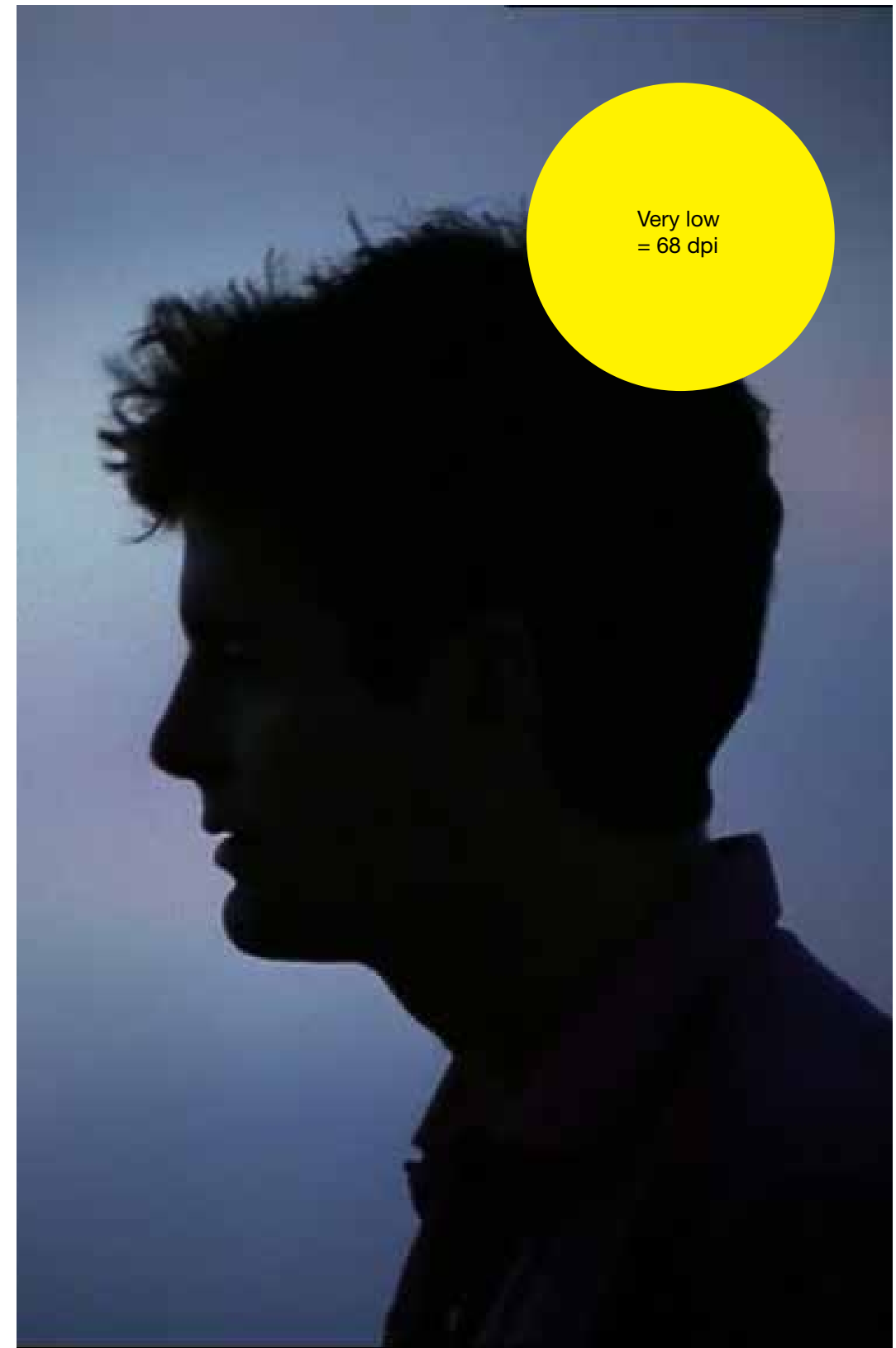
Liam Gillick 156.

CARSTEN HÖLLER, PHILLIPPE PARRENO, RIRKRIT TIRAVANIJA,  
VICINATO, 1995, VIDEO

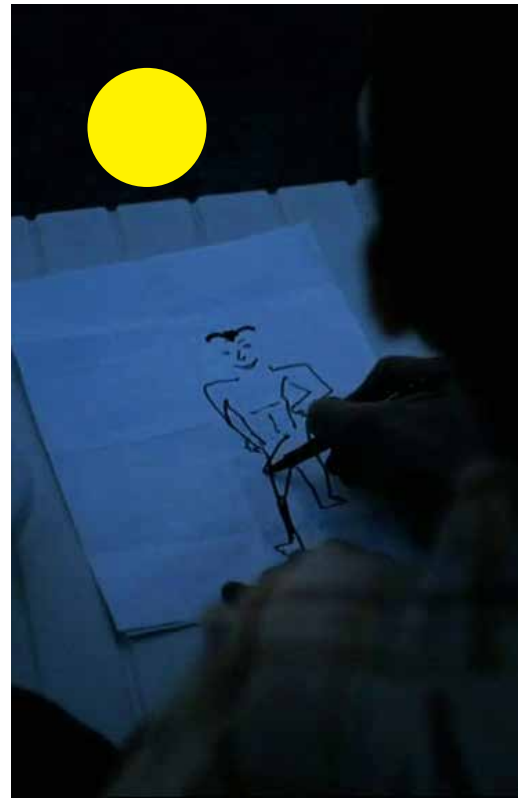
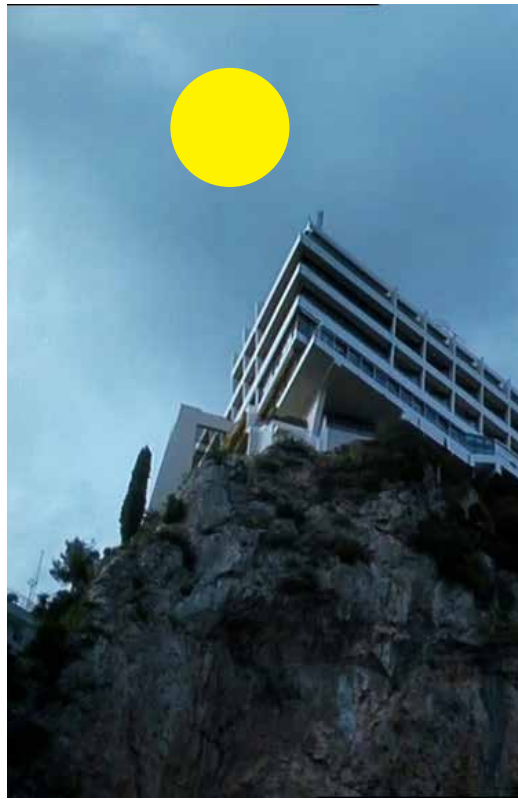
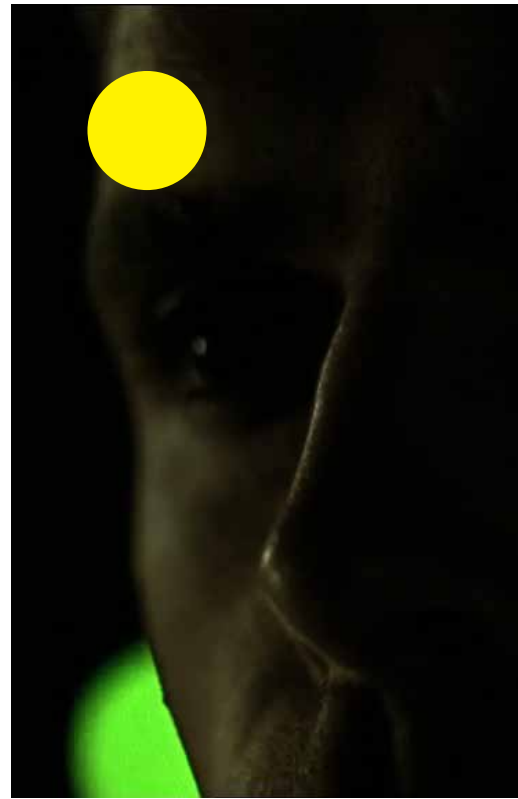
LIAM GILLICK, DOUGLAS GORDON, CARSTEN HÖLLER,  
PIERRE HUYGHE, PHILIPPE PARRENO, RIRKRIT TIRAVANIJA,  
VICINATO 2, 2000, VIDEO

First exhibited at Air de Paris, Paris; Neugerriemschneider, Berlin; Esther Schipper, Berlin  
Exhibited Magasin, 2014

Two videos addressing proximity and the politics of discourse as material. The films are  
a reflection of the collaboration, discourse, and tensions developed by a group of artists  
in the 1990s. *Vicinato 2* is based on a conversation between the artists recorded during  
1998 and 1999.







Liam Gillick 160.

199A-199B 161.



# TIME CAPSULE CLAIRE ASTIER

“The history of ideas should never be continuous; it should be wary of resemblances, but also of descents or filiations; it should be content to mark the thresholds through which an idea passes, the journeys it takes that change its nature or object.”<sup>1</sup>

– Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*

## SEQUENCES OF FLUX

One way of comprehending an exhibition is to define its framework: a place, a time, a here and now. But now even that framework itself is rickety – which “here and now” are we talking about? Where do ideas originate, these situations affecting volume, the spaces they shape? How do we appreciate the impact time has on our understanding of their original context and hence, what relationship does the exhibition have with this “elsewhere” in works of art?

During the 1990s, European artists constantly sought to deconstruct the exhibition from its framework, revealing its mysteries and modes of production while unraveling certain protocols, highlighting links to a precise context. “Smells like teen spirit” even though the feelings have been lost forever. To exhibit art produced in the 1990s today, we have to look at the world through someone else’s eyes, infused with the ideas of that time.

Distancing yourself from the seemingly reassuring framework (protocols, sets, or assembly lines) or the platform (round tables, discussions, events) in Liam Gillick’s work allows you to observe the same recurring forms throughout his exhibitions, maintaining links, not through twinning, but of proximity. Their titles vary from one exhibition to another while their initial forms change, disappear, or reappear (*Prototype Erasmus Table #1 to #3*,<sup>2</sup> *Three Perspectives and a Short Scenario*<sup>3</sup>). Even without maintaining original forms or processes, they nevertheless belong to the same series. They adjust to the frames they fit into (“a frame within a frame”), fabricating situations that render the singularity of a context (*Everyday Holiday*<sup>4</sup>) effective in daily life. What makes these works a series is that they attribute the same role to the context – that of deciding their appearance. In each formation the artwork echoes what it strives to reveal – its ability to absorb existing information about the work and its history, as well as its readjustment mechanisms. This is why each version of the work may be seen as a replica, copy, or imitation made from different objects than the originals, to maintain a discernible, if at times tenuous and strange, link to the past. These survivals or reminiscences from one exhibition to another drive our thinking; from version to version they act like the ghosts of a mitochondrial Eve, hypothetical ancestor, line founder. Recognizing or finding her should in theory allow the meaning to be deconstructed, reconstructing an A–Z guide to the different versions.

1. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980), trans. Brian Massumi, Continuum, London and New York 2004, vol. 2 of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1972–1980).

2. Liam Gillick, “Prototype Erasmus Table #1 (Bourgogne),” 1994; “Prototype Erasmus Table #2 (Ghent),” 1994; “Prototype Erasmus Table #3 (London),” 1995.

3. Liam Gillick, *Three Perspectives and a Short Scenario*, Witte de With, Rotterdam; Kunsthalle Zurich; Kunstverein, Munich; MCA, Chicago, 2008–2010.

4. Liam Gillick and Gabriel Kuri, *La Fête au quotidien*, 1996, Magasin, Grenoble.

The work, through its variations, constitutes a constant flux, a becoming, ideas first introduced by Deleuze and Guattari: “We should be wary of seeing some imaginary series that unite them, but rather look for a term to best render their balanced relationships [ ... ] In short, symbolic understanding replaces the analogy of proportion with an analogy of proportionality; the serialization of resemblances with a structuration of differences; the identification of terms with an equality of relations; the imitation of a primal model with a mimesis that is itself primary and without a model.”<sup>5</sup> They further state that: “A becoming lacks a subject distinct from itself; either we imitate it or we are it. What is real is the becoming itself, the act of becoming, rather than supposed fixed terms through which what is becoming will cross.”<sup>6</sup>

Gillick’s art does not just operate as a series of links with relative proportions along a linear trajectory. Rather it is more a question of ideas mutating and readapting after each transition. These intervals, this nameless in-between, are dealt with by the relative proportions used in different versions of the work. Playing with these relations, Gillick invites us to see not what is changing, but how it is changing.

This flux draws on concepts and models from history, science, literature, and entertainment. Gillick plays with these, stretching them to their limits, eliminating any possibility that they can ever be used or exhibited again, making space for their contemporary variations. Thus, in all its different occurrences, the artwork designs and complements history, rummaging through the world, in other words the scenarios that society offers itself, and that the forms, in their succeeding variations, express and support.

In this sense the work is exponential since its structure is metronomic and evolves with succeeding exhibitions. The protocols and scenarios on display in each variation imply that each work possesses the means within it for a continuation. The work itself makes up and harnesses its escape routes, redefining its territory, showing the influence and function of ideas or the abandoning and forgetting of ideas in time.

Seen this way, the exhibition is a fictive variation on History, corresponding to the artist’s decision to stop the flux of thoughts and ideas between different protagonists, and create temporary stability. He temporarily and subjectively suspends the processes, so as to be able to maintain this interval within a dialectic link between the world and the history of ideas. The exhibition then gives shape to this unaccomplished becoming.

At the heart of each version of the work, Gillick fixes a stage of becoming, offering the spectator a “what has been” of thought, and a representation of the “just before.” Refusing to describe the nature of this moment, Gillick leaves an absence of definition that is for us to occupy.

Let’s make the following assumptions: a version of history called a “point,” situated on a map, determined by two elements, a point of view or perspective, and a geographic, symbolic, or political distance. These two elements – angle and distance – correspond to the coordinates of a point. Each pair of coordinates therefore corresponds to references on a map; point (0, 0) exists. This model opposes the precise center (0, 0), with a multitude of other points whose position – we could say point of view – is defined by

5. Ibid. p. 237.

6. Ibid. p. 238.

their distance from the center. The more time passes, the more this multitude of points and intermediary distances multiply, leading to a situation where the precise center is just a product of its different versions. Time is relative to whatever traverses it. In this sense we can only move forward in the same space, allowing different people to develop different concepts of time simultaneously. What space is able express such distances?

#### PLAN: HISTORY

There was a first day. But was it the beginning?

Seated around a table are six young women from Lithuania, Poland, Bosnia, Italy, France. Their origins alone embody different facets of history. The protagonists behind this meeting are not here.

One is in New York and will soon be joining them. Subject of this meeting, his absence has been the catalyst of an idea: establishing a situation without defining its meaning beforehand.<sup>7</sup> At the beginning, he will be the silent center, arranging the empty spaces, the negotiating table (as big as possible). He will let comments fly echoing in the hygienic brilliance of the furniture specially designed for discussion, while ideas will bubble up, imbuing, gradually permeating, the forms he has produced. Thus he will become a functional surface, as awareness of his silence will be the impetus for discourse.

The other is in Lyon; he is the Critic. From time to time he will want a halt in discussions and will perhaps have some influence when the ideas become more concrete. He will try negotiating.

#### GRENOBLE 2013

The six people are seated around the table and already contours have been traced. "To my mind that surely explains the disenchantment of our generation" says one of them. "But for us the fall consecrated our utopia: get to the other side," says a second.

"History is fiction, it doesn't concern me. I am not, in fact, very interested in politics," comments the third. "But the Revolution? History is the product of social advances in which we find ourselves today; there is a historical reality," argues the fourth. With a quick move, the third brushes away the crumbs from breakfast, scattered on the tablecloth. She only has satsumas for breakfast. She remembers that in her country, Christmas was suddenly announced only by the annual appearance of the fruit in the markets.

"You know what I'm talking about," continues the fourth, "civil war in your country is the confrontation of two fictive selves and it concerns us, this definition of history," she shoots at the fifth, still silent. "It isn't a civil war, it's an invasion," retorts the fifth, who now lives between two borders: the old one, the river whose bridge was destroyed, and the new one surrounded by the main boulevards. During the invasion, her parents sent her to Croatia, to her grandparents.

"But why would it be a comedy?" asks the sixth. "I find this film a bit violent even if I think that in the struggle for their rights, certain groups have used legitimate violence." "Do you really believe these pictures? If so, what roles do they have in the story?"

"Paris, Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze ... " retorts the first, "Liberty, equality, fraternity," takes up the third.

7. "We would prefer to see our working process as connected with a necessity to constantly redefine the points when micro-conclusions become significant and to spread them across any given time period rather than saving them up for the end." Liam Gillick, *Discussion Island/Big Conference Centre*, Kunstverein Ludwigsburg and Orchan Gallery Derry, 1997, p. 55.

## PARIS 2014

“Tomorrow I’m going to the Tuileries. It is the image I had of France before coming here. Besides, it’s maybe the only that I’ll keep,” says the third. “They are the courtyard gardens and the king’s ideological space,” notes the fourth.

“There’s an exhibition of Nika Autor at the Jeu de Paume, inspired by left-wing propaganda films, their montage, the power, direct and indirect, that they exert on their time and history. She examines the cinematographic heritage of newsreels following its various metamorphoses up to today in the context of the radical changes caused by the breaking-up of Yugoslavia.”<sup>8</sup>

“The insurgents Marching on the Tuileries in 1792 sanctioned the French Revolution that started in 1989,” continues the fourth. “Interesting ... Not!” comments the sixth.

## Ukraine 2014

“Did you see that France has not canceled any trade agreements with Russia?” smiles the first, “Russia will never invade Crimea, it can’t do that. There’s an international strategy,” defends the fourth. “Come on, it does what it wants,” asserts the first, “my brother hesitated between art and the army, he chose the army,” she continues. “He has just received his mobilization papers. Putin can invade us too.” “If he continues to annex our countries, at the École du Magasin there will be more Russians at the end of the year than there have been up till now ... ” murmurs the second. “That would be coherent with the art market ... ” grins the sixth.

We, the six characters, are already in a staged frame, together to think over, in depth, a given situation, synchronically, and for a limited time. This situation already took place 20 years ago, it took place two years ago, it has taken place many times in reality, but each of its reactivations corresponds to different needs and contexts. This dimension is the negotiation space where versions of History answer and short-circuit one another. He [who is “He”?] talks to us of a common utopia, that is to say the possibility of constructing a hypothetical spirit-mirror of the times. This negotiation space seems contrived, however, to be tentative to define it while ensuring the potentiality of escape, of a continuation, of another becoming. In this perspective, Liam Gillick’s collaborators, the scenario characters, the exhibition curators, play the role of “beta-testers.” Playing the game, they work on their discussions and repeatedly test the validity of the work’s assumptions: is common space still functional? Is it productive? Does it enable creation?

Our game is to envisage History, through the experience of multiple proximities, distances, and points of view, so as to create the modalities of our own autonomy. By reappropriating the negotiation space created by Gillick, we have transformed it into an illocutionary<sup>9</sup> act that “neither presupposes nor creates a unity, but initiates a series of debates on the nature of the people and on what they want” according to Judith Butler. She specifies, “which does not mean that they all agree, but only that they understand that self-making is a collective and shared process.”<sup>10</sup>

This game is our version of their History.

8. From the press release of Nika Autor’s exhibition at Musée du Jeu de Paume, Paris, *Film d’actualités – l’actu est à nous. Satellite 7. A proposal from Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez*,” February 11–May 18, 2014.

9. John Langshaw Austin, *How to Do Things with Words: The William James Lectures*, ed. J.O. Urmson and M. Sbisá, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1962; delivered at Harvard University in 1955.

10. Judith Butler, “Nous, le peuple: réflexions sur la liberté de reunion [We, the People: Reflections on the Freedom of Assembly],” *Qu’est-ce qu’un peuple?* La Fabrique, Paris 2013, p. 59. Translated into English for this publication by Jan Nowacki.



GRAND PRIX VIEWING PLACE, 1994

First exhibited in *Grand Prix*, curated by Axel Huber,  
Galerie Pierre Nouvion, Monaco, 1994

Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012; Magasin, 2014

Tent, music player

Dimensions determined by chosen tent.

A tent installed on a mountainside. From inside the tent a looped version of the song  
*The Chain* by Fleetwood Mac can be heard.





Magasin, 2014



Left: Magasin, 2014  
Right: Hessel Museum, 2012

Hessel Museum, 2012



199A-199B 171.

LOST PARADISE INFORMATION SERVICE (WINDOW PIECE), 1994

LOST PARADISE INFORMATION SERVICE (ARCHIVE), 1994

First exhibited in *Lost Paradise*, curated by Barbara Steiner, Kunstraum, Vienna, 1994  
Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012; Magasin, 2014  
Dimensions variable.

The establishment of a parallel information service to run alongside an exhibition.  
A series of posters – of identical design but printed on colored paper – should display alternative titles for an exhibition along with contact information for the artist. A resulting archive of information surrounding the project should be displayed on a floor-based orange disc.

“Having worked on a number of parallel activities, including *Documents*, with Henry Bond, *84 Diagrams*, and *German Research Service Complete Archive*, I always felt that it might be possible to evolve a parallel information set up that complimented a fairly standard exhibition structure. The opportunity arose during the exhibition *Lost Paradise*, curated by Barbara Steiner. It was possible for me to operate closely alongside the show, working within it and reaching beyond it. *Information Service* was not a replacement for the existing structures of the place, rather it was designed to operate in a more layered and responsive way, often focusing on one receiver of information rather than a notional large potential public. In addition, a number of alternative titles were proposed for the show and appropriate posters produced. Plans of the gallery were provided and supplementary information sent out with the normal mailer. The files that documented my activity were placed on a platform designed by Jorge Pardo, one of the artists in the show. The complete archive exists for exhibition in different environments.”  
Liam Gillick, 1996

Realized by H.E.N.S. (Arlen Austen and Jason Boughton), (Hessel Museum) and the École du Magasin.





LOST PARADISE, 2012  
HESSEL MUSEUM, BARD CENTER  
H.E.N.S. LOST PARADISE SECOND-TIER SUBCONTRACTING CENTER LLC

June 23rd–December 21st 2012  
Bard Center for Curatorial Studies  
Bard College  
Annandale-on-Hudson, NY 12504

admin@hannseislernailsalon.com

Marking the twentieth anniversary of the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard, the Hanns Eisler Nail Salon (H.E.N.S.) consolidates a new limited liability company dedicated to one of the most influential bodies of work in the 1990s – Liam Gillick’s subcontracting. Until recently it had been axiomatic that no artist would outsource core competencies, those functions that give their artworks a strategic advantage or make them unique. H.E.N.S. Lost Paradise Second-Tier Subcontracting Center LLC is leading the pack with its cutting edge innovation in the cultural field.

#### VISION STATEMENT

H.E.N.S. Lost Paradise Second-Tier Subcontracting Center LLC imagines a world in which workers seize the means of production and distribution, dismantle the ideological fantasies that link desire to power and accumulation, and engage in ceaseless polymorphously perverse amorous contestation. But most importantly we endeavor in a world where precarious cultural workers engage in uncompensated immaterial labor to generate discourse around the work of established artists.

#### WHY ART NEEDS H.E.N.S.’S SUB-SUB-CONTRACTING

Alternately known as “facilities management” or “discursive practice,” subcontracting is a strategy by which an artist contracts out major functions to specialized and efficient service providers. Are you concerned that you won’t reap the benefits that accrue to leftist artists who present representations of socially invisible labor? Don’t worry! H.E.N.S. sub-sub-contracting insures that you extract value from invisible labor while accruing all the cultural capital that comes from interrogating it on a representational plane. With H.E.N.S. sub-sub-contracting you can have your cake and eat it too! Additionally, your tired discursive strategies receive a hot injection of nubile intellectual juice and you are freed up for more time, revealing multiple and contingent realities at the bar.

#### WHY H.E.N.S. IS THE INDUSTRY LEADER

H.E.N.S., formerly a small artist-run project engaged in fostering interpenetrations between artist and activist milieus, has blossomed into an industry leader in the burgeoning field of second-tier arts subcontracting. From paintings to discursive platforms and beyond, H.E.N.S. offers a plethora of attractive means by which to reinvigorate core competencies and buttress your business against the vicissitudes of critical discourse. Unlike most of the businesses in the exhibition which act as merely first-tier subcontracted functionaries recreating Gillick’s works from the 1990s, H.E.N.S. offers excellence not just in the field of relational recreation but, more importantly, an expanded view of the radical becomings latent in second-tier subcontracting.

#### OUR STORY

In 1993, Liam Gillick was undertaking product development for a group show entitled Lost Paradise curated by Barbara Steiner for the Kunstraum Vienna. Frustrated by the curator’s PR for the show, with its reference to failed Utopias, and seeking to distinguish his practice from the Anglo-Saxon fetish for ironic representations of the failed project of modernism, Liam created the *Lost Paradise Information Service*. This innovative business model offered a distinct counter-narrative to a discerning clientele. Brilliantly challenging the ideology in which artworks could be said to be “about” the failure of utopia, Gillick posted contrarian press releases in the museum’s windows giving alternative titles to the exhibition and differing readings of its works. Gillick heroically combated the doxa of failed Utopia, elucidating new “becomings” inert in the shifting and shimmering activities of new art!

However, Liam’s triumph was to be short lived. In our current business climate where the continual predatory mutations of capital mean that recuperation is ever nipping at your heels, Gillick saw his business strategy flailing. Yesterday’s vital shifting and shimmering, if not properly maintained, can become today’s not-so-fresh feeling, and that is why Gillick turned to H.E.N.S.’ trained team of experts to keep his radically generative discursive practice a leading market competitor.

#### SERVICES

By subcontracting the maintenance and upkeep of your discursive proliferation to the H.E.N.S. sub-sub-contracting team, you can rest assured that the deterritorializations your practice generates will proliferate long beyond the operating life of the average machinic assemblages of desires.

For big artists, such as Gillick, H.E.N.S. augments in-house staff during peak times such as retrospectives or biennials, providing endless discourse around the “complexities” of institutional compromise.

For medium-sized artists we bring specialized expertise that may not be available internally: alternative discourse enhancement, refined arbitrage utilizing knowledge outside of the contemporary arts field, and coaching in the conversion of identification across class divides into exchange value.

Smaller artists use us as an on-demand product development department.

Crucially, H.E.N.S. offers protection in the event that liberal commentators dismiss your work as lacking in spectacularly authentic self-transparent political speech-acts. If critics neglect your careful parsing of forms of control integral to the functioning of capitalism, and accuse you of innocuous party planning (e.g. Bishop vs Gillick 2005) you can rest easy! Our trained team of experts will be on the scene, dismantling the crass ascription of singular authorship to your person, and stable representational modalities to your work. The proliferating throng of precarious immaterial workers to whom we have sub-sub-contracted your work will proliferate alternative discourse across capitalism’s endlessly proliferating surfaces of consumption and distribution, rendering the original critique irrelevant. This method has proven effective for preventing damage that can seriously affect the long-term health of your company.

#### PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The current stage in the evolution of subcontracting is the development of strategic

partnerships. Throughout the course of *From 199A to 199B: Liam Gillick* H.E.N.S. Lost Paradise Second-Tier Outsourcing Center will present a series of projects which elucidate Gillick's practice. If you would like to join our qualified staff of precarious workers and engage in uncompensated labor to generate discourse around Gillicks' work, or the work of other established artists, please send your name and contact information to [admin@hannseislernailsalon.com](mailto:admin@hannseislernailsalon.com).

You are also invited to leave your picture and phone number on the Orange Circle Subcontracted Immaterial Worker Agonistic Yiffing Platform in the third gallery to the right in the exhibition.

Orange Circle Subcontracted Immaterial Worker Agonistic Yiffing Platform Emblematic of the depth of H.E.N.S. experience generating radical thought via resistance to utopian objectification and our engagement with the field of architecture as an alternative democratic practice, the Orange Circle Subcontracted Immaterial Worker Agonistic Yiffing Platform (OCSIWAYP) is a core model for reconfiguring mechanisms of social practice within the vocabulary of new art. Throughout the course of the project the platform will become a receptacle for critiques of Gillick's practice, production of which H.E.N.S. will outsource to an array of nubile art practitioners. Currently on view in the glass doors in front of the museum is a retrospeculative account of Gillick's exhibition by John Russell and Gean Moreno.

#### TESTIMONIALS

*Show was just shaping up to be awful drab, it was like none of the work had its original spark and I say, "Liam have you considered subcontracting to H.E.N.S.?"*  
—Tom Eccles

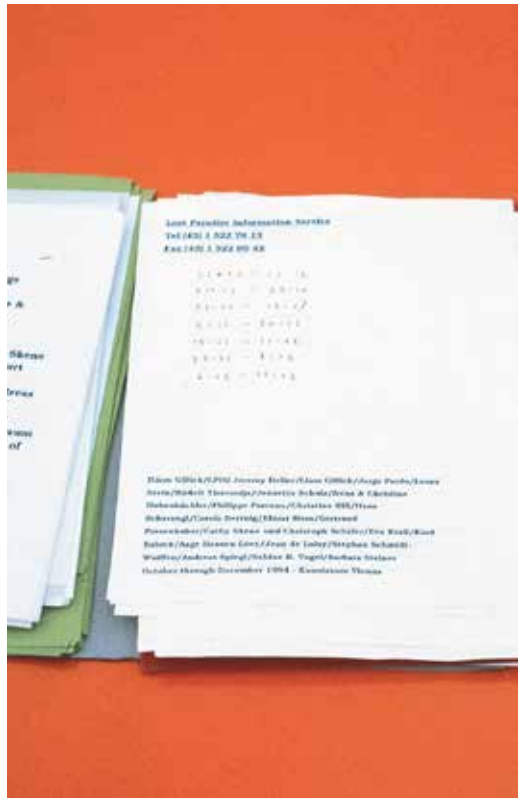
*I generated discourse from eight till ten and sometimes later each day. It is all a blur. All I remember is a feeling of exhaustion and emptiness.*  
—H.E.N.S. subcontracted cultural worker #242

*It was like nothing I said about the guy would stick. The H.E.N.S. team was just too good.*  
—Claire Bishop

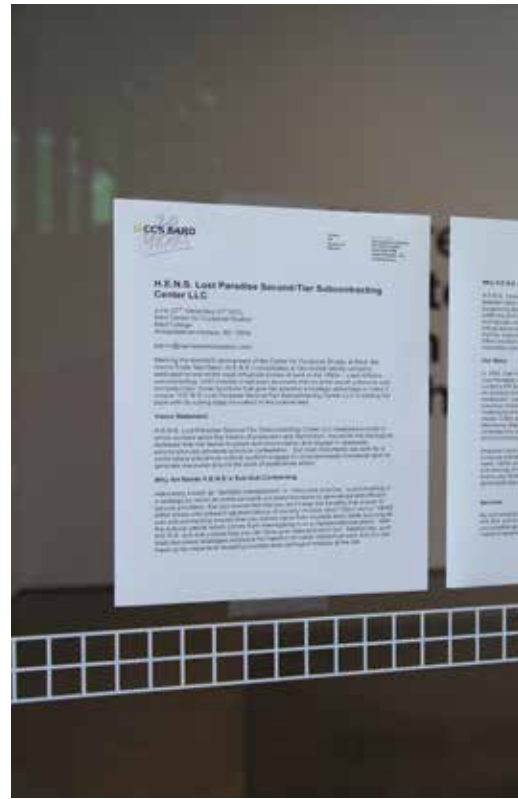
*The ideology of cosmopolitanism is a weapon in the struggle of imperialist plunderers seeking world domination.*  
—V I Lenin

*Liam Gillick is not the enemy and fuck all of you who say he is! You can crawl up his ass or hate him and both are awesome depending on how good the party is and how drunk you are! Gillick's paintings for this exhibition have created situations in which the outcome of the work was often incomplete without involving the institution and questioning the expanded role of the exhibition visitor. Wowza!*

—James McCafferlity H.E.N.S. Director for Curatorial Studies



Left: Hessel Museum, 2012  
Right: Vienna, 1994



Hessel Museum, 2012



Hessel Museum, 2012



Left: Hessel Museum, 2012  
Right: Vienna, 1994





ANGELA BULLOCH AND LIAM GILLICK, AN OLD SONG AND A NEW DRINK, 1993

First exhibited in *Café Beaubourg*, Paris, for one night in October 1993

Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012; Magasin, 2014

*The Ten Commandments of a Man Given to a Woman* by Prince Buster played over a sound system, a cocktail comprising three measures of Irish whiskey.

Dimensions variable.

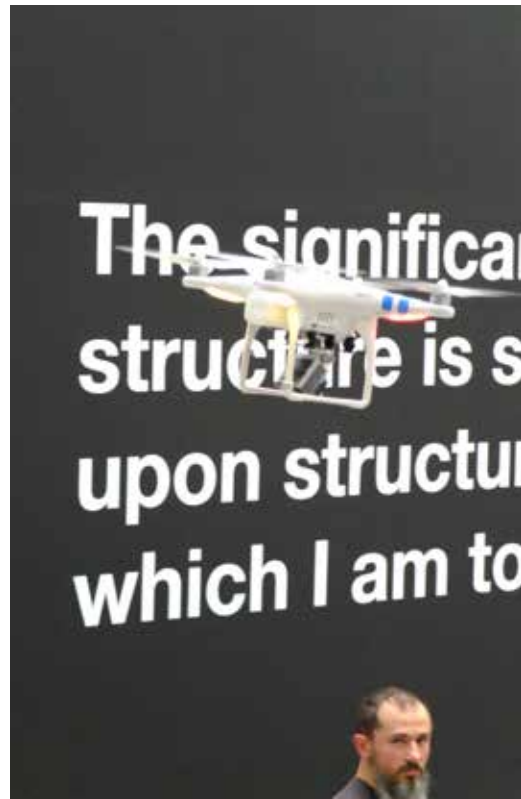
During the work, the record *The Ten Commandments of a Man Given to a Woman* by Prince Buster should be played in an endless loop on a sound system. A designated person should make cocktails comprising three measures of Irish whiskey in a glass. Participants in the work should be anyone who is in the building at the time who chooses to participate. This can include gallery visitors, workers, and others.

Realized with visitors (Hessel Museum); with the workers, curators, staff, and installation crew (Magasin)





Magasin, 2014





## THE PINBOARD PROJECT, 1992

First exhibited at Galerie Monika Spruth, Cologne, 1992; Schipper und Krome, Cologne; Le Case d'Arte, Milan Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012

A series of one-meter-square notice boards constructed from particleboard covered in dyed jute cloth. Various papers.

Each board carries instructions for use printed on a sheet of colored Ingres paper. Additionally, each board is associated with two or more journals or magazines, which can be used to provide content for the board. The boards may also carry any other information that the user feels might be relevant or useful. These works should be deployed in exhibition situations in locations that render their status unclear. In some cases the works are interactive. In others can be used to display information about the exhibition within which they are shown.

## PINBOARD PROJECT 1992

- 1) Pinboards can be constructed by the artist or by another individual or individuals approved by the artist. Specific size and material plans can be supplied.
- 2) Each piece can vary in size and is based on single one-meter-square units. These can be used alone or combined with other boards to make up larger pieces. Each board is made of chipboard on a frame covered in colored hessian to be selected from a swatch provided by the artist.
- 3) Each board comes with a set list of journals, bulletins, and magazines (including addresses) which the user of the board will hopefully acquire.
- 4) The board(s) can be provided ready made, complete with selected articles, photographs, and items of interest provided by the artist.
- 5) Any other material belonging to the user or the artist can also be pinned onto the boards if it seems interesting or might improve the piece.
- 6) The pieces can remain relatively unchanged throughout the exhibition or ownership, or may be changed quite regularly.
- 7) The essential quality of the work is affected by the amount of time, energy, and interest put into it by the user or the artist.
- 8) It is quite possible that in certain circumstances the boards can be "personalized." Specific interests can be catered for, such as pornography, architecture, music, or model railways, even favorite novelists or specific reference to the place where the work is to be installed.

Liam Gillick, 1992

Realized by Ian Berry, Jose Luis Blondet, Cecilia Brunson, David Ho, Yeung Chan, Vincenzo de Bellis, Jennifer Dunlop-Fletcher, Monserrat Albores Gleason, Ruba Katrib, Nathan Lee, Tomáš Pospiszyl, Chen Tamir, Gilbert Vicario, and Tom Eccles (Hessel Museum)







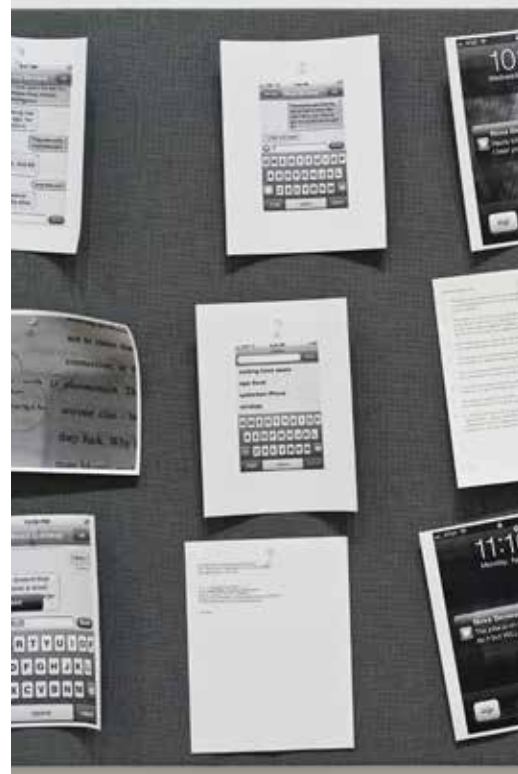
Left: Ian Berry  
Right: Luis Blondet



Left: Tom Eccles  
Right: Jennifer Dunlop-Fletcher



Left: Cecilia Brunson  
Right: Vincenzo de Bellis



Left: Nathan Lee  
Right: Pinboard Project (Corn), 1992



# A LOW TECHNOLOGY DEVICE FOR THE TRANSFER AND MODIFICATION OF INFORMATION

## CHEN TAMIR

My instructions were:

Pinboard Project, 1992 (each 100 x 100 x 4 cm)

13 one-meter-square pin boards constructed from burlap-covered chipboard sheets hung on the wall. Instructions for use printed on a sheet of paper fixed to the boards with standard pushpins. Various potential items for use on the boards are also supplied. A low technology device for the transfer and modification of information.

Involvement: Instruction for use of work to be pinned to the boards. Captions for all works in the exhibition to be pinned on the boards. Three journals, archival or current, to be selected for each board by former CCS students. Selections from the journals to be copied and pinned to the boards. Any other material that the former CCS students think might be relevant can also be pinned to the boards.

I complied.

Of course, in addition to my (lavish, self-conscious, rambling) bits of journal entries required for Michael Brenson's wonderful class in 2007, I had to include "other relevant material."

I proposed the following:

Responding to the educational context of From 199A–199B, this pinboard will focus on the personal and global sides of pedagogy by including selections from a journal I kept during my studies at CCS, international accords for education reform, and a motivational calendar. The pinboard will include the following:

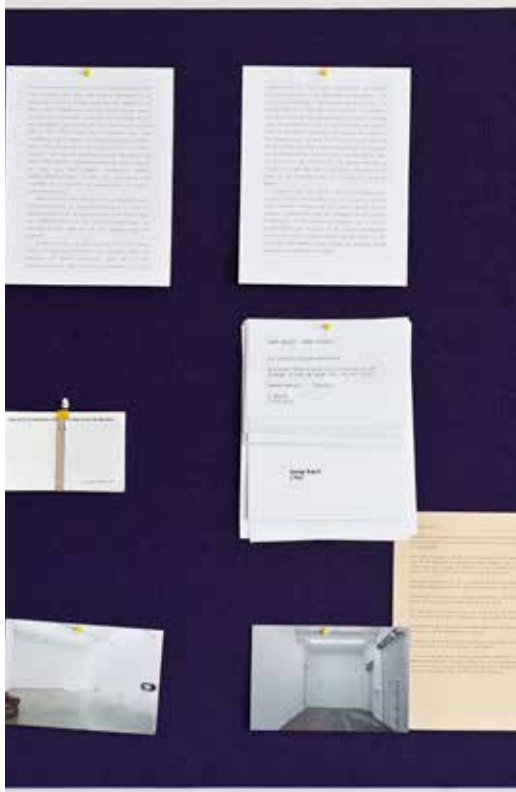
1. "Pinboard Conditions" written by Gillick, scanned and photocopied several times to create the aesthetic of old, academic PDFs to reference change over time through repetition.
2. The Bologna Accord, also known as the Bologna Process, signed into policy in 1999, thereby creating the European Higher Education Area by standardizing academic degrees and homogenizing higher education, radically changing higher education not only in Europe but in many other countries as well.
3. Entries from my journal, written to meet a requirement during my first-year Writing Practicum with Michael Brenson, printed out on letter paper and pinned to the board.
4. A USB stick (flashdrive) with a collection of seminal writing on contemporary higher education.
5. A 2007 motivational calendar, opened to an inspirational quote.

It was a funny moment of an artist curating a curator. The tables had turned; I was being schooled, or at least challenged, by being put on display. My only way out was to point back to the very pedagogical structures that had put us both in this situation.

Much has been made of the art school – and, by extension, curating school – over the past couple of decades. Cynics claim that artists and curators are simply molded into being better cogs in the market-meaning system that is the contemporary art world. Others claim that art (and curating) cannot really be taught – as if one were simply born with the aristocratic right to God-given "talent" and that was that. But ever since Martin Gropius rejigged the curriculum of the Bauhaus School of Art, the education of art has been relatively democratized or pluralized, at least to the extent that scholarships and parental assistance allow. And this opening up of art pedagogy in the 1920s and 30s coincided with the redefinition of the art object through abstraction, Dada, and later conceptualism.

We are in an age of online art courses with thousands of graduates. MFA and BFA programs are integrating computer programming and business management training into their curricula. The lines between disciplines are blurring, and so is the object of art, which has long since been through processes of dematerialization, to the point where Social Practice and Relational Aesthetics are themselves hitting a wall. So we seem to have come full circle when an artist turns the tables and gives a curator an assignment – using the most basic of materials, a pinboard, a grayed out Mondrian square, an abstraction vastly different than what was vanguard a century ago. This new abstract, renewed since the early 1990s when it was originally proposed, points back to the most elementary building block of knowledge exchange. Only a few short steps removed from the Guttenberg Press if we consider its basic material as the printed word, it is light years away conceptually. We are directed back to the "Bauhaus" of art education and, of art in general, to a low technology device for the transfer and modification of information.





Left: Monserrat Albores Gleason  
Right: David Ho Yeung Chan



Left: Chen Tamir  
Right: Gilbert Vicario



Left: Ruba Katrib  
Right: Tomáš Pospiszyl



Left: Nathan Lee  
Right: Jennifer Dunlop-Fletcher





HENRY BOND AND LIAM GILLICK, DOCUMENTS, 1990 – 1993

First exhibited at Karsten Schubert, London 1990; Air de Paris, Nice, 1990

Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012

Framed photographs, Plexiglas-mounted texts

Dimensions variable.

A series of works that operates in parallel to standard media agencies. Events are selected from press agency announcements. When attending the events no press cards or other identification is used. Photographs are taken and recordings made. From this material one photograph and one text segment is selected for display.

“A series of works that operates in parallel to the standard media agencies such as newspapers and television news companies. Over a period of years the artists have obtained prior information and preedited material from organizations such as the Press Association, and attended the events listed. After a period of negotiation the work is formalized as black and white or color images, framed, and accompanied by a text. The work functions as a way to engage with parallel information structures. It provides a site for debate between the two artists and a way to question certain issues of representation in relation to our perception of authority in relation to “the event” as a key marker for our understanding of the way social power structures are organized.”

Liam Gillick, 1996





Hessel Museum, 2012



Liam Gillick 194.

199A-199B 195.



## BOOK READINGS

Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012; Magasin, 2014

### *MCNAMARA* (1992)

A scenario that relates a hypothetical relationship between former US Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, and Herman Kahn of the Rand Corporation.

### *ERASMUS IS LATE* (1995)

A book set the day before the mob becomes the workers.

### *DISCUSSION ISLAND BIG CONFERENCE CENTRE* (1997)

A book about speculation and planning.

### *MCNAMARA*

A script for a film produced from the notes made by a reviewer staying in London in the early 1990s in the margins of copies of various books. The final version of the script was produced in four versions to accompany an exhibition at Schipper & Krome gallery in Cologne in 1994. This was the “master” copy. A new script was written to accompany an edition of three cartoon films produced for the exhibition and originally shown on a Brionvega Algol television. The main characters are Robert McNamara and Herman Kahn of the Rand Corporation. The focus on McNamara as a guilty and complex figure predates the confessional tone of his autobiography *In Retrospect* (Knopf, New York, 1996).

Liam Gillick, 2009

### *ERASMUS IS LATE*

The book *Erasmus is Late* concerns a dinner in London that flashes between 1810 and 1997. A central tension is created from the knowledge that this dinner is taking place on the night before the mob is redefined as the workers. It is the last time they could be assessed as an incoherent group, and from this point on any position in society has to be negotiated rather than given. From now on every day is not the same, the near future is roughly predictable and potentially changeable. We have growth. Modern destabilization has set in. The book also functions as a guide to London, with the central character wandering around various sites for the development of free thought.

Liam Gillick, 1996

### *DISCUSSION ISLAND/BIG CONFERENCE CENTRE*

Turning away from the idea of specific historical characters toward processes, *Discussion Island* is a story that sweeps across various locations and situations in order to create a complex picture of how decisions are made at a point where there is no strongly shared ideological consensus about how the future should be. Or, to put it another way, how decisions are made during a period when people have been told that no collective progressive set of ideas are possible, nor can such ideas ever find a stable form. Looking at structural questions and detailed moments, *Discussion Island* starts in the new big conference center of the title. A large space within the building has gone unplanned and unnoticed in order to create a crisis, which will permit some degree of freedom within the planned structure. With this book the artworks related to it occurred both before and after the writing of the text, and in many cases set the scene for a text that had few clear locations.

Liam Gillick, 2009

Realized by students (Hessel Museum); theatre students (Magasin).

Liam Gillick 196.



199A–199B 197.





Magasin, 2014



Hessel Museum, 2012



DISCUSSION ISLAND/PREPARATION ZONE, 1998

First exhibited in *Kamikaze*, Galerie im Marstall, Berlin, 1998

Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012

Vodka, glitter

Dimensions variable.

A mixture of vodka, water, and glitter should be used to wash down the floors of the gallery or of the space under consideration. The work relates to the book *Discussion Island/Big Conference Centre* (1997), a text concerning the center ground of social and economic development. The enactment of the work addresses constant renovation, cycles of crisis, and exposure of apparently menial tasks.







Hessel Museum, 2012



Liam Gillick 202.

199A-199B 203.



A SEARCH FOR THE CENTRE GROUND KEPT IN CHECK BY  
VIOLENCE, DISORDER AND CONSPIRACY, 1998  
Originally exhibited in *Up on the 222nd Floor*, Air de Paris, Paris, 1998  
Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012  
Circular bronzed mirror  
Dimensions as large as possible.

A large mirror deployed in search of the three main characters from the book *Discussion Island/Big Conference Centre* (1997). The book features three protagonists – Ramsgate, Denmark, and Lincoln.





Hessel Museum, 2012



Liam Gillick 206.

199A-199B 207.

THE WINTER SCHOOL, 1996

First published by JRP editions, Geneva, 1996

Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College, 2012

Dimensions 42cm x 59.4cm.

A fictional story about a meeting of artists and thinkers in Kassel, Germany, in 1971 that proposes that the city become a permanent place of exhibitions and creative work rather than an exhibition site every five years. The final text is secreted in the documenta archive for the year 1971.





## THE WINTER SCHOOL

Last year. 1996. A winter scenario. Before the main event.

A moment spared for thinking back to another time. 1971.

A new structure could have been created, a kind of school.

A place to set action into action.

A projection into the near future. Changing everything. It's just that no one can remember the details.

Three people are looking for the original report. And they'll have to shift and flicker in order to reclaim that old forward thinking.

It's 1971. In a room, overlooking the lake, a series of reports are being written. But we only have access to fragments of this emerging structure. The voice of the report coordinator is indistinct and presently hard to identify. For the moment we will only be able to make out the first few lines. First a cough and then, "Discussion Island is a lost Celtic place, no longer missing. Clans maintained this shared site, each taking turns to farm it in yearly rotation. In the event of any dispute between them, people gathered on Discussion Island to thrash out and reorganize the crisis. An example of a desire for negotiated solutions that is part of a suppressed history. In parallel to this we now have a report that exposes an interest in people and situations where the location for action and analysis is focused upon the center. A reclamation of the near future through an understanding of the middle ground."

It's 1996. If you want to find the center of things then go to sleep. Not a coma sleep, but an active break toward reorganization. In this story there are three people, all heading off in different directions. We will see their travels and feel the complexity of their negotiations. They are trying to think ahead. They are all trying to reclaim the idea of projection. Projection as a tool, the predictive meanderings that maintain us all within a state of thrall. Reclaiming the near future at a time when we might believe that there is no point. And the first person is dreaming, if that is what it should be called. Half asleep and half awake. We are dealing with an individual this time. There are no longer any groups. Half asleep and half awake. Slipping thoughts. There is no bed here, but everything is comfortable enough. We are a long way from any cities. A great distance from any other buildings. But there is no isolation this time. There are only fragments in the sleep state. And it is a half sleep and half wake that is only sustained by small possibilities and elements of negotiation. So the first person is only half with us. Thinking about a number of objects and images from the recent past. In order to move ahead, it might be necessary to reflect just before the slumber. A good time for addressing those things that have only just happened. It seems as if this is the first person's role. It is a good moment to start a winter school. Off-season, out of sync.

It's still 1971. And on the lake outside the report room a man is struggling with a boat. It's distracting. Turning from the window and away from those concerns, a little more of the report may now be read. "So we are exposed to a persistent use of the phrase 'the middle ground.' It is important to understand such a term in relation to the socio-economic structure of society in general, and necessary to trap it in a report that is caught within a fiction. The middle ground, a broad, expanding area where you find negotiation, strategy, bureaucracy, compromise, planning, and projection. An area long recognized as that which is crucial to maintaining the deferment of solutions that lies at the heart of the liberal capitalist dynamic of promise and potential."

It's 1996. Something must be started. Images and objects from the recent past. Pens, televisions, and trousers? A series of questions leads to the problem of whether or not there is a real possibility of seeing any of these things clearly any longer. At least that's the problem for this first person. So let's slip away from the difficulties and the person that bears them and move around the outside of the place where the first person is caught between at least two states. We are circling the area of awakening. Now it is more like thinking aloud, but without the moving or speaking. Clear and precise. If only someone would arrive and explain that there is very little time left. There has to be a winter school. That is clear at least. An antidote within a series of shared moments, a smile plays across the person's lips as their thoughts turn to incomplete stratagems, all of them developing around a beautiful, decorated fir tree.

We approach that first person again. But this time, we start from quite a distance and we move in fast. Picking up the pace. It's as if we hadn't noticed before, there is a panel over-head. Multiple and bright colors are working away. Caught in the middle ground. Half awake. Half not awake. While considering the implications of bureaucracy, compromise, and negotiation. As we know by now, the first person is trying to be more precise and those thoughts are slipping once again. Try and pin down some moments where a winter school can work. Just before the main events. 1971, a year to remember. Now try that list again. A Brionvega television, a Bic Biro, velvet or corduroy? Try to collate a complete list of the things you would need in order to break through a progression of ideas. Times when the winter school could have gone into action, but no one had a timetable.

Leave the first person for a while. Under a canopy, safe and sound, everything is happening.

It's 1971. Away from the window a fire is now roaring. And the report coordinator places something vague into the flames. Holding a fixed gaze while the yellow flicker licks at an ambiguity. Just to see what will happen. A little test. A little boredom? Heat builds up and then a shout from the lake pulls the reporter's attention back. Read on. "This area is enormous and attempts to embrace us all. It is presented as the way things are but is clearly fought for. Put forward as the equilibrium into which structures naturally fall but clearly needs maintenance and continual action to keep it broad. The central zone is well recognized and in its earlier form was fought through the establishment of clear-cut battle lines with which to attack the bourgeois sensibilities that were seen to prop it up. We all know this form of barricade development. And we also know it is useless as a straightforward tool."

It's 1996 again. So shift away from number one and embrace mobility. Move through a series of streets. There are elements of the situation and environment that are recognizable. All of these elements need to be described. But some of the objects that we come across appear to function in parallel to our sense of the present. Yet there has to be some attempt to list it all down. A catching of all the parts and pieces. This task will have to be done before the winter school can really get under way.

The second person is in a bar. Pan around it for a minute or two. Dark crescents under every eye. They look up and away. This person came in about three minutes ago and made a winding interrupted trip to the bar. Stopping frequently to look and greet people. The second person is speaking to everyone they come across today. Talking up to the limit of distance and prepared to press on. And at every point there is some drawing back. A neat technique to defer the speaking process. All promise. They don't realize that the bar is not public, it's private. On the way through and out the other side, it soon becomes clear that the bar is a part of a house. Away on the other side is a work place, somewhere for the second person to get things done. Someone who thinks ahead at all times. For it is the moment to come up with a number of future scenarios. But hide them. Conceal them for a while, behind the familiarity of such engaging company.

We're back in 1971. Something has to happen in the winter. Is there more in the fragmented report? "This broad swathe of activity is generally seen as anything other than valuable territory for investigation. It is not mimicking the engagements of the middle ground that I am interested in, but the possibility of investigating the thrall within which the middle ground of strategized projection holds the potentially dynamized social and political structures that surround us. And along with any understanding of the middle ground must come a time-based conception of the role social and economic projection has played in guiding the development of our situation. A day to day addiction to trends and the forecasting."

It's 1996 for the last time and soon to be 1997. The third person is in an airplane traveling across a developed, well marked landscape. This person is making a series of mental sidesteps all of which look toward alternative options in relation to the landscape below. This person also investigates the possibility of expansion rather than merely development. All of these ideas are noted on a number of sick bags with a borrowed pen. Things are moving faster now. We cut between the first, second, and third person increasingly quickly. They start to argue and contradict each other without ever meeting. They are faced with no option and they are coming together. Closer and closer. It is winter and they arrive in a city. They pass each other by at the station without recognition and head off in different directions toward the flat muted tones of the immediate countryside. The Winter School is no longer only an option, it is a necessity.

1971. And in the house by the lake the sky is darkening. The days are short at this time of year. The report will be finished soon. Out of sync. But just in time.

Liam Gillick 1996

LIAM GILLICK AND ANGELA BULLOCH

WE ARE MEDI(EVIL) , 1994

First exhibited in *WM/Karaoke*, curated by Georg Herold, Portikus, Frankfurt, 1994

Exhibited Hessel Museum, Bard College

Dimensions variable.

A series of specific interventions for the Portikus in Frankfurt am Main, including a hole outside the building, a meadow planted in the grounds around the Portikus, and a video that documents and expands upon the work. The hole dug outside the Portikus was excavated by a team from the city of Frankfurt at the request of director Kasper Koenig. Koenig subsequently edited a small book in the form of a report on the findings made by the archaeological team.

ANGELA BULLOCH AND LIAM GILLICK

WE ARE MEDI(EVIL), HOLE OUTSIDE THE PORTIKUS;

ARCHEOLOGICAL RESEARCH, 1995

Foreword by Georg Herold

with a text by Bettina Eisentraut, Kerstin Thomas, and Rudolf Thönissen

21 x 14.9 cm; 24 pages

23 illustrations

Softcover

Portikus Frankfurt am Main, 1995

“In response to the invitation to consider the possibility of broader cultural concerns – such as football and Karaoke – as a structural metaphor as much as literal activity, a medieval scenario was proposed. A consideration of pre-football and pre-Karaoke positions. A hole was dug outside the Portikus and a meadow of wildflower seeds planted over the existing controlled park area that surrounds the building. In addition a video was produced that features the two artists explaining the thinking behind the work. Somewhat disguised, the artists are seen in a quasi-terrorist mode. A message from one time to another. A book was written by a number of archaeologists and produced by Portikus that documents the findings within the hole and sets out the parameters of the project.”

Liam Gillick, 1996

Realized by (name to be supplied)







Hessel Museum, 2012



Portikus, Frankfurt-am-Main, 1994





# ANNA TOMCZAK MIMICRY

“Many thoughts have come and gone ...”<sup>1</sup>

## MIMICRY<sup>2</sup>

A collective game for the Artist, the Institution, and Cooperators Mimicry is a strategic board game, which involves negotiations, discussion skills, and a time element. The goal of the game is simple: to set up the exhibition of an Artist in an Institution in association with a team of Cooperators. The game can be modified by adding additional tasks, like defining catalogues or website content or planning special events to accompany the exhibition. The game has a few optional starting frames leading to multiple scenarios – the final results of shared discussions. Players must not only be skilled in diplomacy and negotiation, but aware of the tension and dynamics of a group participating in a game. This paper will discuss the preparation, rules, and possible strategies of the game.

“Forget about the ball and get on with the game.”<sup>3</sup>

## STRATEGY

The game establishes a situation of collective work, which doesn’t mean that each player has to agree to work in and for a group. They should bear in mind that: the Artist(s), the Institution, and the Cooperator(s), have a different status, zones of power, and personal or institutional interests.

It is good to keep in mind a few strategic tips. The game doesn’t necessarily set up the winner; it is about an interesting discussion and potential exchange of thoughts. What makes it dynamic are turning points that can be caused by the players by changing decisions, setting up a difficult character, self-interest, or experimental ideas.

## PLAYERS

This game can be played by a minimum of 3 players and up to 8. The more players there are increases the potential of discussion and raises the level of difficulty in the game. All players have to describe themselves as precisely as they can or want.

## THE ARTIST(S)

This player should define who is an/are artist(s) in a game, taking a name(s) from art history or inventing their own personality. In this case the Artist should be described with the following details: date of birth and/or death, interests, a list of where she or he exhibited recently (maybe nowhere), an art market price or cultural capital. The artist has the final word in each round. Once during the game she or he can propose an alternative option for the exhibition, which may enliven negotiations and discussions. Depending on the personality, selected beforehand, the Artist(s) has to define their

purpose for cooperating with the Institution and Cooperators: a retrospective exhibition, a blockbuster show aimed at private collectors, a new project, etc. The Artist defines a written list of artworks that will be the object of the game (see the chapter Game Preparation).

## THE INSTITUTION

The player impersonating the Institution has to define what kind of organization she or he is: a commercial gallery, a national gallery, an art center, a museum, etc. The goals of the Institution can be defined as: not spending too much money and limiting the budget, organizing space following safety regulations, controlling realization time, promoting itself as much as possible. This player is the personification of a structure, which exhibits different factors and is dependent on strong social and political contexts. The Institution can also declare itself to be independent or underground; it can specify its political sympathies. The Institution also provides a plan of the space, which can be fictional or inspired by an existing building.

## THE COOPERATOR(S)

They are directly responsible for setting up the exhibition. In the first part of the game – during the first few rounds – they should share their analysis of the proposed works. In the following rounds they discuss with the Artist and the Institution how to juxtapose artworks on an abstract level in order to find the solution to placing them in a physical gallery space. They negotiate their proposals both with the Institution and the Artist. Their process is disturbed by unexpected events from “C’est la vie” cards. Their role is also to moderate discussions and intellectual exchanges between themselves and the Artist.

## WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR A GAME

A few sheets of A3 paper, pencils, time.

## BOARD

The game board is set up by the Institution. It consists of a plan including an exhibition space (up to 10 rooms). Anyspacewhatever.

## C’EST LA VIE CARDS

Cards include events that influence the direction of the game; the players cannot predict this and so have no influence over them. Cards are not supposed to be shuffled before the game.

## GAME PREPARATION

The game begins with the Institution’s description of itself followed by an invitation to the Artist, the aim of the exhibition and the time in which all players have to set it up (a minimum of 90 minutes or 10 rounds). The Artist introduces herself or himself, the artworks proposed for the exhibition, and a few others that may be reconsidered during the game. There is no minimum or maximum number of works that can be put forward. The list of artworks remains uncovered on the table during the whole game. After the Artist’s statement, the Cooperators define the order of negotiation in each round. If they cannot agree they roll dice which can be used each time players cannot decide or do not want to continue the discussion. Even numbers mean YES, odd numbers are NO as an answer to a properly formulated question. All players should agree to the game’s duration in minutes or number of rounds.

1. Liam Gillick, “From a Truncated Correpondance” in: *Proxemics*, JRP Ringer, Zurich & Les Presses du réel, Dijon, p. 182.

2. The name of the game relates to the classification of games people play by Roger Caillois in his book *Les jeux et le hommes. Le masque et le vertige* (Paris, 1958). Mimicry, alongside agon [competition], alea [chance], and ilinx [Greek

for whirlpool; vertigo] is a type of game in which players temporarily accept a game’s illusion, becoming a part of settled, conventional, and fictional world, accepting assigned roles and functions. There is no place for luck; constant invention is indispensable. The aim of the game is not a clear victory, only the pleasure of playing and inventing new situations.

3. Ibid. p. 181.

## THE GAME

One idea can be discussed in each round. The round starts with the Cooperator's proposal being discussed by the Institution. The Institution can agree, refuse, or ask for the artist's opinion, making its position neutral.

In the case of a negative answer, it is the Cooperator's decision to propose the same idea to the Artist. If this player also refuses, the Cooperator loses the next round but can still try to push this idea with new arguments later on. It may not be surprising that after proposing a non-institutionally accepted idea to the Artist, the relationship with the Institution in the next round may be harsh. However, this is not certain and it depends on the circumstances of the game.

In the case of a positive answer on the part of the Institution, the Cooperator can present the proposal to the Artist. The idea is accepted definitively and written on the board when both Artist and Institution agree to it.

Each idea – written on a game board or not – can always be changed or cancelled. Ideas can be cancelled by all players, but only the Institution and the Artist do not have to justify their decision. Cancellation depends on the relationship between the Co-operators.

Each time an idea is put on the board its author takes a “C'est la vie” card and proceeds to carry out what is written on it.

When the established time has lapsed the game is over. No winner need be selected. It is up to the players to designate the winner and decide what makes her or him a winner.

It is possible that when the designated time is up the exhibition is not decided.

The players gain experience.

Players can continue the game for their own pleasure after the end.

Nobody can lose the game, even if the Artist decides to quit before the end of the fixed time. There is still a discussion process remaining.

## POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

Preparation is essential to the whole process. By defining the Artist, the profile of the Institution and other arbitrary contexts the new situation is established. That creates a potential. Multiple connections among players can be specified during the game. They will also be defined through player's reactions during discussions. Human factors – weak points, emotions – can be used in negotiations. Below a few possible scenarios for the game of Mimicry:

### 1. RECREATION

Players choose an exhibition that has already taken place in art history. Using documentation of the exhibition or just their own memory they try to set it up again. By discussing different potentials and discourses of the artworks selected, the profile of both the Artist and the Institution, they revisit a place in time.

## LES ATELIERS DU PARADISE

Artists: Philippe Parreno, Pierre Joseph, Philippe Perrin. Institution: Gallery Air de Paris, Nice, 1990

Game: In this case players can modify roles and choose a few Artists and one Cooperator. Proposed artworks and exhibition concepts will be discussed again. Players cannot ignore their experience and time lapse of the event. They can also decide to exclude “the Institution” player from the structure of the game. This decision, however, should be by a statement of the Cooperators and Artists.

Result: Either a “new” exhibition Les ateliers du Paradise, or a failure.

### 2. RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBITION

Institution: Kunsthalle in Geneva. The exhibition will take up the whole space and will be accompanied by a catalogue.

Artist: Erwin Wurm

Artworks: Selected pieces from the series of *One Minute Sculptures*, which the Institution wants to recreate in the exhibition space in cooperation with professional dancers/actors/models.

Game: The concept of the exhibition is defined by the Institution. The Artist does not agree with the concept of the exhibition, Cooperators have to define their position. Negotiations on the curatorial statement will be the first part of the game.

### 3. EXHIBITION OF A NEW PROJECT

Institution: An independent project space in a medium-sized city, subsidized by its left-wing authorities; only a few people work in this place, but they have a wide audience, and esteem in the art world.

Artist (created for the game): Gerome Doubidou, a 26 year-old French artist, painter, musician, and photographer. His inspiration: cinéma noir.

Idea of the project: create a series of works around the movie *Sunset Boulevard* by Billy Wilder.

Game: to define details of the project and works to be produced for the exhibition purpose.

Enjoy the game!

## “C'EST LA VIE” EXAMPLE CARDS

Your last proposal is impossible to carry out for technical reasons.

Production of your work is taking too long, lose a round.

You have no Internet connection, miss the next round.

Your assistant made a mistake in your diary, lose a round.

It's a nice day today. The Artist is in a good mood. She or he agrees to your proposal.

You've found a sponsor! Go overboard with your next idea.

You've lost financial backing. Your exhibition proposal is too difficult and abstract for the sponsor.

Everything is fine and going well!

Over the last few days you've been so well organized you have more free time. Next round you can propose two solutions/discuss two questions.

It turns out that the Institution has no more money. You all have to discuss the project as it is and find low-cost solutions.

The Artist is traveling and can't be reached. He is not participating in the next two rounds, so no final decision can be made.

You're all going to a different city for an important event. Time is passing. All players lose one round or 10 minutes from allotted game time.

This text and the conception of the game were inspired by Liam Gillick's writings, especially texts from *Proxemics* (JRP|Ringer, Zurich, & Les Presses du réel, Dijon): "From a Truncated Correspondence (Simile: Belly Laugh)"; "Forget about the Ball and Get on with the Game" (1995); "Les Ateliers du Paradise" (1990); "Prevision. Should the Future Help the Past?" (1998); "Lothar Hampel's Rigged Rooms. Surviving Survival" (1999); " Exterior Day. Pierre Huyghe and the Role of the Implicated Player" (1999). Also: Liam Gillick, *Erasmus is Late*, London: Book Works, first edition 1995, second edition 2000.



## BIOGRAPHIES

### BARD STUDENTS AND ALUMNI

#### JUANA BERRÍO

Juana Berrío (b. 1979, Bogotá, Colombia) is the director and curator of Kiria Koula, a contemporary art gallery and bookstore located in San Francisco. She has worked as an Education Fellow at the New Museum in New York (2012) and at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis (2010-2011) and served as a curatorial assistant for Massimiliano Gioni (2013 Venice Biennale). As an independent curator and writer, she has been a contributor for Frog Magazine, Bielefelder Kunstverein, Kadist Foundation (Paris), among others. Before moving to the United States in 2006, Berrío taught art history at the University of Jorge Tadeo Lozano and Italian language and art history at the University of Los Andes in Bogotá, Colombia. She earned a BFA from the University of La Sapienza – Accademia di Belle Arti in Rome, an MFA from the University of Minnesota, and an MA in Curatorial Studies from Bard College.

#### OLGA DEKALO

Olga Dekalo is a Curatorial Associate at the non-for-profit alternative space, PARTICIPANT INC, and is a graduate of CCS Bard (2013).

#### SARAH FRITCHEY

Sarah Fritchey is the Curator and Gallery Director at Artspace in New Haven, CT. She is a contributor to ArtForum.com, Art New England Magazine, and The Fairfiled Courant/Hartford Advocate.

#### SARAH HIGGINS

Sarah Lynn Higgins is Graduate Program Coordinator at the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College. She completed a M.A. in Curatorial Studies from the Center for Curatorial Studies (CCS Bard) in 2013. She has been a Curatorial Fellow under Lauren Cornell at the New Museum in NYC, and the Curatorial Coordinator for the 2013 MFA Thesis Exhibition, Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts, Bard College.

#### ANNIE LARMON

Annie Godfrey Larmon (2013) is Assistant Editor at Artforum and author, with Ken Okiishi and Alise Upitis, of *The Very Quick of the Word* (Sternberg Press, 2014). In 2013, she curated, with Hendrik Folkerts, Cally Spooner's performance *And You Were Wonderful, On Stage*, at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, and she has recently curated "The Cardboard Lover," featuring the work of Alisa Baremboym, Peter Brock, Alex Da Corte, Aleksandra Domanovic, Joel Holmberg, and Owen Kydd, at *American Contemporary* in New York and "A Way Out as Hovering: Three Videos by Ken Okiishi" at *Rongwrong* in Amsterdam. Her critical writing has appeared in such journals as *Artforum* and *MAY*, and she recently contributed to the catalog for *Performa 13*, forthcoming later this year.

#### MARINA NORONHA

Marina Noronha is an independent curator and researcher from Brazil. Her work focuses on curatorial strategies that bring sustainability to art collecting institutions. Noronha is a doctoral candidate at Aalto University in Helsinki, Finland.

#### KARLY WILDENHAUS

Karly Wildenhaus is a curator, editor and researcher living in London. She graduated from CCS Bard in 2013.

#### IAN BERRY

Ian Berry is Dayton Director of The Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College. Berry received his MA from the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College in 1998 and served as Assistant Curator at the Williams College Museum of Art before coming to Skidmore.

#### JOSE LUIS BLONDET

José Luis Blondet is Associate Curator for Special Initiatives at LACMA (Los Angeles County Museum of Art). Prior to moving to Los Angeles in 2010, Blondet was the Curator at the Boston Center for the Arts. In 2003, he completed his degree in Curatorial Studies at Bard College, New York, thanks to a fellowship from the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros.

#### CECILIA BRUNSON

An institutional curator for the first decade of her career, Cecilia Brunson is the founder of Cecilia Brunson Projects in London, a commercial project space dedicated to collaboration between artists and curators in contemporary art projects. Offering renowned international artists their first solo exhibitions in the UK, the space is an extension of the curator's home, thus resurrecting the intimacy of the art world of old in a new context.

#### DAVID HO YEUNG CHAN

David Ho Yeung Chan is a curator based in Hong Kong. With Pearl Lam Galleries, Chan has curated *Tsang Kin-Wah: Ecce Homo Trilogy I* (2012), *Déjà Disparu* (2013), *After Time* (2014), *Embodied* (2014), *Ren Ri- Yuansu Projects* (2015). He holds an MA from the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College, New York, USA.

#### VINCENZO DE BELLIS

Vincenzo de Bellis (1977) is Co-Director and Curator at Peep-Hole Art Center, which he founded in 2009 in Milan. In 2015 he will guest curate a survey show on Betty Woodman at Museo Marino Marini, Florence and Ennesima, notes for the seven exhibitions of Italian art from 1965 to 2015 at Triennale di Milano, Milan

#### JENNIFER DUNLOP-FLETCHER

Jennifer Dunlop Fletcher is the Helen Hilton Raiser Associate Curator, Architecture + Design and Head of the Architecture + Design Department at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. She graduated from Bard College's Masters in Curatorial Studies program in 1999.

#### MONSTERRAT ALBORES GLEASON

Montserrat Albores Gleason studied visual arts at the ESMERALDA, Mexico City and obtained her M.A in Curatorial Studies at the CCS, Bard College, New York. From 2012-2014 she was the Jumex Curator-in-residency at the CCS, Bard College. Albores writes for ArtForum.com and is the author of *Misfeasance?*, the first publication of her recently founded editorial project Frédéric.

#### RUBA KATRIB

Ruba Katrib is Curator at SculptureCenter in Long Island City, New York. Her recent exhibitions include the group show *Puddle, pothole, portal*, and solo projects with David Douard, Radamés "Juni" Figueroa, and Jumana Manna (all 2014).

#### NATHAN LEE

Nathan Lee is a critic, curator, and PhD candidate in the department of Modern Culture and Media at Brown University.

#### FIONN MEADE

Fionn Meade is Artistic Director at the Walker Art Center and a graduate and former faculty member of the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College.

#### TOMÁŠ POSPISZYL

Tomáš Pospiszyl is an art historian, curator, and critic based in Czech Republic. He is currently teaching art history at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague, as well as at the Film and TV School of Academy of Performing Arts in Prague.

#### CHEN TAMIR

Chen Tamir is Curator at the Center for Contemporary Art in Tel Aviv and also works with Artis as Program Associate. She holds an M.A. from the CCS, Bard College (2007).

#### GILBERT VICARIO

Gilbert Vicario is Senior Curator at the Des Moines Art Center in Des Moines, Iowa.

#### ARLEN AUSTIN AND JASON BOUGHTON

Arlen and Jason have worked on an uncompensated, debt-financed and/or below minimum wage basis for Liam Gillick, Columbia University School of the Arts, Bard CCS, Redcat Gallery, the Public Art Fund, and e-flux amongst others. Seizing the means of production and distribution as co-proprietors of the Hanns Eisler Nail Salon (H.E.N.S.), they have embarked on the creation of the children's television series Comrades of Socktown, which, elucidating for a 6-9 year old the relation between their puppet friends, the concrete totality of late capitalist exploitation and the dialectical determinants arising therefrom, transcends pure description and yields the category of objective possibility as class war.

#### BIOGRAPHIES

#### ÉCOLE DU MAGASIN PARTICIPANTS

#### CLAIRE ASTIER

Graduated in Sociology and Political Anthropology and began working in contemporary art in 2008. Recently coordinated the gallery of La Friche la Belle de Mai in Marseille and the implementation of the visual arts program in the Italian-French cross-border projects and VIAPAC (Musée Gassendi, 04).

#### NERINGA BUMBLIENE

Has a Master Degree in Curatorial Studies. Worked as a curator at the Klaipeda Art Centre-KCCC, Lithuania (2010–2013). Curated a number of solo and group art projects of local, national, and international scope.

#### PAOLA BONINO

Graduated in Visual Arts and worked as Curatorial Assistant to Bettina Pelz. As an independent curator realized the exhibition *Narracje Picture Project* in Gdansk, Poland (2011), and collaborated with the artist-in-residency program Takt a.i.r. in Berlin (2012-2013).

#### GIULIA BORTOLUZZI

Graduated in Philosophy and has worked in collaboration with various contemporary art galleries in France and Italy, and most recently in the educational and cultural service of the Cartier Foundation for Contemporary Art. She is the editor in chief of the contemporary art magazine [julietartmagazine.com](http://julietartmagazine.com).

#### SELMA BOSKAILO

Has a degree in History of Art and Comparative Literature and has collaborated with various institutions such as Kultfakt (Sarajevo), Institute for Art in Context (Berlin), Museumakademie Joanneum (Graz), Art Gallery of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

#### ANNA TOMCZAK

Graduated in Science of Culture and was an assistant curator and curator at the Zacheta National Gallery of Art in Warsaw, where she worked on solo and group shows of both Polish and international artists.

*FROM NINETEEN NINETY A TO NINETEEN NINETY D* IS A DOCUMENT OF FROM 199A TO 199B AT THE CENTER FOR CURATORIAL STUDIES AND HESSEL MUSEUM OF ART, BARD COLLEGE, ANNANDALE-ON-HUDSON, NEW YORK (JUNE 22–DECEMBER 21, 2012) AND *FROM 199C TO 199D* AT LE MAGASIN, CENTRE NATIONAL D'ART CONTEMPORAIN, GRENOBLE (JUNE 6–SEPTEMBER 7, 2014).

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## PUBLICATION

Editors  
Yves Aupetitallot, Tom Eccles, Liam Gillick

Editorial Coordination  
Lionel Bovier

Editing and Proofreading  
Noah Barker, Liam Gillick, Jan Nowacki, Maureen O'Hare Wilson  
French: Claire Astier, Marianne Dubacq, Caroline Soyez-Petithomme

Translations  
Magasin: Jan Nowacki, Maureen O'Hare Wilson, Claire Astier

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www.jrp-ringier.com

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Liam Gillick (1964) is a British artist who studied fine art at Goldsmiths College, London, graduating in 1987. Gillick is part of the generation of artists who gave art a new impetus in the late 1980's and early 1990's. Liam Gillick deploys multiple forms to expose the new ideological control systems that emerged at the beginning of the 1990s. He has developed a number of key narratives that often form the engine for a body of work. McNamara (1992 onwards) Erasmus is Late & Ibuka! (1995 onwards) Discussion Island/Big Conference Center (1997 onwards) and Construction of One (2005 onwards). Gillick's work exposes the dysfunctional aspects of a modernist legacy in terms of abstraction and architecture when framed within a globalized, neo-liberal consensus. His work extends into structural rethinking of the exhibition as a form. In addition 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. Margin Time (2012) The Heavenly Lagoon (2013) and Hamilton: A Film by Liam Gillick (2014). Gillick is currently completing a book on the genealogy of the contemporary artist titled Industry and Intelligence: Contemporary Art Since 1820 for Columbia University Press.

Liam Gillick held his first solo exhibition at Karsten Schubert Gallery in London in 1989. Gillick's work has subsequently been included in numerous important exhibitions including documenta and the Venice and Berlin 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 and Louise Lawler. He lives and works in New York City.



