

PRESS RELEASE

Liam Gillick

The Case is Altered or Die Sache ist anders

September 18 – October 24, 2026

Opening on Thursday, September 17, 6 – 8 pm

Waldmannstrasse 6, CH-8001 Zurich

Galerie Eva Presenhuber is pleased to present *The Case is Altered or Die Sache ist anders*, the gallery's fifth solo exhibition by the British artist Liam Gillick.

Liam Gillick's *Mirrored Image: A Volvo Bar*, first performed at the Kunstverein Munich in 2007, was later presented at the 21er Haus in Vienna and the Bundeskunsthalle Bonn in 2010. This short performance takes place in a bar next to a Volvo factory, where workers gather to boast about their expertise in building cars. A pivotal moment occurs when a curator arrives from the local museum, asking for help. The director is in the middle of a crisis and is trapped inside the building permanently. The workers mobilize to rescue culture. All of this is witnessed by a protagonist who has miraculously appeared on the day of his own birth to experience a parallel crisis – one of time, identity, memory and loss.

The title of this exhibition is borrowed from the 1609 production of the same name by British playwright Ben Jonson. This seventeenth-century play is an early example of a "comedy of humors," in which characters embody various aspects of their dominant "humors" — choleric, phlegmatic, sanguine, or melancholic — or some other fundamental trait that guides their behavior. *The Case Is Altered*, a familiar phrase at the time implying a change in legal circumstances and a potential reversal of a case, is the title of the new, expanded performance of *Mirrored Image: A Volvo Bar*, which is layered with new subplots, inversions, and complications. The "workers" are now fully aligned with the cultural sphere, in opposition to automated characters pre-programmed with new "humors" of their own making. The phrase is also the name of several pubs and bars in the UK, which reinforces the setting of Gillick's original performance and suggests that new conditions can arise after informal gatherings.

To expand on his original script for this new performance, Gillick began researching performance structures during Jonson's time. He developed a new series of sketches, drawings, and structures into new works. These include pen-and-ink drawings on gessoboard of costumes and performance settings. There is also a series of small sculptures that further visualize characters and sets, as well as new mirror works that allow visitors to see themselves as sharply outlined performers. Drawing upon Inigo Jones's sketches for masques—spectacles of singing, dancing, performing, and stagecraft from the 16th and 17th centuries—the new works propose specific postures and situations. The works also expand the artist's interest in the legacy of modernism and its expanded performative forms. The artist's mother, a commercial artist in the 1960s and 1970s who produced technical drawings for advertising and magazine graphics, influenced the use of traditional pen-and-ink technique. Gillick learned the same techniques as a child through observation and attempts to copy her style.

Liam Gillick's work moves between abstractions based on the social structures of the recent past and near future, as well as texts, films, and graphics that often appear to contradict and comment on the clarity of his structures. Unlike his earlier reliance on geometry, systems, and subjective visions, Gillick's abstract works derive from secondary structures emerging from an information-based society of renovation, negotiation, and discourse. His work reflects on the conditions of production in a postindustrial landscape, including the aesthetics of the economy, labor, and social organization. It exposes the dysfunctional aspects of the modernist legacy in terms of abstraction and architecture within a globalized, neoliberal consensus and extends into a structural rethinking of exhibitions as forms.

GALERIE EVA PRESENHUBER

Liam Gillick (b. 1964 in Aylesbury, UK) lives and works in New York City and London. His work has been included in numerous important exhibitions, including Documenta in Kassel and the Biennales in Venice, Berlin, Shanghai, Gwangju, and Istanbul. He represented Germany in the Venice Biennale in 2009. His solo museum exhibitions have been featured at the Whitechapel Gallery in London; the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago; the Museum of Modern Art in New York; the Tate in London; the Museu Serralves in Porto; the Gwangju Museum of Art in South Korea; and the Pergamonmuseum in Berlin. His work is held in many important public collections, including the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Guggenheim Museum in New York and Bilbao, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and the Tate in London. He is the author of several books, including a volume of his selected critical writings. Throughout this time, Gillick has extended his practice into experimental venues and collaborative projects with artists, including Philippe Parreno, Lawrence Weiner, Louise Lawler, Adam Pendleton, Gelitin, and the band New Order. This collaboration resulted in a series of concerts in Manchester, Turin, and Vienna, as well as a live double album, *∑[No, 12k, Lg, 17Mif]: New Order and Liam Gillick*. In 2013, he co-starred with Viv Albertine in Joanna Hogg's critically acclaimed film, *Exhibition*.

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