

LIAM GILLICK

MAX ANDREWS

Renovation filter: recent past and near future is a collective rather than personal experience. Addressing the works in isolation becomes immediately problematic, as each dips into a pool of political and economic models and a growing *dramatis personae* of characters.

Gillick's novellas, including *Erasmus Is Late* (1995) and *Discussion Island/Big Conference Centre* (1997), are 'at the centre' of this show – roped to MDF shelves in gallery one – yet not 'central' to the project. They don't explain the show's objects, although such objects appear in them. And as soon as the possibility of deliberate incompleteness is entertained, the probability that the works actually have no content becomes apparent.

Gillick's most familiar structures – multicoloured plexiglas screens and cantilevered ceiling platforms – propose solutions to architectural problems. *Twinned Retraction Screens #1* and *#2* were originally proposed as a solution for a 'problematic dead zone' in a Munich bank, in a kind of corporate *feng shui*. It's no accident that these structures look so at home in patrons' Über-offices, or amongst the partitions at art fairs. The patterns of *Renovation Filter Lobby Diagram #1* and *#2* and the pine cladding in the upstairs gallery provide us with a backdrop for other activities that are only partially prescribed.

Inside Now, We Walked Into A Room With Coca-Cola Coloured Walls takes its title from *Discussion Island/Big Conference Centre*, and consists of Gillick's attempts to come up with a suitable match for such a décor: a series of painted brownish daubs. Somehow legitimised by proxy (though its appearance in fiction explains precious little), the work enacts a

response rather than suggesting one. *Vicinato 2*, a film made in collaboration with Douglas Gordon, Carsten Höller, Philippe Parreno, Pierre Huyghe and Rirkrit Tiravanija, shows four men in a riviera setting discussing social change, mass hysteria and the merits of 'parasites in the system'. Their strategic proposals and earnest policy-making outwit our interpretive progress – the film is itself already a discussion about how best to proceed.

McNamara is an animation of the opening scene of the fifth draft of Gillick's film script of the same name. Shown on a Brionvega Algol television set (a 1963 model brought back into production in 1994, the year the work was made), the film relays a fictional dialogue between Robert McNamara, former US Defense Secretary (and the central character in *Erasmus Is Late*) and Herman Kahn, Director of the RAND Institute: the action takes place in a tunnel under the White House. Trading on the political intrigue surrounding JFK, in style the piece recalls a *film noir* conspiracy genre where information is issued in dark parking garages. In Alan Pakula's *The Parallax View* (1974), which by its very title conceded to circumstantial distortions in any one point of view, the systematic assassinations of the Corporation escape detection because the public's belief in unconnected events is maintained. Similarly *McNamara*, with its flickering dates and flashlights, throws up double agents in the process of rewriting history. As in Gillick's entire output (where things function synecdochically), consensus remains just beyond reach. One of the characters in *Vicinato 2* opines: 'we need mysteries and things we don't understand, we need gaps, spaces and secrets in our lives'. Gillick provides these in abundance.

Renovation filter: recent past and near future was at Arnolfini, Bristol, 8 October – 23 December 2000

left: LIAM GILLICK, *Renovation Filter Lobby Diagram #1*, 2000, orange paint, dimensions variable (grid 30 cm). Courtesy: Corvi-Mora, London

right: LIAM GILLICK, DOUGLAS GORDON, CARSTEN HÖLLER, PHILIPPE PARRENO, PIERRE HUYGHE and RIRKRIT TIRAVANAJA, *Vicinato 2*, 2000, DVD, 12 mins duration. Courtesy: the artists

