

E-mail message by Liam Gillick to Devorah Lauter

I have known Florence for 35 years so it is not easy to boil anything down.

So... 35 points to work with...

1) I received an invitation for the exhibition Les Ateliers du Paradise in 1990 in Nice. The invitation was the same shape and size as a credit card. I drove from London with a girlfriend. The night we got there we had tripe for dinner at Florence's apartment. For 35 years I have told people Florence makes great tripe. I just found out it was ordered from a restaurant.

2) Even after one exhibition the gallery already had a reputation. A whole group of people had gone to the curatorial program at Magasin in Grenoble, including Esther Schipper. They began to revolutionize the work of galleries while still functioning as galleries.

3) The gallery was and is marked by a certain informality. There was no office at the beginning. Everything took place in the same space.

4) Relationships with curators and young artists is the key to the gallery. It is a place where new discussions take place and relationships form.

5) It is always about the exhibition as form rather than single artworks alone.

6) Florence and Edouard support artists working on projects that completely dissolve boundaries.

7) Florence doesn't like hierarchies.

8) Florence likes to tell the truth.

- 9) The gallery always shows a diverse group of artists. It never promotes a particular style or orthodoxy.
- 10) The gallery has always looked for new artists and new ideas.
- 11) Florence is never truly content.
- 12) Not everything the gallery does makes economic sense.
- 13) Everything the gallery does makes artistic sense.
- 14) Florence is allied to radical politics and radical style.
- 15) While many of the artists make complex and sometimes theoretically difficult work Florence can express her ideas clearly.
- 16) I like her. Florence hates fascists and bullies.
- 17) Florence is interesting and quite shy.
- 18) You never really know exactly what she will say or do.
- 19) There always been a commitment to employing the most interesting gallery assistants.
- 20) I think Florence might be disappointed by increasingly cynical art structures.
- 21) I don't think Florence understands why people say one thing and then do exactly the opposite.
- 22) Every exhibition we have done is full of anecdotes.
- 23) Florence appreciates good food and wine without embarrassment.
- 24) It is always good to hang out at Florence's desk.
- 25) I don't think Florence likes art fairs very much.

26) We spent New Years together in Nevers once and we all made hats out of Barbra Streisand record covers.

27) The gallery went through a phase of only serving whiskey at openings. Only the serious people would drink it.

28) During early openings in Nice all the action took place in the street. It felt more like a backstreet party together than a gallery opening.

29) A collector once took me to the bar on the corner during an opening at Air de Paris in Paris. He had been reading about my exhibition and listening to Florence explaining my ideas and theories. The collector wanted to know if it was OK to just like my work.

30) In one Paris location the gallery had a small sign that they would regularly put in the window. "Au Bar."

31) I don't remember ever being in a car with Florence. She was always at the gallery before I got there and after I left.

32) Florence was one of the first people I know who seemed to take great pleasure in the idiotic aspects of the Internet. Showing you dumb things and smart things at the same time.

33) Florence has been a constant presence in my life for 35 years. Yet we are just getting started.

34) Many of the same structural problems in the artworld that Florence identified more than 30 years ago are still there and getting worse.

35) The gallery is a gallery. It is a place to develop, show and sell art. Florence has devoted most of her adult life to helping artists do what they need to do. This is not unique - but the way she does it has never been boring and remains often surprising.