

Press release

Liam Gillick

Factories in the Snow

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“Factories in the Snow” relates to a deferred text that is under constant review provisionally titled “Construcción de Uno”. There is a parallel connection; the work does not function as a guide or illustration of the developing ideas. Rather it has been produced in a state of distraction while thinking about the conditions of a revised social structure.

“Construcción de Uno” concerns a group of people in a Northern European country who return to their recently closed factory out of habit and boredom. Their area is unaffected by post-industrial blight, but the former employees are conscious of a specific loss. Following a period of directionless improvisation with the signage and equipment left behind in the factory they start to develop structural games in order to develop a better model of production.

The text follows their increasing skill at developing scenarios that might produce an “economy of equivalence” where one unit of ideas, stuff or action might result in one unit of ideas stuff or action with the smallest possible loss or gain. While they appear to reach a state of perfect equivalence, it is unclear whether or not they have underestimated their own effect on their thinking.

The work here – signage, seating, low screens and a corral – refer to the earliest days following the closure of the place. And a manipulation of materials that happen to surround them in order to produce a new series of framing devices around which to commence their thinking. The work also makes a conscious reference to the language of workshop based semi-industrial modernist art production. The wall text, which describes fractional views of a factory in the snow, might be seen as a marker of their statistical and comparative approach towards a revised poetics of the workplace. Standing together by a new hole cut in the side of a simple structure, looking out across the landscape with the sound of quiet discussion replacing the mechanisms of production.

“Over time they completely reconfigure the working space of their new activities. They write on the walls and create diagrams on the floor that reveals the passage of their thoughts, false starts and developments. More windows are opened up in the space to create new vistas and bring them closer to the exterior spaces that now make them anxious and should be kept as a view not an experience. Some people work all night and if you are driving past the factory you might see them through the windows, involved in long discussions and lengthy expositions of their ideas. They attempt to find a way to create a total transfer of all objects and ideas in such a way as to ensure that nothing is depleted or diminished but everything is different.”

Liam Gillick, September 2005