

John Armleder EVER

24 APRIL–25 MAY 2025

DIRIMART DOLAPDERE

*In my work, I tend to prefer eschewing the text and any tools for understanding.
I believe it is the viewer who creates the artwork.*

John Armleder



Whoopee, 2025
Mixed media on canvas
165 x 110 x 6 cm

Dirimart is pleased to announce *EVER*, John Armleder's debut in Turkey, a singular figure in contemporary art history who co-founded the Geneva-based Groupe Ecart in the spirit of the Fluxus movement of the 1960s. Presenting the artist's journey from the 1960s to today, the exhibition showcases a retrospective selection of his work, featuring his iconic furniture sculptures, works on paper, and his latest puddle-and-pour paintings specifically created for the show.

Born in Geneva in 1948, John Armleder's practice challenges conventional boundaries of art through painting, sculpture, installation, and performance. His playful yet critical approach orchestrates unexpected juxtapositions – merging found objects with vibrant swathes of colour and reflective surfaces – to create environments that question our perceptions of aesthetic norms. Influenced by composer John Cage, Armleder embraces chance and experimentation in the creative process, allowing for a delightful collision between art and everyday ephemera. His puddle-and-pour paintings explore the fluid nature of paint, where unpredictable chromatic encounters occur. Similarly, his installations and sculptures interrogate the conventions of artistic display and the ever-shifting landscape of cultural references.

The exhibition titled *EVER* carries a layered meaning, typical of Armleder's often enigmatic approach, cultivating a deliberate ambiguity open to potential explorations of the viewer. It may suggest a continuous reinterpretation of aesthetic values – a sense of perpetuity and ongoingness that resonates with Armleder's artistic process. It might also comment on the art world's appetite for the monumental and the timeless or act as a sarcastic statement about permanence, a humorously contrasting with the transient nature of gallery exhibitions. Or it might hint at the cyclical nature of artistic ideas, their constant recycling and reinterpretation. Whatever interpretation emerges, Armleder would likely say, 'This is true, too,' as *EVER* invites to a dialogue that is both serious and humorous.

In *EVER*, a selection of 31 works on paper from the 1960s to 1983 – ranging in medium, including pen and ink, watercolour, gouache, acrylic, oil, and collage – reveals the continuity in Armleder's practice. These works offer a focused study of line, form, texture, and improvisation. Whether collaged fragments, independent compositions, or preliminary sketches, they reflect the artist's broader approach to art-making.

A highlight of the exhibition is *Yakety Yak*, a monumental 10-metre painting that epitomises Armleder's embrace of spontaneity, chance, and Fluxus ideals. More than an artwork, it is a happening within its exhibition context.

Armleder's reflective works, meanwhile, engage viewers by destabilising fixed perspectives, transforming the gallery space into dynamic visual field. Using mirrored surfaces, polished metals, and other reflective materials, he invites both the environment and the viewer into the artwork, blurring boundaries between object and observer.



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His seemingly orderly dot paintings, with their vibrant, scattered forms, explore the possibilities of pattern distribution. These works resonate with broader art historical dialogues, from Picabia to Damien Hirst, and reflect Armleder's belief that 'the problem is not to invent something new ... but to create a relationship with what has already been done.'

His diptychs of puddle-and-pour paintings further highlight his continued fascination with chance in a manner reminiscent of Larry Poons' poured and dripped paintings. Here, colours are allowed to flow or pool freely, echoing Fluxus values and transforming the surface into a stage where chance and action converge.

The artist's iconic *Furniture Sculptures*, first created in the late 1970s, combine pieces of furniture – seats, musical instruments, and tables – with paintings, creating thoughtful environments that challenge distinctions between art and everyday life. Two new *Furniture Sculptures* designed specifically for the show continue this inquiry, questioning value and function, the mass-produced and the unique.

Lastly, *EVER* features a site-specific installation developed during Armleder's stay in Istanbul, responding to the city's unique context and energy.

Through *EVER*, John Armleder invites viewers into his expansive, humorous, and experimental practice – spanning drawings, abstract paintings and furniture sculptures – and offers a testament to his enduring influence on contemporary art. The exhibition will be on view at Dirimart Dolapdere from 24 April to 25 May 2025.

John Armleder (b. 1948, Geneva) studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, Geneva. He held his first exhibition in the Ecart Happening Festival in Hotel Richemond, Geneva in 1969. Armleder's works were exhibited in prestigious institutions including Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Kunstmuseum Basel, Basel; Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Sydney; Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (MAMCO), Geneva. In 1986, he represented Switzerland at the Swiss Pavilion of the 42nd Venice Biennale. His recent solo exhibitions include *EVER*, Dirimart Dolapdere, Istanbul (2025); *Encore Trop*, Centre d'Édition Contemporaine, Geneva (2024); *Transparents*, Musée Barbier-Mueller, Geneva (2024); *EXPERIENCES*, Kunsthalle Marcel Duchamp, The Forestay Museum of Art (KMD), Cully (2023); *Again, Just Again*, Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai (2021) and *John M. Armleder*, Aspen Art Museum, Aspen (2019). Among the significant exhibitions and biennials he participated in are the Biennale de l'image en mouvement, Geneva (2016); 6th Shanghai Biennale, Shanghai (2006); 2nd Lyon Biennale of Contemporary Art, Lyon (1993); documenta VIII, Kassel (1986) and the 6th Biennale of Sydney, Sydney (1986). John Armleder lives and works in Geneva.

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