PRESS RELEASE

Louisa Gagliardi
Long Distance Relationship

November 13, 2026 – January 9, 2027
Opening, November 12, 6 – 8 pm
Waldmannstrasse 6, CH-8001 Zurich

Galerie Eva Presenhuber is pleased to present *Long Distance Relationship*, the fifth solo exhibition by Swiss artist Louisa Gagliardi with the gallery.

A long-distance relationship thrives on a paradox: one is connected yet separated, feeling close and distant at the same time. Louisa Gagliardi makes this field of tension the theme of her current exhibition. Relationships emerge between the works, to the exhibition visitors, and in the proximity and distance of an immediately lived moment in a changing world with an uncertain future.

This multi-layered quality characterizes Louisa Gagliardi's artistic practice. Her pictures begin on the screen and unfold physically in space. Gagliardi paints digitally, prints the image on PVC, and subsequently works on it with various types of varnish, such as nail polish. The impasto application creates depth and a moment of joyful fascination when the varnish glitters upon observation. Surfaces of captivating ambiguity are created: digital, smooth, and glossy, yet simultaneously corporeal and immediate. Both materially and conceptually, tense relationships run as a common thread throughout her oeuvre.

Such an ambivalent encounter marks the opening of the exhibition: disembodied hands in front of a deep black background shuffle cards. Sometimes they are face down; sometimes a self-portrait of the artist transforms into the image of a snake. The cards are reshuffled. But what game are we playing? Who is playing along? And who decides? The title of the work provides only a supposed answer: *Dealer's Choice*—leaving much open.

Louisa Gagliardi's paintings are like short stories. They immediately unfold a concrete scene, a visible narrative. Yet despite—or precisely because of—this, they elude any final interpretation because the beginning and end remain open. The works become projection surfaces.

Gagliardi generates visual dialogues by placing works opposite and in relation to one another. Thus, a cowlick, whose growth pattern is as stubborn as it is unmistakable, meets a crop circle, which is interpreted between natural phenomena and speculation about extraterrestrials. The solar eclipse as a black shadow over an oversized Zurich resonates with a giant eye in which this scenery is reflected. A pull is created that triggers unease, yet at the same time hardly allows the viewer to turn their gaze away from the pictures. An uncomfortable flicker between the fascination of looking closely and wanting to see everything, and the urge to look away as soon as a feeling of unease sets in upon realizing cosmic grandeur and human insignificance. Whether a skeptically looking, larger-than-life baby stands for a fruitful future or for the conscious decision not to have children remains open.

Her paintings are not a commentary, Gagliardi says, but an expression of an unease that she prefers to let tilt into a nervous laugh rather than a gloomy dystopia. The strategy of zooming in and out—from extreme proximity to the furthest distance—allows a shift in perspective in which major ecological and socio-political issues become negotiable for her without feigning answers. For whom would have them anyway?

Spatial dialogues emerge in the installation consisting of two plastic curtains, each depicting the front and back of a truck. With the tailgate open, the view into the dark interior is unobstructed. For a brief moment, one is tempted to ask whether this depicted space is actually hidden behind the curtain one can walk through. Gagliardi's work thrives precisely in this friction between what is shown and what remains hidden.

Just how close play, adventure, luck, risk, and danger lie together is made the subject of the final room: skid marks of a car in the snow; slot machines in bluish light reminiscent of a horror film laboratory setting; a furtive glance at

a playing card; a pool player ready for the shot, targeting the blue ball. It may be an allusion to the butterfly effect, in which the smallest shift can have huge, unpredictable consequences. The component of the uncanny as an important element in Gagliardi's oeuvre is clearly tangible here. What is depicted is not the moment of actual action or even horror itself—what is hidden or what follows, leaving the scene suspended in anticipation, in that uneasy state of limbo in the knowledge that something has happened, or with the premonition that something might occur. You never see it directly; you only feel that the atmosphere has changed.

Is everything a game of calculated risk and blind chance, of control and loss of control? Exhibition visitors are right in the middle of it, yet always a little bit too close or just too far away. What is their role in this constellation? Once again, a nervous laugh spreads.

Seraina Peer

Louisa Gagliardi was born in 1989 in Sion, Switzerland, and lives and works in Zurich, Switzerland. In recent years she has been the subject of monographic shows at Ferme Asile, Sion, CH (2026) (with Adam Cruces); MASI - Museo d'arte della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano, CH (2025); Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Vienna (2024); CC Strombeek, Grimbergen, BE (2024); Galerie Eva Presenhuber x TAXA, Seoul, KR (2024); Edition VFO, Kunsthalle Zürich, Zurich, CH (2023); Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich, CH (2023); National Gallery, Prague, CZ (2022); Swiss Art Awards, Basel, CH (2021); Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva, CH (2021); Antenna Space, Shanghai, CN (2020); McNamara Art Projects, Hong Kong, HK (2019); MOSTYN, Wales, UK (2019); and Openforum, Berlin, DE (2018). In 2022, she presented a large-scale work, Tête-à-tête, at Art Basel Unlimited in Basel. Gagliardi's work has been featured in group exhibitions such as Swiss Institute, New York, NY, US (2024); Fondazione Sandra e Giancarlo Bonollo, Thiene, IT (2024); Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich, CH (2023; 2022); National Gallery Prague, CZ (2021); Wallriss, Fribourg, CH (2019); UN Art Center, Shanghai, CN (2019); Plymouth Rock, Zurich, CH (2018); Aargauer Kunsthaus, Aarau, CH (2018); Kunsthalle Sankt Gallen, St. Gallen, CH (2018); Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, DK (2017); and Museum Haus Kontruktiv, Zurich, CH (2017).

For more artist information, please contact onlinesales@presenhuber.com.
For press images and information, please contact press@presenhuber.com.