

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Cullinan, Nicholas. "Mario Merz: What is to be Done?" *ArtForum*, May 2011.

LEEDS, UK

"MARIO MERZ: WHAT IS TO BE DONE?"

HENRY MOORE INSTITUTE · July 28–
October 30 · Curated by Lisa Le Feuvre

One of the most politically committed artists associated with Arte Povera, Mario Merz engaged issues of process and proliferation that seem more current than ever, making this focused survey especially timely. The question raised by Merz's numerous versions of the neon sculpture *Che fare? (What Is to Be Done?)*, first made around 1968, chimed with the Leninist problematic adopted by Italian students in that tumultuous year. This exhibition promises to move past such polemics to examine instead the radical potentiality inherent in the array of materials Merz employed, with special consideration given to the everyday objects and consumer goods he penetrated with neon. Eschewing Marxist praxis as a lens in favor of artistic practice, the HMI's Le Feuvre has selected key works by Merz from the 1960s and '70s and bracketed them with filmic portraits of the artist by Gerry Schum and Tacita Dean.

—*Nicholas Cullinan*