
GARY HILL





Title:House of Cards

Date:1993

Media:Mixed media installation

Description:

Five 20-inch LCD displays mounted on an aluminum ladder, two 15-inch LCD displays, speakers, computer/server with seven channels of Quicktime playback (black-and-white and color; stereo sound)

Dimensions: variable, ladder approximately 11 ft. high (3.35 meters)

Edition of two and one artist's proof

Note: The work was refabricated in 2007.

House of Cards consists of an aluminum structure resembling a ladder, which is approximately 11 feet high and leaning against a wall. Five 20-inch LCD displays are mounted between the ladder's rungs. Opposite (or on either side of) the ladder are two wall-mounted 15-inch LCD displays. The sequence of black-and-white images on the ladder displays consists of a slow, continuous, vertical panning motion revealing identifiable bands of rooms in a house. The camera pans up the walls, across the ceiling and down onto the floor again, scanning the entirety of every room of the house. On the two other displays are color images of close-up details of faces speaking, one a man and the other a woman. The roaming views of the faces are exactly the same. The text is recited as a chain of interlocking phrases exchanged between the two people. The last word of each sentence is always the first word of the next, which are spoken simultaneously.

Spoken Text:

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hold it here hold it there

there is where others have

have one hand here

here goes the other hand

hand over hand

hand over mouth

mouth over eyes

eyes in the back of your head

head over heels

heels in my back

back to back

back to the wall
wall to ceiling
ceiling to floor
floored by the sight
site of troubled thoughts
thoughts doubling as other thoughts
thoughts that count unaccountable things
things inhabiting the room
room between rooms
rooms doubling as other rooms
rooms without doors
doors without sound
sound masked between you and I
I am talking to you
you who lose face
face lost in my hands
hands laid bare by other hands
hands rifling papers
papers stacked against walls
walls mined with displays
displays of items and chosen pictures
pictures of those framed moments
moments when crystal broke awakening the flesh
flesh and fool's blood
blood from prime time

time stolen by consumption
consumption of other's agony
agony safely distanced from terror
terror stapled to a mouth with words
words hollowed out
out of rain fallen twice
twice comes once
once in a lifetime
time to return
return a glance
glance from a face gone
gone to mirror all
all is the mind crossed out
out of meaning and its place
place that bodies call here
here is what stands
stands alongside the one
one is not allowed here
here are my promises
promises, promises
promises you keep
keep within reason
reason for breaking
breaking and entering
entering the house

house with the name home
home of known quantity
quantity of questions
questions from the back
back to the bed of surrender
surrender of thought to word
word penetrated by sound
sound of dropped clothing
clothing folded without incident
incident erased from origins
origins of stories kept
kept and bound as ruptured volumes
volumes of words read
read between scribbled bodies
bodies holding bodies gone
gone from the point of going
going back to square one
one is not allowed here
here are my promises
promises, promises
promises you can't keep
keep talking around and about
about the insistence of talking
talking between you and I
I am listening

listening the wrong way
way out where you don't want to go
go before the left eye
eye of our word
word hollowed out
out of rain fallen twice
twice comes once
once in a lifetime
time to return
return a glance
glance from a face gone
gone to tell all
all is not lost
lost inside your words
words are all we have
have we to speak to see?
see how they run
run from your mouth
mouth to mouth
mouth swims up
upside down seeing red
red from talking
talking for you and I
I am listening
listening the wrong way

way out where you don't have words
words collapse thought
thought holding forth that which we cannot see
seeing was once believing
believing in the touch of your mouth
mouth to mouth
mouth of a moth eating light
light from a naked bulb that sways
sways awake the tortured faces
faces on heads protruding from necks
necks circled by stones
stones trespassing time
time encircling zeros
zeros request one
one for now
now and forever
forever more distant
distant distances
distances
distances we imagine
imagine between what
what ever counts differences
differences that make difference
difference of standing positions
positions of forgiveness verses rights

rights claimed as older than origin
origin of no return
return of a point larger than mind
mind is as close as you come
come as you are with or without
without knowing which is the hand that reaches out
out of bounds from questions
questions lost in points
points on hold
hold it here or there
there is where others have
have one hand here
here goes the other hand
hand over hand
hand over mouth
mouth over eyes
eyes of angels from day one
one is not allowed here
here and now over and again
again I begin from the back
back to the voice that houses sounds
sounds of plants making
making believe
believe it or not
not in the least

least of all truth

truth as it may have been being

being and time gone awry

awry from thought put on hold

Bibliography:

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Myoda, Paul. "Gary Hill. The Guggenheim Museum, New York." *Frieze* (November/December 1995), p. 70.

Young, Lisa Jaye. "Electronic Verses: Reading the Body vs. Touching the Text," *Performing Arts Journal* 52, 18, 1 (January 1996), pp. 40, 42.

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Gary Hill: Selected Works and catalogue raisonné. (Wolfsburg: Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, 2002), GHCR 77, pp. 81, 169 – 173, 248.

Quasha, George and Charles Stein. *An Art of Limina: Gary Hill's Works and Writings*. Barcelona: Ediciones Polígrafa, 2009, pp. 401 – 403, 481.

Exhibition History:

An example of this work was first exhibited at the Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Aarhus, Denmark,

from September 4 – November 14, 1993 as part of the exhibition “strange HOTEL.”

“Gary Hill,” (travelling exhibition organized by the Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington), Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C., February 17 – May 8, 1994; Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, June 10 – August 14, 1994; Museum of Contemporary, Chicago, Illinois, September 24 – November 27, 1994; Guggenheim Museum SoHo, New York, New York, May 11 – August 20, 1995.

Group exhibition. Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Wolfsburg, Germany, May 25, 1996 – January 1, 1997.

“Language Let Loose,” Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, Washington, July 15, 2000 – April 29, 2001.

Donald Young Gallery at Art 32 Basel, Switzerland, June 12 – 18, 2001.

“Gary Hill,” Donald Young Gallery, Chicago, Illinois, February 17 – April 15, 2006.

Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, Washington, May 5, 2007 – March 2008.

Notes: Spoken texts performed by Elizabeth Conner and Mark B. McLoughlin.