Title: Tall Ships

Date: 1992

Media: Sixteen-channel video installation, silent

Description:
Sixteen modified 4-inch black-and-white video monitors (cathode ray tubes removed from chassis) with projection lenses, sixteen adjustable metal brackets, pressure-sensitive switch mats, black or dark gray carpet, computer with sixteen RS-232 control ports and controlling software written in DOS, sixteen laserdisc players and sixteen laserdiscs (black-and-white; silent)

Dimensions of corridor: 10 h. x 10 w. x 90 l. ft. (3 x 3 x 27 meters)

Edition of two and one artist’s proof

_Tall Ships_ consists of sixteen 4-inch black-and-white video monitors with sixteen angled projection lenses, which are mounted in a line down the center of the ceiling of a completely dark, corridor-like space. There is one projection approximately every five feet alternating from side to side (i.e., approximately every ten feet on each side), and the last projection is seen on the back wall. The projections are of people of varying ethnic origin, age and gender. The images are high-contrast yet soft with a halo-like quality due to the nature of the projection system and the acute angle of projection. There is no border of light defining the frame of the image; it is the figure itself that gives off the light and is seen directly on the wall. The figures, standing or seated and ranging from one to two feet high, first appear in the distance, at about eye level. As the viewer(s) walk through the space, electronic switches are activated and the figures approach the viewer until they reach approximately life-size. They remain in the foreground, slightly wavering, until the viewer(s) leave the immediate area. Each of the projections is independently interactive with the viewers; thus, according to the number of viewers in the space, any number of the people/projections could appear in the distance – approaching, withdrawing, or standing in the foreground – at any given time.

**Spoken Text:**

**Bibliography:**


Sarrazin, Stephen. _Chimaera Monographe No. 10 (Gary Hill)_. Montbéliard, France: Centre International de Création Vidéo Montbéliard, Belfort, 1992, pp. 44, 84. (Including an excerpt from an interview with Gary Hill).


Der elektronische Raum: 15 Positionen zur Medienkunst. Bonn: Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle


Rowlands, Penelope. “Gary Hill’s Hall of Mirrors.” ARTnews 100, 5 (May 2001), pp. 177.


Farr, Sheila. “‘WOW’ intoxicates, vexes the senses.” *The Seattle Times* (November 5, 2004).


Gagnon, Jean. “Gary Hill à la recherche de la perte technologique / An Interview with Gary Hill.” *artpress* 2: Arts Technologiques - Conservation et Restauration (February/March/April 2009), pp. 10 – 21. (French and English)


**Exhibition History:**

An example of this work was exhibited for the first time at *Documenta IX*, Museum Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany, June 13 – September 20, 1992. (sixteen-channel version)


“Múltiplas Dimensões,” Centro Cultural de Belém, Lisbon, Portugal, June 7 – July 31, 1994. (sixteen-channel version)

“Facts and Figures: Selections from the Lannan Foundation Collection,” Lannan Foundation, Los Angeles, California, October 22 – February 26, 1994. (sixteen-channel version)


“Gary Hill: O lugar do outro/where the other takes place,” Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, July 3 – September 21, 1997; Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, Brazil, October 3 – November 2, 1997. (twelve-channel version)

University Art Galleries, University of California, San Diego, California, September 25 – December 13, 1997. (twelve-channel version)

Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Aarhus, Denmark, January 17 – April 5, 1999. (sixteen-channel version)

“Space Odysseys: Sensation and Immersion,” Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, August 18 - October 14, 2001; Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI), Melbourne, Australia, October 26, 2002 – January 27, 2003 (with the title “Deep Space: Sensation and Immersion”). (twelve-channel version)


Special exhibition of Tall Ships in conjunction with “Gary Hill: Language Willing,” (travelling solo exhibition organized by the Boise Art Museum), Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax, Canada, July 22 – November 21, 2004. (twelve-channel version) Note: The installation of Tall Ships was extended beyond close date of travelling exhibition.


Notes:

Commissioned by Jan Hoet for Documenta IX, Kassel, Germany, 1992.

Twelve-channel version, left wall: Bill Colvin, Santha Cassel, Ronald Choate, Sharon Parker, Megan Adcock, Mark Vandevanter; back wall: Anastasia Hill; right wall: Lou Hetler, David Cheung, Terri Colvin, Katsura Ozeki, Preston Wadley.

Sixteen-channel version, left wall: Bill Colvin, Preson Wadley, Ronald Choate, Santha Cassel, David Cheung, Sharon Parker, Megan Adcock, Mark Vandevanter; back wall: Anastasia Hill; right wall: Greg Hill, Lou Helter, Richard Parker, Terri Colvin, Donald Young, Jay McLoughlin, Katsura Ozeki.