
ACTUS REUS
MENS REA
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A STONE'S THROW AWAY FROM A WHIRLPOOL OF ERRORS
ARS EST CORPUS VILE
IN WONDER
WE WONDER
G. HILL 2006 ≈ 2 OZ. .9999 FINE GOLD







Title: Guilt

Date:2006

Media: Mixed media installation

Description:

Five gold coins with five motorized painted aluminum pedestals, five telescopes with five MDF-board pyramidal mounts, five spotlights, five ultrasonic audio speakers, five DVD players and five DVDs (mono sound)

Edition of three and one artist's proof (with one example including all five coins and telescopes together; and the remaining examples available as separate coin and telescope pairs)

Note: Guilt *was commissioned by and first exhibited at Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris, France, 2006 - 07.*

Selected images or "snapshots" of the artist being beaten are stamped on a series of five 24-carat gold bullion coins. The front side of each coin depicts a detailed relief of the artist's angst-ridden face as it is being punched with a fist. Each image is different and is encircled by one of five Latin phrases suggesting individual as well as collective guilt (TEMPUS IN MANIBUS NOSTRIS SANGUIS EST IN MANIBUS NOSTRIS: *Time on our hands is blood on our hands*; FI ALIQUIS ALIUS ET CONSEQUENTER PROCEDE: *Become someone else and proceed accordingly*; EXPRESSIO UNIUS EST EXCLUSIO ALTERIUS: *The expression of the one is the exclusion of the other*; MUNDUS VULT DECIPI ERGO DECIPIATUR: *The world wants to be deceived, therefore it is*.) The reverse side of all the coins completes the self-infliction with an image of the artist's buttocks being whipped by a laurel branch and is again encircled with Latin: Ars est corpus vile: *Art is a worthless body*. English phrases further convolute possible meanings: A stone's throw away from a whirlpool of errors and In wonder we wonder, perhaps an inference to "IN GOD WE TRUST" as seen on American coins and legal tender. Additionally, etched around the edge circumference of the coins is the Latin palindrome In girum imus nocte et consumimur igni: *We Go Round and Round in the Night and are Consumed by Fire.*

The coins are displayed on chest-high white cylindrical pedestals. They are motorized to rotate on their edges at a slow speed of one cycle every two minutes. High intensity spot lights are focused on each coin, generating glinting moments as the coins turn. Although a casual observer can walk through and around the pedestals, the optimal viewing point is through powerful telescopes placed at a distance of about 30 feet away. As the viewer peers through the telescope's lens, a spoken text can be heard only at that location via ultrasonic speakers mounted directly above the telescopes' eyepieces. The artist's voice/text attacks, abuses and ridicules himself, the complicit viewer at a distance, and the "powers that be," arriving at the notion that we are at "peak time" (a reference to peak oil, perhaps suggesting we have limited time to change our course lest we make ourselves extinct, hence the guilt factor of "spending" time making art verses direct engagement with the matters at hand – and all the ambiguity and complexity that emerges from said sentiment).

Spoken Text:

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Note: Although the following text can be heard in full, the words and phrases are often broken up or divided, as if the text itself is being pulled apart like an accordion and physically 'punched' or 'beaten.'

What's this? Do YOU know what this is? Not getting' it, I don't get it. Am I supposed to get it? Help me out. What's it for? Who? Is it for me? Does it make a difference—a difference that makes a difference? Does it relate to some—thing? Are you related…. to anything? What do I get? Do I get something from this? Show me, show me what its about. I'm missing the point. Give me something I can sink my teeth into. I need to chew or I get nervous. I see no connections, no currency—no value what-so-fucking-ever at all.

You need to suffer, suffer and suffer more. Suffer so fucking much you give up—you give in and have no hope. *Then* you tell me something, tell me anything you want fucker. You need to wake up next to death gasping for air that is not there. All I see is surface noise. Who the fuck do you think you are? This is good for nothing, fucking nothing. You're worthless. This is fucking bullshit. I know… I know you got a little nag that gnaws and grows. Rhyme and reasons don't help a fucking thing. Push comes to shove you're a selfish fucking prick. Anybody in this game is no fucking different. It's all consummation in the fires of illusion. You're going to have to learn the hard way. You want to play with images? HERE, look at this fuck head, what do you see? You see nothing. You're blind white. You're a prick, fucker of all fucks, bar none.

Well, what do you think about it so far? You've been waiting for it without knowing it. Like you always say, "this is it." Damn fucking right this is it. Fucking it. Get it? Take your head out of your ass and look around. Go on, check it out. Do what you have to do to convince yourself that this *is* it. No one's going to tell you otherwise, it's all up to you, here and fucking now. You can eat, drink, smoke, watch that fucking box, draw, read or write; go for a ride, fuck your brains out or just plain think. But you're here *with* it, displaying all your variability and all your possibilities and messages you've collected along the way. On or off that beaten track it all leads back to here before branching out, when once again you can point, choose, have, love, suffocate, hate, like, be counted, talk, scream, kick, shit, vomit, eat, drink and be merry; talk about death, art, politics, flesh & blood, machines and don't forget money. Sure you know what I'm talking about. You've heard it before, you've read it before, but never while you were here with it...and I stole it. It was here for the taking, wasn't it? Everybody gets it sooner or later. This is it. You've had your little talk in every other room. Now it's my turn. Now it's your turn. And now mine. Time to turn the record over….

Statistics? You got statistics? You want statistics, stats, data? Something to rifle through; something you can get your head around; something to make some sense out of? N-u-m-b-e-r-s, disfigurements, tortures, rapes, mutilations, decapitations, collateral damage, disappearances, human slaves, human shields, numbered bodies, numbed minds, bloodied cherished documents, laws, memos, acts gone awry, crimes against humanity, civilian casualties, nasty roadside attractions, emaciated bloated beings, terminations, secret cells, bunker busters, warheads, warlords, genocide machines, treasury notes afloat; poppy fields, tonnage, the distinct extinction possibility. What do you want? Victims, witnesses, perpetrators, names places times, names places times, names places times…

Are we there yet? Peak oil et al? That's history, we're at Peak time! This is the time. Time is rolling over for the come what mays'. It's mayday. Fucking mayday. Close the hatch, we're going down. The walls are melting up and the sky doesn't give a rat's ass. Take a side. Stand the fucker down. "You're either with us or…." a tourist. Sound familiar? Do you like familiarity? Do you like your home? Do you like your children? Do you like your bed? Tell me something…do you like YOUR MIND? Does it feel right? Does it feel like a right mind? Maybe it's reeling—really getting ready to rock; maybe you're going to play dead when the donuts finally roll. No turning back now. Better lay down, lay it down low. Get down, way, way down…I'm AWOL.

You want him dead don't you—all of them. Vaporized. You want him gone. Take your best shot—watch it, live it, be it. One golden esoteric round enters the smirking mouth, finds its way through the veritable rot of tissue, shattering the skull every which way, switching sides, exiting one eye, entering the other, ricocheting through the labyrinth of the left ear, finding its spent self on a grassy knoll. Mission accompli. No, too quick, too easy. You want to make it last, wallow in the mire a bit… Maybe you want to fuck him (it) in the ass with a baseball bat. Maybe you want to grind its testicular parts to paste and rub its face through the socalled manhood. I get it, torture as a tool for the greater good! He's on the world's back and you want him off—him and his minions, the wannabes' and the has-beens, all the players and their reserves, the PTBs' and the PPT. A fucking pipe dream; a pipe bomb away. Bombs away, all the way, all around, all fucking out—out of bounds of imagination. Got to dream, dream on. Give us a drum roll—get barreling. Back up the truck for god's sake. Fuck god, fuck gods, fuck them all. Turn the page over and take your turn, now it's my turn, now it's your turn, it's time to turn the record over.

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Gary Hill:o lugar sem o tempo / taking time from place. Rio de Janeiro: Contra Capa Livraria /

Mag Mais, 2009, p.95 (photo).

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Exhibition History:

“Gary Hill,” Fondation Cartier pour l’art contemporain, Paris, France, October 27, 2006 – February 4, 2007.

Solo exhibition. Gladstone Gallery, New York, NY, January 13 – February 10, 2007.

Solo exhibition. Louise T. Blouin Foundation, London, England, June 22 – August 30, 2007.

“Gary Hill: Strange Trajectories,” NRW-Forum / IMAI (Inter Media Art Institute), Dusseldorf, Germany, September 15 – October 28, 2007.

“Art et Argent, Liaisons Dangereuses,” Monnaie de Paris, France (online exhibition only - http://expo.monnaiedeparis.fr/), July 12 – December 31, 2011.

Notes: