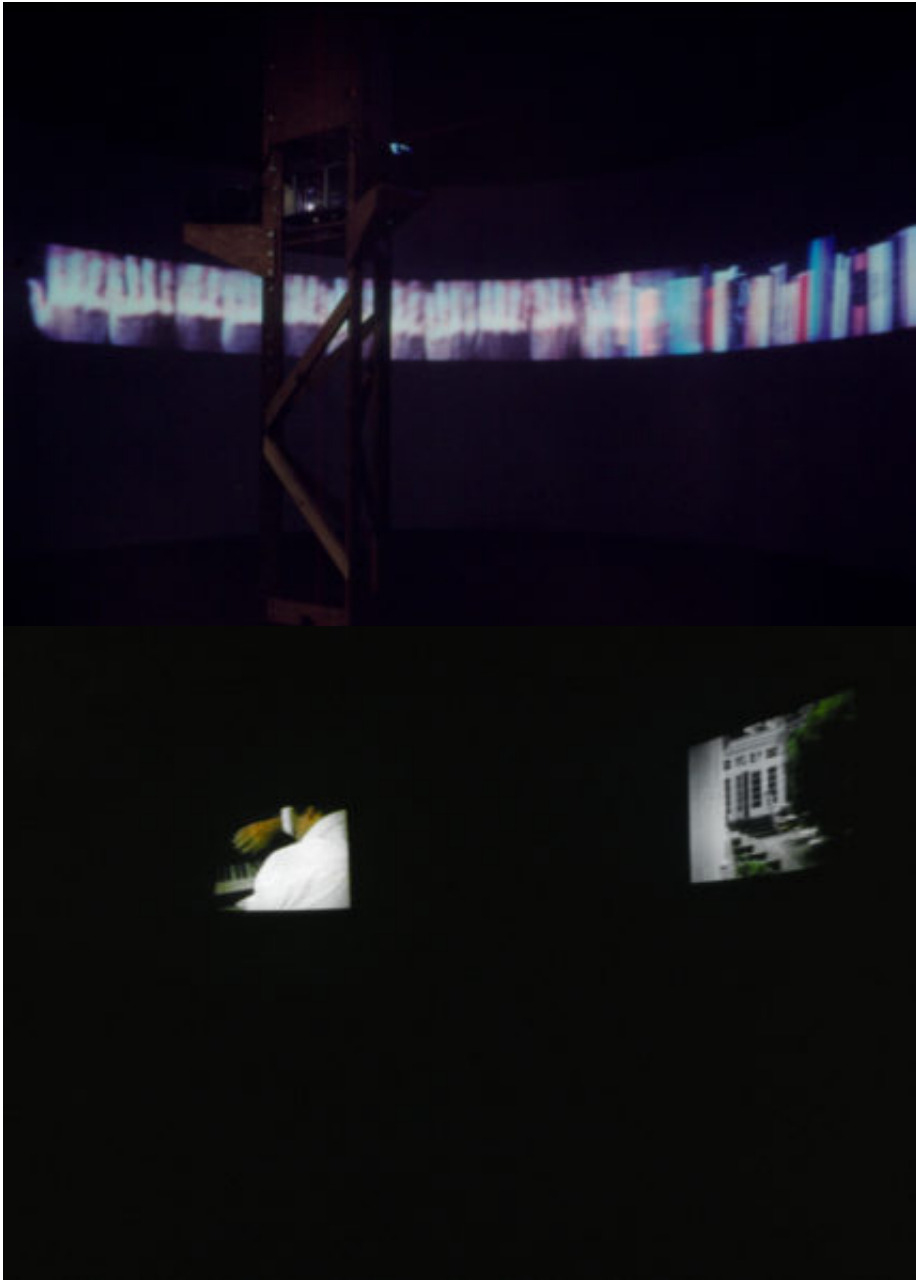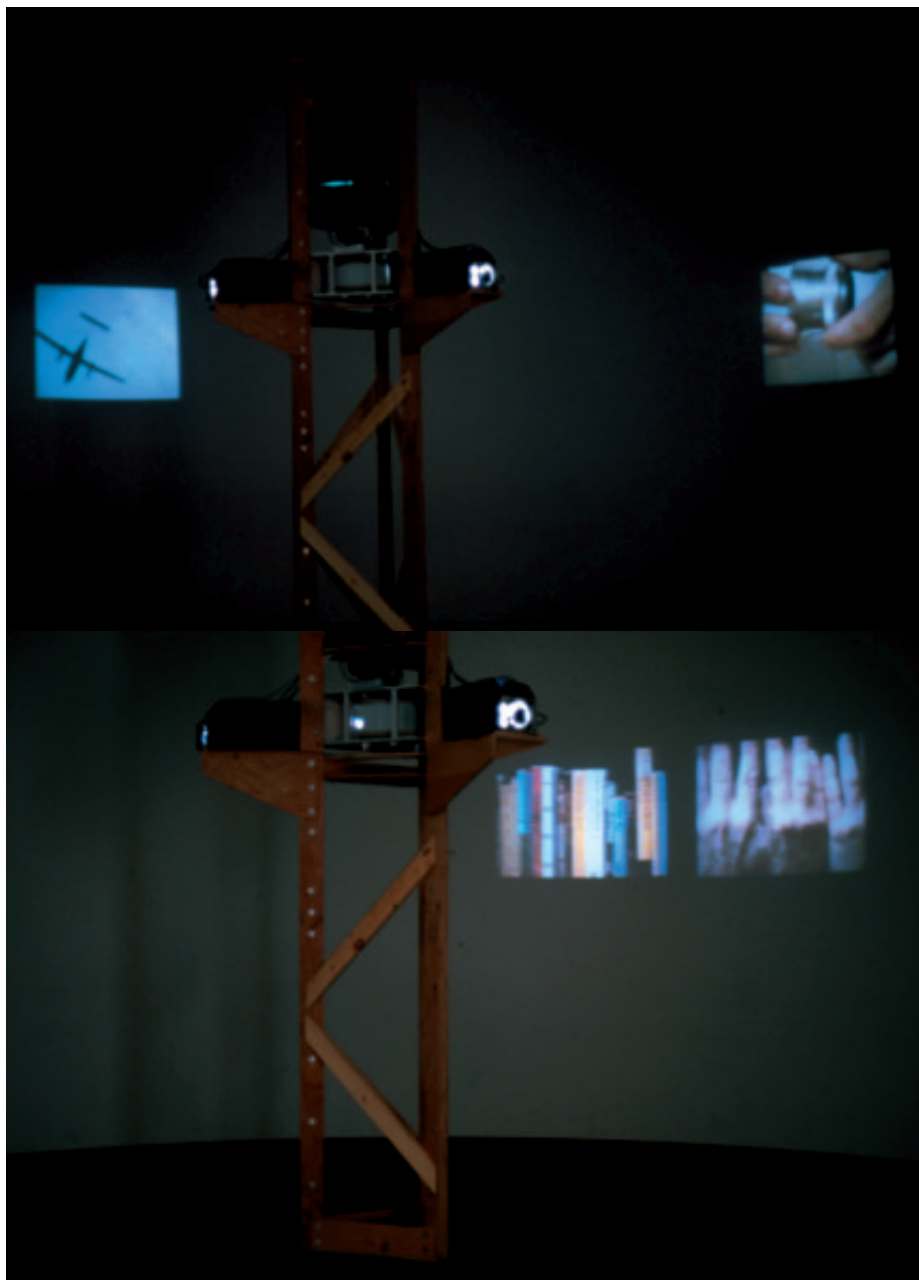# GARY HILL

Title: Dervish

 Date:1993-95

Media: Mixed media installation

Video Link :

Description:

Aluminum and wood structure, four plate glass mirrors, two modified video projectors (projection bulbs replaced with strobe lights), motor, optical encoder, motion detector, motion-controlled

entrance light, two speakers, computer with controlling software written in DOS, time code reader, two-channel synchronizer, two laserdisc players and two laserdiscs (color; one with stereo sound)

Dimensions variable; work requires approx. 200-degree semi-circular wall with a diameter of approx. 31 ft. (9.3 m.)

Edition of two and one artist's proof

Dervish consists of a tower-like structure, an "image turbine," centrally positioned in a circular room with an approximate 200-degree circular projection wall. As a viewer enters the space, lights dim and the contraption begins its cycle. A spinning mirrored box comes up to speed in the crossfire of two video projectors, reflecting and throwing out images of the interior and exterior of a large home. The projectors use strobe lights instead of the usual projection bulbs which are in turn synced to the speed of the rotating box, thus making the frame rate of the image linked to the changes in speed of the motor. The viewer becomes aware of a sole individual (played by the artist) in some kind of process of coping with his surroundings as if the rug of reality was being pulled out from it all. As the whirling machine picks up speed, the space fills with a deafening sound. Shards and fragments of the two independent images flicker, sliding across the curved wall at rapid speeds, at times coming together only to then fly apart. Images of windows, furniture, books, flowers, staircases, and piano innards are seemingly thrown from the tower with centrifugal abandon. A wave of chanting voices slowly overcomes the sound of the machine while processions of quivering fingers and books interweave across the projection area**.** The chanting voices reach a crescendo as the man, now naked on all fours, stroboscopically fills the walls, straining the viewer's capacity to assimilate the persistence of vision.

Spoken Text:

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2002), pp. 33, 34, 37, 185.

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Exhibition History:

A prototype of this work was first exhibited at SITE Santa Fe in Santa Fe, New Mexico from July 14 – October 8, 1995, as part of the exhibition "Longing and Belonging: From the Faraway Nearby." An example of the completed version was first exhibited at the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania as part of the "1995 Carnegie International," November 4, 1995 – February 18, 1996.

"Foreign Bodies," Museum für Gegenwartskunst Basel, Öffentliche Kunstsammlung Basel, Basel, Switzerland, June 1 – September 29, 1996.

Solo exhibition. Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, January 30 – May 3, 1998.

"Gary Hill: Selected Works," Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Wolfsburg, Germany, November 10, 2001 – March 10, 2002. Travelled to: Centro Cultural de Belém, Lisbon, Portugal, October 10, 2002 – January 12, 2003.

"Des oeuvres majeures de la Collection du Musée," Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, February 11 – April 2, 2006.

"Déjà," Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Québec, Canada, May 26 – September 4, 2011.

"Future Present," Schaulager, Basel, Switzerland, June 13, 2015 — January 31, 2016.

Notes:

Dervish was the first instance in which the artist utilized strobe lights although not explicitly—they replaced the standard projection bulbs allowing for the image to be "strobed" in terms of

time--giving the illusion of images slowing down and/or speeding up, as well as space—images from the two projectors could be updated frame by frame anywhere along the semi-circular wall noted in the description. Since then he has used strobe lights in varying ways in *Reflex Chamber*, 1996 *Midnight Crossing*, 1997; the performance *Splayed Mind Out*, 1997; *23:59:59:29 - The Storyteller's Room*, 1998; *Cabin Fever*, 1999; *Wall Piece*, 2000; *Unconditional Surrender*, 2008 and *The Slow Torque of Bonsai,* 2017.

The "image turbine" and controlling software were developed for the work by Dave Jones.