
GARY HILL





Title:Processual Video

Date:1980

Media:Video (black-and-white, sound); 11:30 min.

Video Link :<https://vimeo.com/5510969>

Description:

This piece was originally planned by the artist as a reading for the Viewpoint series at New York's Museum of Modern Art. "It was an attempt to circumscribe my work in the structure of a reading," Hill explains. *Processual Video* is minimal with regards to an "image" but quite complex in terms of the interplay of language and image. In fact, the image as such functions more as a tracking device. On a black screen, a white line slowly rotates on its own axis, seemingly generating a spoken text that refers to itself. Depending on its position, the line gets narrower, then wider, finally dissipating horizontally into thin white strokes. While this is happening, Hill reads a text that triggers associations and wordplays with the precise position and detail of the continuously changing line. As the first-person narrator, he describes various places: snow-covered mountains, the sea, an airport and various processes and actions that refer reflexively to himself, the reader, and to a viewer, "...a passenger in a chair..." On account of the monotone voice and the iconic line repeating its cycle again and again, 'burning' itself in, the work has an almost meditative effect.

Broeker, Holger, ed. *Gary Hill: Selected Works and catalogue raisonné*. Wolfsburg: Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, 2002, GHCR 37, pp. 86 - 88.

Spoken Text: He knew the ocean well. He grew up there and observed the waves daily; the water always returning, informing the shoreline, feeding the waves back into themselves. He didn't particularly like flying, but it was worth a certain edginess and an occasional glissando within his stomach, in that order, in order to be in the mountains surveying the slopes, cutting patterns in the random snow. Being a surfer, skiing was acutely secondary, nevertheless close to his concerns. It was 11:00 am and cold. The sun was very bright, too bright for a single pair of eyelids. The outline separating the pristine blue sky and distant peaks never seemed to stabilize. His perception reflected what he conceptualized to be true, that there was really no line at all. Reaching the top of the incline he remained on the lift for the ride back down. The maintenance crew was still covering the run with snow (artificially produced snow). He turned his concentration from panorama to local reality: A passenger in a chair, suspended, moving at a constant rate towards the platform landing, in all probability to loop again. He watched the last length of cable overhead trying to "get" its tensile strength before requesting the operator to slow the machine down allowing him to get off. Back home the waves were flat. The forecast was the same for time to come. He thought to himself and not for a moment too long. He imagined he was there observing distance; the space always returning, informing time, feeding memory back into itself. He stood in the sediment of the text banking on and off its reverberances, sentencing himself to a temporal disparity. The voice of presentation was awkward for him, as were slide rules and what they represented to equilibrium and certain geometric art, respectively ascending their horizontal and vertical cultures. From here he could survey the slopes, the graph and the patterns of a predictable randomness. He was at or nearing the apex of deliverance. Answering was acutely secondary, nevertheless close to begging the question. The discourse was what to expect by the time he got there. The outline separating the blue chroma and white data never seemed to stabilize. His conception reflected what he perceived to be true, that the line was an iconic abrasion enabling him to follow the negative going edge of the clock. He lost track of where he was; a dancer forgetting to throw his head ahead of himself before pirouetting. He recovered his concentration from a panoramic smear drawing a slightly different perspective: A passenger in a chair, suspended, waiting at a constant rate, moving the platform towards the landing, in all probability to loop again... He

suggested the last horizons would lead to states of blanking increasing with time. Reclining, he awaited the forecast to see if it had changed. He felt the vulnerability of transition, a kind of dream leaving a surfacing sleep. He couldn't remember whether he dreamt in color or not; the sequences always returning, enfolding the cycles, feeding information back to the clouds. He didn't particularly like flying, not to mention the airport escalators designed to track the angular motive of the site, yet operating by now predictably in and out of order, in that order assuming they were there to function and carry him to a terminal distance where the plane's instrument panels would synchronize. It was arrival time. He knew what he had expected by the time he got there. The outline separating the pristine blue sky and boarding aircraft never seemed to stabilize. His processual continuum with the object forced this to the true state. Reaching the top of the mechanized ascent he discovered a long line waiting. The maintenance crew was still removing snow from the runway. With no place to go, he turned around and walked back down a ramp. The immediacy of movement was controlled and went unnoticed. He was distracted by the sound of a jet. His concentration spiraled out from graphic to glass, tinted, and as long as the structure could contain. He watched another landing; a plane, a passenger, a chair suspended at a constant rate towards the platform. The image became static passing the toggle state resetting the mythology. He was aware that decisions had to be made, and finality simply avoided the vulnerability of transition. His mind bore little resemblance to the state of the art. He projected ahead. The time would always return, enfolding the object, giving space back to the given. He realized banking on and off Newtonian principles would confuse the stairstep logic, not to mention the escalators his memory staked out of order in order to underline a certain notion about compasses operating from manmade polarities. The time came to call attention to itself. He was left cold. He was one up on himself. Memory had remapped expectation before he was there. The speaker threw his head ahead of himself before pre-wetting his tongue. The outline separating the mouth and words was prerecorded. He needed a signal to retrigger the trace. The control of immediacy was movement. His arms outstretched and dialed a space resetting the methodology. Direction was open-ended. Transmission lines could carry his message anywhere provided it began with the rise time of the form. His position was refractive. Scale was not a part of the trajectory. The pulse width of interim was widening and time was sinking through the window containing the vacuum. His distance was referenced by the frame. He was at arm's length with it. The outline separating the left and/or right and right and/or left sides of the brain never seemed to stabilize. To proceed with the object of recognition was to accept architecture as the delineator. The possibility of adjacent spaces was collapsing. His mind was an iconic abrasion of reality attempting to level with the first person. The aluminum was in his grasp as it should be; light, precision milled and easily movable from place to place. He imagined measuring the abstract. His eye floated in a green illuminated substance between the lines (the pendulum always returning, performing entropy, feeding stasis back to the object revolving in his head). He wasn't accustomed to metrodemonic devices as they wrought a certain slant on linear statements such as: when binary operations and the art of origami are considered the two equal sides of an isosceles triangle with the third being a satellite of sorts, a contextual shift begins to cycle causing the polarization of all axes within a proximity determined by a violet code. He was one to one with himself. The space was wired with discrete tensions adding to the torque when nearing the perpendiculars. Old pilings, once the support of a platform, had been outmoded and replaced by a bridge. His mind rested within a suspension system of equal probable beauty. He watched the last length of cable trying to "get" its tensile strength as the double line broke, allowing him to pass. The rearview mirror was slightly ajar. He adjusted it. Within limits, he enjoyed long distance driving and travelling light.

Bibliography:

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2^e *Semaine Internationale de Video*. Geneva: Saint-Gervais Genève, 1987, pp. 33 – 35, 63, 65, 66, 100, 127. (Including a transcription of the spoken text of *Processual Video*, 1980)

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OTHERWORDSANDIMAGES: Video by Gary Hill. Copenhagen: Video Gallerie/Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, 1990, p. 23.

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Exhibition History:

This work was first performed on February 26, 1980 as part of the event "Video Viewpoints: Processual Video" at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York, February 26, 1980. The first known screening of the work was as part of the Image Dissector Screening Series at the University of California, Los Angeles, California on June 10, 1980.

Solo exhibition. Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York, February 19 – 24, 1981.

Solo screening. Anthology Film Archives, New York, New York, February 28, 1981.

"The Electronic Gallery," State University of New York, Binghamton, New York, April 1 - 15, 1981.

"New York Video," Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Munich, Germany, July 7 – August 2, 1981.

"Video Europäische Videotheken." Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Munich, Germany, October 20 – November 1, 1981.

"Gary Hill: Equal Time," Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, California, March 28 – May 2, 1982.

"Freie Video-Produktionen aus den USA," Steirischer Herbst '82, Funkhaus Graz, Graz, Austria, November 6 – 10, 1982.

"Art Vidéo Rétrospectives et Perspectives," Palais des Beaux-Arts, Charleroi, Belgium, February 5 – March 27, 1983.

"The Electronic Gallery," University Art Gallery, State University of New York, Binghamton, New York, March 2 – March 25, 1983.

Solo screening. London Video Arts, London, England, December 8, 1983.

Solo screening. International Cultural Center, Antwerp, Belgium, December 9, 1983.

Solo exhibition. Center for Media Art, The American Center, Paris, France, December 13 – 15, 1983.

Solo exhibition. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York, May 24 – June 15, 1986.

2^e Semaine Internationale de Vidéo, Saint-Gervais Genève, Geneva, Switzerland, November 16 – 21, 1987.

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January 9, 1994; The Tate Gallery, Liverpool, England, February 25 – May 2, 1994.

"Hill: Sites Recited," Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, California, December 3, 1993 – February 20, 1994.

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Solo exhibition. Dia Center for the Arts, New York, New York, May 11 – June 25, 1995.

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"Gary Hill: O lugar do outro/where the other takes place," Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, July 1 – 6, 1997 (not the full run of the exhibition); Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil, October 3 – November 2, 1997.

"Gary Hill: Rétrospective de ses premières oeuvres mono-bandes," Cinéma Lux, Caen, Basse-Normandie, France, December 11, 1997.

Solo exhibition. Center for Contemporary Images, Saint-Gervais Genève, Geneva, Switzerland, September 9, 10, 1998.

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"Gary Hill: Video Works," NTT InterCommunication Center, Tokyo, Japan, February 16 – March 31, 1999.

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"Video Acts: Single Channel Works from the Collections of Pamela and Richard Kramlich and

the New Art Trust," P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, New York, New York, November 10, 2002 – April 2003.

"Say It LOUD," District Berlin, Berlin, Germany, October 4 – November 10, 2012.
Momentombs," Suwon Art Museum, Suwon, Korea, November 26, 2019 — March 6, 2020.

Notes:

The precursor of this work is *Resolution*, 1979. *Processual Video* also exists as a performance of the same name.