
GARY HILL





Title:Solstice d'Hiver

Date:1990

Media:Video (color, sound); 60:00 min.

Video Link :<https://vimeo.com/111298679>

Description:

Edited from the press kit of the exhibition Gary Hill. Sites Recited, Long Beach Museum of Art,

Long Beach, CA, 1993 – 94:

Solstice d'Hiver was Hill's last single-channel video before the recently completed *Goats and Sheep* and *Blind Spot*. The work was recorded in real time and was taped December 21, between the hours of 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. At the beginning the camera moves in slow increments around a sun bathed room, gently embracing objects contained within as if seen for the first and last time. The scene is almost silent, with the occasional sound of the autofocus on the camera lens readjusting as it searches for a subject to focus on. A figure, the artist, enters into the frame and with determined slowness places a record on a record player. It is a sound composition by the avant garde composer Alvin Lucier entitled, "I am Sitting in a Room." Lucier has recorded his speaking voice and then plays it back repeatedly, until "the resonant frequencies of the room reinforce themselves so that any semblance of my speech, with perhaps the exception of rhythm, is destroyed." The spoken text is a description of this act, with his explanation, "I regard this activity not so much as a demonstration of a physical fact but more as a way to smooth out any irregularities my speech might have."

The recording continues to play its repeated message while Hill takes a shower, leaving the camera to document. The recording, the camera, and Hill become separate entities. The gradual inability to decipher Lucier's text parallels the camera's oscillating focus and Hill's sudden change of pace and mood – radically transformed as the camera is violently uprooted from its tripod, the natural light eliminated as window shades are dramatically closed, and Hill, nude, frantically moves into other rooms, leaving the recording behind. He enters a bedroom and off camera reads random quotes from books, like: "All of our past is like a kind of threat..."; "The less you expect the better..."; "These were people. These are anecdotes dwelled upon for there are several elements of the extraordinary." The books are then thrown at the wall to land on a disheveled bed. The desire to correlate the found text with the previous action(s) is defeated as the books pile up and time runs out.

Broeker, Holger, ed. *Gary Hill: Selected Works and catalogue raisonné*. Wolfsburg: Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, 2002, GHCR 65, pp. 149 - 150.

Spoken Text:

Following is the transcription of the recording by Alvin Lucier entitled "I Am Sitting in a Room":

I am sitting in a room different from the one you are in now. I am recording the sound of my speaking voice and I am going to play it back into the room again and again until the resonant frequencies of the room reinforce themselves so that any semblance of my speech, with perhaps the exception of rhythm, is destroyed. What you will hear then are the natural resonant frequencies of the room articulated by speech. I regard this activity not so much as a demonstration of the physical fact but more as a way to smooth out any irregularities my speech might have.

Bibliography:

Hill, Gary. "Happenstance (explaining it to death)." *Video d'artistes*. Geneva: Bel Veder, 1986, unpaginated.

Sarrazin, Stephen. *Chimaera Monographie No. 10 (Gary Hill)*. Montbéliard, France: Centre International de Création Vidéo Montbéliard, Belfort, 1992, p. 40.

Gary Hill: Sites Recited. Long Beach, California: Long Beach Museum of Art, 1993, p. 25.

Van Assche, Christine and Corinne Diserens. *Gary Hill*. Valencia: Instituto Valenciano de Arte Moderno (IVAM), Centre del Carme, 1993, pp. 120 – 125, 131 – 133.

ForumBHZvideo 1993. Festival Internacional de Vídeo: Limite. Belo Horizonte, Brazil: Festival Internacional de Video, 1993, p. 48.

Sarrazin, Stephen. "Gary Hill. Dai un senso a ciò che muovi." *Flash Art* XXVI, 174 (April 1993), p. 35.

Grout, Catherine. "Gary Hill – La condition humaine de la pensee." *Arte Factum* 48 (June/July/August 1993), p. 10.

Cornwell, Regina. "Gary Hill Interview." *Art Monthly* 170 (October 1993), p. 9.

Sarrazin, Stephen. "Gary Hill: mean what you move." *Flash Art* (International Edition) 173 (November/December 1993), p. 86.

Thériault, Michèle. *Gary Hill. Selected videotapes 1978 – 1990*. Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1994, unpaginated.

Vischer, Theodora, ed. *Gary Hill: Imagining the Brain Closer than the Eyes*. Basel: Museum für Gegenwartskunst; Ostfildern: Cantz, 1995, pp. 70, 124, 125. (In German: *Gary Hill: Arbeit am Video*. Basel: Museum für Gegenwartskunst; Ostfildern: Cantz, 1995, pp. 76, 130.)

Intelligente Ambiente/Intelligent Ambience. Program notes. Long Beach, California: Long Beach Museum of Art, 1995, unpaginated.

Dantas, Marcello. *Gary Hill: O lugar do outro/where the other takes place*. Rio de Janeiro: Magnetoscópio, 1997, pp. 69, 77.

Memory Book. Personal Effects: The Collective Unconscious. Sydney: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1998, pp. 30, 31.

Bélisle, Josée. *Gary Hill*. Montreal: Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, 1998, pp. 9, 15, 28, 55.

Gary Hill: Video Works. Tokyo: NTT InterCommunication Center, 1999, pp. 48, 49.

Kold, Anders, ed. *Gary Hill*. Aarhus: Aarhus Kunstmuseum, 1999, p. 114.

Morgan, Robert C., ed. *Gary Hill*. Baltimore: PAJ Books / The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000, pp. 229.

Gary Hill en Argentina: textos, ensayos, dialogos. Buenos Aires: Centro Cultural Recoleta,

2000, pp. 4, 21, 46 – 47, 48.

Gary Hill: Instalaciones. Córdoba: Ediciones Museo Caraffa, 2000, pp. 56 – 57, 64 – 65, 78.

Lageira, Jacinto. *Des premiers mots aux derniers silences* in *Gary Hill: Around & About: A Performative View*. Paris: Éditions du Regard, 2001, pp. 17 – 19, 20 – 21, 23, 26 – 29.

Gary Hill: Selected Works and catalogue raisonné. Wolfsburg: Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, 2002, pp. 149, 150.

Video Acts: Single Channel Works from the Collections of Pamela and Richard Kramlich and New Art Trust. Long Island City: P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, 2003, pp. 173.

Thorel, Benjamin. *L'art contemporain et la télévision.* Paris: Editions Cercle d'Art, 2006, pp. 116 – 117.

Odin, Paul-Emmanuel. *L'absence de livre [Gary Hill et Maurice Blanchot – Écriture, vidéo].* Marseille: La Compagnie, 2007, pp. 48 – 69.

Exhibition History:

Solo screening. Etablissements Phonographiques de l'Est, Paris, France, November 25, 1992.

ForumBHZvideo, Festival Internacional de Video, Belo Horizonte, Brazil, November 10 – 15, 1993.

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

"Gary Hill," Musée d'art contemporain, Lyon, France, May 26 – September 19, 1994.

"Gary Hill: Selected Videotapes 1978 – 1990," Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, June 7 – August 28, 1994.

"Intelligent Ambience," Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, California, December 2, 1994 – February 19, 1995; Ars Electronica '94: Festival für Kunst, Technologie und Gesellschaft, June 21 – 25, 1994.

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

Sedicesima Biennale Internazionale del Bronzetto Piccola Scultura Padova, Padua, Italy, October 29, 1995 – January 28, 1996.

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

"Made in Corpus," Odyssud, Blagnac, France, May 11 – June 5, 1998.

"Personal Effects: The Collective Unconscious," Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, Australia, July 11 – September 6, 1998.

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

Solo exhibition. Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Aarhus, Denmark, January 17 – April 5, 1999.

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

"The Cool World: Film & Video in America 1950 – 2000, Part 2: The Unfixed Image, 1970 - 2000," Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York, January 30, 2000.

Solo exhibition. Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires, Argentina, May 17 – June 4, 2000 (shown as a projection work).

Solo exhibition. Museo Caraffa, Córdoba, Argentina, July 7 – 30, 2000 (screening on July 29, 2000, and shown as a projection work).

"l'écriture vidéophage – les bandes vidéo de Gary Hill," La Compagnie, Marseille, France, May 1 – 31, 2001 (May 29 & 31 screenings).

"Les Enfants du Paradis," Galerie Yvon Lambert, Paris, France, September 12 – October 12, 2002.

"Exchange and Evolution: Worldwide Video Long Beach 1974-1999," Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, CA, October 7, 2011 – February 12, 2012.

"The Embodied Vision: Performance for the Camera," MUSEU NACIONAL DE ARTE CONTEMPORÂNEA DO CHIADO, Lisbon, Portugal, March 5 – May 4, 2014.

"Gary Hill: Momentombs," Suwon Art Museum, Suwon, Korea, November 26, 2019 — March 6, 2020.

Notes:

Commissioned by La Sept for *Live*, a series of real time videotapes proposed by Phillipe Grandieux.

Audio recording: "I am Sitting in a Room," by Alvin Lucier