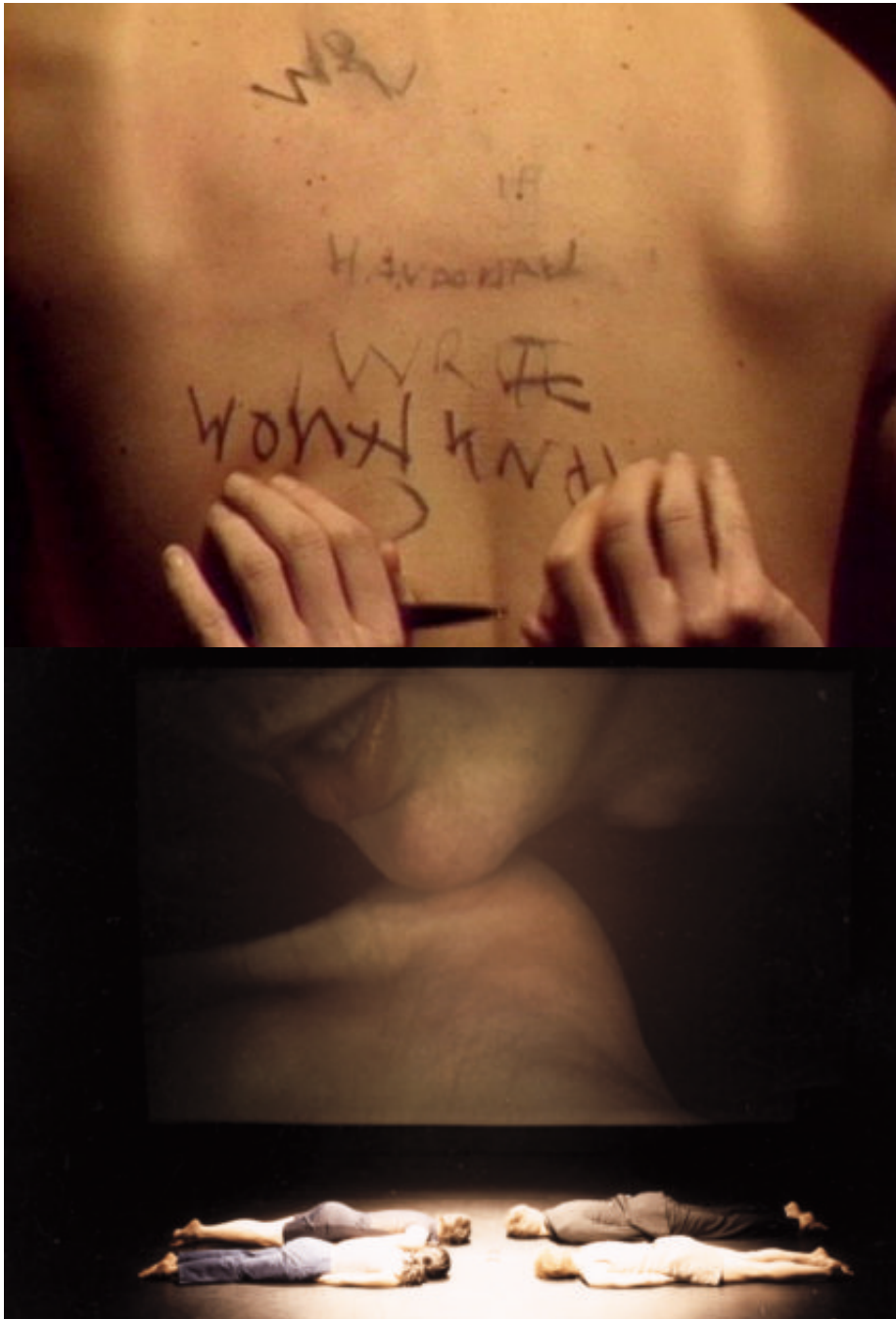

GARY HILL





Title:Splayed Mind Out

Date:1997

Media:

Video Link :

Description:

Gary Hill and Meg Stuart

Created with and performed by Heine R. Avdal, Milli Bitterli, Christine De Smedt, Cristelle Fillod, Gary Hill, Wouter Krokaert, Yukiko Shinozaki, Meg Stuart; Artistic assistant, Christine de Smedt; Costume design, Dorothee Loermann; Technical direction, Marc Dewit; Technical assistance, Ralf Nonn; Produced by Damaged Goods

Intermedia dance performance for large-scale projection, two 27-inch color monitors (size variable) on wheeled platforms with extended cabling, three black-and-white monitors (sizes variable), video switcher, three laserdisc players, three laserdiscs, CD player, headphone microphone, mixer, house sound system, computer with control software, theatrical lighting control console/lights, strobe light, costumes, chair, cigarette, lighter, two felt tip pens

Splayed Mind Out was developed during a three-week residency at the Kaaithheater in Brussels, where it was shown as a work-in-progress in April 1997. The collaboration continued for several months and had its premieres at Documenta X (short version) and at Dansens Hus in Stockholm (long version).

The work begins in pitch-black darkness with sounds of electronic feedback mixed with barely audible syllabic utterances. A “body” pile very slowly emerges from the darkness via intermittent flashes from a strobe light overhead and unravels itself—three figures emerge, amphibian-like, exploring first the space between their bodies and then the space around them. Light comes on slowly, and more voices are heard; utterance becomes speech, and chant-like sounds build in intensity. The bodies seemingly ‘write’ themselves into existence, coupling and decoupling over the entire stage as the sound builds to a crescendo of chanting voices before the lights are cut and a series of tableaux begin. The notion of membranes between media and body resonates throughout the work in many ways. At various times and through different configurations seven performers (dancers and non-dancers alike) move among each other exchanging movement, touch, speech, and images being displayed on moveable monitors and a single projection on the back wall of the stage. Live and prerecorded images of the body and of “viewers” are seen standing full-figured or as wall-sized faces looking through the performance space and making eye contact with the audience. At one moment in front of a flickering projection of a large tree, the performers work themselves from “rooted” positions to slightly wavering standing figures synchronizing to harmonic overtones. One begins to hear another sound—a kind of waltz very faintly as if it were next door being heard through the walls. The loudness increases and the music (Black Cat Orchestra) drifts in like smoke along with an older couple dancing through the standing figures and out the back of the stage followed by the music. *Splayed Mind Out* ends when the last member of the audience leaves a lone performer who repeats a series of gestures using her pointed finger to connect her body to the particular

location in which she moves.

Quasha, George and Charles Stein. *An Art of Limina: Gary Hill's Works and Writings*.
Barcelona: Ediciones Polígrafa, 2009, p. 592.

Spoken Text:

Live spoken text:

a node

another node

two nodes tuning the meaning of an

action

speaking

instructions on how to move

back and forth

behind the tween

hidden within

a body of thoughts

the mind can't know

what hand is left

and if

the right hand

were to be ingrown

backhandedly

a hand

passes through

what hand is left

on the back of language

and one remains roaming
dividing the words
doubling the languages
back to their roots
from one word to the next
questions arise
and eyes inflict thought
and right inflects left
and this inflects that
and words reflect back
hand and forth
when the body splits
calls to mind
that which is left
from right
across the flesh
comes a hand written hand
when the right hand
stops writing
the left hand
stops to write
the first hand
for the last time
the hand unhands itself
beheads its double

and the left hand is
not the right
and knowledge
reflects back
the right hand
going mad
and for everything
which is visible
there is a copy
of that which is hidden
proceed accordingly
inside a book
outside a hand
spun mind
laid bare
on a chair
I am the mirror of a body
lodged in an unknown word
moving the view from right to left

Light passed through the window as it is able to do. It had that gold-orange color that happens. It sprawled over the thing in the room. A fixed gaze moved through the glass separating vision from pure light. Across the way it looked to be you sitting in a small chair. Your hands washed clean pressed together in the warmth of your thighs. The sound of distant cars can filtering through the unseen pines.

The smell of the tall trees that brings us to our senses. A field of shimmering mirages evokes memories of movies and one smeared dream of your own. Abruptly, eyes about face taking in the black velvety curtain beyond which there are no cities. Cities with adequate light to reflect back a ceiling for the sky. You stand like a giant walking stick ready to infiltrate invisible forests. A second thought reclines you without a fight. Your knees become headlights deep in the night

illuminating my being with the blindness of light. I hit the ground. I wait for the earth to quake. Starfish hands suck a grip from tiny crushed rocks. There I am eye level with a dead rodent annihilated by invention; singled out by the giant movements of coincidence. Its body made abstract, unrecognizable save for the eyes, glazed over with the last shutter of life. I remember I'm blind. I speak instead...but cutting the corners just creates more sides, more words and mere words doubling as other words. Is there something to say? Can I give you a hand? I don't think I understood exactly. A world before words spins somewhere in your being, sending nasty little signals throughout the day.

Perhaps there are slight differences, blind slivers I should be aware of that I could then pass on to you. Or is it just a matter of time, a difference in time--Mine, theirs and then finally yours. And so we begin and end not at the same point or different points. These are the excepted habits of place left on the wayside. We are simply here. Waiting awaits waiting.

I walk around the world a few times.

Big parallel lines tunnel through

pulling up points of entry and exit.

The two nodal hemispheres play

havoc in the skull. Thoughts can't

help but mince and suddenly I am

beside myself entertaining a party

of two, only to fall back a few steps,

a few words gone by, a few

instructions on how to get from

point A to point B. Points, known

only by the needle that records

everything.

Written text:

Spencer Holst from *Zebra Storyteller* (published by Station Hill Press, Barrytown, New York, 1997)

Up in heaven the curtains fluttered the curtains fluttered

the curtains fluttered and the Mona Lisa entered

at the end of a small hall
which was hung with many veils
Up in heaven the curtains fluttered
fluttered fluttered and the Buddha entered
the hall at the other end
They smiled

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Exhibition History:

First performed as a work-in-progress at Kaaaitheater, Brussels, Belgium, April 23 – 26, 1997.

This work premiered, in a shortened version, at Documenta X in Kassel, Germany, September 5 – 7, 1997, and travelled to: Dansens Hus, Stockholm, Sweden, September 12 – 14, 1997;

Stadsschouwburg, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, October 10, 11, 1997; Octobre en Normandie, Rouen, France, October 18, 1997; City of Women, Ljubljana, Slovenia, October 21, 22, 1997; Monty, Antwerp, Belgium, November 13 – 15, 1997; Festival Internacional de Dança, Belo Horizonte, Brazil, November 21, 22, 1997; Danças Na Cidade, Lisbon, Portugal, November 26 – 28, 1997; Danse Scenen, Copenhagen, Denmark, December 11 – 13, 1997; Warande, Turnhout, Belgium, December 17, 18, 1997; Klapstuk, Leuven, Belgium, January 16, 17, 1998; Mousonturm, Frankfurt, Germany, January 22 – 24, 1998; Vooruit, Ghent, Belgium, January 30, 31, 1998; Podewil, Berlin, Germany; February 5 – 7, 1998; Teatro Central, Seville, Spain, February 6, 7, 1998; Théâtre des Abesses, Paris, France, February 12 – 14, 1998; Pumpenhaus, Münster, Germany, February 21, 22, 1998; Lunatheater, Brussels, Belgium; February 25 – 28, 1998; Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki, Finland, May 29 – 31, 1998; Wiener Festwochen, Vienna, Austria, June 5 – 7, 1998; On the Boards, Seattle, Washington, November 19 – 21, 1998; The Kitchen, New York, New York, December 2 – 5, 1998.

Notes: