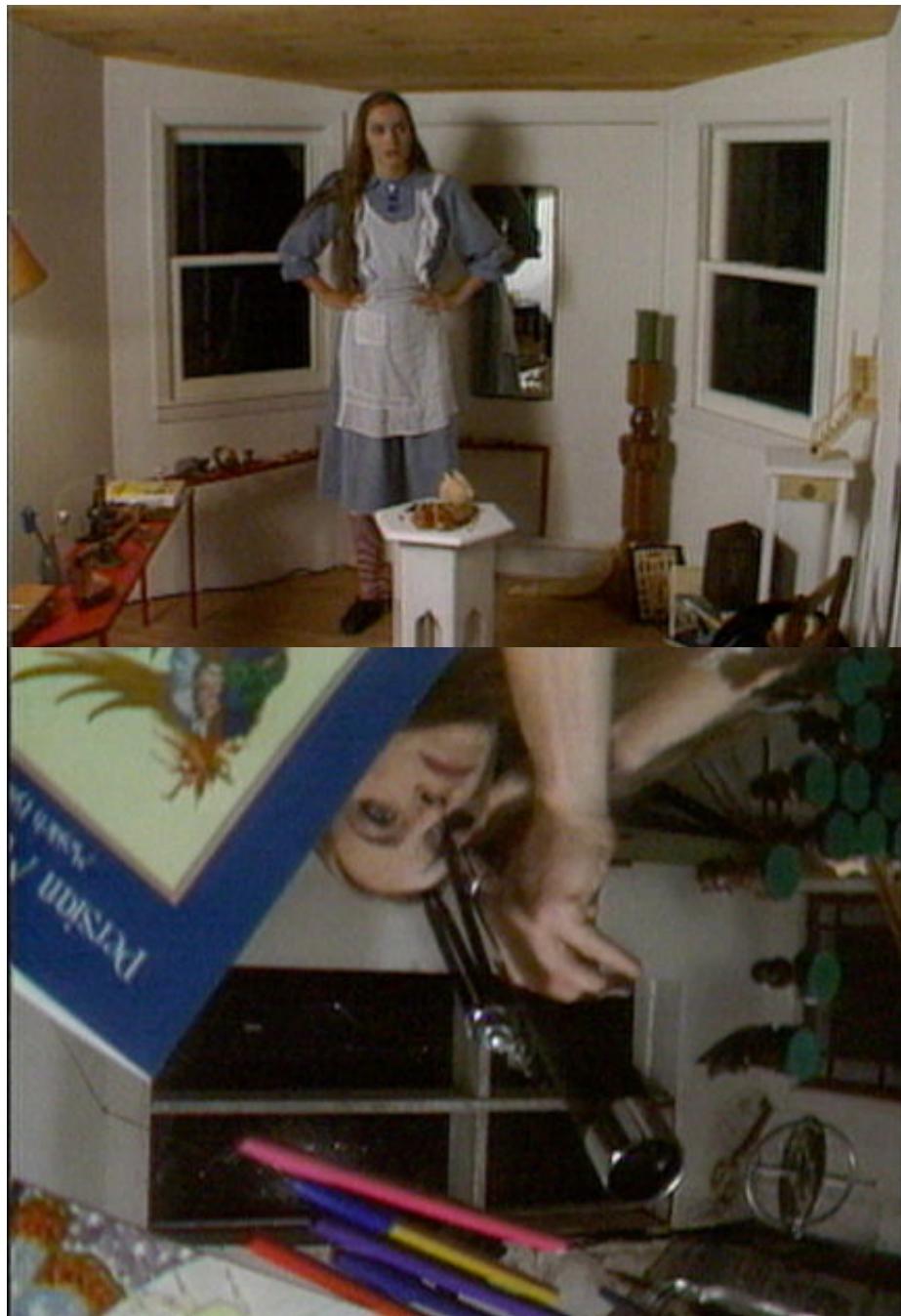

G A R Y H I L L







Title: Why Do Things Get in a Muddle? (Come on Petunia)

Date: 1984

Media: Video (color, stereo sound); 32:00 min.

Video Link :<https://vimeo.com/45472623>

Description:

This tape is the first of Hill's works for which he deliberately wrote a screenplay. The title defines the piece's starting point: Alice in Wonderland asks her omniscient father why things get in a muddle. They then talk on a metalinguistic level (i.e. about language using language). A glimpse through the looking glass reveals an inversion of the customary order of things. The father ingests the smoke from his pipe, Alice does not so much blink her eyelids momentarily open as stare wide-eyed, and the playing cards fall out of the air in an orderly manner into the girl's hand. The language of the two protagonists is strangely slurred and partially incomprehensible. Gradually the reason for these phenomena becomes clear. Almost all the passages are being played and spoken backwards, and the tape can likewise be played backwards, with the result that at first sight the action appears plausible. This also explains why at second glance the movements of the protagonists' bodies look strangely mechanical. Hill made phonetic notes of the texts spoken backwards by Alice and her father. At the end of the tape, when Alice is standing in front of the looking glass, the letters of the subtitle ("Come on Petunia") logically regroup as "once upon a time."

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Second Japan Video Television Festival: "Delicate Technology," Spiral, Aoyama, Tokyo, Japan, July 31 – August 7, 1989.

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

"Passageworks," Rooseum, Malmö, Sweden, April 27 – July 25, 1993.

"Video to Expand Your Mind," Dayton Visual Arts Center, Dayton, Ohio, June 3, 1993.

"Video Time Shifts," Forum for Contemporary Art, St. Louis, Missouri, June 4 – July 31, 1993.

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Solo screening. London Film Festival, Museum of the Moving Image, London, England, November 5, 1993.

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

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

911 Media Arts Center, Seattle, Washington, July 8, 1994.

“Gary Hill,” Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California, December 19, 1994 – March 12, 1995.

“Gary Hill,” (travelling exhibition organized by Riksutställningar, Stockholm, Sweden) Moderna Museet, Spårvagnshallarna, Stockholm, Sweden, February 4 – April 17, 1995; Museet for samtidskunst, Oslo, Norway, April 26 - May 21, 1995; Helsingin Taidehalli, Helsinki, Finland, June 29 - July 30, 1995; Bildmuseet, Umeå, Sweden, September 3 - October 15, 1995, Jönköpings läns museum, Jönköping, Sweden, October 22 - November 15, 1995; Göteborgs Konstmuseum, Göteborg, Sweden, November 15, 1995 - January 14, 1996.

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

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“Visual Utterance: The Works of Gary Hill,” Pacific Film Archive, University of California, Berkeley, California, February 11, 18, 1998.

“Video Library,” David Zwirner Gallery, New York, New York, March 18 – April 18, 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.

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“Searchlight,” California College of Arts and Crafts, San Francisco, California, September 11 – December 11, 1999.

Solo exhibition. Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires, Argentina, May 17 – June 4, 2000 (May 26, 2000 screening).

Solo exhibition. Museo Caraffa, Córdoba, Argentina, July 7 – 30, 2000 (July 22, 2000 screening).

“Hill(scape),” Extra Microwave Media Art Festival (organized by Videotage), Hong Kong Space Museum Lecture Hall, Hong Kong, January 14 – 31, 2001 (January 20 – 21 screenings).

“l’écriture vidéophage – les bandes vidéo de Gary Hill.” La Compagnie, Marseille, France, May 1 – 31, 2001 (May 15 and 17 screenings).

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

Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, February 28 – March 6, 2002 (entire program February 28 - March 24, 2002).

“Say Hello to Peace and Tranquility,” Netherlands Media Art Institute, Montevideo/Time Based Arts, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, March 22 – April 27, 2002. Traveled to: Nicolaj Center for Contemporary Art, Copenhagen, Denmark, April 26 – June 2, 2002; hARTware, Dortmund, Germany, early 2003; Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio, March 16 – April 19, 2003.

“Standby: No Technical Difficulties,” (organized by MoMA, New York, and Pacific Film Archive) Gramercy Theatre, New York, New York, October 10, 2003 (screening program October 9 – 18).

“Hypnose,” Les Laboratoires d’Aubervilliers, France, December 4, 5, 6, 2003.

“Gary Hill: A Personal Anthology / Video Works,” (video screenings) The Ossolinski National Institute, Wroclaw, Poland, December 1 / 2 and FAMU, Prague, Czech Republic, December 9, 2004.

“Outer Ear Festival of Sound,” Experimental Sound Studio, Chicago, Illinois, December 4 and 8, 2005.

“Os Anos 80s,” Museu de Serralves, Porto, Portugal, November 10, 2006 – February 4, 2007.

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

“Gary Hill: Voice Grounds,” St Paul Street Gallery, Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand, March 12 - April 25, 2009.

"Art of Limina: Gary Hill," Slought Foundation, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, March 21 – May 1, 2009.

"Paying a Visit to Mary," The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Aldrich, Connecticut, January 31 – June 2010.

"Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg at The Hunter Museum," The Hunter Museum of American Art, Chattanooga, TN, May 26 – October 4, 2011.

"Why do things get in a muddle?," Fotogalleriet, Oslo, Norway, November 11 — December 17, 2016.

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

Notes:

With Kathy [Katherine] Bourbonais and Charles Stein.

Hill considered making this work the first in a trilogy of metalogues. A second work, titled *Why Do Things Have Outlines (or A Cut Along a Dotted Line)*, was partially realized in a workshop in France. The proposed title for the third work was *Why Do French Men?*