

# bitforms gallery

**Gary Hill**

***On the Outskirts***

May 18 – June 30, 2019

**Opening Reception:** Saturday, May 18, 6 – 8 PM

**Gallery Hours:** Wednesday – Saturday, 11 AM – 6 PM & Sunday 12 – 6 PM

“Had I simply lost consciousness and awakened with a bird's eye view of a cinematic event? Perhaps I was only peering into an optical contraption—a prototype of some kind—swimming through its seductive illusionary space having forgotten it was pressed up against my own face. Or, had I embarked on a somnambulistic journey that night? I live on the outskirts of a desert border town—a place of quietude conducive to a sleepwalk of any length that would have me nowhere in no time at all.”

– Gary Hill, *Cutting Corners Creates Mores Sides*

bitforms is pleased to present *On the Outskirts*, the gallery's first solo exhibition with Gary Hill. Revered for his masterful use of diverse media, Hill skillfully crafts phenomenological encounters. His concentration on the dynamics of perception results in deconstructed image boundaries. Through this dismantling, Machiavellian elements of media, most notably surveillance and seduction, are laid bare. *On the Outskirts* presents the works *Cutting Corners Creates More Sides* and the *SELF ( )* series.

Five acrylic sculptures make up the *SELF ( )* series. In an echo of optometry, the seemingly-clinical objects feature padded eyepieces that occupy the center of the artworks. A glimpse into their interior chambers reveals a live feed of the viewer. Embedded cameras are angled to exclude the subject's face in a beguiling act of disassociation. The sculptures act as instruments of surveillance, yet reveal abstract reflections. This displacement is characteristic of Hill's disregard for normative viewing processes. By eliminating self-recognition, *SELF ( )* supplants instant gratification with inspection. The series includes *SELF A–F*, yet omits *SELF E* in an effort to replace the banalities of selfie culture with disorienting portraiture.

Hill's artworks often create exceptional viewing experiences that verge towards synesthesia. *On the Outskirts* unites the cunning idiosyncrasy of media with experiments in image comprehension. *Cutting Corners Creates More Sides* is a mixed media installation narrated by voices emanating from a long plane of embedded speakers. A diptych of two-channel video projects a patina of fantastic shapes and colors. The images sway in and out of focus, miming myopia as the camera traverses a bizarre landscape. As the viewer attempts to match the focus of the dual screens, moments of harmony emerge in congruent instances. What once appeared as phantasmagoric color fields slowly transfigures into quotidian objects as the narrator queries, “Was it simply a question of synchronicity?”

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b.1951, Santa Monica, CA

Gary Hill has worked with a broad range of media including sculpture, sound, video, installation and performance, producing a large body of single-channel videos, mixed-media installations, and performance work. His longtime work with media continues to explore an array of issues ranging from the physicality of language, synesthesia and perceptual conundrums to ontological space and viewer interactivity. Although working from a conceptual and linguistic base, Hill is considered one of the foundational artists of media art.

Solo exhibitions of his work have been presented at the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain in Paris; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Basel; Museu d'Art Contemporani, Barcelona; Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Germany; West Den Haag Museum, The Netherlands; and the Center for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv, among others. Recent gallery and museum exhibitions include *surf, death, tropes & tableaux: The Psychedelic Gedankenexperiment*, Barbara Gladstone, New York, New York; *Gary Hill: glossodelic attractors*, Henry Art Gallery in Seattle, Washington; *Always Rings Twice*, West, The Hague, The Netherlands; *Linguistic Spill in the Boiler Hall*, Museum of Art, Architecture and technology (MAAT), Lisbon, Portugal.

Hill has completed a number of commissioned works including the permanent installations, *Hand HearD-Variation* for the Science Museum in London and *Astronomy by Day (and other oxymoron)* for the new Seattle Public Library designed by Rem Koolhaas. Following a two-week trip to a Yanomami village in Brazil, he produced *Impressions d'Afrique* for the exhibition, "Yanomami: l'esprit de la forêt," at the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris.

Hill has also worked collaboratively with a number of artists and writers most notably, George Quasha and Charles Stein producing the publication, *An Art of Limina: Gary Hill's Works & Writings*. In 1998 he collaborated with the choreographer meg Stuart and her dance company 'Damaged Goods' to produce *Splayed Mind Out* which was performed more than 50 times in Europe, South America and the United States. In 2005, Hill was Commissioned by the Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma to produce *Resounding Arches / Archi Risonanti*, an installation of multiple projections with sound for the Colosseum and Temple of Venus and Roma. The event culminated with the performance, *Dark Resonances*, in collaboration with Paulina Wallenberg-Olsson and Charles Stein. In 2008, Hill was commissioned by the Holland Festival to collaborate on the production of "Varèse 360°," a two-night concert of the composer Edgard Varèse's complete works, presented at the Westergasfabriek Gashouder, Amsterdam, and at Salle Pleyel, Paris, in 2009. Hill developed the dramaturgy and visual component for the entirety of the performance and invited further collaboration with performers Christelle Fillod, George Quasha, Els Van Riel, Charles Stein and costume design by Paulina Wallenberg-Olsson. The artist had his opera directorial debut at the Lyon Opera House interweaving Beethoven's *Fidelio* with the science-fiction novel *Aniara*. Hill exhibited several works in the 2016 Kochi-Muziris Biennale in India.

A recipient of numerous fellowships, Hill has received awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, Rockefeller Foundation, and Guggenheim Foundation. He has been the recipient of numerous awards and honors, most notably the Leone d'Oro Prize for Sculpture at the Venice Biennale; John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellowship Award; Kurt-Schwitters-Preis Prixe; and honorary doctorate degrees from The Academy of Fine Arts Poznan, Poland and Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle.