

ROBERTS & TILTON

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Gary Hill
Observaciones Sobre los Colores
June 6 - June 27, 2015
Opening Reception: June 6th, 6-8pm

Roberts & Tilton is pleased to announce an exhibition by renowned American artist Gary Hill. Presented for the first time in the United States, *Observaciones Sobre los Colores* (1998) was filmed and produced in Caracas, Venezuela and subsequently smuggled out the same year.



Gary Hill *Observaciones Sobre los Colores*, 1998
Single-channel video/sound installation

Observaciones Sobre los Colores consists of a single video projection in which a boy reads a Spanish translation of Wittgenstein's *Remarks on Colour, Part 1* (1951), consisting of 88 segments, in real time over a period of 78 minutes. Hill provided a modified version of the book with all proper names, philosophical terms and scientific language replaced with phonetically spelled versions.

A reaction to Goethe's *Theory of Colours* (1810), Wittgenstein's *Remarks on Colour* remains famously impenetrable on account of its complex fragmentation; despite great effort, the boy's reading is laboriously staggered and uncomprehending. Unable to comfortably understand the auditory content, one's attention shifts to the visual: a young boy with black hair clothed in a yellow shirt reading from a white book, superimposed against archival footage produced by the non-governmental association Active Citizenship documenting the 2002 Venezuelan protests directly against the government of President Hugo Chavez.

The body, as is language, remains a central feature of Hill's practice. Here, Hill deftly utilizes language as a system of bodily gestures. The viewer consciously 'reads' the imagery on screen as one might with written text: scanning left to right, up to down, with the hand moving to turn the page once the eyes fall still. Confronting this hyper-awareness of the body - the very physical nature of how we communicate - is seen how, from our position of view, the child does not look up from his reading. Stuttering, pauses, gaps - he is difficulty and effort embodied.

The child at the foreground, positioned against the more distant, moving protestors, becomes a tangible experience unfolding in real time and space. His out-of-sync utterance drives the rhythmic editing and progression of images. Further complicating this layering effect is the representation of specific intervals of time; the page number count, visible on the upper right screen, increases as the reading unfolds. Shaped by flexibility and interruption, under this perceptual simultaneity, time stretches: lurching forward and hanging back, while paradoxically standing still.

Reflecting on the language used in Hill's video, it is important to view the usage of text as embodying human lack of comprehension; this substitution closely parallels the historicized interpretation of color as representing the transcendent or 'beyond definition' as posited by Goethe's origin theory.

In *Observaciones Sobre los Colores*, Hill constructs a temporal, psychological, and cultural space negotiating the gaps between the visible world and our actual vision of it. In perceiving the world through visual, phonic, and etymological cues, it remains significant that it is not what one sees or hears, but how one sees it and hears it.

The end result is a subjective experience of the relationship and confrontation between images and words mediated through language, as opposed to a meditated experience.

Gary Hill's intermediary practice investigates the relationships between words and electronic images, exploring a wide array of issues ranging from the physicality of language, the space between ontological linguistics and viewer consciousness, and synesthesia.

Originally a sculptor, Hill began working in video in 1973 and has produced a wide array of video works, mixed-media installation and performances.

Exhibitions of his work have been presented at museums and institutions worldwide, including solo exhibitions at the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Guggenheim Museum SoHo, New York; The Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, Washington; Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Basel; Museu d'Art Contemporani, Barcelona; and Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg; Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles; MIS - Museu da Imagem e do Som, São Paulo, Brazil; Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal, Montreal, Quebec, Canada; Center for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv, Israel, among others. Commissioned projects include works for the Science Museum in London and the Seattle Central Public Library in Seattle, Washington, and an installation and performance work for the Coliseum and Temple of Venus and Rome in Italy. Hill has received multiple fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Rockefeller and Guggenheim Foundations, and has been the recipient of numerous awards and honors, most notably the Leone d'Oro Prize for Sculpture at the Venice Biennale (1995), a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellowship Award (1998), the Kurt-Schwitters-Preis (2000), and honorary degrees from The Academy of Fine Arts Poznan, Poland (2005) and Cornish College of the Arts, Seattle (2011). He was recently awarded the Genius Award in Film by The Stranger, Seattle 2011.

Recent projects include directing Beethoven's opera *Fidelio* which premiered at the Lyon Opera House and *Feedback Path*, a monumental multi projection installation in the Grotte du Mas D'Azil, France.

Gary Hill lives and works in Seattle.

For additional information, please contact Camille Weiner at camille@robertsandtilton.com, 323.549.0223.

Gallery hours are Tuesday – Saturday, 11:00am – 6:00pm.

Roberts & Tilton is located between Fairfax Avenue and La Cienega Boulevard.

Parking is available on the street and at Dunn Edwards located 1/2 block east of the gallery.