

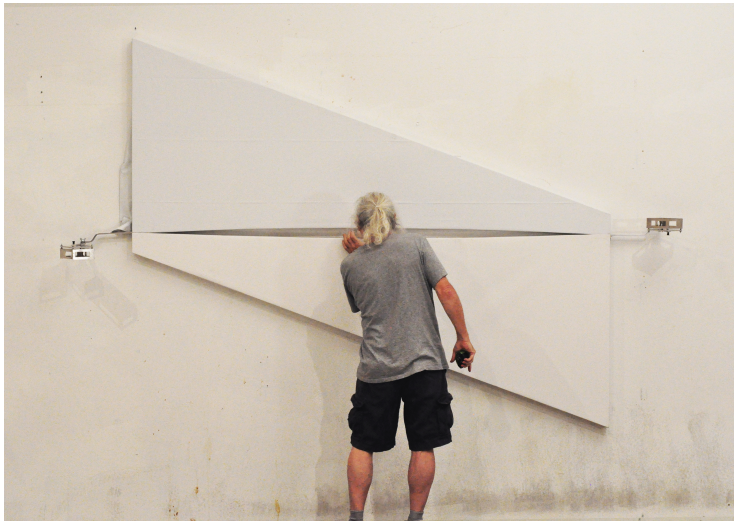
JAMES HARRIS GALLERY

604 SECOND AVE
SEATTLE, WA 98104

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JAMESHARRISGALLERY.COM

PRESS RELEASE



Gary Hill: *Dream Stop*

July 14 – August 26, 2016

Opening Reception:

Thursday, July 14th 5-8pm

Left: **Gary Hill**

Painting with Two Balls (after Jasper Johns), 2016

Shaped canvas, aluminum, plastic,
projectors, video cameras, and electronics
78" x 96" x 3.25"

Gallery Hours:

Wednesday-Saturday, 11am-5pm

Tuesday by appointment only

Images are available upon request.

James Harris Gallery is pleased to present our third solo exhibition titled “Dream Stop” by Gary Hill that features all new work. For this show, Hill constructs an environment of ubiquitous closed-circuit surveillance, each piece containing hidden cameras that capture distorted or fragmented footage of the exhibition space and viewer. Hill continues his interest in systems of communication and the sociopolitical implications of new technology. Surveillance evokes themes of voyeurism, paranoia, and the omnipotence of a policing authoritative force. But it also relates to social media, our culture of image production and the obsessive capturing of our own experiences.

Hill’s *Self()*’s series both entices the impulse to participate and thwarts our expectations and desire to have control of this projection of self. In the middle gallery, the five wall-mounted works first appear as abstract sculptural objects, designed into simple geometric forms of white glossy Plexiglas that gives them an institutional air. Each of these objects has an ocular or two, small view finders for the viewer to investigate. *Self()*’s reveal how the desire to look results in the inability to see the whole. Strategically placed on these wall-mounted sculptures are discreet cameras that capture a specified area of the viewers’ body. The artist adds an additional camera to each progressive sculpture, so that the first triangular shaped piece has a single image, and the last long rectangular work has a total of six angles. As the view clicks through each camera, the experience is unnerving wherein gazing, the viewer is forced into the apparatus, their body becoming subject. Yet the subject is disembodied, and the relationship to self estranged, creating a closed individual experience of ‘otherness’ unique to each viewer.

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Painting with Two Balls (after Jasper Johns) refers to the 1960 Johns' painting that playfully responded to the rhetoric of the time around Abstract Expressionist painting as a masculine endeavor. With new media, Hill recreates a similar composition of two spherical objects, now hidden cameras, inserted into the center of the piece and breaking up the picture plane. The "painting" in this case is the video projection captured by the hidden cameras, a distorted image of the exhibition space and viewer that is projected across the parallelogram shaped stretched "canvas". Hill's abstraction responds to current mode of communication through the moving image and addresses issues around the rise of surveillance in today's media saturated landscape. As Johns did in the 1960s, Hill addresses problematic sociopolitical agendas with a similarly seductive playfulness. His work draws you in literally, creating a dynamic experience with the viewer that is both intriguing and disturbing.

Dream Stop transforms the entire room into an alternate reality of holographic projections. The title is a play on words that when conjoined can be interpreted as a perhaps a station, a place to begin a dream. Conversely it can also suggest the end of a dream, the stopping point. The structure that holds all 31 cameras that creates the spliced projections across the room is shaped like a dreamcatcher, associating the piece with the magic powers from a system of belief before the technological turn and suggesting the spiritual longing of new age culture. The projected image is in a state of flux, constantly shifting as the viewer moves throughout the space. Through these multiple projections, the hyper real quality of this experience resides in a liminal space where physicality and time are suspended. For Hill, liminal spaces offer productive insight into the complexities of ontological exploration.

How we produce and share information and knowledge has radically changed in contemporary culture, where digital media has become embedded in our everyday lives and identities. Hill manifests this phenomenon as an eerie presence, where the source is unknown and viewer involvement itself becomes the subject and content of the work that unfolds. Just as pervasive social networks have disintegrated boundaries between public and private, local and global, official and amateur – this exhibition produces its own inescapable reality that offers a transportive yet uncannily constructed experience.

Hill currently has work included in the exhibition *Caméra(Auto)Contrôle* at the Geneva Center of Photography. At the end of the year, he will be included in the 2016 Kochi-Muziris Biennale in India. There will be a room dedicated to one of Hill's works in our gallery's booth, number B14, at this year's Seattle Art Fair, August 4-7.