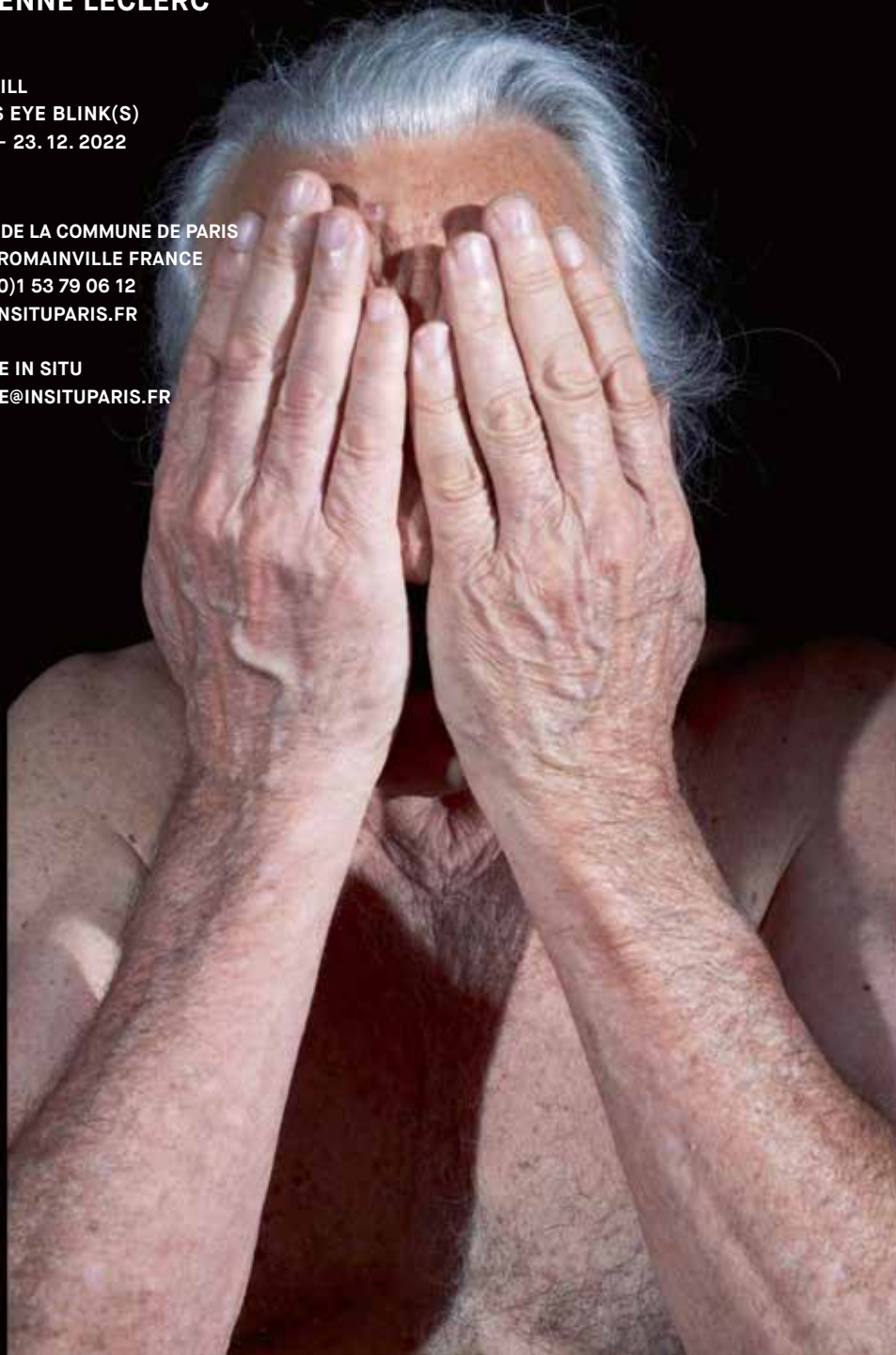


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IN SITU  
FABIENNE LECLERC  
■

GARY HILL  
MIND'S EYE BLINK(S)  
06.11 — 23.12.2022  
■

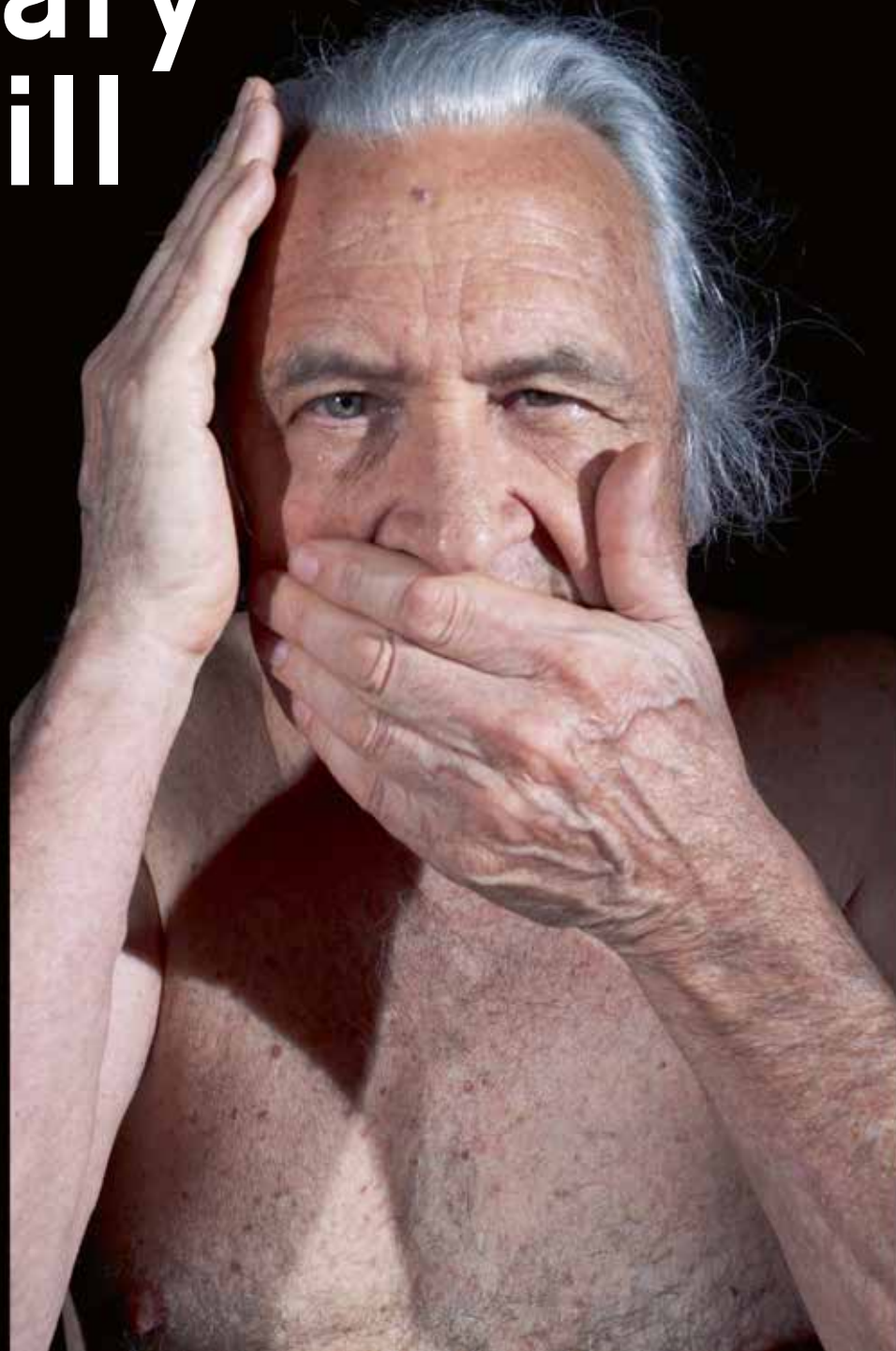
43 RUE DE LA COMMUNE DE PARIS  
93230 ROMAINVILLE FRANCE  
T +33 (0)1 53 79 06 12  
WWW.INSITUPARIS.FR  
■

GALERIE IN SITU  
GALERIE@INSITUPARIS.FR  
■



# Gary Hill

MIND'S EYE BLINK(S)



**MIND'S EYE BLINK(S)**



Exhibition view, 2022



Hmmm  
Hmmm  
Come on  
You come on  
Are you coming on?  
What you see is what you get  
What you get has already been taken  
You're breaking up  
Someone's poking around  
Fishing for compromises  
The possibilities  
The buck stops here  
Let's get started  
After you  
I have my walking papers  
Talking points please  
Talking pictures  
A dime a dozen  
no more distractions  
Get to the point  
Wash, rinse, repeat  
Wash, rinse, repeat  
Do I hear an echo?  
After me  
What just happened?  
Causality  
Without probable cause  
It's come and gone  
This time  
Not possible

Is there a problem?  
The impossible is not always possible.  
What you see is what you get is  
impossible  
The possibility of the impossible  
Fact check  
fuck that  
Raze the walls  
Raze the white flag  
Raise or Raze  
Same difference  
Wash, rinse repeat  
What's it going to be  
What's it going to be  
The impossible happens  
The impossible has happened  
It's the possible we have problems with  
Algorithms predict outcomes  
How come?  
Algorithms find you out  
How far out?  
Impossibilities are suspect  
Pronouns are suspects  
Got your PGP straight?  
Come on  
Come on  
Stop the double talk  
Double or nothing  
Up the ante  
I'm out

*Language Pit, 2016-2022*

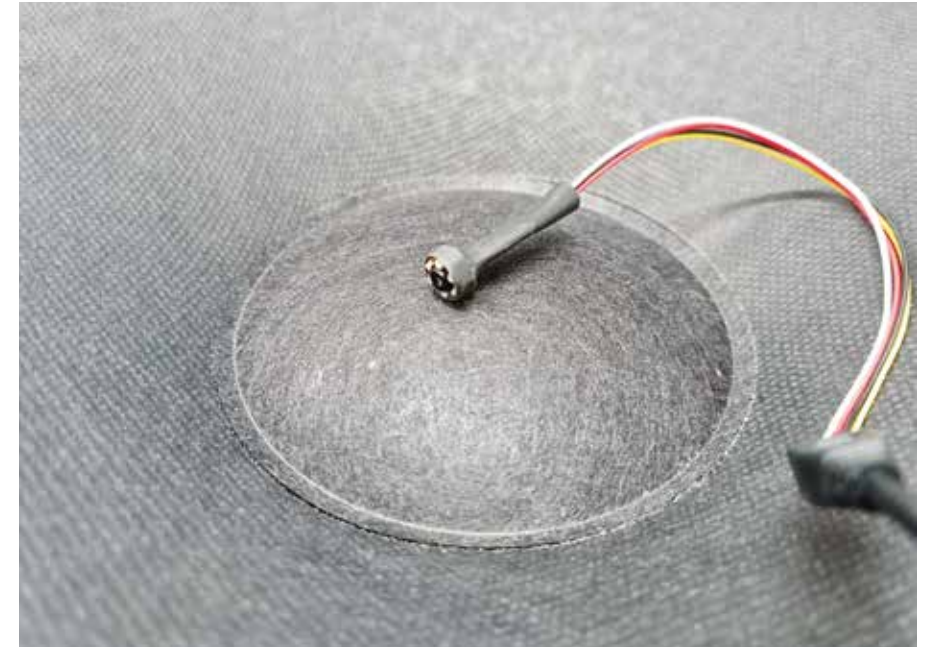
Two 10-inch speakers, amplifiers, 2 HD displays, two micro-cameras, media player  
89 x 104 x 44,5 cm



Not possible  
Check the body cam  
Body cams galore  
Unthinkable possibilities  
Unthinkable possibilities  
Redact that  
Think positive  
With a negative charge  
What a crock  
Come on  
Come on  
Come on  
Only the facts please  
In point of fact  
Can you point it out?  
Improbable but not impossible  
It can't happen  
its prerecorded  
So, what  
forget particulars  
The devil's details  
Its happening at the border  
who's the recorder  
Is someone taping this  
I've got this  
I'm speaking  
and have spoken  
Just above the dotted line  
Cut here

Move the Goal posts  
The probabilities of uncertainties  
What's your cost analysis?  
Has this ever happened before?  
Time to go downtown  
Before we bubble  
a compromised quagmire  
Pockets of resistance  
Drain the swamps  
Lance the boils  
inoculate anything that moves  
What difference does it make?  
Ze can come  
Ve can come  
You can come  
They can come  
Heir can come  
Come one, come some, come all  
Welcome  
What's it going to be?  
Heroes or zeros  
Nuns or ones  
All is well that ends well  
Who gets the kick?  
Who gets the kick?  
Who gets the kick and who jumps ship?  
Pull the rug, pull the plug

*Language Pit, 2016-2021*





THEY  
THEY

THEY  
HE

THEY  
THEY

SHE  
THEY

THEY  
THEY



*HE/THEY [XOR]*, 2022  
Engender Project  
PVC  
18 x 62,5 x 18 cm



*SHE/HE [XOR]*, 2022  
Engender Project  
PVC  
17 x 44 x 17 cm



ELLE/IL [ELLE - IL], 2022  
Engender Project  
PVC  
18 x 55 x 18 cm





*SHE/THEY HE/THEY [OR]*, 2022  
Engender Project  
Watercolour on paper  
70 x 100 cm (72 x 102 x 2,5 framed)



Exhibition view, 2022



Exhibition view, 2022



*SHE/HE [liminal gate 4], 2022*  
Engender Project  
Silkscreen print in colour  
70 x 100 cm (72 x 102 x 2,5 framed)



*SHE/HE [liminal gate 1], 2022*  
Engender Project  
Silkscreen print in colour  
70 x 100 cm (72 x 102 x 2,5 framed)



*SHE/HE [liminal gate 3], 2022*  
Engender Project  
Silkscreen print in colour  
70 x 100 cm (72 x 102 x 2,5 framed)



*SHE/HE [liminal gate 2], 2022*  
Engender Project  
Silkscreen print in colour  
70 x 70 x 100 cm (72 x 102 x 2,5 framed)





*Klein Bottle with the Image of Its Own Making [after Robert Morris], 2014*  
Blown glass, projector, media player and SD card with media file, pedestal  
135 x 48 x 48 cm





*Pacifier*, 2014  
3 identical screens [70 inches diagonal], 3 multimedia files [1360 x 768], 3 synchronized microcomputers



*Place Holder*, 2019  
HD video, 4 audio speakers, 4K screen [16:9 format, variable dimensions], microcomputer, multi-channel audio interface and video file

one less one  
un-less  
lossless  
one loss, one less  
the lessons of one  
lost æon none  
nonetheless  
no one knows  
one from one  
an "n" number of ones  
change the words  
zero from none  
stop  
one stops  
stop gap  
every breath  
stopped out  
one breathes  
it's always the same  
zero sum game  
points  
vanishing  
one at a time  
the arrows fly  
Eros dies  
a rose enfolds  
zeroing in  
every other round  
turns inside out  
my hand is backwards  
you're in the wrong position  
it's always the same  
difference  
one, zero  
next to next  
the next ex



exists  
exactly  
as if ex could occlude "act"  
ex acts like ex  
exes' exit  
one ext out  
of existence  
stop  
one stops  
breathe  
one breath  
stop gap  
it's always the same  
difference  
between points  
one wanders  
end to end  
begin to begin  
change the words  
around arrows  
crossing zero  
one wonders (the won-der of one)  
no-won-der  
let the brain breathe  
your hand is backwards  
I'm in the wrong words  
turn-a-round  
zero on its head  
the inside part  
he can see her own face  
disappear  
one of the ones is not here

*Exacting Light/None of the Above, 2021-2022*  
Poem



JACINTO LAGEIRA

## Words in bottle of words

Gary Hill's works brought together here compose ramifications of past or recent issues more than an ensemble closed on itself, complete in itself, moved by an easily recognizable main theme. This precaution is not only rhetorical, because we can be surprised by apparently heterogeneous works, but that, if we look at and listen to them closely, are part, in extending them, of surprising plastic finds that the artist regularly presents. The title given to the exhibition, *Mind's Eye Blink(s)*, can, however give us a possible explanation situated between the metaphorical – the mind seems to open and close what surrounds it – and the reality of its activity, to the degree that it occurs through several moments or forgetting or remembering, marked attention and absences, so that the mind obliterates or very precisely captures certain facts, gestures, words, concepts.

In the literal sense, a large part of Gary Hill's oeuvres work on and with these different conceptions but by producing forms, configurations, mental as well as physical images, by means of plastic objects that materialize for their creator as well as for their recipient, the recursiveness or reflexivity specific to this very old philosophical problem – the relationship of the body and the mind. To devote themselves to it, philosophers and artists have no other choice than to resort to their body and their mind that are simultaneously the subject and the object of their *reflection*, of a return of thought on the body and of the body on thought. With the difference that works of art are in a position to represent and to literally give figure and form to experience, to feeling, to the meaning of our existences, and thus to externalize our inner world as much imaginary as the most concrete. Among the artist's innumerable works that deal with these questions, we can mention the emblematic work *Site Recite (a prologue)*, 1989, notably a few words spoken in voice off near the end of the video:



"Brain, minding business, incessantly constructs an infinite series of makeshifts designed to perpetuate the picture – the one like all others that holds its breath for a thousand words, conversely exhales point zero zero one pictures. This insidious wraparound, tied to the notion 'I have eyes in the back of my head,' binds me to my double, implodes my being to a mere word as it winds the world around my mouth. A seamless scroll weaves my view back into place – back to back with itself – the boomerang effect, decapitates any and all hallucinations leaving (lo and behold) the naked eye, stalking each and every utterance that breaks and enters the dormitories of perception.

I must become a warrior of self-consciousness and move my body to move my mind to move the words to move my mouth to spin the spur of the moment. Imagining the brain closer than the eyes.."<sup>1</sup>

The work on language, visual as well as sound, taking form on different supports, has for some time in Gary Hill, and in a few works, sought to reach, if ever such a thing were possible, the limits of language. It is undoubtedly an attempt destined to fail, since to be perceived in this way, any language must be minimally intelligible, even by bits, intermittences, by its intonations or rhythms. To the point that onomatopoeias, apparently a-significant vocal noises, such as the phonetic poems by Raoul Hausmann<sup>2</sup> or the *Ursonate* (1932) by Kurt Schwitters<sup>3</sup>, inevitably resonate according to the original German language. The principle holds for every language. Likewise for the signification that can be attributed to languages by the strongest distortion, since beyond a certain point of enunciation or listening, we can certainly recognize the language's origin, but sometime lose the meaning of the sentences, words, the very smallest sounds.

This is partially produced in *Exacting Light/None of the above* (2011-2021), by sudden breaks, hesitations, phonic bursts, almost stuttering, gusts of terms the contour and sense of which we think we have grasped but that are disseminated the moment after by another imperceptible sound and semantics, sometimes gliding on each other, such as the first utterances:

"one less one  
un-less  
lossless  
one loss, one less,  
the lessons of one  
lost on none  
nonetheless..."

Through gesture, the enunciator (here, the artist), hides his mouth, his ears, sometimes his eyes, so as to not speak, listen, hear, see, imposing on himself like the person looking-listening, a verbal eruption inexplicable at first glance, perhaps a certain anger or a sort of disarray regarding the language that seems to slip away, to simultaneously constitute itself by its own elisions. Since, as the enunciator indicates, permutations of letters, "each breath," change the words, or a breath stops the void between the words or breaths, according to the scansion adopted in consideration of the text. Or if one must "let the brain breath," the enunciator however states: "I find myself in the wrong words," this "I" seeming to rapidly transform itself into an Other, in a "he can see is own face/disappear/one of the ones is not here." Then, the end of the video – "one of the ones is not here" – seems to hang on to its beginning – "one less one" – and simultaneously stand out, even refute it or contradict it, as the title, "None of the above," suggests. Nothing of what was uttered seems right, exact or "doesn't exactly exist" in the way that was just said.

Without *Exacting Light/None of the above* being directly connected to the series. *Engender Project* (2022), what is said and how, as far as its possible pronunciations, and to whom it is directed, is one of their common points. *Engender Project* thus puts forth personal pronouns in English as well as in French (she, he, *il*, *elle*) by visually moving through and by its locution and diction the passages or overlapping of words that can both dissolve them in a growing indistinction and mark their clear separation, according to the

1. Cf. catalogue Gary Hill, Centre Pompidou/Mnam, 1992-1993, curator Christine Van Assche. Site recite (a prologue), éd. du Centre Pompidou, 1992, p. 33.

2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sat0LlaOVtM>

<https://erratum.bandcamp.com/album/po-mes-phon-tiques-remastered>

3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7QgHTM9hQj8>

reading or enunciation direction. What linguists call “double articulation, ” the first constituting the monemes, the smallest units of meaning, and the second, the phonemes, which make it possible to distinguish one moneme from another (*la/ma*, or *she/the*, for example). Because double articulation is specific to every human language, no one will miss the fact that for the two languages chosen here this idea is to be taken literally and figuratively, since it distinguishes as much as it *articulates* the human and grammatical gender(s) laid claim to socially and politically for some time now. The title of the piece and the “project” can moreover be understood as “put into gender” – perhaps *in danger* – even though it obviously concerns what that can engender, what language engenders when it is engendered as gender.

For historical reasons, most languages do not have any grammatical gender or have a dozen or so. Ultimately, only a hundred or so languages (out of nearly 7,000) have two or more genders. More or less exacerbated, and increasing stronger socio-political claims criticize the masculine-gendered dominant of languages, because it is understood as the result of the imposition of the patriarchy and male domination. French (language with two genders) and English (language with three genders: feminine, masculine, neutral) can possibly enter into a relatively socio-linguistic reevaluation concerning these claims, but this would be to forget that the semantic gender does not always coincide with the biological sex – the man, the girl; the sea, *la mer*, *el mar* or *la mar* (masculine and feminine, in Spanish), *das Mädchen* (the girl, in German; neutral gender), or masculine qualifiers positively expressed regarding women in Portuguese and positively used by them. We can cite a long list, the majority, of differences, distinctions, which all have in common however the fact that languages are essentially *arbitrary* – there is no *natural* connection between the signifiant and the signified. In other words, grammatical gender does not systematically correspond to *natural gender*. If languages were all motivated by some underlying ideology, then all the languages disseminated in humanity would have the same masculine gender that would dominate the feminine gender everywhere, which is far from being the case, where as

it is largely the case from the economic and socio-political viewpoint. This is not the place to discourse further upon the historical-scientific data of linguistics worldwide, but to reject or deny these facts is what leads, among other factors, to the current gender conflicts., non-arbitrary conflicts about arbitrary constructions. As the linguistic idea of “arbitrary” is already a first misunderstanding leading to thinking that the conflicts could be resolved if conventions were changed, and that consequently all the genders were feminized, or that everything would become the neutral gender or a mixture of pluralities, but difficult to apply to an entire language or to every language.

It is inside this latter logic that the sculptures and drawings of *Engender Project* takes us, placing us in a sort of unpronounceable vision while being perfectly visible. The letters and words are clearly there, we can sometimes distinguish them, separate them, isolate them, but most often they are superimposed and so easily mix their forms that the very meaning is erased, blurred, undecided. We are in the in-between, in neither one nor the other or both simultaneously. Almost inexpressible or non-utterable, by the voice, even an inner voice, and however so obvious for vision. The visual prevails over the verbal, over the pronunciation of what is being deciphered, producing a fleeting a-semantics, a type of slight dysarthria in which the muscles of speech do not actualize what is however clearly perceived. Without ignoring a possible wink at a few phrases of *Language Pit* (2016-2021) – “Ze can come / Ve can come / You can come / They can come / Heir can come” – a first and too superficial reading that would suggest that this language blurring would be metaphorically equal to the blurring and erasure of social genders. For today’s sexual gender activists who are looking for the most appropriate denominations possible for their reassignments and their identities, the various grammatical usages of genders, so to speak also reassigned, are not metaphorical. Yet, if languages change and evolve, the grammatical distortions that we wish to impose on them to overcome, we think, socio-economic, moral and political inequalities between the genders does not seem to be the best solution. The domination of one gender over another – principally masculine

– has been observed for centuries in cultures in which grammatical genders are neutral or non-distinguished. Language cannot transform everything by simple uttering. Furthermore, language is not only instrumental, because the poetic function of language escapes the sole informational obligation of the message and the code, even social genders and moral claims. We can notably perceive this in word plays and the language of the typographies of certain films by Jean-Luc Godard, for example in the trailer of *Masculin féminin* (1966) and in the text or letter inserts of the film itself: MA SCU LIN. In the laundromat scene, Robert (Michel Debord), Paul's (Jean-Pierre Léaud) friend tells him: "Did you notice, in the word 'masculin', there is mask and there is cul ["sex"]." And Paul asks "and in 'féminin'?" / Robert: "There isn't anything." When the film ends, the word "féminin" appears in large capital letters, then letters are removed, leaving the word "fin" [*fin*, "end" in French].

As human language is also generally linked to very very tiny transitions between sound and meaning, this even more so when it is pushed rather far (he/she /i.elle), in many videos and installations Gary Hill has very often manipulated, deformed, exaggerated these possibilities – notably in pronouncing texts backwards filmed as such and then projected backward to recover the initial meaning – to the point of often producing a language that is often abstract, in the same way as abstract painting exists. But as Picasso remarked concerning this genre or style, there is no painting of nothing; there is no sound of nothing either, and sound, even when very reduced, sometimes to a single letter (the distinctive units of phonemes, *tu/ta*), or to an ordinary noise in the street (screeching of tires) can be understood and interpreted according to a certain meaning.

This "abstractification" can be found in *Klein Bottle with the Image of Its Own Making* (2014), a direct citation from Robert Morris's work, *Box with the Sound of Its Own Making* (1961). In the latter, the wooden box, closed and opaque, made by the artist, contains all the sound of its fabrication from the beginnings to its completion, whose result we have before us. Gary Hill uses the idea, this time with the image of its fabrication projected in the "Klein

bottle" and visible through transparency. This curious bottle – imagined for the first time in 1882 by the German mathematician Felix Klein – unlike Morris' box, does not really have edges, or an interior or an exterior, because the surfaces are blended. It is not impossible that, situated in the context of this ensemble in which *Engender Project* is found, we can consider with a grain of salt that the bottle does not have a defined gender or has all of them. The nature of human language must be added to it, and more exactly its inescapably reflexive dimension, which the great linguist Émile Benveniste called the "double significance of language." In speaking, in writing, we are aware of using signs that signify to express other significations on a second level, and we thus, even implicitly, make statements on the very meaning of the signs of our significations. In other words, we know that in talking or writing we necessarily treat the language and signs that make it possible to speak or write. The *Klein Bottle* can count as the reversal of language in which the signification of the signs and the semantic signification overlap, are a matter of a double surface on which meaning and signs to signify are both the interior and exterior of language, language with the sound and image of its own fabrication. The words (or images) are the bottle that contains the words (or images) of which it is made.

Even if the Klein bottle was impossible to fabricate, we could regard it as an interesting speculation, a fiction worthy of Lewis Carroll, a magnificent conjuring thing, yet its physical and manipulable concreteness avoids the bias of certain thought experiments that can be easily imagined but impossible to materialize. Its topological modeling has even made possible audacious applications in different social sciences, for example in anthropology in Claude Lévi-Strauss, notably in *La potière jalouse*.<sup>4</sup> The anthropological-psychoanalytical reflections of Lévi-Strauss were undoubtedly influenced by the theories of Jacques Lacan (himself strongly influenced by Lévi-Strauss, as he acknowledged on several occasions), since in several *Séminaires*, this topological model is brought up either directly (the bottle), or with the Möbius strip and other tori.<sup>5</sup> The principal challenge of this topological model is to

4. Claude Lévi-Strauss, *La Potière jalouse*, Paris, Plon, 1985, chap. XII.

5. The topology of the Klein bottle is developed at length in the *Séminaire Problèmes cruciaux pour la psychanalyste* (1964-1965), consultable on: [http://www.lutecium.org/mirror/www.valas.fr/IMG/pdf/S12\\_](http://www.lutecium.org/mirror/www.valas.fr/IMG/pdf/S12_)

PROBLEMES.pdf or site <http://gaogoa.free.fr/SeminaireS.htm> as well as in the *Séminaire, D'un Autre à l'autre* (1968-1969), consultable on: <http://staferla.free.fr/S16/S16%20D'UN%20AUTRE...%20.pdf> or site <http://gaogoa.free.fr/SeminaireS.htm>

J. Lacan, *Le Séminaire*, livre XVI, *D'un Autre à l'autre* (1968-69), Paris, Le Seuil, 2006.

understand the effects of language on the real, the effects on the subject, on the Other, or on the other's desire. According to Lacan, as the human being was fundamentally a "being that lacks," constantly feeling a void in him/her, perceiving like a hole in his/her being, the human tries to fill this "lack of being" and this void by all sorts of inventions and subterfuges, beginning with language, but also with productions such as works of art, to which Lacan would regularly resort to support his theories – the most well-known exposé being the analysis of the anamorphosis present in the foreground of the painting *The Ambassadors* by Holbein, in the *Séminaire XI* (1964).

Yet works of art also present a void, a hole, a lack, and their principal function is even the "presentification" of the void that we thought we could fill by admiring them, by enjoying them. In the final analysis, they only send the void back to the interior of the void. Hence Lacan's strong interest in the topology of the Klein bottle, simultaneously closed and infinitely open, a hole full of void, so to speak. The most important facet in Lacan's approaches was clearly to grasp what language produces on the real, how it shapes it or escapes it. And language is not always certain, explicit, clear, it also being strewn with voids, absences, disturbances, semantic holes – for example to attribute or designate genders – in such a way that speech, words, what we think we are saying and what is really said, is precisely the same place in which meaning is made or unmade, being able to take the form of a bottle made of words forming the bottle that serves to make words, speech. We are beings of speech constantly lacking words without which speech could not however exist.

The purpose of these references to two major figures and theories of the social sciences is not to divert attention from Gary Hill's works nor to artificially heighten them either – which they have absolutely no need of – but rather to underscore the conjunction of the issues connected to the body, to language, to otherness and to the interaction between speaking and desiring subjects, elements of research and implementation strongly present in the artist's works. Gary Hill's ethical as well as plastic positioning relative to gender questions and the linguistic-corporeal gender, for example, should

not be really surprising, because they are in the order of a freedom of artistic creation in which similar or antagonistic questioning can and must be posed. As to *Engender Project*, we understand that, to put it a little flatly, but with all the caution required in such contexts, the problem is clearly more complex, and the grammatical transformation of genders by incantation only rarely results in the hoped-for result.

The vocal-visual scansion of a large number of Gary Hill's works, whose broad range of rhythmic, sounds, tonalities, expanses, textures, movements, provides a glimpse of the very dense complexity of human language through which we explore infinite significations, from the most ordinary to the most refined, from the most atrocious to the most affectionate takes us back to the strange title suggesting the wink of the mind. We cannot help but dream in the short essay by Merleau-Ponty, *L'Œil et l'esprit*<sup>6</sup> – in which we can effectively see resonances with certain themes of Gary Hill's works, as for example the body as a place and ontological anchoring point in the world and the return of language on this perception of the body, or the fact that vision is a thought, a mind that thinks seeing it and sees thinking it – this would be another study. Through its more or less rapid, slow, accelerated stroboscopic effects, *Reflex Chamber* concerns this verbal-visual scansion, or that wink that, transmitting the image to the brain at the rhythm of the very brief wink of light and bits of words, sometimes barely recognizable, causes the *wink* of the brain. As though undergoing a psycho-cognitive experiment, the mind (thought, consciousness?) of the visitor perceives (grasps, apprehends, captures) elements, but too brief and disseminated to be able to link all these pieces of meaning in a coherent whole, whereas the images *normally* follow each other most of the time. This being relative, since the optical-sound scansion that is superimposed on the images that surround us either restricts or prevents a homogeneous vision. As the narrator moreover asks us to do, we seem to attend the unfolding by shreds of a dream as elaborate as it is disjointed, like most dreams, images (trees, tunnel, etc.) being moreover related to certain statements. But the whole – images, light, sound, voice, words, phrases – is

6. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *L'Œil et l'esprit* (1964), Paris, Gallimard.



too abrupt and jerky for us to be able to follow and recompose this drift of the flow of a consciousness. In fact, we are not in a position to start what is called a neuronal synchronization. Since the brain treats colors, sounds, images, language in its different zones, the neurons must be synchronized and in rhythm for these elements to make sense once they are put together at the right moment. Our cerebral rhythm – which has five frequency ranges – is badly treated here, but the *Reflex Chamber* system – like other similar installations – could be a “putting into space” of what happens in our brain when it winks rather quickly, and therefore our thought, our consciousness, perhaps our mind. In such a way that we do not know how to grasp the direction as the signification of the first sentence – “A word is worth point zero zero one pictures.” A reduction of words into images or toward the images, or, inversely, images into words or toward the words. This formula echoes the text of *Site Recite* about the brain producing an infinite number of images hence “inversely emanates zero period zero zero an image.” *Reflex Chamber*, a nod to echo chamber – sends back or reverberates these images and words, but especially produces on the visitors reflexes, in the meaning given them by physiology, namely an “unconscious or involuntary motor response caused by a sensitive or sensorial stimulation” (Larousse dictionary), therefore a too immediate reaction to be able to be controlled by the brain. Is the reflex then a thought, a consciousness, a mental state, a beginning of thought or intellection? Also being a reflex chamber, the piece could be more than an externalization or exteriorization of what the narrator thinks and feels as *projecting* his image-thoughts outside his skull through uncontrolled reflexes because it would clearly concern the reversal of thought-images that, like a glove turned inside-out, are like the reverse and obverse of a thought flow. And that, in the end, like the Möbius strip, has only a single surface and a single edge (in topology: “a compact surface whose edge is homeomorphic to a circle”). We will return to the Klein bottle, because it is in reality a double Möbius strip and like language, intersects itself. But as the narrator says: “Two nodal hemispheres play havoc in the skull.”

A large number of Gary Hill’s work is an address to the spectator, a statement for him but also with him, since addressing oneself to a person implies a minimum of interaction. The latter can occur by difference types of *tempi*, forces, speeds, in such a way that we can feel somewhat roughly handled or aggressed – for example, in *Language Pit* – or confident, at least attentive and open, as in *The Whisper Room*. We know that the manner of speaking and the tone used can induce completely different, even opposite, significations for the same statements. The sober system of *The Whisper Room*, its title, the enveloping of the whispering voice that only seems to address the person who is very close to it, gives the ensemble a strange intimacy through the simple pleasant tessitura, a steady cadence, a form of complicity. In part, the voice states what we are in the process of doing as spectators/listeners, we approach another who himself approaches, we were made to come to this place, we are asked questions, and the microphone placed in front of us seems to further solicit some response, a simple reaction, which we rapidly understand will not be produced, cannot occur. But the text can also be heard as the fragment of a dialogue, at least between two people, perhaps more, of which we are the simple witnesses, as certain details relative to precise places – a bed, an island – to a shared memory whose recipient is absent, if this is not excluded, seems to confirm. It is one of the characteristics of many of Gary Hill’s texts to be as precise as they are vague, to be addressed to everyone and to no one in particular, to convey experiences or remarks that we can share but that are however not ours. This is not solely due to the unavoidable distance caused by the mediums or installation systems – here as reduced as possible – but the spacing between the other and myself, the irreducible difference with the author that I also perceive as another me, is nestled in the interior itself of language, pushing the speaking beings that we are to fill in the gaps and voids left or created by language so that we can once again say, recommence, prolong speech and, in doing so, deepen ever further the lacks that we produce through it.



A word is worth point zero zero one pictures. To be transfixed is no longer an option. I am in a way blind. I live time through a succession of pictures I've known since when. But it's precisely this when that haunts--it eats out the looking cavities and smiles inward like a Cheshire cat. What I might name as «the immediate surroundings» has all but vanished. I can only imagine a centripetal point that calls out numbers. As it stands--I have no place. No feet. I've lost the vague idea of limbs. Legs feel more like logs arranged for fire. A small pipe organ made of glass infiltrates the body. Music. I know it but can't place it. I live the threat of broken glass penetrating skin from the inside out. I remember a dream of holding the other's heart in my hand; for a moment I live the pulse of another being. Then it was over and I gave it away to a hungry animal. Lush sensations have ceased. I have no mouth, no scream, no voice within. I only listen to an imaginary sound I might make. I am supersonic and alien. I have the feeling of being a fuselage. Am I walking? Dreaming? Sitting in a chair? Killing? Eating? Could it not be any of these, any and all simultaneously? Where am I? I can't remember at will. It can only be described as holy for fear of something completely other. Parts come back not quite like what was before, but the connection is certain. A few switches flipped, that's it. The wherewithal generator is next to close by-- happening right before my hands. I'm synthesized. Thought--that tree that won't let go brings to mind the terrifying possibility: it's only words that separate things. I feel abandoned by the real, leaving what's left. I'm going. I'm watching myself go. Everything's changing speed, backing into itself. The effect mesmerizes. Movement eludes me. I'm paralyzed. Waiting awaits what's left. It's doing exactly what it says. No question. No questions. Circumstance is at a standstill. Things have exited. If I go everything will have already followed. I know it. It knows it. There is nothing to leave. Nothing. Difference exists only through sound, a wall of sound. Can I go through it? Can I go through with it? Where is it now, where does it reside? What does it feed

*Reflex Chamber*, 1996

Projector and table (MDF, steel, paint), mirror, strobe light, steel stands, media and video player (720 x 486), mono sound with 4 channels, speakers

350 x 400 x 400 cm

on? Why does it flicker? Nothing approximates its speed. It's something from the outside. Way outside. I didn't think this. This is not me. I'm not accountable. It wasn't thought out. It has no relation to thought. This is that hole that everything must pass through. I'm going now before it comes. Will I know when it comes? Will it approach with signals? Will there be a moment of recognition? Is that when I am it? Am I simply tapping myself on the shoulder? What is the point? It's always there, on again; on again. It waits without pathos. Waiting is human. This point wants to show me something inhuman. It wants to bring me to my knees. It wants me to pray. It wants me to see through seeing, it wants me to act like knowledge. It wants acknowledgment. It wants me completely at the edge. It burrows itself in, blow ups and begin again. Plural. Points. Cells. Each and every one autonomous in perfect orbit; holding fast. Why? What prevents meltdown. I live. Why? There is still the liquidity of everything; it runs in place of numbers. The tree of whens lost its leaves. All stones have been left turned. I throw one, it skips, walks on water; meets its own reflection in a way that propels it to its next reflexive moment...and so on...across the abyss...and little by little, little divides: I should become someone else and proceed accordingly. I walk around the world a few times. Big parallel lines tunnel through pulling up points of entry and exit. Two nodal hemispheres play havoc in the skull. Thoughts can't help but mince, and suddenly I'm 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.

*Reflex Chamber*, 1996

*Reflex Chamber*, 1996

Installation's view : White Cube, London, England, 1996–1997

Projector and table (MDF, steel, paint), mirror, strobe light, steel stands, media and video player

(720 x 486), mono sound with 4 channels, speakers

350 x 400 x 400 cm





Sometimes  
As we approach  
Others approaching  
An imaginary point coalesces  
Before us  
Our past trajectories  
All the protagonists  
All of a sudden  
Amongst us  
Resurrected as it were  
Our whereabouts  
The involuntary inventory begins  
Sampled earth  
Unknown holes  
Literal things too numerous to name  
Reminiscent of ancient signs  
Too sober to absorb  
The slow torque of bonsai  
The warmth of what once was  
Just enough  
Fades away  
Alone in the light  
Abandoned wood avails itself  
I brought you here for reasons I can't disclose  
I've worked long hours for this  
There is no particular agenda in mind  
Nothing here will make or break  
Anything  
You, them, or I  
Each and every one  
Like tormented insects

*The Whisper Room, 2022*

HD Screen, multimedia player, multimedia file, headphones



By the end it will not matter  
Or you will have forgotten  
The differences once sworn by  
I hesitated  
Before deciding  
Not to be present  
No doubt, a compromise  
I apologize  
Do you remember?  
The bed  
The island  
The refuge  
The swollen details  
Shared memorabilia  
Human propaganda  
The fact that you are here  
Has that dawned on you?  
But don't go  
I wish there were a way  
For you to smell my belly for the first time  
All over again  
I could stand before you  
Peer down at the crown of your head  
We could have gone to see a film  
Committed to the tedium of plagiarized time  
Enabling our being together  
Within our separate thoughts  
Would it suffice?

*The Whisper Room, 2022*



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Projecteur 4k, lecteur multimédia 4k, 2 enceintes

Inside front cover /

*SHE/THEY HE/THEY (HE - THEY)*, 2022

Engender Project

Watercolor on paper

70 x 100 cm (72 x 102 x 2,5 cm framed)

*SHE/THEY HE/THEY (AND)*, 2022

Engender Project

Watercolor on paper

70 x 100 cm (72 x 102 x 2,5 cm framed)

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