

Paul Sharits

November 23, 2011 – January 14, 2012

Greene Naftali is pleased to present a solo exhibition of works by Paul Sharits (1943-1993), the artist's second at the gallery. Widely recognized as a structural filmmaker and contributor to the invention of the "flicker" genre, this presentation situates Sharits's experimental films within the context of his film scores and their intermediary realizations, which range from large-scale drawings to his *Frozen Film Frames*.

Sharits's landmark "locational" film *3rd Degree* (1982) is a three-projector installation that addresses perception and illusionism on a meta-cinematic scale. As a woman strikes a match and waves the flame toward the camera Sharits slows the film to a stop, melting the filmstrip against the projector bulb into a bubbling abstraction before speeding up again. Sharits then successively re-photographed the original film—a process made evident through the inclusion of a new line of sprocket holes with each subsequent generation—allowing the images to fall in and out of sync, appearing to float backward, recede, and emerge. The cross-examination of the film's protagonist as she repeats, "Look I won't talk" mirrors Sharits's concurrent examination of the materiality of film, as he exposes the boundaries and fragility of the medium as parallel to that of the human body. With projectors mounted on sculptural bases and images re-oriented horizontally using mirrors, Sharits's panoramic projection initiates an expansion of film into real space.

Apparent Motion (1975), also on view, represents an instance of Sharits's nuanced sensitivity to the properties of celluloid film down to a microscopic level. The infrastructure of the filmstrip is revealed through a series of enlargements, foregrounding grain particles that would otherwise exist below the threshold of observation. Sharits applied color gels using an optical printer to code up to six superimposed layers of grain fields, activating static with the perceptual illusion of motion. One of his most painterly films, the result is an image that appears at once cellular and cosmic, echoing the expansive scope of Sharits's approach to filmmaking.

Sharits's consideration of both filmic space and gallery space is evident through the presentation of his schematic scores—in which compositions of color anticipate a parallel presence in filmic time—alongside his comprehensive installation diagrams such as *Study A for Location X: 3rd Degree*. Reflecting his view of space and time as inextricably linked, Sharits's *Frozen Film Frames* exist simultaneously as scores, films, and spatial objects. This non-hierarchical treatment of media, in which fixed objects are implicitly temporal and transitory works occupy three-dimensional space, together with his dedication to transparency and anti-illusionism highlights Sharits's democratic vision as well as his radical innovation in the medium of film.

Sharits was acknowledged during his lifetime with shows at the Walker Art Center, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, and Albright-Knox Art Gallery as well as inclusion in Documenta and multiple Whitney Biennials. His work has been presented in recent exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Burchfield Penney Art Center, and the Hirschhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden.

Apparent Motion and *3rd Degree* are a co-presentation of Greene Naftali and Anthology Film Archives, New York and have been preserved from the original materials in Anthology's collection. This exhibition has been possible through the close collaboration of Christopher Sharits/The Estate of Paul Sharits, Anthology Film Archives, and the Burchfield Penney Art Center.

For more information please visit www.greenenaftaligallery.com