

# GREENE NAFTALI

## Paul Sharits

February 19 – April 11, 2009

Greene Naftali is pleased to present a solo exhibition of works by Paul Sharits (1943-1993). Widely known for his structural films, Sharits pioneered the use of multiple projectors, infinite film loops, experimental soundtracks, and interventions at the level of the filmstrip in order to realize his elemental mode of cinematic presentation. Sharits was widely acknowledged during his lifetime, with shows at the Bykert Gallery, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, and Walker Art Center among other institutions, and has been posthumously exhibited at the Whitney Museum, MoMA, and Birchfield-Penney Art Center in Buffalo, New York. Trained initially as a painter, and a prolific theoretical writer, Sharits' art-making was in fact wide-ranging, evidenced by his early involvement with Fluxus artists in New York. His many works on paper—from diagrams to abstract film scores, fashion drawings, and hallucinogenic illustrations—have yet to be fully integrated into his better-known body of work. For this exhibition, Greene Naftali will present a selection of these drawings and will debut the restored four-projector "locational" film installation, *Shutter Interface* (1975), whose two-screen version was realized for the Whitney Museum's seminal *Into the Light* exhibition organized by Chrissie Iles in 2001.

*Shutter Interface* is a room installation that consists of four projectors placed side-by-side on large black pedestals. Their projections partially overlap, so effecting live color mixing, and creating a horizontal flood of changing hues on an infinite loop. Each filmstrip is made up of consecutive frames of solid colors punctuated by single frames of black. The pulsing flashes and disappearances of frames create optical aftereffects and sensations of horizontal currents—an environment that Sharits likened to watching "fireflies or water flowing over a dam—something that's moving. A fire or candle flame—it's shifting—but it doesn't change its form dramatically." High frequency tones are emitted from the four films' soundtracks, echoing each appearance of the black frames, so imitating and calling attention to the shutter—a revolving wheel that separates moments of illumination and darkness as the film runs through the projector. Sharits so presents a filmic metaphor for a mechanical element normally eclipsed by the illusion of cinema.

A second gallery presents a wide array of works on paper that display Sharits' at once intuitive and calculated process. A pairing of the practical with the fantastical (as in his fashion drawings of the early 1990's) and of mathematically specific formulas with expansive ideals (as in his scores or meditations on Mayan and Aztec monuments) bears Sharits' metaphorical process. By making a "specimen" of his medium, dealing with the mechanics of light, color, and film to allow room for his audience to perceive meaning, Sharits exhibits his democratic understanding of his own artistic practice: "I am not a 'filmmaker,' I am an artist researching the relationship between human consciousness and communication behavior and cinematic reality; I don't want to hide anything—everything which is part of the conceiving/making of the work should be realized aesthetically and in manners which address themselves to other beings."

*Shutter Interface* is a co-presentation of Greene Naftali and Anthology Film Archives, New York and was 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 and Anthology Film Archives.

For more information please visit [www.greenenaftaligallery.com](http://www.greenenaftaligallery.com).