



la Biennale di Venezia

52. Esposizione
Internazionale
d'Arte

Eventi collaterali

Press Release

Bill Viola
*Ocean Without a
Shore, 2007*

Chiesa di San Gallo
Campo San Gallo,
San Marco 1103,
30124 Venezia, Italia

10 June – 24
November
10am – 6pm Tuesday
– Sunday

Private View 7 June,
6-8pm

52nd International Art
Exhibition La Biennale
di Venezia

Supported by:
Haunch of Venison
James Cohan Gallery
Kukje Gallery

Sponsoring Institution:
Peggy Guggenheim
Collection (The Solomon R
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Bill Viola has created a major new work to be presented at the 52nd International Art Exhibition La Biennale di Venezia. Entitled *Ocean Without a Shore, 2007*, the three-screen High Definition video and sound installation was inspired by its setting - the 15th century intimate Venetian church of San Gallo.

Ocean Without a Shore presents a cyclical progression of images that describes a series of encounters at the intersection between life and death. Located near the Piazza San Marco the church of San Gallo was formerly a private chapel, and Viola directly incorporates its internal architecture into his piece, using the three existing stone altars as video screens.

Of the work Bill Viola states, "*Ocean Without a Shore* is about the presence of the dead in our lives. The three stone altars in San Gallo become transparent surfaces for the manifestation of images of the dead attempting to re-enter our world."

"The video sequence describes the human form as it gradually coalesces from within a dark field and slowly comes into view, moving from obscurity into the light. As the figure approaches, it becomes more solid and tangible until it breaks through an invisible threshold and passes into the physical world. The crossing of the threshold is an intense moment of infinite feeling and acute physical awareness. Poised at that juncture, for a brief instant all beings can touch their true nature, equal parts material and essence. However, once incarnate, these beings must eventually turn away from mortal existence and return to the emptiness from where they came."

Over 24 performers and a technical team of 20 participated in the creation of *Ocean Without a Shore*. Kira Perov, Viola's wife and long time collaborator, Harry Dawson, director of photography, and Brian Pete, editor, made essential creative contributions to the production.

For over 35 years, the work of Bill Viola has focused on universal human experiences. Viola is renowned for creating installations, videotapes and sound performances that present manifestations of the human form undergoing various



states of transformation and renewal. His work has been instrumental in the establishment and development of video as a contemporary artistic practice, while his writings and lectures have disseminated his ideas to a wide international audience. Viola's work continues to break new ground, both technologically and aesthetically, and has inspired a generation of media artists and filmmakers.

The exhibition is curated by critic, curator and American art expert David Anfam, who is also commissioning editor for Fine Art, Phaidon and a member of the board of the Clyfford Still Museum, Denver.

The new work is jointly presented by galleries Haunch of Venison, James Cohan Gallery and Kukje Gallery.

www.oceanwithoutashore.com

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Editors' Notes

Bill Viola

Bill Viola (b 1951, USA) lives and works in Long Beach, California with wife and collaborator Kira Perov. The artist received his BFA in Experimental Studios from Syracuse University, 1973 and has since exhibited in museums, galleries, film festivals, and on public television worldwide. Viola represented the U.S. at the 46th Venice Biennale in 1995. Full biography available at www.haunchofvenison.com

