
Perry Hall: Paint Video and Sound Drawing

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Press Release

American painter Perry Hall uses a set of experimental techniques that draw on organizing principles found within nature. In his Paint videos, (videos of paint in motion), Hall charges paint with various stimuli: temperature, vibration, turbulence. These forces are used instead of the traditional brush, and allow paint to transform over time into compositions which he captures onto video. Taping the movement of paint over real time without any digital manipulation, Hall captures the sensual self-organizing characteristics of paint as it interacts with a variety of substances and stimuli. The language of cells, vortices and turbulence are the forces with which the paint transforms over time, combining the material of paint with organic forms and behaviour. In his Paint videos he integrates the concerns of a painter with the awareness of time used by a filmmaker through a language found in nature.

In the Sound drawings, (images of sound waves moving through paint), sound is used to transform paint over time in a translation of sound into vision. Sound waves are channelled into a vessel containing paint mixtures; Hall works the materials by changing the qualities of the sound, 'playing' the paint like a musical instrument. He films the transforming imagery onto video and presents it along with some of the individual still photo images (Sound drawings), which are shown as abstract photo prints. Flowing calligraphic and architectural compositions emerge from his visual improvisations with sound. As a means of developing his technique, Hall worked in visual effects film making on motion pictures, learning the techniques of digital simulation in order to bring contemporary ideas into his painting practice, all of which is created without computers or any digital manipulation.

Hall's work raises important questions in regard to breaking down the traditional boundaries between painting, film-making, and sound. He demonstrates that paint as subject can be as dynamic and sensual as any organic material. He also shows that paint as medium can be altered and manipulated to be as dramatic and time-sensitive as video or film or photography. And by using his experience as a musician and student of music, Hall is able to manipulate sound waves to create complex visual works from the material of sound.

Hall's work has been exhibited at Artists Space in New York, The Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York, and The Jamaica Centre for the Arts in New York and the Williams College Museum of Art in Massachusetts. He worked as a painter on the visual effects for the film "What Dreams May Come" (directed by Vincent Ward) which won the Academy Award for Best Visual Effects of 1998. Hall has lectured and is a studio critic at Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture in New York and The Southern California Institute of Architecture in Los Angeles.

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