

BIO

Born in Lima, Ohio in 1956, Ann Hamilton received a BFA in textile design from the University of Kansas in 1979 and an MFA in sculpture from the Yale School of Art in 1985. From 1985 to 1991, she taught on the faculty of the University of California at Santa Barbara. In 1992, she established her home and practice in Columbus, Ohio. Since 2001, she has been a Professor of Art at The Ohio State University. Hamilton has been the recipient of the Heinz Award, MacArthur Fellowship, NEA Visual Arts Fellowship, Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship, and was chosen as the United States representative at the 48th Venice Biennale.

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RECTO/VERSO

video by Ann Hamilton

Colgate University
Picker & Clifford Art Galleries

Friday, February 3-Friday, April 6, 2012

This two gallery exhibition organizes for the first time the video work of Ann Hamilton, an artist known primarily for her complex site related installations. Noted for their large scale sensory surrounds, her installations combine materials from the natural world with found and fabricated objects, human figures, sound, written and spoken words, and images, both still and moving, in a poetry of bodies, language and experience.

Video is one of the elements that comes forward out of these larger works to be reconfigured in varying iterations of form and scale. This exhibition, *RECTO/VERSO*, refers not only to the two facing pages of an open book but also to time, present and past. Each of these video pieces has had a former life in an installation, or was made afterwards, in response. Ann Hamilton has said that the video “began as a way to introduce a gesture that can’t be performed live or can’t be ongoing.” The earliest, from *dissections ... they said it was an experiment* (1988), *the capacity of absorption* (1988), *linings* (1990), and *aleph* (1992), correspond in one-to-one scale relationship with the body. The stationary camera focuses on a bodily orifice (the mouth or the ear) overwhelmed—drowning, choking, spewing, oozing or struggling to speak. The small scale of the screen invites the viewer into intimacy with the figure, where sensation once internalized may in turn repel.

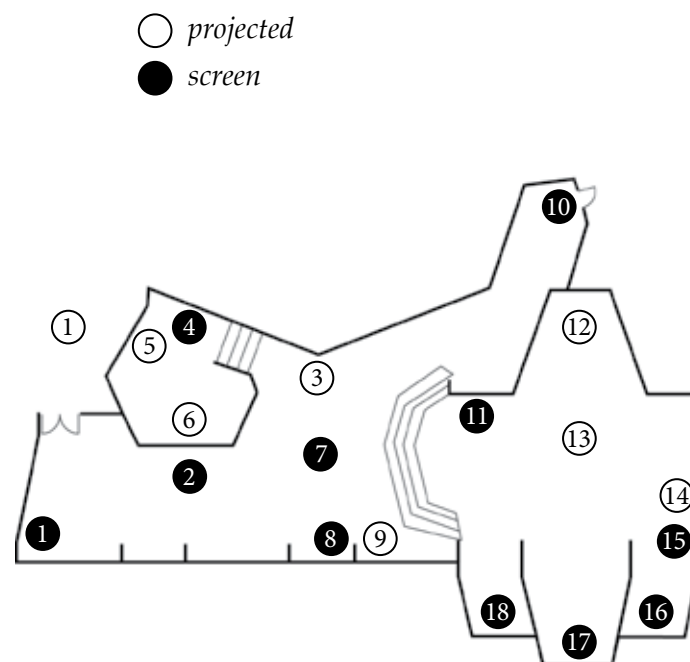
During Hamilton’s 1996 residency at The Wexner Center for the Arts, video brought into recorded time the tactile hand that had performed the accretions of material labor in the early installations. Continuing to work with a fixed camera, *(handed · video)*¹ shows the figure vigorously polishing a plum offered forward in multiple projections. Simultaneously, Hamilton found a way of working in which a miniature camera could be used with the fluidity and responsiveness of a

handheld stylus. This “video hand” moved in and out of sync with the “gesturing hand” to create signature works such as *abc*, on display in the Picker. Then, in 2000, both the camera and the projection were set in motion in *ghost...a border act*, sweeping an entire room with a line drawn “at the pace of a slow walk.” As the spinning projection delineates the space, it progressively illuminates parts and incorporates visitors as both moving screens and shadows on the wall. The rhythms of the roving projection and a camera, incessantly moving toward or away from its subject, places viewers uncertainly between vertigo and legibility, engulfment and distance. In both *(stylus · video)* and *(across · boat/video)*, the movement over a still image draws and distorts, bringing something fixed in time disturbingly to life, just as memory animates a meaningful photograph and opens what Barthes called “a blind field.”

Over the arc of her career, Hamilton’s work has consistently found form in meeting and rubbing up against the container of the architecture where it is sited and to which it responds. Similarly, *RECTO/VERSO* engages the unique geometry and tactile membrane of this architecture. Paul Rudolph’s Picker Art Gallery has never been so richly animated as it is by the sweeping, converging, overlapping, and quietly secretive play of Hamilton’s cacophony of video imagery, which gathers up the multiple faces of the space and knits them into one whole. The Clifford, a more rational orthogonal configuration of planes, is a less fragmented container. Here the exhibition, bracketed between two giant pinhole tarps of Brehmer Theatre and Memorial Chapel, locates the work between theater and sanctuary. The video between describes a line that draws, sews, speaks, circles, writes, and quietly weaves the modest acts that bring us together in congregation.

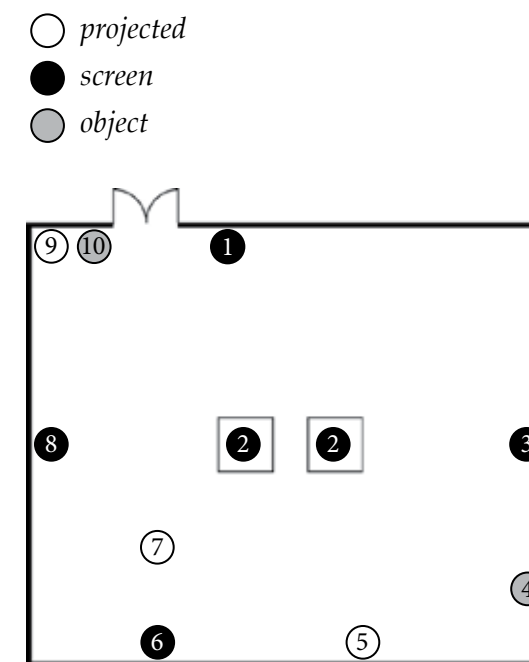
—Linn Underhill, Curator

PICKER GALLERY



- 1 *(aleph · video)*, 1992/1993
- 2 *(handed · video)*, 1996/2006
- 3 *(stylus · video)*, 2010
- 4 *the event of a thread*, 2011
- 5 *up*, 2003
- 6 *(stylus · video)*, 2011
- 7 *(reserve · table · video/writing)*, 1996/1997
- 8 *(whitecloth · video)*, 1999
- 9 *(seam · video)*, 2001
- 10 *(lumen · vent dummy 1-3)*, 1995
- 11 *(abc · video)*, 1994/1999
- 12 *circles*, 2010-2012
- 13 *(across · boat/video)*, 2002
- 14 *(lumen · hand/ring video)*, 1995/1996
- 15 *open*, 2011
- 16 *(linings · video)*, 1990/1993
- 17 *(dissections · video)*, 1988/1993
- 18 *(the capacity of absorption · video)*, 1988/1993

CLIFFORD GALLERY



- 1 *draw*, 2003
- 2 *(voce · video)*, 2006
- 3 *Memorial Chapel*, 2011
- 4 *The Technique of Speech*, 2012
- 5 *(salic)*, 1995
- 6 *follow*, 2011
- 7 *(ghost...a border act · video)*, 2000
- 8 *Brehmer Theater*, 2011
- 9 *my love*, 2003
- 10 *(the earth never gets flat · book)*, 1986

¹ In the titling of the work, the lowercase first letter is intentional. The parentheses indicate that the object came forward from a previous installation or performance.