

WHITE CUBE

Bruce Nauman
Presence/Absence
White Cube Hong Kong
10 March – 8 May 2021

White Cube is pleased to present an exhibition of video works by Bruce Nauman. Widely regarded as one of the world's most influential contemporary artists, this is the first exhibition of his work in Hong Kong.

'Presence/Absence' features two single-channel works, from 1999 and 2001, along with three dual-screen projections made in 2013, that foreground the artist's experimental approach, both in front of and behind the camera. Shot at his ranch in New Mexico, in his studio or the surrounding landscape, they are explorations of mind and matter. Employing elements of performance, labour, language, illusion and duration, the works investigate cognitive and social spheres.

Nauman has said that '[...] what makes the work interesting is if you choose the right questions. Then, as you proceed, the answers are what's interesting.' With an economy of means, and the length of the work often determined by the duration of the medium or of a given task, they are modelled on the artist's self-confessed desire 'to find the most efficient way to get what I want'.

Setting a Good Corner (Allegory & Metaphor) (1999), filmed on his ranch in Galisteo with a stationary camera, shows the artist building a wooden corner on which to stretch a fence and hang a gate. A job he identifies as having a 'real purpose', it involves digging holes, securing foundations, planting posts and setting tension wires. These tasks are steadily and methodically completed with only brief interruptions – from painter Susan Rothenberg, Nauman's wife, and their dogs.

While the film highlights the artist's commitment to ranch life, it also addresses, as its title suggests, wider concerns symbolic of Nauman's dual persona as constructor of both a fence and an artwork, as well as his longstanding practice of recording himself performing self-assigned tasks. Accompanied by ambient sounds – the wind, machinery at work, and snippets of conversation – the action unfolds slowly and purposefully. The durational limits of a video tape provide the form: filmed in real time, it runs for 59 minutes and 18 seconds, the standard length of a video cassette. 'You began when the job started; and when the job was over, the film was over', Nauman has stated.

By contrast, *Sound for Mapping the Studio Model (The Video)* (2001) was filmed inside Nauman's studio, created from footage originally used for the artist's

celebrated *Mapping the Studio (Fat Chance John Cage)*, (2001). Using the hours of recordings capturing chance occurrences in his night-time studio, the sequences were chosen for their audio content, so that the ensuing soundtrack, set on high volume, is as important as the image. Approximately one hour in length and shown on repeat, it features footage from seven different vantage points, filmed on a Sony Hi8 video camera with infrared capability. The sound of coyotes, horses, trains and rain can be heard outside the studio space, while inside, doors bang and a cat, mice and insects intermittently come into view. Experienced together, they attest to artist and composer John Cage's conviction that the world is continually composing chance symphonies.

Nauman has frequently used his own body as an exploratory tool – an expressive instrument that can expose the charged space between idea and action. Hands in particular recur throughout his work, their movements becoming vectors for communication or thought. In the two corner projections, *Thumb Start* and *4th Finger Start* (both 2013), Nauman revisits the parallax effect which he explored in a number of room-scale corridor works in the early 1970s. An illusion occurring when objects are viewed from two different lines of sight, here Nauman uses his own hands to perform call and response routines with combinations of digits pointing towards one another, from thumb to fourth finger and in reverse order. Both videos present two views of gesturing hands: from the outside in the left-hand image, and from the inside in the right-hand image, the latter mirroring the artist's own viewpoint. Seen against a white background, the hands and fingers are superimposed, creating an illusion of detached fingers floating in the space between.

A similar effect occurs in *Bullet Illusion/Pencil Illusion* (2013), a work in which two projections (looped) feature Nauman's hands holding a pair of bullets and a pair of pencils, point to point in mid-air. Projected side by side, the images create a palpable sense of tension as the objects almost touch but never quite, wavering just slightly from the effort of being held aloft. Playing asynchronously, the dual projections form an illusion of doubled hands and of a third, double-ended object suspended between bullets and pencils. Characteristically, Nauman from time to time breaks the theatrical suspension by making matter of fact comments; double checking how the image looks with his

longstanding technical collaborator, or if indeed filming has started.

Thumb Start, 4th Finger Start and Bullet Illusion/Pencil Illusion all offer a sense of physical and perceptual disembodiment, a gap between voice and hand, mind and body that echoes Nauman's early studio films and videos. In these works, repeated physical actions take on new meanings over time, as the artist exerts himself to perform them to the best of his ability. They reflect Nauman's drive to test perception and understanding, a process the artist has described as 'thinking through something until there's nothing left'.

BIOGRAPHY

Bruce Nauman was born in 1941 in Fort Wayne, Indiana and lives and works in New Mexico. He has exhibited widely including solo exhibitions at Los Angeles County Museum of Art, touring to the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (1972–74); Kunsthalle Basel and Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (1986–87); Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (1991); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, touring to Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid and The Museum of Modern Art, New York (1993–95); Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, touring to Centre Pompidou, Paris, Hayward Gallery, London and Nykytaiteen Museo, Helsinki (1997–99); Dia Art Foundation, New York (2002); Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin (2003); Tate Modern's Turbine Hall commission, London (2004); Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, California, touring to Castello di Rivoli, Italy, and The Menil Collection, Houston, TX (2007–08); Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2010); Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (2012); Fondation Cartier, Paris (2015); Schaulager, Basel, touring to The Museum of Modern Art and MoMA PS1, both New York (2018–19). In October 2020 Tate Modern, London opened a survey exhibition which will tour to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam and Pirelli HangarBicocca, Milan. An exhibition at Punta della Dogana, Venice is scheduled to open in Spring 2021.

Among numerous awards, Nauman won the Golden Lion at the Venice Biennale (1999) and the Golden Lion for Best National Participation for his exhibition in the US pavilion at the 53rd Venice Biennale (2009). Additional prizes include the Max Beckmann Prize (1990); the Wolf Prize in Arts (1993); the Wexner Prize (1994); and the Japan Art Association's Praemium Imperiale Award for sculpture (2004). He was made a Member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York (2000) and has received honorary doctorates from the San Francisco Art Institute, California (1989) and California Institute of the Arts, Valencia (2000).

This exhibition is presented in collaboration with Sperone Westwater, New York.

A fully illustrated catalogue, with an essay by Joan Simon, is published to coincide with the exhibition.

White Cube Hong Kong is open
Tuesday – Saturday, 11am – 7pm.
Admission is free.

The gallery is open to the public.

Do not enter the gallery if you have any Covid-19 symptoms.
Please use hand sanitiser on entry.
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布鲁斯·瑙曼 (Bruce Nauman)

(非) 在场

白立方香港

2021年3月10日至5月8日

白立方欣然呈现来自布鲁斯·瑙曼 (Bruce Nauman) 的录像作品。瑙曼被公认为是世界上最具影响力的当代艺术家之一，这将是其作品在香港的首次展览。

“ (非) 在场”展示了两件创作于1999至2001年间的单通道作品以及一件创作于2013年的三联双通道投影，以凸显艺术家在镜头前后的实验性路径。这些作品拍摄于其在新墨西哥州牧场的工作室内或周遭的景观之中，是对精神与物质的双重探索。艺术家采用了行为、劳动、语言、幻觉以及延时等元素，在认知与社会领域展开研究。

瑙曼曾说道：“……令这件作品变得有趣的地方在于如何选择恰当的问题。然后当你继续下去的时候，答案就显得很有趣了。”仅凭寥寥几种创作手段，作品的长度通常取决于媒介或具体任务本身能够持续的时间，且都建立在艺术家自己“找到最有效的方式来获得我想要的东西”的表白欲望之上。

艺术家使用固定相机在位于加利斯特奥的牧场里拍摄的《Setting a Good Corner (Allegory & Metaphor)》(1999年)展示了其用来拉起一幅栅栏并吊住一扇大门而搭建的一个木制角落。他认为这项工作具备“真正的目的”，包括打洞、固定地基、种桩以及安装张力钢丝等动作。这些任务能够被秩序井然、有条不紊地完成，其间偶有遭到打断是由于画家苏珊·劳森博格 (Susan Rothenberg) 即瑙曼的妻子与他们的狗。

这部影片强调了艺术家对牧场生活的投入，同时正如其标题所暗示的那样，更涉及了艺术家双重人格的象征——作为一幅栅栏与一件艺术作品的建造者，以及记录自己如何执行自我分配的任务的长期实践。伴随着周围的环境声——风声、机器的运转声与断断续续的谈话声，上述动作缓慢而自觉地展开。录像带的时长限制规定了以下形式：实时拍摄，它可以运转59分18秒，这是录像带的标准时长。瑙曼说道：“你从作业开始的时候开始 (观看)，而在作业结束的时候，影片结束。”

相较之下，《Sound for Mapping the Studio Model (The Video)》(2001年)拍摄于瑙曼的工作室内，该部影片是根据最初为艺术家著名的《Mapping the Studio (Fat Chance John Cage)》(2001年)而准备的脚本制作的。利用长达数小时的捕捉到了偶然性事件的录像作为素材，其顺序源自音频内容，所以在音量放大后，连贯的声道会与图像本身显得同样重要。长度约为一小时的影片循环播放，凭借具有红外功能的索尼Hi8摄像机，来自七个不同机位的镜头下的片段得以呈现。工作室外土狼、马驹、火车以及雨水的声音能够被听见，而在室内也时不时地会出现砰砰作响的关门声或猫鼠与昆虫的叫声。当这些声音被共同感知时，艺术家兼作曲家约翰·凯奇的信念获得了证明，即世界仍在不断谱写偶发的交响乐。

瑙曼经常将自己的身体作为一种探索工具——一种可以揭示思想和行动之间存在着某种高密度空间的表达工具。在他的作品中，手部的动作尤其频繁地出现，成为交流或思考的载体。

在位于角落的两件投影《Thumb Start》(2013年)和《4th Finger Start》(2013年)中，瑙曼回顾了他曾在20世纪70年代早期的一些与房间同等尺度的走廊作品中所探索的视差效应。物体在两种不同视线的观看下会令人产生一种错觉。瑙曼在这里使用了自己的手指来执行一套命令与回应的动作，即五根手指相互组合并指向对方，从大拇指到小拇指或从小拇指到大拇指。两件录像都呈现了手势所裹挟的两种视角：从外面看是左手边的图是，从里面看是右手边的图像，后者反映了艺术家自己的视角。在白色背景下，双手与十指重叠在一起，创造了一种手指分离而漂浮在空间之中的幻觉。

在《Bullet Illusion/Pencil Illusion》(2013年)中出现了类似的效果。这件作品的两个 (循环) 投影表现了瑙曼的手在半空中握住了一对被点对点并置的子弹与铅笔。作为并排投影，这对图像创造了一种明显的紧张感，因为物体几乎是要接触，但有从未完全接触，而将其举在半空中的努力确实使之略微摇摆。没有同步的双通道投影在双手和子弹和铅笔之间造成了一种存在着第三个双头物体的错觉。典型的是，瑙曼不时地通过对事实发表评论来打破戏剧停顿；和他长期合作的技术伙伴反复检查图像，或确认拍摄是否已经开始。

《Thumb Start》《4th Finger Start》《Bullet Illusion/Pencil Illusion》都提供了一种身体与知觉分离的意识，一种声和手、灵与肉之间的缝隙，并呼应瑙曼早期的工作室影片和录像。在这些作品中，重复的身体动作随着时间的推移而呈现出新的意义，因为艺术家尽其所能去表现它们。它们反映了瑙曼去试验感知与信任的动力，艺术家将这个过程描述为“思考一些事情直到什么都不剩”。

简介

布鲁斯·瑙曼1941年生于印第安纳州的韦恩堡，现生活并工作于新墨西哥州。他曾在洛杉矶郡立美术馆&纽约惠特尼美国艺术博物馆(1972-74年)、巴塞尔艺术馆&伦敦白教堂美术馆

(1986-87年)、伦敦当代艺术学院(1991年)、明尼阿波利斯沃克艺术中心&马德里索菲亚王后国家艺术中心博物馆&纽约现代艺术博物馆(1993-95年)、沃尔夫斯堡艺术博物馆&巴黎蓬皮杜艺术中心&伦敦沃沃德美术馆&赫尔辛基奇亚斯玛当代艺术博物馆(1997-99年)、纽约迪亚艺术基金会(2002年)、柏林德意志古根海姆美术馆(2003年)、伦敦泰特现代美术馆涡轮大厅委任项目(2004年)、加州伯克利艺术博物馆和太平洋电影档案馆&意大利利沃利城堡当代艺术博物馆&德州休斯敦曼尼收藏馆(2007-08年)、柏林汉堡火车站当代美术馆(2010年)、伦敦当代艺术学院(2012年)、巴黎卡地亚基金会(2015年)、巴塞尔舒拉格美术馆&纽约当代艺术博物馆及PS1分馆(2018-19年)等机构举办个展。2020年10月，伦敦泰特现代美术馆呈现其作品回顾展，将巡展至阿姆斯特丹市立博物馆与米兰汗伽·比克卡基金会(Pirelli HangarBicocca)。2021年春季其位于威尼斯海关大楼博物馆的个展即将开幕。

在所获众多奖项中，瑙曼曾被授予威尼斯双年展金狮奖(1999年)并在第53届威尼斯双年展中因于美国馆举办个展而成为最佳国家馆金狮奖的得主(2009年)。其他奖项包括马克斯·贝克曼奖(1990年)、沃尔夫艺术奖(1993)、卫克斯那奖(1994年)以及因雕塑作品而获得的日本美术协会的高松殿下纪念世界文化奖(2004)。他是纽约美国艺术暨文学学会的成员(2000年)，并被加州旧金山艺术学院(1989年)和位于巴伦西亚的加州艺术学院(2000年)授予荣誉博士学位。

此次展览与纽约斯皮罗内·维斯特沃特(Sperone Westwater)画廊合作呈现。

展览画册同期出版，内容详实，涵盖由琼·西蒙(Joan Simon)撰写的文章。

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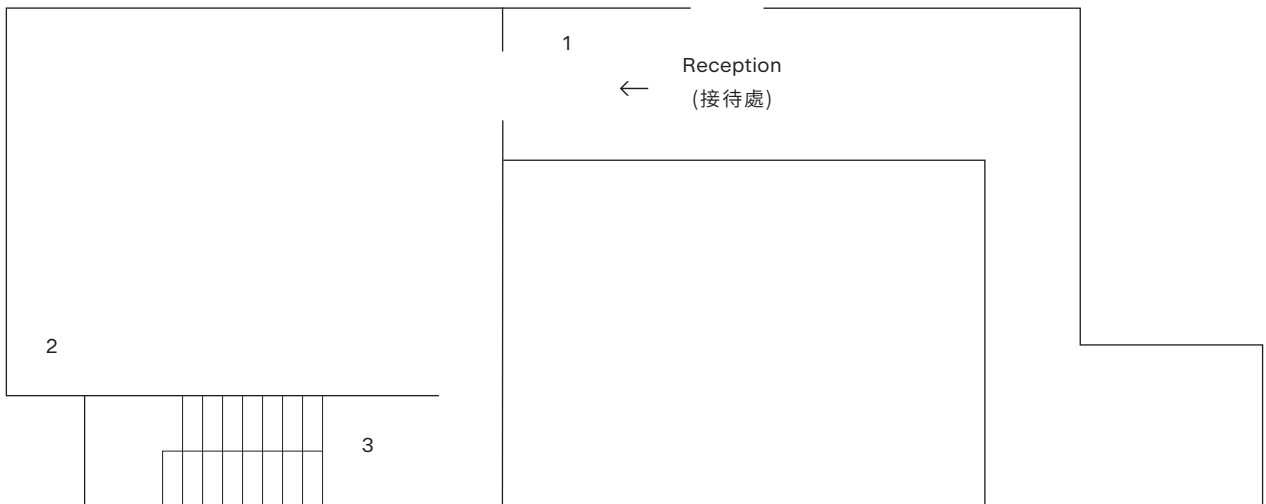
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FIRST FLOOR

- 1 *Sound for Mapping the Studio Model (The Video)*
2001
Edition of 6
DVD (colour, sound)
1 hour, 1 minute, 20 seconds
- 2 *Bullet Illusion/Pencil Illusion*
2013
HD video installation (colour, mono sound, continuous play,
asynchronous loop)
2 HD video sources, 2 HD video projectors, 2 speakers
approx. 92.7 × 167.6 cm (36½ × 66 in.) each installed
Bullet Illusion: 1 minute, 10 seconds
Pencil Illusion: 1 minute, 5 seconds
- 3 *Setting a Good Corner (Allegory & Metaphor)*
1999
Edition of 40
DVD (colour, sound)
59 minutes, 30 seconds



GROUND FLOOR

- 4 *Thumb Start*
2013
HD video installation (colour, mono sound, continuous play, synchronous loop)
2 HD video sources, 2 HD video projectors, 2 speakers
85.7 × 152.4 cm (33¾ × 60 in.)
4 minutes, 21 seconds
- 5 *4th Finger Start*
2013
HD video installation (colour, mono sound, continuous play, synchronous loop)
2 HD video sources, 2 HD video projectors, 2 speakers
85.7 × 152.4 cm (33¾ × 60 in.) , each installed
5 minutes, 37 seconds

