

## KUKJE GALLERY | PRESS RELEASE

### Bill Viola Solo Exhibition *Moving Stillness* at Kukje Gallery

Press Conference: December 3, 2024 (Tues.), 12pm  
Exhibition Dates: December 3, 2024–January 26, 2025  
Venues: Kukje Gallery K1, K3

Kukje Gallery is pleased to present *Moving Stillness*, a solo exhibition of the pioneering video artist Bill Viola, on view in K1 and K3 from December 3, 2024 to January 26, 2025. Marking the first exhibition devoted to Viola in Korea since his passing this past July, the exhibition brings together a wide range of works to celebrate his incredible life and artistic practice. Born in New York in 1951, Bill Viola was a seminal figure in the founding and development of video art. Widely recognized for his powerful installations, Viola used video technology to explore modes of perception, cognition, and the pursuit of self-knowledge. Describing his videos as “visual poems, allegories in the language of subjective perception,” Viola experimented with the optical and technical properties of video as metaphors for evoking universal human experiences—namely, cycles of nature, birth, death, and the flow of consciousness. Characterized by moving imagery grounded in spiritual traditions, including Zen Buddhism, Islamic Sufism, and Christian mysticism, his unique aesthetic embodies a poignant sense of inner vision highlighting his profound humanism.

Anchoring the exhibition is *Moving Stillness: Mount Rainier 1979* (1979), installed in K3. This powerful installation depicts the mountain being reflected in a pool of water via a rear projection screen, which causes the image of Mount Rainier to be dependent on the state of the water’s surface. Any small disruption directly impacts the image and therefore, challenges the notion of a solid and immobile mountain. The faltering image of the mountain is stabilized only after time allows for the water to become still. In experiencing the distorted image of the mountain created by Viola, viewers confront a poetic illustration of time and the illusion of stability, while also experiencing a work of tremendous beauty and calm.

K1 introduces a collection of Viola’s earliest videotape works on CRT monitors. *Information* (1973) embraces a technical mistake of production into an investigation of the material traits of the electronic medium; *Four Songs* (1976) portrays a collection of visual allegories in which the composition of video images and sounds narrates the psychological and emotional dynamics of the individual in interaction with the environment; and *Ancient of Days* (1979–81), as the artist himself has described, is “a series of canons and fugues for video expressing the nature of the passage of time.” Also, in the front room of K1 is *Poem B (The Guest House)* (2006), a triptych of three flat panel monitors mounted on the wall, through which we share “sharp pains of memory and dull ache of hidden stories” of a woman reflecting on the past and future of her life.

The rear room of K1 is dedicated to *Interval* (1995). A significant work by the artist produced for his participation in the 46th Venice Biennale, the work is composed of two large projections that stand opposite each other. On one side of the room is an image of a naked man in a shower room slowly washing himself with a cloth. On the opposite side of the room is projected a series of violent images of fire and water intercut with close-ups of body orifices. The images are never present on opposite walls simultaneously. The juxtaposition of the two opposing energies of the peaceful and the violent, or the passive and the aggressive, is gradually bridged as the computer-controlled sequence of images is progressively sped up to a climax of volatile speed before an abrupt blackout on both screens.

Finally, on the second floor of K1 is *The Reflecting Pool* (1977–9/1997). In this installation, we see the artist himself interacting with a pool of water framing the visual metaphor of water as a medium of spiritual (re)birth. The reflections and disturbances caused on the surface of the water in this work once again provides an alternative perception of time and space, highlighting different layers of the mind and consciousness.

Of *Moving Stillness*, Viola said, “the apparent solid, constant character of the image of the mountain is only due to a moment-to-moment coincidence of a set of factors, each independent and minutely variable.” In this journey of finding our balance among the infinite variables of our surroundings, it is through this exhibition that we invite our audience to come and contemplate their own constants in life. However fleeting or faltering the encounter with that unique constant may be in the larger trajectory of time, stars certainly aligned to produce that moment of coincidence.

### **About the Artist**

Bill Viola (1951–2024) received his BFA in Experimental Studios from Syracuse University in 1973 where he studied visual art with Jack Nelson and electronic music with Franklin Morris. Viola represented the United States at the 46th Venice Biennale in 1995. His major solo exhibitions include presentations at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1987); the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (1997); the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (1997, 2002); the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (2003); Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2006); Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome (2009); Grand Palais, Paris (2014); the National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C. (2016); Palazzo Strozzi, Florence (2017); Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (2017); Royal Academy of Art, London (2019); Royal Museums of Fine Arts, Brussels (2020); Busan Museum of Art (2020); Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow (2021); West Bund Museum, Shanghai (2021); Museum der Moderne Salzburg (2022); Palazzo Reale, Milan (2023); and the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery, Exeter (2024). Viola's works are included in major museum collections globally including the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Tate Modern, London; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; and Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, among others.

His major projects include a commission for the 2004 Olympics in Greece and the installations of two video commissions *Martyrs (Earth, Air, Fire, Water)* and *Mary* at St. Paul's Cathedral, London in 2014 and 2016, which were the first permanent installations of video art in a Church of England cathedral. Viola received numerous awards, including the MacArthur Foundation Fellowship (1989), the Skowhegan Medal (1993), XXI Catalonia International Prize (2009), and the Praemium Imperiale from the Japan Art Association (2011).



**Bill Viola (1951–2024)**

*Moving Stillness: Mount Rainier 1979*  
1979

Video/sound installation  
Continuously running

Courtesy of Bill Viola Studio  
Photo: Phoebe d'Heurle

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



**Bill Viola (1951–2024)**

*Information*

1973

Videotape, color, mono sound

29:35 minutes

Courtesy of Bill Viola Studio

Photo: Kira Perov © Bill Viola Studio

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



**Bill Viola (1951–2024)**

*Poem B (The Guest House)*

2006

Color and black-and-white video triptych

20:38 minutes

Courtesy of Bill Viola Studio

Photo: Peter Mallet

Image provided by Kukje Gallery



**Bill Viola (1951–2024)**

*Interval* (detail)

1995

Video/sound installation

29:00 minutes

Courtesy of Bill Viola Studio

Photo: Kira Perov © Bill Viola Studio

Image provided by Kukje Gallery





**Bill Viola (1951–2024)**

*The Reflecting Pool*  
1997–9/1997

Video/sound installation  
7 minutes

Courtesy of Bill Viola Studio  
Photo: Kira Perov © Bill Viola Studio  
Image provided by Kukje Gallery

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