

NOTHIN' BUT WORKING

PHILL NIBLOCK, A RETROSPECTIVE

Born in 1933, Phill Niblock has produced, for over more than fifty years, a multidisciplinary work. His "Intermedia Art" features a combination of minimalist music, conceptual art, structural cinema, systematic or even political art, and has actively contributed to transform our perception and experience of time.

The photographs, films, installations and all his recorded music are brought together for the first time in a retrospective exhibition by Mathieu Copeland dedicated to Phill Niblock's entire artistic endeavour.

Admittedly one of the greatest experimental composers of our time, Phill Niblock initiated his career as a photographer and film director. Born in Anderson - Indiana, USA, a jazz aficionado, he moved to New York in 1958 where he started photography in 1960, specializing in portraits of jazz musicians such as Charles Mingus, Billy Strayhorn and Duke Ellington, that he frequently accompanies in studio and during concerts. In the middle of the 60s, he shifts from photography to film: encouraged by Elaine Summers, the choreographer and founder of the Experimental Intermedia, he becomes the cameraman for the dancers and choreographers of the Judson Church Theatre, such as Yvonne Rainer and Meredith Monk. From 1968 on, Niblock focused on music and composed his first pieces, which, according to the artist, should be listened to at loud volume in order to explore their overtones.

Since the mid-60s, his analogue photographic work explores New York's architecture and urban planning. The sequencing and layout of his images offer a mapping of the location and object photographed, such as the abandoned buildings of Welfare Island (today Roosevelt Island) in 1966, the disused district of South Bronx in 1979, or the facades of SoHo Broadway district in 1988. From 1966, Niblock undertakes a thorough consideration on the production of moving images through his series of films and slideshows. Produced between 1966 and 1969, *Six Films*, a series of short films with sound realized with 16 mm film, heralds his experimental method through portraits of artists and musicians such as Sun Ra and Max Neuhaus.

In 1968, the artist began experimenting a combination of his visual productions with his musical scores in order to create architectural and environmental sound compositions. Recreated by the artist for the first time since its last presentation in 1972 for the retrospective, the *Environments* series extracts the reality of different surroundings through images, all the while generating a dense and intense temporary environment of projected images, music and movements throughout the museum's space.



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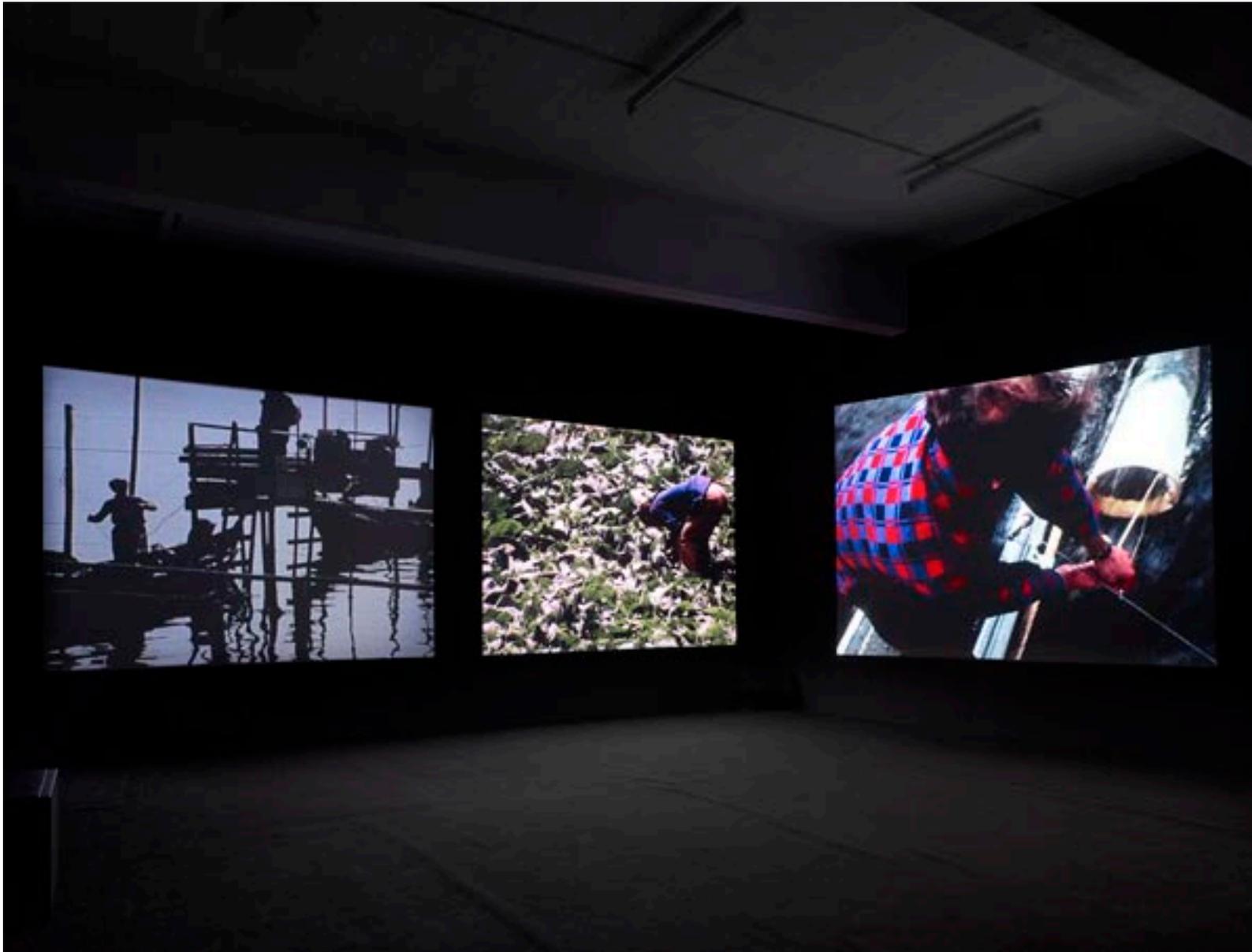
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