

## Bill Viola

*The Quintet of the Unseen*

Blain|Southern

21 Dering Street, London W1S 1AL

9 February – 12 March 2011

Preview: Tues 6-8pm, 8 February

Blain|Southern is delighted to present *The Quintet of the Unseen*, a large-scale video work by the acclaimed American artist Bill Viola.

Imitating the composition of a Renaissance painting, five actors stand close together against a neutral background. Initially their expressions are blank, however as the cycle unfolds, the group, who do not move from their original positions or interact with each other, are gradually overcome by emotion. As this builds to a crescendo, they become overwhelmed, distressed. From such fervour they can only come down, and by the end of the cycle each of the actors is emotionally spent.

As with other Viola works, the 15:19-minute film runs in ultra-slow motion. This makes visible the smallest nuances of expression, allowing viewers to discover the layered complexity of feeling unfolding before them, creating a subjective, psychological space where time is suspended for performer and viewer alike.

*The Quintet of the Unseen* is from Viola's four-part 'Quintet Series'; the other three works are quintet of the 'Astonished', 'Remembrance' and 'Silent'.

For further information and images please contact Mark Inglefield

T: +44 758 419 9500

E: mark@blainsouthern.com

Notes to editors:

Bill Viola

For almost forty years, Bill Viola (b.1951) has been instrumental in the establishment of video as a vital form of contemporary art, and in so doing has helped to greatly expand its scope in terms of technology, content, and historical reach. Viola represented the U.S. at the 46th Venice Biennale in 1995, and his work has been the subject of several large solo survey exhibitions: The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (travelled to 5 venues) 1997-2000; The J. Paul Getty Museum,



*The Quintet of the Unseen*, 2000 (production still)  
Video installation, colour video rear projection on screen mounted on wall  
Projected image size: 140 x 240 cm  
Photo: Kira Perov

Los Angeles (travelled to 3 venues), 2003-2005; Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2006); and Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome (2008). Among his numerous awards, he received a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellowship in 1989. He holds honorary doctorates from Syracuse University (1995), The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (1997), and Royal College of Art, London (2004) among others, and was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (2000). In 2006 he was awarded Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters by the French Government, and received the Catalonia International Prize in 2009.

Viola lives in Long Beach, California, with his wife and long-time collaborator, Kira Perov.

**Blain|Southern** was established in September 2010 by Harry Blain and Graham Southern. This is the gallery's second exhibition.