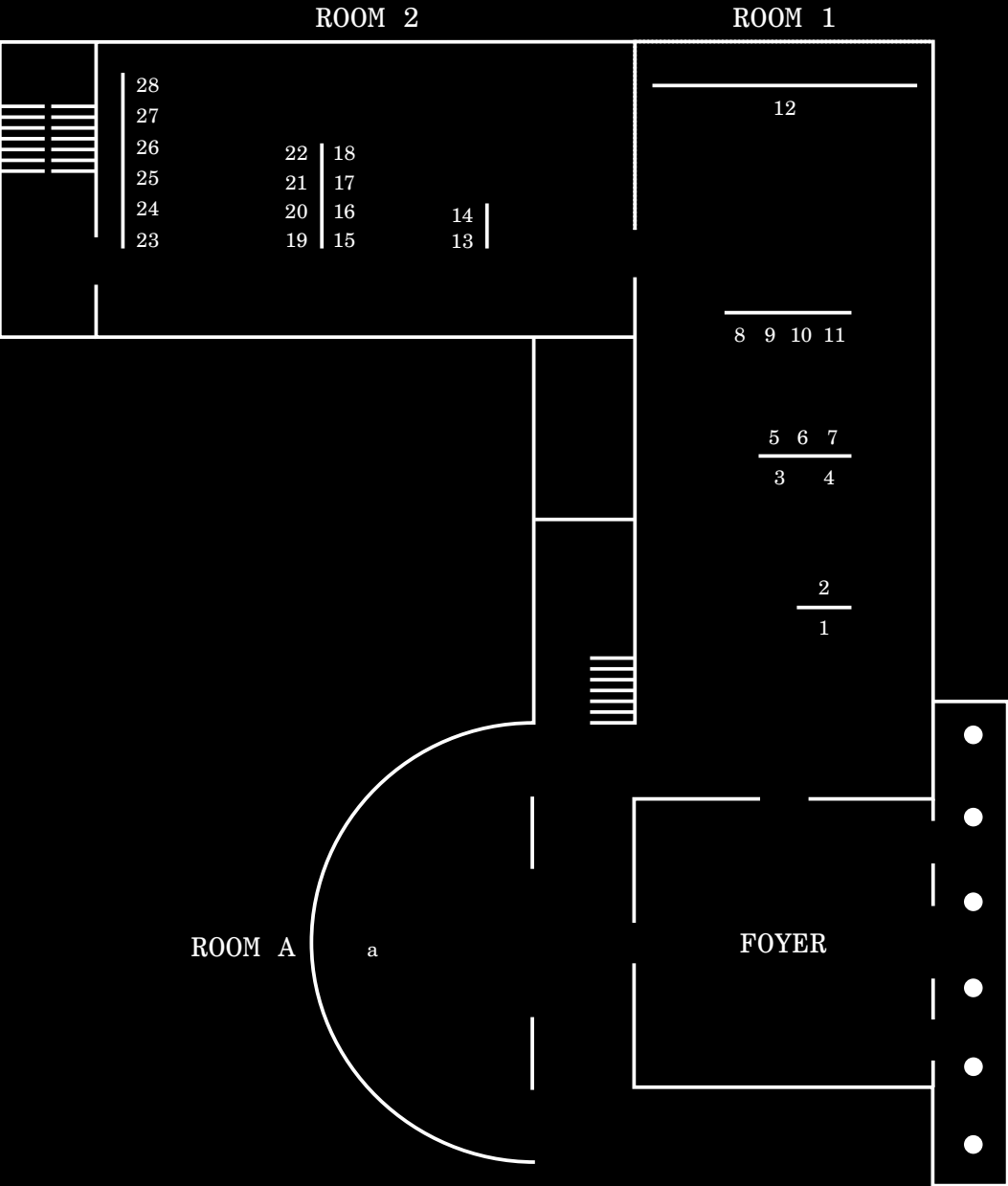


Paul Sharits  
A Retrospective

Ground floor



- Room 1

1

*Transcription*, 1990. Hand-coloured silk screen, 35×27.9 cm

2

*Replica Study I*, 1975. Watercolour on paper, 73×58 cm

3

*Frozen Film Frame*, 1971–76. Silk screen on plexiglass, 173×106.5 cm

4

*Frozen Film Frame*, 1971–76. Silk screen on plexiglass, 173×107 cm

5

*Location III: “The Forgetting of Impressions & Intentions”*, 1978. Pencil and coloured pencil on paper, 58.7×45.7 cm

6

*Frozen Film Frame*, 1973. Silk screen on plexiglass, 43×35.4 cm

7

*Frozen Film Frame*, 1976. Coloured silk screen on plexiglass, 43×35.5 cm

8

*Hypothetical Shutter Interface Series B/J1*, 1976. Ink and watercolour on paper, 58×73.5 cm

9

*Hypothetical Shutter Interface Series B/D2*, 1976. Ink and watercolour on paper, 58×73.5 cm

10

*Hypothetical Shutter Interface Series B/L2*, 1976. Coloured felt pen on paper, 58×73.5 cm

11

*Hypothetical Shutter Interface Series B/I3*, 1976. Ink and watercolour on paper, 58×73.5 cm

12

*Dream Displacement*, 1975–76. 16mm film, colour, quadraphonic sound, 4-screen projection, indefinite duration
- Room 2

13

*Study for “Film Grain Analysis” /II*, 1975. Ink and felt pen on paper, 45,5×53 cm

14

*Study for “Film Grain Analysis” /III*, 1975. Ink and felt pen on paper, 45.5×53 cm

15

*Study for Frozen Film Frame (pink modularity B)*, 1974. Coloured felt pen on paper, 43×56 cm

16

*Frame Study 10: pink modularity B*, 1974. Coloured felt pen on paper, 43×56 cm

17

*Study for Frozen Film Frame of Frame Study 22*, 1976. Coloured felt pen on paper, 43×56 cm

18

*Frame Study 22: Temporal Frame B*, 1976. Coloured felt pen on paper, 43×56 cm

19

*Frame Study 12: field B*, 1974. Coloured felt pen on paper, 36×54.5 cm

20

*Study for Frozen Film Frame (field B)*, 1974. Coloured felt pen on paper, 36×54.5 cm

21

*Frame Study 20: Diagonal Temporality B*, 1976. Coloured felt pen on paper, 43×56 cm

22

*Study for Frozen Film Frame of Diagonal Temporality B*, 1976. Coloured felt pen on paper, 43×56 cm

23

*Study for Frozen Film Frame (field C)*, 1974. Coloured felt pen on paper, 36×54.5 cm

24

*Frame Study 13: field C*, 1974. Coloured felt pen on paper, 36×54.5 cm

25

*Study for Frozen Film Frame (pink modularity A)*, 1974. Coloured felt pen on paper, 43×56 cm

26

*Frame Study 9: pink modularity A*, 1974. Coloured felt pen on paper, 43×56 cm

27

*Study for Frozen Film Frame (orange field)*, 1973. Coloured felt pen on paper, 36×54.5 cm

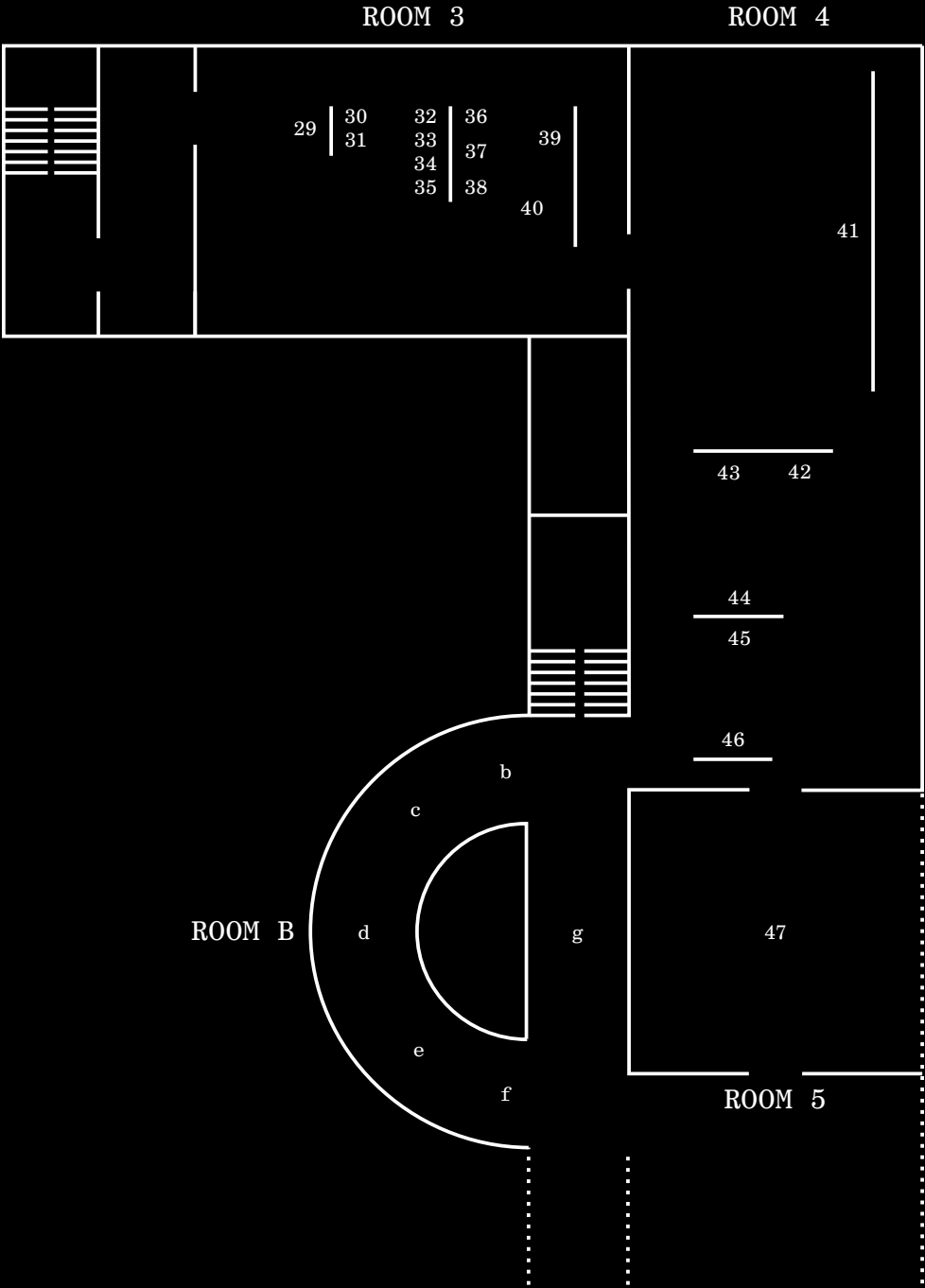
28

*Frame Study 3: orange field (3 minutes 9 seconds)*, 1973. Coloured felt pen on paper, 36×54.5 cm
- Room A

a

*Frozen Film Frame: N:O:T:H:I:N:G*, 1968. 16mm colour film strips between plexiglass plates, 3 parts, 155×216×1 cm each

1. Floor



Room 3

- 29 *Word Movie (Fluxfilm 29)*, 1966. 16mm, colour, sound, 3'45''
- 30 *Untitled*, n.d. Marker on paper, 27.9×21.6 cm
- 31 *Lower Arm Infection*, 1982. Mixed media on paper, 53.3×36.8 cm
- 32 *Untitled*, n.d. Coloured felt pen on paper, 25.4×13 cm
- 33 *Untitled*, n.d. Marker on paper, 27.9×21.6 cm
- 34 *Untitled*, n.d. Marker on paper, 27.9×21.6 cm
- 35 *Untitled*, n.d. Marker on paper, 21.6×27.9 cm
- 36 *Damaged Cells III*, n.d. Coloured felt pen on paper, 44.8×56.4 cm
- 37 *Damaged Cells II*, n.d. Coloured felt pen on paper, 44.8×56.4 cm
- 38 *Damaged Cells I*, n.d. Coloured felt pen on paper, 44.8×56.4 cm
- 39 *Migraine Onset Series/Studies*, 1976. Coloured felt pen and graphite on graph paper, 20.96×27.3 cm
- 40 *Untitled*, n.d. Coloured felt pen on paper, 2 parts, 43×55.7 cm each

Room 4

- 41 *Shutter Interface*, 1975. 16mm film, colour, 4 separate soundtracks, 4-screen projection, indefinite duration
- 42 *Positano Series*, 1982. Acrylic on linen, 127×96.52 cm
- 43 *Positano VIII*, 1980. Acrylic on linen, 152.4×121.9 cm
- 44 *Posalo I B*, 1979. Acrylic on canvas, 121.92×152.4 cm
- 45 *Posalo 5 C*, 1982. Acrylic on canvas, 152.4×121.92 cm
- 46 *Edge of Spring*, 1981. Acrylic on canvas, 76.2×60.96 cm

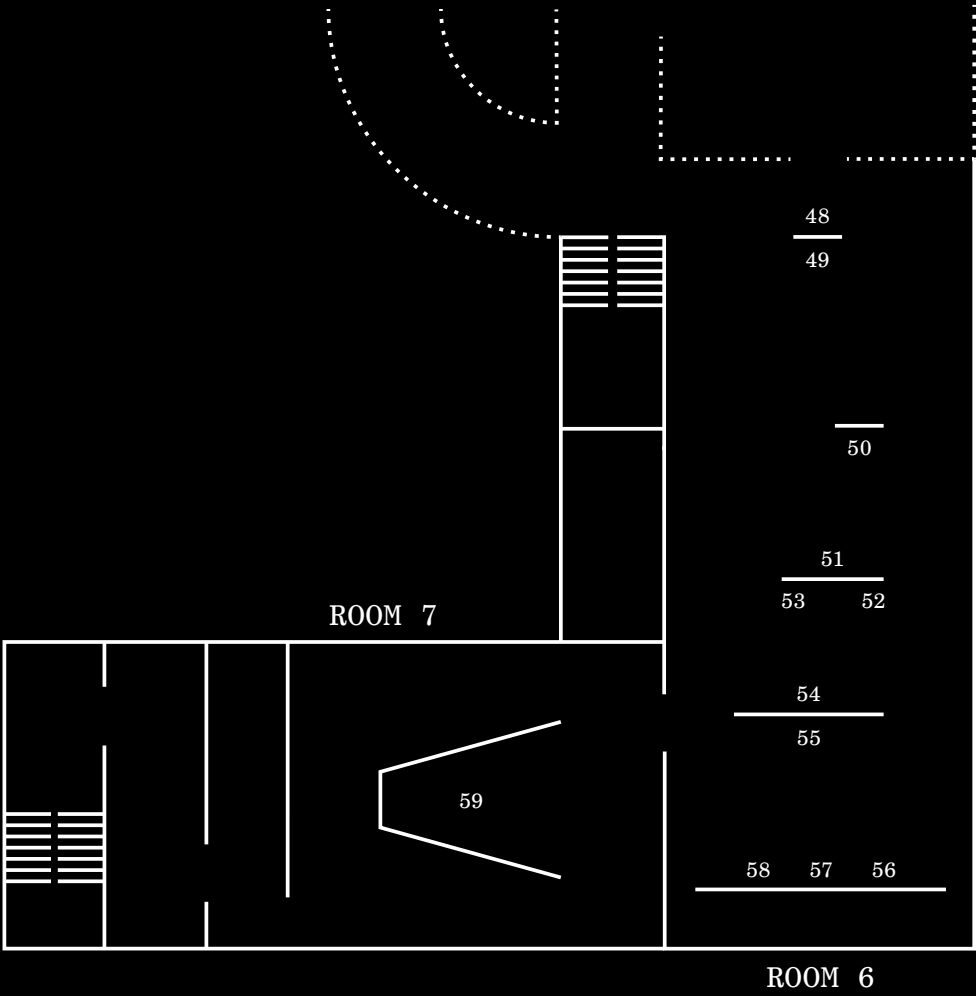
Room 5

- 47 *3rd Degree*, 1982. 16mm film, colour, sound, 3-screen projection, indefinite duration

Room B

- b *Frozen Film Frame*, 1971–76. 16mm colour film strips between plexi-glass plates, 91.5×127.8 cm
- c *Frozen Film Frame*, 1971–76. 16mm colour film strips between plexi-glass plates, 96.5×127.5 cm
- d *Frozen Film Frame*, n.d. 16mm colour film strips between plexiglass plates, 100×134 cm
- e *Frozen Film Frame*, 1971–76. 16mm colour film strips between plexi-glass plates, 101×127.2 cm
- f *Frozen Film Frame*, 1971–76. 16mm colour film strips between plexi-glass plates, 89×114.4 cm
- g *Posalo V/C*, 1982. Acrylic on linen, 243.84×152.4 cm

1. Floor



Room 6

- 48 *3rd Degree*, 1982. Pastel on paper, 63.5×50.8 cm
- 49 *T,O,U,C,H,I,N,G*, 1968. 16mm, colour, sound, 12’
- 50 *Out “Reaching”*, n.d. Mixed media on paper, 29.2×19.7 cm
- 51 *Left Foot*, 1982. Acrylic on canvas, two panels, 91.44×203.2 cm
- 52 *Lower Arm Infection*, 1982. Mixed media on paper, 53.3×36.8 cm
- 53 *Outreach A*, 1983. Coloured felt pen on paper, 52.7×35.6 cm
- 54 *Foot Infection I*, 1983. Acrylic on fabric canvas with mixed media foam core, four panels, 203.2×167.64 cm
- 55 *Frozen Angel*, 1982. Acrylic and mixed media on yellow Mylar, 111.76×152.4 cm
- 56 *Infected Hand I*, 1982. Acrylic on red Mylar with mixed media, 86.36×50.8 cm
- 57 *Infected Hand III*, 1982. Acrylic on blue Mylar with mixed media on foam core, 157.48×109.22 cm
- 58 *Foot Infection III*, 1982. Acrylic on purple Mylar with mixed media on foam core attachment, 175.26×134.62 cm

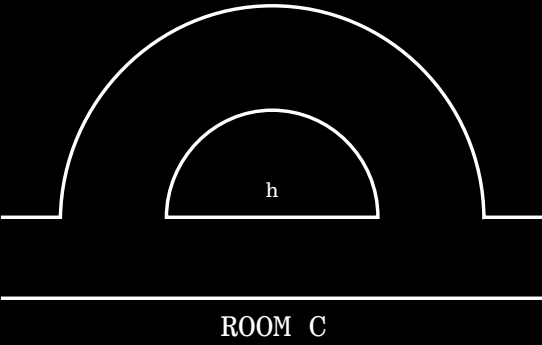
Room C

- h *Piece Mandala/End War*, 1966. 16mm, colour, silent, 5’

Room 7

- 59 *Epileptic Seizure Comparison*, 1976. 16mm film, colour, sound, 2-screen projection in trapezoid space with metallic walls, indefinite duration

2. Floor



Working with precisely composed 16mm films, the American experimental filmmaker Paul Sharits (1943–1993) created extraordinary cinematic spaces characterized by a degree of complexity and density that is unique in the history of art. In his installations and multiple projections (*locational film pieces*) he transforms film not only into a deeply visual, but also a profoundly physical experience. Meticulously arranged colour compositions (*Shutter Interface*, 1975), deceptive film-in-film presentations (*3rd Degree*, 1982) and abstract sequences interrupted by graphic images (*Epileptic Seizure Comparison*, 1976) form the basis for his reflections on the functions and conditions of the medium of film. Sharits' work masterfully combines a sense-penetrating intensity with reflections on filmic illusion and the mechanisms of seeing.

In his *Frozen Film Frames*, he reduces film to its essential components, causing it to freeze into sculpture floating in space: Between suspended Plexiglas panes he mounts strips of film arranged side by side in such a way that they can be viewed both vertically and horizontally. Sharits reduces film to its essential components, celluloid and light, thereby divesting it of its fundamental determinants, namely time and motion.

Analogous to his cinematic pieces, Sharits continues to experiment with analytical and rhythmic colour compositions in numerous graphic works. In his diptychs and series executed in felt-tip on graph paper he places studies alongside the films, thereby creating a film notation that is entirely his own. In the early 1980s Sharits turned his attention once again to the roots of his art and thus to painting. Here as well, he was concerned primarily with the function and conditions of the medium and abstract compositions alternate with graphic representational works.

For the first time ever, the Paul Sharits retrospective unites four film installations (*locational film pieces*) within a single exhibition. In addition to single-screen projections, various *Frozen Film Frames* and numerous drawings, the show presents his late paintings as well as a number of previously unexhibited works. The Fridericianum is pleased to present the world's first comprehensive retrospective devoted to the art of Paul Sharits.

OVERTURE: “All writing is pigshit. People who leave the obscure and try to define whatever it is that goes on in their heads, are pigs.” – Antonin Artaud

I am tempted to use this occasion to say nothing at all and simply let my films function as the carriers of themselves—except that this would be perhaps too arrogant and, more important, a good deal of my art does not, in fact, “contain itself.” It is difficult for me to verbalize about “my intentions” not only because the films are largely non-verbal experiences but because they are structured so as to demand more of viewers than attention and appreciation; that is, these works require a certain fusion of “my intentions” with the “films’ intentions” and with the “viewers’ intentions.” This has nothing to do with “pleasing an audience”—I mean to say that in my cinema flashes of projected light initiate neural transmission as much as they are analogues of such transmission systems and that the human retina is as much a “movie screen” as is the screen proper. At the risk of sounding immodest, by re-examining the basic mechanisms of motion pictures and by making these fundamentals explicitly concrete, I feel as though I am working toward a completely new conception of cinema. Traditionally, “abstract films,” because they are extensions of the aesthetics and pictorial principles of painting or are simply demonstrations of optics, are no more cinematic than narrative-dramatic films which squeeze literature and theatre onto a two-dimensional screen. I wish to abandon imitation and illusion and enter directly into the higher drama of: celluloid, two-dimensional strips; individual rectangular frames; the nature of sprockets and emulsion; projector operations; the three-dimensional light beam; environmental illumination; the two-dimensional reflective screen surface; the retinal screen, optic nerve and individual psycho-physical subjectivities of consciousness. In this cinematic drama, light is energy rather than a tool for the representation of non-filmic objects; light, as energy, is released to *create* its own objects, shapes and textures. Given the fact of retinal inertia and the flickering shutter mechanism of film projection, one may generate virtual forms, create actual motion (rather than illustrate it), build actual color-space (rather than picture it), and be involved in actual time (immediate presence). While my films have thematic structures (such as the sense of striving, leading to mental suicide and death, and then rhythms of rebirth in *Ray Gun Virus* and the viability of sexual dynamics as an alternative to destructive violence in *Piece Mandala/End War*), they are not at all stories. I think of my present work as being occasions for meditative-visionary experience.

## COLOPHON

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