

Vito Acconci

INSTANT HOUSE 1980

Flags, wood, chain, springs, cable & pulleys; 8' x 21' x 21'

Self-erecting room, or house, activated by a swing.

In the initial (inactivated) phase, four American flags -- wall-size and attached to wooden frames, lie on the floor in a cross-shape around a central wooden framework: there are cuts in three of the flags (at this stage, as the flags lie undefined on the floor, the cuts are probably noticeable but not readable, they are seen simply as cuts, without a function).

In the middle of the central framework, in the middle of the flags, a swing hangs down from the ceiling (in the first installation, the swing was made of metal, like a conventional playground swing, in the second installation the swing was made of wood, like the framework of the other parts): the walls are connected by rope to a pulley-system that holds the swing.

When a person sits down on the swing, the swing descends to the floor, the flags rise up around the swing and become the walls of a room, a house: the cuts are definable now as door and windows (or eyes and ears and mouth or nose); inside the house -- the part available to the participant -- the walls are the American flags that have been spread out on the floor; outside the house -- the part available to the public -- the walls are what had been the unseen underside of the American flags, the walls are Russian flags.