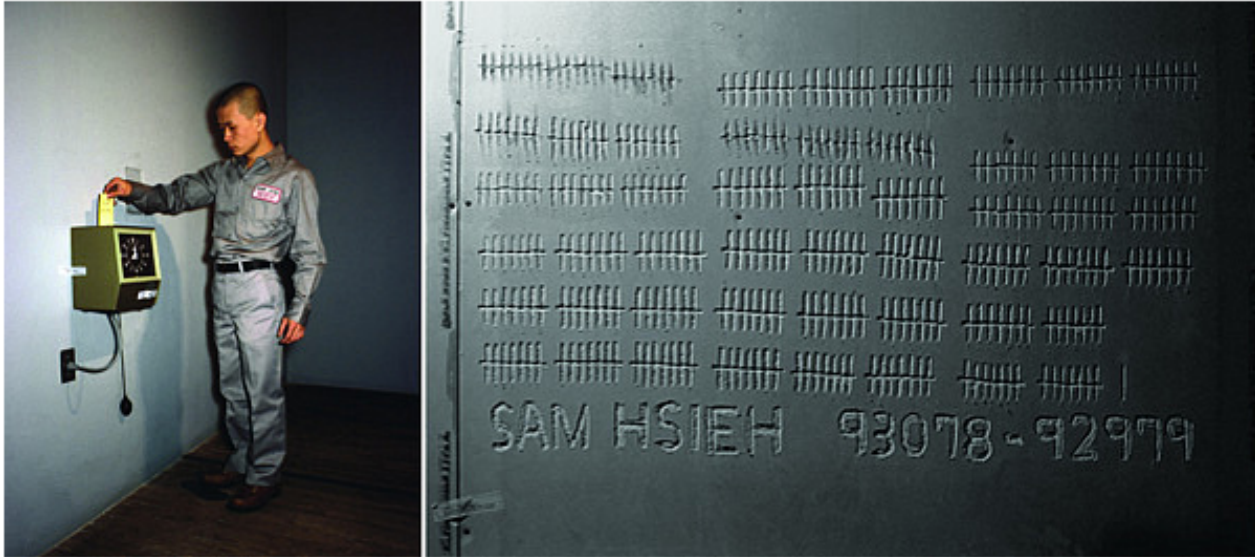


Ou, Arthur. "Tehching Hsieh," *Arforum.com*, January 22, 2009.

## ARTFORUM

### Tehching Hsieh



Left: **Tehching Hsieh**, *One Year Performance 1980–1981*. Performance view, 1980. Tehching Hsieh. Photo: Michael Shen. Right: **Tehching Hsieh**, *One Year Performance 1978–1979*. Performance view. Photo: Cheng Wei Kuong.

Taiwanese-American artist Tehching Hsieh is well known for his durational performances. An installation of his first *One Year Performance 1978–1979*, commonly known as “Cage Piece,” debuted at the Museum of Modern Art in New York on January 21, inaugurating MoMA’s new “Performance” series. His second *One Year Performance 1980–1981*, or “Time Clock Piece,” will be included in the Guggenheim Museum exhibition “The Third Mind,” opening on January 30. A comprehensive monograph of his oeuvre, *Out of Now*, is slated to be published by MIT Press and Live Art Development Agency in March.

**IT’S COINCIDENTAL THAT** “Cage Piece” and “Time Clock Piece” will be exhibited in January in New York, along with the publication of the book. “Cage Piece” is, for me, my most important work. Reinstalling the cage brought back memories of the year that I lived inside the cage and also memories of the following years, in which I struggled to return to normal life. The installation of the original cage at the museum is somewhat hidden: There will be a separate room built inside the gallery space that contains the cage, and the audience will see documents of this piece before they approach the room. The cage is the same size as the original and includes the same source of light—a one-hundred-watt bulb.

“Time Clock Piece” has never been shown in its complete form, with all the original documents, which include still and moving images, a 16-mm film camera, and a 16-mm projector to run the film loop. For me, these documents are important, but they are secondary, because they offer only traces. There are elements that are invisible and can only be approached through the viewer’s own experience and imagination. As an artist, after having finished my work, I am separated from the artwork; as a witness, I can provide original thoughts that will help the artworks to be better understood.

The book, two years in the making, is authored with Adrian Heathfield. Before we started working on the book, I had spent a lot of time digitizing my extensive archives. I’ve always had an uneasy relationship with language. I’m accustomed to asking questions and answering them in my mind without using any verbal or written tactics, so I found it hard to transform my thoughts into language. Adrian is a good listener and a keen thinker, and he was cautious to not categorize my work in any way that was not true to my original concepts. There have also been other important artists and writers who have responded to my artworks in deep and beautiful ways.

— As told to Arthur Ou