



Title: Bill Viola. Love/Death. The Tristan Project  
Publisher: Mercatorfonds (Belgium)  
Distributed by: Yale University Press (USA) and Actes Sud (France)  
Printed in Belgium  
Format: 22 x 28 cm, hardcover  
Number of pages: 128  
Languages: English and French  
Publishing date: October (UK) / November (USA) 2023  
ISBN EN 9780300270174 | ISBN FR 9789462303430

Richard Wagner's opera *Tristan und Isolde* is the story of a love so intense and profound that it cannot be contained in the material bodies of the lovers. In order to fully realize their love, Tristan and Isolde must ultimately transcend life itself.

A behind-the-scenes recounting of the creative process behind *The Tristan Project*—featuring video by Bill Viola—with written contributions from some of the main protagonists. Includes preparatory notes, drawings, production and performance images, as well as a catalogue of artworks later derived from the opera footage.

Edited by Kira Perov, executive director of Bill Viola Studio, who has worked with Bill Viola, her husband and partner, since 1979. She edits all Bill Viola publications, and curates, organizes and coordinates exhibitions of the work worldwide.

Featuring an introduction by Mark Swed, classical music critic for the Los Angeles Times, along with insightful essays by: Kira Perov, on the complex video production; performing arts powerhouse Peter Sellars, who directed; star conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen; as well as a text by Bill Viola, detailing his own personal journey through the development of the project.

**"Viola's imagery is personal, with ceremonies of purification, flames and forests and Tristan's literally out-of-this-world final ascent from the ocean's depth to the heavens."**

—Mark Swed, classical music critic, *Los Angeles Times*

In 2004 the opera world was taken by storm with a ground-breaking new production of Richard Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* in Los Angeles, which included a revolutionary four-hour video, specifically created for the opera by Bill Viola. This is the story of the then-Paris Opera director Gerard Mortier, who pushed the boundaries of what opera could be by inviting a trinity of California-based creatives to re-imagine a *Tristan und Isolde* for our times. It was a bold project for the LA Phil, having just opened the now-iconic Frank Gehry-designed Walt Disney Concert Hall, projecting them into the world of music and images. The fully staged opera has since been seen in Paris, Tokyo, Kobe, Toronto and Madrid, with concert versions in Los Angeles, New York, Rotterdam, London, Helsinki, Stockholm, and St Petersburg.

#### DISTRIBUTION

**Benelux:**

Exhibitions International, Leuven  
[www.exhibitionsinternational.org](http://www.exhibitionsinternational.org)

**France, Switzerland, and Canada:**

Actes Sud, Arles  
[www.actes-sud.fr](http://www.actes-sud.fr)

**The rest of the world:**

Yale University Press,  
New Haven and London  
[www.yalebooks.com/art](http://www.yalebooks.com/art)  
[www.yalebooks.co.uk](http://www.yalebooks.co.uk)