

NOTES ON BLINDNESS



In 1983, after years of deteriorating vision, the writer and theologian John Hull lost the last traces of light sensation. For the next three years, he kept a diary on audio-cassette of his interior world of blindness. The film is a reenactment that uses his original recordings and interviews.





“I knew that if I didn’t
understand it,”

“blindness would
destroy me.”

— JOHN HULL



At the age
of 13

John developed cataracts which left him
blind for months at a time.

At the age
of 17

Long series of retinal detachments led to losing
sight of left eye

In 1980,
at age 45

After further detachments of the right eye, John's
vision was so poor that he was registered blind.

In 1983,
at age 48

John lost the final traces of light sensation, that he
began to confront the enormousness of this loss.



Practical Challenges of Adaptation and Madly Learning New Tricks





Visual Memory
Begins to Disappear







Sacrificing Nostalgia for Reality







Virtual Reality Experience

Notes On Blindness: Into the Darkness (2016)

NIHILO, ARTE FRANCE AND AUDIOGAMING, IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH ARCHER'S MARK.



Notes On Blindness : Into Darkness, an immersive virtual reality (VR) project based on John's sensory and psychological experience of blindness.

The **interactive experience** complements the story world of the feature film. Each scene addresses a memory, a moment and a specific location from John's audio diary, using binaural audio and real time 3D animations to create a fully immersive experience in a 'world beyond sight'.

THE EXPERIENCE FOLLOWING PLATFORMS: SAMSUNG GEAR , MOBILE OR CARDBOARD: IOS | ANDROID

Notes On Blindness: Into the Darkness (2016)

NIHILO, ARTE FRANCE AND AUDIOGAMING, IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH ARCHER'S MARK.



Notes On Blindness: Into the Darkness (2016)

NIHILO, ARTE FRANCE AND AUDIOGAMING, IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH ARCHER'S MARK.



Audio as the Source Material

One Dark Night (2015)

NONNY DE LA PENA, EMBLEMATIC GROUP

Immersive journalism virtual reality piece traces the sequence of events leading up to the shooting of Trayvon Martin by George Zimmerman. The piece is based on 911 calls made by Zimmerman and various residents of the Twin Lakes condo complex; witness trial testimony; and architectural drawings of the location, both interior and exterior.



One Dark Night (2015)

NONNY DE LA PENA, EMBLEMATIC GROUP



SAY
SOMETHING
BUNNY!



Say Something Bunny (2017)

ALISON S M. KOBAYASHI



Say Something Bunny (2017)

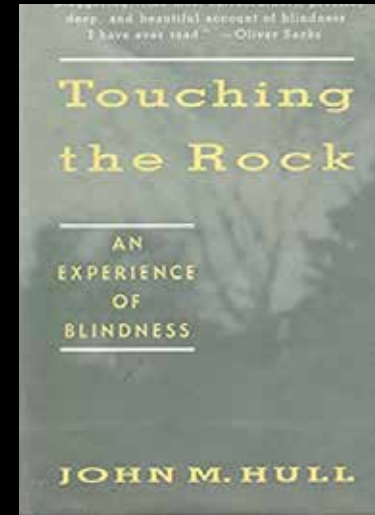
ALISON S M. KOBAYASHI





Source Material

16 HOURS OF AUDIO DIARIES, EXCAVATING THE INTERIOR WORLD OF BLINDNESS,
AS WELL AS MARILYN'S VOICE, TAKEN FROM A BBC INTERVIEW FROM THE EARLY 1990S.



1983	1990	2010	2011
Last traces of light sensations. Starts audio diaries on blindness and goes on for 3 years	John's diaries were first published under the title ' <i>Touching the Rock</i> ' Neurologist Oliver Sacks describes as, 'A masterpiece... The most precise, deep and beautiful account of blindness I have ever read.'	December 2010 - Directors Peter Middleton and James Spinney met John and Marilyn Hull while filming a short documentary about the blind experience of snowfall.	Middleton and Spinney receive John Hull's parcel containing a dusty box of eight C90 cassettes: "Cassette one. Side one. Notes on Blindness."
2012	2014	2015	2016
The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) granted him a Lifetime Achievement Award for his contributions to the literature of blindness.	NY Times Op-Doc short film "Notes on Blindness" is an official selection of the 2014 Sundance Film Festival and won the documentary award at the Encounters short film festival and an Emmy award.	John Hull passes away just 3 months after celebrating his 80th birthday. He is survived by his wife Marilyn and his five children.	January 2016 premiering at Sundance in January 2016 (alongside our virtual reality project) It won the Best Documentary at the British Independent Film Awards .

A three-part series of videos produced by independent filmmakers, who are supported in part by the nonprofit Sundance Institute.

JAN. 16
'Notes on Blindness'

COMING MONDAY
'China's Web Junkies'

COMING WEDNESDAY
'Sarah's Uncertain Path'

'Notes on Blindness'

By PETER MIDDLETON and JAMES SPINNEY

In 1983, after years of deteriorating vision, the writer and theologian John Hull lost the last traces of light sensation. For the next three years, he kept a diary on audio-cassette of his interior world of blindness. This film is a dramatization that uses his original recordings.



PLAY ORIGINAL VERSION

PLAY WITH AUDIO DESCRIPTION

PLAY WITH CLOSED-CAPTION

Recently, John Hull responded to the diary entries in the film, reflecting on his memories of sight, alarm at the onset of darkness and his eventual discovery of beauty.



MEMORY
(2:14)



PANIC
(2:16)



RAINFALL
(2:07)

“Little beautiful things that
sighted people wouldn’t
waste their time on to me,
became so rich.”

— JOHN HULL

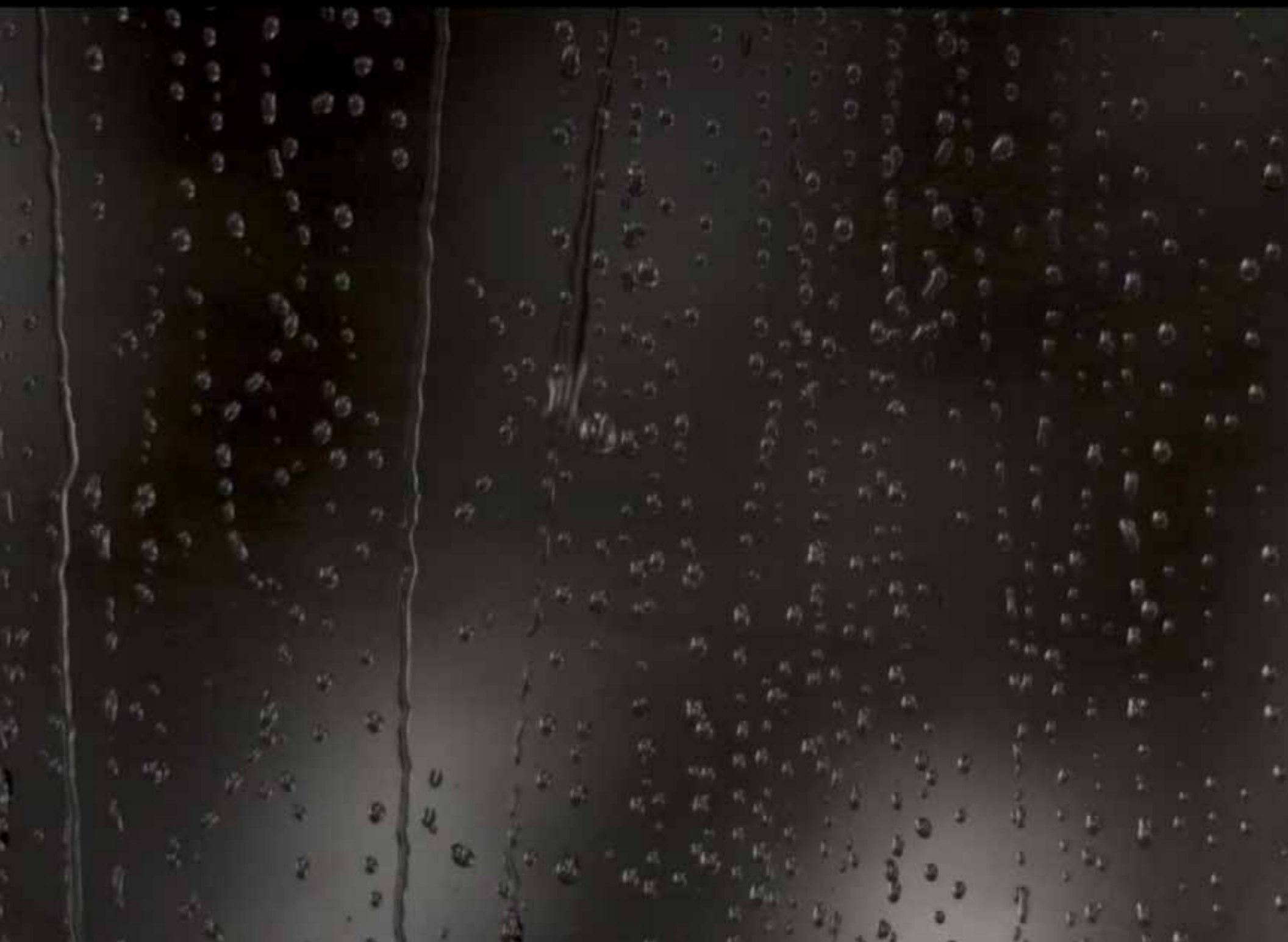
October 2012 / Memory Marathon











“I discovered that sighted people on the whole don’t realize that they live in a world which is a projection of their slighted bodies.”

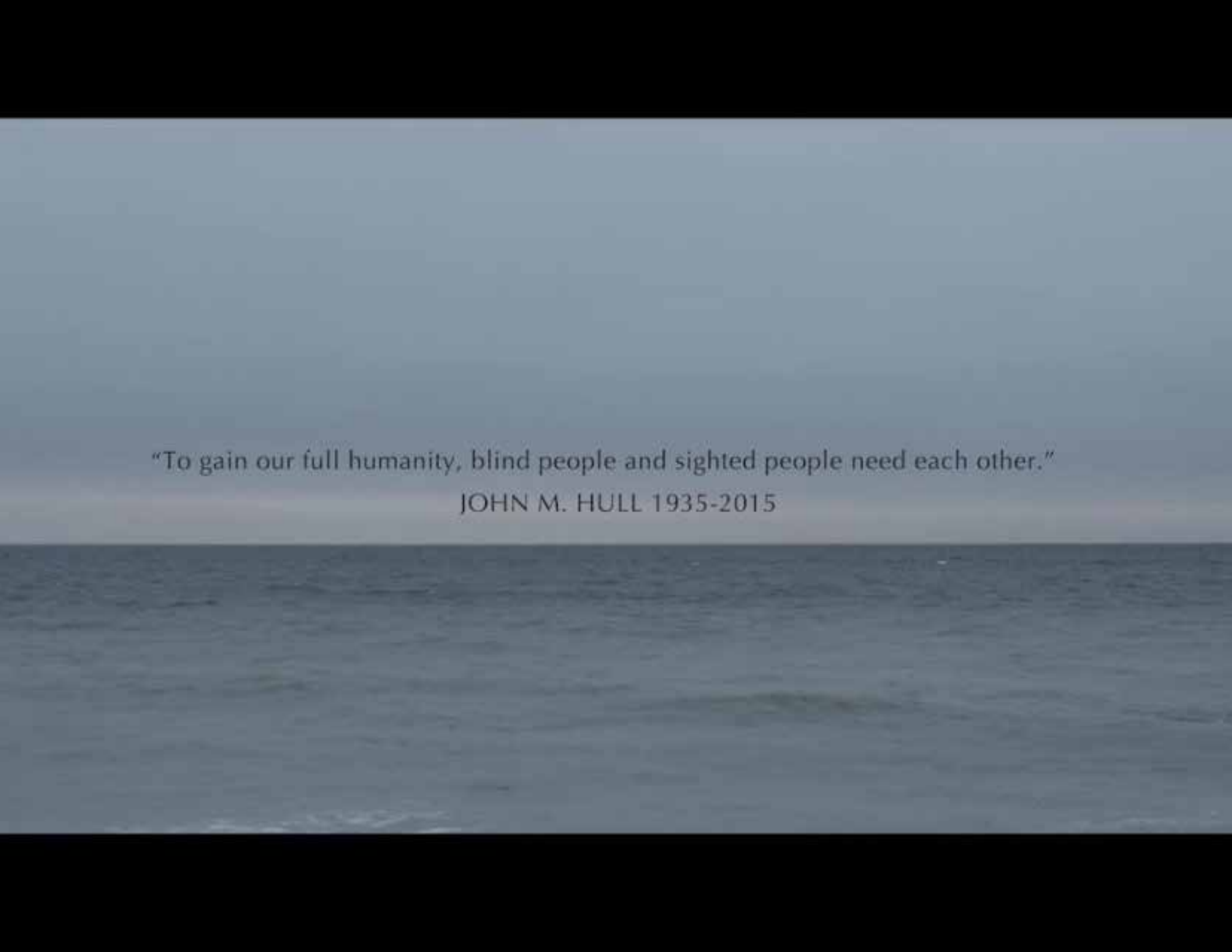
— JOHN HULL

October 2012 / Memory Marathon









"To gain our full humanity, blind people and sighted people need each other."

JOHN M. HULL 1935-2015