

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, October 2011

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Justin Vivian Bond

The Fall of the House of Whimsy

October 30 - December 18, 2011

Opening reception:

Sunday, October 30, 7-9pm

Mx Bond's *Low Double Standards*

Performances at Joe's Pub

425 Lafayette Street NYC

Sunday, October 30, 9:30pm

Sunday, November 6, 13, 20 + 27, 9:30pm

Sunday, December 4, 9:30pm

Tickets: \$25 at www.joespub.com

For Performa 11

Full Moon Tranifestation Circle with

Justin Vivian Bond and Friends

Thursday, November 10, 8pm

Free admission

Untitled

Jim Hodges, Carlos Marques da Cruz, and Encke King

Video screening with performance by

Justin Vivian Bond

Thursday, December 1, 2011

8:30pm screening, performance at 10pm

Distributed for 2011 World AIDS Day/

Day With(out) Art by Visual AIDS

Free admission



From October 30 - December 18, 2011, PARTICIPANT INC is proud to present ***The Fall of the House of Whimsy***, the first solo exhibition of **Justin Vivian Bond**, including paintings, photographs, and installations incorporating elements of Bond's former Second Avenue loft, soon-to-be demolished. A piano, record player, couch, and vanity, among other personal effects, create an intimate context for Bond's delicate pencil and watercolor portraits of friends, lovers, radical faeries. As well, it serves as a space in which impromptu performances can occur. The scripted environment of the exhibition is mirrored in Bond's photographs of the former loft, providing glimpses of life in this *House of Whimsy*. Unlike Bond's solitary childhood imaginings of it, this now placeless dream house is populated by whimsical/subversive figures, rendered in Bond's portraits.

Made in collaboration with IOULEX, a video of Bond's song "American Wedding," based on a poem by Essex Hemphill, will be on view. As well, a very special limited edition of Bond's debut album, *DENDROPHILE*, will be pressed on black vinyl (edition of 150). For Performa 11, PARTICIPANT INC will host *Full Moon Tranifestation Circle with Justin Vivian Bond and Friends* on Thursday, November 10. Bond will perform in the newly renovated Joe's Pub (October 30, November 6, 13, 20, 27, and December 4), articulating themes shared with the exhibition, including the current effects of urban economics on artistic life in New York City.

Bond's work over the past two decades continues to evolve a legacy of radical queer art, performance, and philosophy, and is rooted, most notably, in the pioneering efforts of figures like Jack Smith and Ethyl Eichelberger who, like Bond, made work in homage to strong, independent, and defiant women in history. Bond was recently described as "the greatest cabaret artist of (v's) generation," by writer Hilton Als in the *New Yorker* ("v" is Bond's pronoun of choice). V's formal mastery of theater and music is made even more complex and profound by a philosophical exploration of evolving gender identity, manifested through a deeply personal reclamation, reinvention, and re-definition of Bond's own body and self. States of hybridity are also reflected in v's paintings, in which human and floral forms, for example, tend to intermingle.

Stemming from Bond's recent performances at The Kitchen, v's research of the Galli, gender variant priests/priestesses of the goddess Cybele, also known as "tree bearers" in Phrygian mythology—continues with a new limited edition made especially for *The Fall of the House of Whimsy*. This bronze sculpture, designed in collaboration with artist/jeweler Jelena Behrend, was created in homage to the youthful male consort of Cybele, Attis, and will house a fragrance-in-progress for Etat libre d'orange by Ralf Schwieger, inspired by Justin Bond and the Galli. According to Randy P. Connor's *Blossom of Bone*, Attis was a goat herder and high priest who bore similarities to Adonis, Pan, and other vegetation deities. In order to avoid an arranged marriage to Ia, the daughter of King Midas, and out of loyalty to Cybele and his gender variant lover the eunuch Agdistis, Attis self-castrates under a pine tree, and the bride gives herself an Amazonian-esque half mastectomy. Before Attis can bleed to death, Zeus refuses the pleas of Cybele and Agdistis to spare his life, but instead preserves Attis' body in a vampiric state, leaving only one finger in eternal motion. According to mythology, the finger in perpetual motion is a symbol of anal eroticism and sexual variance, referred to as "siphnianizing."

In 1993, as a response to the devastation of the AIDS crisis, **Justin Bond** created the character Kiki Durane, a washed-up yet irreverent, resilient, and ultimately triumphant torch singer. In collaboration with Kenny Mellman, the two invented the now legendary act Kiki and Herb, which they continued to perform for nearly 15 years. The comeback that the 70-year-old characters Kiki and Herb claimed they were making when they conceived the act in small San Francisco clubs became reality. Kiki and Herb went on to play Carnegie Hall, The Sydney Opera House, and London's Queen Elizabeth Hall, in addition to mounting the Tony-nominated production *Kiki and Herb Alive on Broadway* at The Helen Hayes Theatre, and the Off-Broadway *Coup de Theatre* (The Cherry Lane Theatre). Bond made the decision not to perform as this character (successfully) forever—and life after Kiki is characterized by Bond's production of original music, painting, writing, and theatrical performances that encompass all of these formats.

Mx Bond's novella-length memoir, *TANGO; My Childhood, Backwards and in High Heels* is now available from The Feminist Press and v's debut CD, *DENDROPHILE*, was self-released by WhimsyMusic. Mx Bond was nominated for a Tony Award for *Kiki and Herb Alive On Broadway* in 2007. Other notable endeavors include touring with avant-garde performance troupe The Big Art Group and appearing in the John Cameron Mitchell film, *Shortbus*. Please visit www.justinbond.com to download and enjoy v's music and blog, *Justin Vivian Bond is Living!*

Performa 11 (November 1-21, 2011) is the fourth edition of the internationally acclaimed biennial of new visual art performance presented by Performa, the leading organization dedicated to exploring the critical role of live performance in the history of twentieth-century art and to encouraging new directions in performance for the twenty-first century. www.performa-arts.org



◆ **PERFORMA 11**

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PARTICIPANT INC is located at 253 East Houston Street, between Norfolk and Suffolk Streets on the LES. Subway: F to Second Avenue, Allen Street exit or JMZ to Essex/Delancey. participantinc.org

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