



Johanna Constantine, *Conduit*  
Curated by ANOHNI  
July 10 - Aug 14, 2022  
Opening Sunday, July 10, 5-9pm

From July 10 to August 14, 2022, PARTICIPANT INC presents **Johanna Constantine, *Conduit***, which marks the artist's first solo exhibition including performance, sculpture, vintage and newly produced performance videos. Eight of Constantine's iconic dance works were videotaped on-site for this exhibition: *White Dance*, *Insect Mother*, *Airplane Dance*, *Ceremony*, *Deer Dance*, *Claw Dance*, *Bird Dance*, and *Knife Dance* and, together with videos from the archives of ANOHNI, will be continuously on view as an immersive installation. *Conduit* emphasizes and acknowledges Constantine's lifework, channeling the struggle to survive in an uncertain environment.

**Johanna Constantine, *Conduit*** is the first in a series of three exhibitions curated by ANOHNI exploring work related to **Blacklips Performance Cult**. Blacklips was started by ANOHNI in New York City's East Village in the summer of 1992 with founding members Johanna Constantine and Psychotic Eve. At times, Blacklips enacted an *art of death* as described by artist and queer theorist Jill H. Casid, anticipating the Necrocene with the production of allegorical plays that addressed the intertwined issues of AIDS and the Anthropocene, weekly and with great effort, through scenes of post-apocalyptic horizons populated by dead and undead, non-human and human characters. In discussing some of the unexplained cultural references of Constantine that pre-dated as well as permeated Blacklips, ANOHNI recalled, "In *Class Nine Nuclear Mishap* [a deep-state conspiracy play written by Clark Render] she was cast as a nuclear reactor, which was exactly the type of role at which she excelled. She embodies a savage force of nature, dancing through ever-near annihilation. This is the spirit that has stayed with her in past and current works."

Constantine's first play written for Blacklips in November 1992, *Spectra*, was a form of autobiographical science fiction. "It was a dance of celebratory violence and love, kind of launching surreal aggression into the void. She began building extensions off her body using metal refuse, sometimes things she would smash herself, pieces from automobile wrecks, which she would then augment with knives and corkscrews and whatever from the local dollar store. She would use wire, phone cords, anything plastic or metal she could find on the street, and of course black electrical tape as anchoring materials." Later, ANOHNI's play *Miracle Now*, in December 1994, featured Constantine as 'Death of America,' vintage documentation of which will be on view. Like an unexpected reincarnation, in some way evolved from all the "blood and guts, knives, jewels, drugs, pain, and love," of Blacklips, the collective's final play *13 WAYS TO DIE*, was staged on March 13, 1995.

#### 2022 Videos:

Directed, choreographed, and performed by **Johanna Constantine**

Body painting and costumes by **Johanna Constantine**

Additional costume elements:

metal by **Manuel Albarran**

molded leather by **Louis Fleischauer**

Editor, camera: **Marit Liang**

Production Manager: **Marbles**

Camera and Super 8: **John Brattin**

Makeup and Production Assistant: **Caroline Mills**

Production Intern: **Leon Heist**

Music:

*White Dance*, **Johanna Constantine**

*Insect Mother*, **William Basinski**, *The Trail of Tears*

*Airplane Dance*, **Wladimir Ussachevski + Otto Luening** and unknown

*Ceremony*, **Johanna Constantine**

*Deer Dance*, **William Basinski**, *The Disintegration Loops II*

*Claw Dance*, **Johanna Constantine**

*Bird Dance*, **Ab Ovo**, *Ascendance*

*Knife Dance*, **Pan Sonic**, *Puhdistus*

#### Archival videos (from the archives of ANOHNI):

"Death of America," excerpt from The Johnsons play *Miracle Now*, written and directed by ANOHNI, PS1, NY, 1996

"Arcadia Dance," The Johnsons at Arcadia, Williamsburg, NY, 1995, video by James Elaine

"13 Ways to Die," Blacklips at Pyramid, NYC, March 13, 1995

"Dance for Sylvia Rivera," Antony and the Johnsons at Joe's Pub, NYC, 2002 video by Robert O'Haire at Straw2gold Pictures

"Box Dance," Antony and the Johnsons at Joe's Pub, NYC, 2001, video by Robert O'Haire

"Spike Dance," Antony and the Johnsons at Joe's Pub, NYC, 2001

"Mating Dance," Antony and the Johnsons, 1999, video by Robert O'Haire

"Death of America (Lavender)," 2012, video directed by ANOHNI

"Horse Dance," from The Johnsons play, *Love*, written and directed by ANOHNI, Mother, NYC, 1999

"Deer Monster Dance 2," from The Johnsons play, *Love*, written and directed by ANOHNI, Mother, NYC, 1999

"Deer Monster Dance 3," Antony and the Johnsons at The Kitchen, NYC, 2000, video by Robert O'Haire

**Johanna Constantine** is a New York dance-based performance artist and DJ, and a founding member of Blacklips Performance Cult and The Johnsons. Today she tours the world with her transformative performances; her costumes, often comprising stark metal sculpture and body extensions lend her appearance a monolithic quality. A co-founder of the Future Feminism Collective (2014–present), Constantine has also collaborated on Whitney and Tate Modern installations with filmmaker Charles Atlas and live projects with sound artist William Basinski. She has also had the privilege of dancing for the The Ohno School in several performances adjacent to the Yoshito Ohno collaboration with Anohni and the Johnsons, as well as doing live soundscapes and soundtracks for the Dance Archive Project in Tokyo. Her pointed offering of antagonistic response to patriarchy has infiltrated both art and nightclub scenes.

Image: **Johanna Constantine** in collaboration with **Charles Atlas** for *Dance Ink Magazine*, 1994. Photo: **Josef Astor**. [A black and white photograph of the artist Johanna Constantine in an asymmetrical pose, looking directly into the camera, her body accented with dripping body paint and electrical tape. She wears an ornate headdress and claw-like gloves made of post-apocalyptic refuse such as electrical wires and appendages made of tape.]

**Safety protocols:** Visitors and staff must wear a mask and practice social distancing.

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PARTICIPANT INC's exhibitions are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature.

Our programs are supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

This project is made possible with funds from the NYSCA in Partnership with Wave Farm: MAAF Forward Fund, with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

Archiving and documentation projects are supported by the National Endowment for the Arts.

PARTICIPANT INC is supported in part by an Artists Council Grant of the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation.

PARTICIPANT INC receives generous support from the Harriett Ames Charitable Trust; Agnes Gund Foundation; Marta Heflin Foundation; The Ruth Ivor Foundation; The Meredith E. James Charitable Fund; Jerome Foundation; Lambent Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation; Andrea Stern Charitable Fund; Still Point Fund; The Jacques Louis Vidal Charitable Fund; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; FRIENDS of PARTICIPANT INC; numerous individuals; and Materials for the Arts, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs/NYC Department of Sanitation/NYC Dept. of Education.

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PARTICIPANT INC receives support from the Henry Luce Foundation, the Willem de Kooning Foundation, and Teiger Foundation through the Coalition of Small Arts New York.

PARTICIPANT INC is located at 253 East Houston Street between Norfolk and Suffolk Streets. Closest trains are the F (2nd Ave) and the J/M/Z (Essex/Delancey); closest wheelchair accessible stop is the 4/6 (Bleecker/Lafayette). Entry is on grade and the gallery is barrier free throughout with an all gender, wheelchair accessible bathroom. Service animals are welcome.