



Martin Gustavsson
El Mirage

Stanley Love Performance Group
In residence

November 22, 2015 - January 17, 2016
Opening reception and performance,
Sunday, November 22, 7-9pm

Stanley Love Performance Group
Tapestry Truths
Premiere performances, January 2016

From November 22, 2015 - January 17, 2016, PARTICIPANT INC is proud to present **Martin Gustavsson**, *El Mirage*, an exhibition of new paintings explicitly produced to be utilized by **Stanley Love Performance Group**, in residency for the duration of the exhibition. There will be a special opening performance for Performa's 10th Anniversary, Performa 15, on the evening of November 22. The exhibition and residency will culminate in the premiere of a new performance work, *Tapestry Truths*, by Stanley Love Performance Group (SLPG) in January 2016.

With *El Mirage*, Gustavsson upends the conventional aesthetics of a painting show with mobile works that compose an environment for intervention by others. The thinking around this project started five years ago as a conversation between Gustavsson and Ian White (1971-2013). White was a performance artist, curator, writer, long-time friend and collaborator. Together, Gustavsson and White discussed the potentialities of an exhibition that combined painting and performance. They spoke of Baroque music as rhythmic gesture, Jean Genet, Poussin; and about being, inhabiting, performing, or not performing an image. In discussions about revisiting such an exhibition at PARTICIPANT INC, Stanley Love was introduced as a collaborator.

Genet plays a pivotal role in the overall work; specifically his 1961 play *The Screens*, to which Gustavsson makes direct reference through the deployment of painted movable screens. In Genet's stage directions, the representations depicted on the screens are always in proximity to real objects, betraying the possibility of stable imagery and initiating novel scenes. As an artist who refused to play the game of representation, Genet, to quote Leo Bersani in his 1996 book *Homos*, "turns his back on *The Theatre of Good*." Proposing a space of the indeterminate, *El Mirage* re-creates room for fantasy, pleasure, and play. This is where Love comes in.

Performing in and around Gustavsson's *screens* – paintings affixed onto metal structures on wheels – Stanley Love Performance Group will utilize the exhibition as an open rehearsal space, a space of interaction, continually re-shaping itself. Working from social and modern dance idioms, the SLPG cast is built on an array of individuality, a large ensemble of diverse bodies. While highly structured and choreographed, the performance introduces movement that is wildly dynamic and open to past and future agencies.

This collaboration reflects upon the daily occurrence of action, pictured outside and within the set of paintings, not as spectacle, but as an investigation into physiology: what is a body, what is an image, how do the two correlate and mutate? The exhibition foregrounds the un-boundaried image, one that originates and exists beyond the canvas, and poses the question: When does a painting become a body?

In making these works, Gustavsson looked to heroes, while engaging a personal narrative of his formative years in the 1990s – to be young and gay in New York and Europe in the wake of the AIDS crisis. Speaking to this directly, Gustavsson stated, “I learned about David Wojnarowicz from a distance, while at art school in London. His sense of urgency felt electrifying. Stanley transports us from this time. I am also looking at William Blake, his use of swirls and labyrinths, in an effort to access these spaces for myself. I surround myself with these larger-than-life figures, or, the image I have of them, and converse with them in this ‘play’ that we are making.”

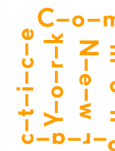
Martin Gustavsson (b. 1964, Sweden) lives and works in London, UK. Gustavsson attended The Royal University Collage of Fine Art in Stockholm, Sweden and Middlesex University, UK. His works have been exhibited in Scandinavia, the UK, Japan, US, and the Middle East. Recent solo exhibitions include *Indentations* (2013), Maria Stenfors, London; *In No Particular Order* (2010), Gothenburg Museum of Art, Sweden; *Wrath of God* (2007-2008), Oslo Kunstforening, Norway and Brändström & Stene, Stockholm. He lectures at Umeå University, Sweden and held the IASPIS residencies in New York (1999-2000) and Stockholm (2007).

Founded in 1992, **Stanley Love Performance Group** has recently performed at MoMA PS1 (2013), PS122 (2013), and The Whitney Biennial (2012). Other venues include The Kitchen, Paula Cooper Gallery, The Tribeca Performing Arts Center, Cooper Union, NYU, Dixon Place and The LGBTQ Center. Stanley Love graduated from The Juilliard School and creates work of eclecticism and expression to inspire humanity. Love lives and works in New York.

Image caption: Martin Gustavsson, # *Two Moons*, 2015. 190 x 190 cm. Oil, acrylic, pigments and glitter on linen. Photograph by Matthew Booth. Courtesy of the artist.

KONSTNÄRSNÄMNDEN

This exhibition has been produced with the support of the Swedish Arts Grants Committee.



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

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

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

PARTICIPANT INC receives generous support from the Ames Family Foundation; The Blessing Way Foundation; Foundation for Contemporary Arts; The Greenwich Collection Ltd.; Harpo Foundation; The Ruth Ivor Foundation; Lambent Foundation; 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.

Common Practice New York is an advocacy group that fosters research and discussions on the role of small-scale arts institutions in New York City. Common Practice New York aims to collectively embody the question, *What is our common practice and why do we value it?* commonpracticenyc.org

PARTICIPANT INC
253 East Houston Street NY NY 10002

PERFORMA 15