

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Lia Gangitano, 212 254 4334

1 September 2009

MY BARBARIAN

The Night Epi\$ode

September 13 - October 18, 2009

Opening reception, Sunday, September 13, 7-9pm

Performance immediately following at 9pm

From September 13 - October 18, 2009, PARTICIPANT INC is pleased to present *The Night Epi\$ode*, the first New York solo exhibition of **My Barbarian**. My Barbarian is a Los Angeles-based collaborative group consisting of Malik Gaines, Jade Gordon and Alexandro Segade. The trio makes site-responsive performances and video installations that use theatrical play to draw allegorical narratives out of historical dilemmas, mythical conflicts, and current political crises.

The Night Epi\$ode is a new video installation that explores the genre of sci-fi television, linking narratives of supernatural anxiety with tales of economic collapse. Inspired by episodic TV shows from the 1950s-'80s, particularly Rod Serling's *The Night Gallery*, Gaines, Gordon, and Segade perform in six short video episodes that approach the financial crisis through the tropes of that genre. These stories function as a means of addressing the speculative narratives and outright myths that drive public discourse.

In one video, an unemployed woman loses her insurance and begins an affair with a being from another dimension. When her husband leaves her, she plans to marry the flickering light spirit in hopes of getting on the entity's insurance plan, only to discover that they are in fact a same-sex couple and cannot be married. In another episode, a man does a dangerous yoga pose to release toxins in his body, only to be overcome with a horrifying skin disease that can only be cured by a witch doctor dressed in Obama-print African fabric. The man finally discovers the doctor's bill is a price too high to pay.

A seventh video hosts the program: three nightmare curators trapped in a boardroom meeting find there is no exit from the aura of negativity that permeates the politics of exhibition. Modeled on Sartre's existentialist play, *No Exit*, the video combines absurdist dialogue, suspenseful images found in old credit sequences, and the stylized sets of early music videos. The action is set in a theatrical space mirrored in the gallery through set pieces and dramatic lighting.

As a collective that works regularly with non-profit art institutions in an art world confronted by questions of sustainability, My Barbarian brings its own personal psychology to these uncanny images of economic dysfunction. The process for generating the work, all of which was made during the summer of 2009, was modeled after a fast form of television production, with the three members of the group writing, editing, performing, shooting, composing, costuming, and producing the project.

The opening night features a performance by the group in which the fictive curators will hold a "Death Panel Discussion."

PARTICIPANT INC
253 East Houston Street NY NY 10002

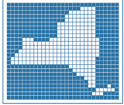
My Barbarian had its first solo gallery exhibition in May 2009 at Steve Turner Contemporary in Los Angeles. In 2008, the group made a collaborative exhibition with the sculptor Lara Schmitz at Museum Het Domain, Sittard, NL, which, in 2009, traveled to the Luckman Gallery in Los Angeles. Since 2004, My Barbarian has shown work in group exhibitions and/or performance programs at venues including REDCAT, LACMA, Hammer Museum, LAXART, Schindler House, LACE, Steve Turner Contemporary, Los Angeles; New Museum, Whitney Museum, Studio Museum in Harlem, Participant Inc, P.S.1, Joe's Pub, Anton Kern Gallery, New York; Yerba Buena Center, San Francisco; MOCA, Miami; Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago; Aspen Art Museum; Contemporary Arts Forum, Santa Barbara; Vox Populi, Philadelphia; Estacion, Lui Velazquez, Tijuana; The Power Plant, Toronto; De Appel, Amsterdam; Peres Projects, Berlin; Torpedo, Oslo; El Matadero, Madrid; Galleria Civica, Trento, Italy; Center for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv; and Townhouse Gallery, Cairo. My Barbarian was included in PERFORMA 05 and PERFORMA 07, NY, the 2006 and 2008 California Biennials, the 2007 Montreal Biennial, and will participate in the 2010 Baltic Triennial and Quebec City Biennial. The group has made two full-length albums of music from its performances: *Cloven Soft-Shoe* (2004) and *California Sweet & the 7 Pagan Rights* (2008).

Malik Gaines (1973, Visalia, CA) received a B.A. in History from UCLA (1996) and an MFA in Writing from Cal Arts' School of Critical Studies (1999) and is a faculty member in the School of Theater at Cal Arts.

Jade Gordon (1975, Santa Rosa, CA) received a BA in Theater at USC (2008) and teaches at the Stella Adler School in Los Angeles.

Alexandro Segade (1973, San Diego, CA) received a BA in English from UCLA (1996), studied in the School of Film and Television at USC (1997-1998), received an MFA in Interdisciplinary Studio Art from UCLA (2009), and also currently works as a solo artist.

State of the Arts



NYSCA

PARTICIPANT INC's exhibitions are made possible with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency.

PARTICIPANT INC receives generous support from the Harriett Ames Charitable Trust; Bloomberg; The Brown Foundation, Inc. of Houston; Foundation 20 21; Peter Norton Family Foundation; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; an anonymous donor of the Community Foundation of Abilene; numerous individuals; and Materials for the Arts, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs/NYC Department of Sanitation/NYC Department of Education.

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

Gallery Hours: Wednesday-Sunday, noon-7pm