

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Stuart Sherman: Nothing Up My Sleeve
Curated by Jonathan Berger
November 8 - December 20, 2009
Opening Reception, Sunday, November 8, 7-9pm

Nancy Barton and Michael Glass with Allison Somers and Eric Van Speights;
James Lee Byars; Carol Bove; Matthew Brannon; Katarina Burin; Tony Clifton; Vaginal
Davis; Eileen Gray; Harry Houdini; Andy Kaufman; KIOSK/Alisa Grifo and Marco Romeny;
Little Switzerland; Babette Mangolte; Pedro, Muriel, and Esther; SITE Projects;
SUPERSTUDIO; Stefanie Victor; Hot Keys/Jeff Weiss and Richard C. Martinez

Performance, Monday, November 16 at Santos Party House, 96 Lafayette Street, NYC:
Advanced Capitalism Reunion: Reparations and Retardations. Vaginal Davis with
Pedro, Muriel, and Esther (P.M.E.), 1989-2009; and a rare NYC appearance by
international singing sensation, Tony Clifton, and his 17-piece Katrina Kiss My Ass
Orchestra, sponsored by Comic Relief
Doors at 8pm, \$20

Nothing Up My Sleeve is based on the work of the widely unknown, remarkable artist
Stuart Sherman. Sherman was an early member of both the Charles Ludlam and Richard
Foreman theater companies. Over a thirty-year period, he compiled an immense body of
his own work in performance, film, video, writing, sculpture, and drawing until his
death in 2001. He devoted a large amount of his time to the creation of numerous small
tabletop performances, which he called 'spectacles.' These performances involved the
manipulation of both familiar and unfamiliar everyday objects atop one or more folding
TV dinner tables. Performed by a pokerfaced Sherman, the spectacle performances sit in
a uniquely awkward hybrid space that moves between references to comedy, illusion,
minimalism, surrealism, melancholia, foreign language, and vaudeville. The
performances are constantly shifting in appearance and impact, evoking everything from
a three card monty game, to a musical number, to a magic show, to a Fluxus action.

Nothing Up My Sleeve focuses on the notion of artists creating alternate lived
realities through the use of various forms of deception, which they are able to
justify through the aspirations of their work. In doing so, these artists are able to
revise the negative stigma attached to the act of lying, questioning the assertion
that 'the truth' is fact, and instead engaging it as a subjective form. Using the many
relevant concerns which permeate Sherman's work as a guide, including
transubstantiation, perception, trompe l'oeil, illusion and magic, fiction,
communication, and language, the exhibit explores these themes as they manifest in the
work of artists of the 20th and 21st century. The artists included in the exhibition
span a 150-year period, representing a diverse range of practices and relationships to
art and culture.

Nothing Up My Sleeve will be accompanied by a publication, functioning as an extension
of the exhibit in print format, designed by Julian Bittiner, which will
include contributions of special projects from each of the participating artists.
Reprinted for the publication, with new commentary, are two early critical texts about
Stuart Sherman's spectacle works, by John Maturri (written in 1978), and Berenice
Reynaud (published in issue eight of *October* art journal, 1979). The book will also
include texts by Lia Gangitano, Jonathan Berger, Molly McGarry, and Mark Bradford, in
addition to an interview with the members of SUPERSTUDIO by Carol Bove, and an
interview with SITE Projects by KIOSK.

Nothing Up My Sleeve is curated by artist Jonathan Berger. Berger's work encompasses
the fields of sculpture, drawing, architecture, installation, performance, design,
philosophy, and curatorial projects. Most recently, Berger presented a commissioned
large-scale installation for the 2008 Busan Biennial, Busan Museum of Modern Art,

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South Korea. "Prologues, Epilogues, Thresholds," three new sequential solo exhibitions, was presented in October, November, and December of 2007 at the Andreas Grimm Gallery, NYC. Recent curatorial projects include "Where Art and Life Collide: Ron Athey, Vaginal Davis, Franko B," a series of premiere performances, lectures, and events (presented in 2006 at Artists Space, Participant Inc., and Siberia, NYC), and the 2005 exhibit "Founders Day: Jack Smith and the Work of Reinvention," at Grimm-Rosenfeld NY, which received critical acclaim from Roberta Smith in the NY Times. Berger has been awarded multiple fellowships from the MacDowell Colony, the Millay Colony, and the Corporation of Yaddo. Forthcoming curatorial projects include retrospective exhibitions of Andy Kaufman and Peter Schumann.

SPECIAL LIMITED EDITIONS for *STUART SHERMAN: NOTHING UP MY SLEEVE*

Andy Kaufman and Bob Zmuda, *Uncle Andy's Funhouse*

Limited edition t-shirt, reprinted from the original!

Pedro, Muriel and Esther, *The White to Be Angry*, CD and signed poster

Elementary Set, Houdini Inspired Bracelet

For information on editions please visit: www.supportparticipant.blogspot.com/

Also in conjunction with *Nothing Up My Sleeve*:

CLIFTON, the fragrance... Fragrance consultant and entrepreneur Ulrich Lang of Ulrich Lang New York, longtime specialist in art and fragrance, brought together Robert Stapf and Kevin Verspoor of fragrance house DROM and design firm Marc Rosen Associates to develop *CLIFTON*, the anti-celebrity fragrance. Being launched as part of the exhibition, *Clifton* will be available in stores soon!

Lynne Margulies reading from *Dear Andy Kaufman, I Hate Your Guts!*

A Process Book, introduction by Lynne Margulies, foreword by Bob Zmuda
details to follow at participantinc.org

Beginningless Thought/Endless Seeing: The Works of Stuart Sherman

Curated by John Hagan, Yolanda Hawkins, and John Maturri

October 20 - December 20, 2009, at New York University's 80WSE Gallery
80 Washington Square East, NYC, admission free

A Screening of Selected Films and Videos by Stuart Sherman (1945-2001)

Curated and hosted by Berenice Reynaud

NYU's Einstein Auditorium, 34 Stuyvesant St. (at 9th St. between 3rd and 2nd Ave.)

Wednesday, November 11, 7pm

Admission free, for information call 212-998-5747



● PERFORMA 09

Nothing Up My Sleeve is presented as part of **Performa 09** (November 1-22, 2009), the third edition of the internationally acclaimed biennial of new visual art performance presented by Performa, a non-profit multidisciplinary arts 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

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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, admission free

www.participantinc.org