

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, May 2010

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DEAD FLOWERS

May 9 - June 20, 2010

Charles Atlas
Alvin Baltrop
Timothy Carey
Johanna Constantine
Genesis Breyer P-Orridge
Marti Domination
Scott Ewalt
Georg Gatsas
Brandon Olson
Kembra Pfahler
Cynthia Plaster Caster
Taboo! (Stephen Tashjian)
Paul Thek

Sunday, May 9, 7-9pm, Opening reception and performance by Taboo! and Brandon Olson



Timothy Carey, *The World's Greatest Sinner*, 1962. Stills from 35mm film. Courtesy of the Timothy Carey Estate.

Performances:

Monday May 10, 7pm

Cynthia Plaster Caster, *Talking Dick and Tit*, a monologue

Sunday June 20, 8pm

Johanna Constantine, *Veil April 24 2010*

Breyer P-Orridge, *PANDROGENY RANT*

Marti Domination & Beaut, *Take My Hand*

Screenings curated by Ed Halter:

Sunday May 23, 7:30pm, Andrew Meyer, Edward Owens, Steven Arnold

Sunday June 6, 7:30pm, Werner Schroeter, Luther Price

Sunday June 13, 7:30pm, Suzie Silver, GB Jones, Tom Rubnitz, Vaginal Davis

Please check participantinc.org for Timothy Carey Film Screening, coming this fall...

From May 9 - June 20, 2010, PARTICIPANT INC is pleased to present *Dead Flowers*, a group exhibition based on the work of actor/director Timothy Carey, curated by Lia Gangitano for Vox Populi, an artist collective in Philadelphia, where it was previously on view (March 5 - May 2, 2010). Carey became known as a pioneer of underground film due to his rarely seen 1962 film, *The World's Greatest Sinner*. Screenings of this and other unreleased films by Carey, as well as a presentation of his ephemera and artifacts, will be organized in cooperation with Romeo Carey, the artist's son and Executor of the Timothy Carey Estate. The exhibition draws themes from Carey's unique correlation between his life and work, which sought to define what it means to be an artist through an uncompromising understanding of the meaning of *success*.

PARTICIPANT INC

253 East Houston Street NY NY 10002

Carey stated his rationale for declining his potentially lucrative mainstream break in order to preserve his integrity as an artist as follows:

“We slip. We bleed. Cassavetes taught me that. The truth is, I never really cared about conventional success. [...] I was offered a spot in both *The Godfather* and *The Godfather Part II*. [...] But I didn’t do either show, because if I had, I woulda been just like any other actor—out for the money.”

For both Carey and his longtime collaborator John Cassavetes, working the mainstream, mostly as secondary character actors, was just a means to their optimistic ends. All proceeds gathered on the inside served to fuel their independent projects, which they resolutely considered art. Despite their inherent critique of middle-class America and society in general, neither figured themselves as part of an underground. They expressed ambivalence toward such distinctions that would necessarily alienate them from their desired audience, and seemed to imply no doubt that the public would comprehend their innovative approach as driven by economic necessities—not underground “style.”

“The underground,” whose definition, although generously borrowed by all manner of artistic practitioners, has been historically located in a cinematic field in which dominant factors of fundability and mainstream acceptability are more clearly understood. Underground actors and filmmakers serve as illuminating, persistent models of alterity, as their gauge, or the object of their resistance, has remained somewhat transparent despite social, political, and economic shifts in the cultural terrain — meaning, underground film can remain underground, even if shown in museums. While some of us continue (perhaps out of respect) to use terms like “alternative space” or “underground film festival,” it’s not entirely clear anymore what, exactly, we mean. Since the variable meanings of “alternative,” like its elusive companion “the underground,” cannot be indisputably defined without temporal reference to a changing dominant culture, perhaps we can believe they may not cease to exist.

DEAD FLOWERS brings together an intergenerational group of artists to address such shifting methodologies, ideals, aesthetics, and working models, as expressed by works from the late 60s and 70s (by Alvin Baltrop, Paul Thek, and Cynthia Plaster Caster), and contemporary works by subsequent generations of artists (including Kembra Pfahler, Scott Ewalt, Marti Domination, Georg Gatsas, and Johanna Constantine), and that of artists whose work spans this entire period (for example Charles Atlas and Genesis Breyer P-Orridge). The exhibition aims to address the relationship between alternative and mass culture by bringing together a group of artists who have consistently aligned themselves with communities outside the mainstream, and entered the dominant fields of art and film, sporadically and to critical effect, as uncompromising proof that other ways of working are possible — inside and outside traditional expectations of the artist — to rewrite rules of artistic production through conscious economic and critical efficiency.



VOXPOPULI

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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 or JMZ to Essex/Delancey.

Gallery Hours: Wednesday-Sunday, noon-7pm, admission free
www.participantinc.org