



**SOFIA MORENO**

***BOTCHED GARDEN OF EARTHLY DELIGHTS - III ACTS***

Curated by **Laura Brown** in collaboration with **HOUSING NY**  
October 24 - November 7, 2021

Opening reception: October 24, 6-9pm, performance at 8pm

Appointments are required. Make one [here](#).

***Act I - Dancer's Reward***

Sunday, October 24, 8pm, live at Participant Inc

***Act II - Sleeping Hermaphroditus***

Wednesday, October 27, 12-7pm, live at Participant Inc

***Act III - The long-nosed god***

Wednesday, November 3, 8pm EST, live-stream performance on [participantafterdark.art](http://participantafterdark.art)

*Human decline is accelerating each day and will not recover. The reckless pace of our daily consumption and simultaneous quest to keep outdated ideas alive only serves to limit new forms of expression. Regardless, new and deformed knowledge will rise. Who are the predatory ones, the environmental villains? And who deserves to live in this toxic new mass habitat full of monsters, mermaids, and mythical hybrids?*

PARTICIPANT INC debuts Sofia Moreno, *Botched Garden of Earthly Delights - III Acts*, an installation and performance series curated by **Laura Brown** in collaboration with **HOUSING NY**. A trans-noir experience of intimacy and pleasure, the exhibition unfolds and is ultimately realized through three interconnected live performances that speak to the erotic, the fantastical, and the spiritual. Staged in a dying landscape, each Act delivers stories of self-transformation from imagined pasts and futures. Moreno performs sacred anthropology—excavating a decade of footage, re-creating objects on-site, and burying personal relics from her archive. The works call upon personal mythologies and material histories, practices of gender, environmental terrorism, and the ancient roots of perversion. Moreno's art confronts the violence of medical waste and industrial capitalism, and the fundamental relationship of those systems to her trans body.

**ACT I: DANCER'S REWARD**

*Dancer's Reward* shapes the first night, leading the audience through a poly-visual narrative in which the artist's life events are directly testified to through her live hand into the digital body and physical space. Live-mixing a decade of performance documentation and personal footage, the work traces the key phases of a Diva's life and correlates them with a singular musical landscape. Through this combination of video, installation, movement, and sound, Moreno creates inter-medial digital Ghosts in a real-time, dream-like sequence. *Dancer's Reward* references Aubrey Beardsley's illustration of the same name created in 1894 for the first British edition of *Salomé*, a violent and erotic dance whose legacy has shaped romantic and exploitative inequities that persist today. The resulting three-channel video projection will remain on view for the duration of the exhibition.

**ACT II: SLEEPING HERMAPHRODITUS**

*Sleeping Hermaphroditus* is a poem-like durational performance that makes reference to the 1620 life-size marble sculpture of the same title by Gian Lorenzo Bernini. Moreno performs the fantasy of the statue, simultaneously fragmenting her body through the meta-image of live-feed cameras. The resulting installation superimposes the digital remnants of the performance onto its existing sculptural components. Rich in mythological references and symbols, *Sleeping Hermaphroditus* asks fundamental questions about our existence and meaning, especially when approached from outside of a Western ontological framework. Liquids collected from *Sleeping Hermaphroditus* will be used to create the resulting sculptural floor piece made of water, leaves, dirt, and urine.

### ACT III: THE LONG-NOSED GOD

*The long-nosed god* draws upon Moreno's poetics of migration, disturbing the past through the contemporary technologization of the flesh. Shifting from the durational nature of Act II, the performance is concerned with physical endurance and personal memories encoded through repetitive actions. Exaggerations and simplifications of those behaviors make objects take on new life. *The long-nosed god* is situated within a soundscape that moves from the "classical" into a more experimental place that is at once colder and more guttural—maintaining grace through intensity.

**CREDITS:** Sound by **Johanna Brock**; Latex objects and clear plastic gloves by **David Nasca**; Glass adornments by **Grace Wardlaw**; Shoes by **Sua Yoo**.

**Sofia Moreno** is a multimedia artist whose subjects include expressions of the sacred and profane, the body, sexuality, religion, and socio-political issues within contemporary culture. Recent solo exhibitions include *Sentimental Archeology, an Auto-Glorification Memorial* at HG Chicago and *Mi Jardín Botánico: El Falso Final Feliz* curated by Roger Muñoz in Costa Rica. Her nine-year project, *P o r n A g a i n*, was shown by s+s project in San Francisco, LaGrotta Art Gallery in Queens, and at Defibrillator in Chicago. She has participated in group exhibitions in Berlin, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, and across the United States. Under the collaborative umbrella of s+s project, Moreno has organized projects with artists and peers for over a decade. In 2020, s+s project in collaboration with babyratta (Mexico City) created *Divas nos Queremos*, a series of micro-grants that help to counteract the financial disparity faced by trans artists and activists living in Mexico, and to soften the impact of Covid-19. *Divas nos Queremos* also hosts an artist's residency in the South of Mexico. Moreno was born and raised in Coahuila, Mexico and emigrated to the US in 1994. She studied at El Centro College, Dallas and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Moreno currently lives and works in Mexico City.

**Laura Brown** is a curator, writer, and editor. This year she co-founded *Blue*, an online journal published on a slow, rolling basis; co-edited the first monograph on the work of painter and performance artist Kikuo Saito (1939-2016), published by James Fuentes Press; and copy edited Jorge Satorre's *Black jacket, gray sweatshirt*, published on the occasion of the artist's exhibition of the same name at CRAC Alsace, France. Brown's writing appears in *X-TRA Quarterly*, *BOMB*, *Mousse*, *Flash Art*, *Cultured*, *Contemporary Art Review Los Angeles*, and *AQNB*. She has presented curatorial and editorial projects in collaboration with Participant Inc, HOUSING NY, James Fuentes, e-flux, Goethe-Institut, The Kitchen, ISCP, and A.I.R. Gallery in New York; Kayne Griffin and Actual Size in Los Angeles; and West Space and tcb art inc in Melbourne. Brown received a BFA from the Queensland College of Art, Australia and MA at the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College, NY. She was born in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa and lives in NYC.

**Safety protocols:** Appointments are required and are limited to 4 people. Visitors and staff must wear a mask and practice social distancing. NYC requires visitors to be vaccinated against COVID-19 to enter.

Image: Sofia Moreno photographed by Navi Ninfa, CDMX, 2020. [A photograph of the artist Sofia Moreno sitting on an unmade bed with white sheets in front of a white wall. To the left is a blacked out window partially covered by a white curtain. To the right is another blacked out window partially covered by white curtains on both sides, a third, tied white curtain falls down the middle of the window. She is wearing clear plastic platform heels, long black latex gloves, a crystal necklace and crystal hoop earrings.]



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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. **Hours: Wednesday-Sunday, 12-7pm**