

For Immediate Release, contact [lia@participantinc.org](mailto:lia@participantinc.org), 646-492-4076

**Narcissister: *The Body is a House***

Friday, November 3, 7pm

Saturday, November 4, 7pm\*

Sunday, November 5, 7pm

\*Followed by Ariel Osterweis in conversation with Narcissister



*"The mask for me is essential. I created this performance project knowing that I would be wearing a mask. [...] The mask makes everything possible."*  
--Narcissister

For Performa 17, PARTICIPANT presents video and performance by Narcissister, whose live works deploy humor, pop songs, elaborate costumes, and her trademark mask - all tools in dismantling what Stuart Hall calls "fixed and closed stereotypical representations." Short-form live works are interspersed with performances made for camera, allowing for multiple costume changes.

Saturday evening will conclude with Ariel Osterweis in conversation with Narcissister.

Three evenings for Performa 17 will precede Narcissister's major gallery-based installation to be staged at PARTICIPANT this spring. Comprised of large-scale tableaux, Narcissister will employ her spectacle-rich approach to gender, racial identity, and sexuality in an exhibition format. Considering the translation of her collage-based practice into spatial form, the forthcoming exhibition will allow Narcissister to cast multiple others, expanding her generative process of unmooring roles and identities—exemplifying the visceral and kinesthetic experience of seeing the world through another's eyes—to a collective, durational action.

**Narcissister** is a Brooklyn-based artist and performer. Wearing mask and merkin, she works at the intersection of performance, dance, art, and activism. She actively integrates her prior experience as a professional dancer and commercial artist with her art practice in a range of media including photography, video art, and experimental music. She has presented work in New York at The New Museum, MoMA PS1, The Kitchen, Abrons Art Center, and at many nightclubs, galleries, and alternative art spaces. Narcissister has presented her work internationally at the Music

Biennale in Zagreb, Croatia; Chicks on Speed's Girl Monster Festival; The City of Women Festival in Ljubljana, Slovenia; Warehouse 9, Copenhagen's first live art festival; and the Camp/Anti-Camp festival in Berlin, among many others. Her videos have been included in exhibitions and film festivals worldwide, including on MoCATV. Her film *The Self-Gratifier* won an award for "Best Use of a Sex Toy" at The 2008 Good Vibrations Erotic Film Festival and her film *Vaseline* won the main prize of this festival in 2013. Interested in troubling the divide between popular entertainment and experimental art, Narcissister appeared on *America's Got Talent* in 2011. Narcissister was in *FORE* at The Studio Museum, Harlem and had her first solo gallery exhibition "Narcissister is You" at envoy enterprises in February 2013. She was nominated for a 2013 Bessie Award for her evening-length piece "Organ Player" which debuted at Abrons Art Center in March 2013. Narcissister is a 2015 Creative Capital Fellow, a 2015 Theo Westernberger Grantee, and a 2015 United States Artists Fellow.

**Ariel Osterweis** is on faculty at The Sharon Disney Lund School of Dance at CalArts, where she teaches courses on critical dance studies and performance studies. She has also taught at Skidmore College, Wayne State University, and the University of California, Berkeley. Osterweis earned her Ph.D. in Performance Studies at UC Berkeley and her B.A. in Anthropology at Columbia University. Her book manuscript, *Body Impossible: Desmond Richardson and the Politics of Virtuosity* (working title), is under contract with Oxford University Press and examines issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality in contemporary dance. Osterweis also researches Sub-Saharan African dance and mixed-race, feminist, and transgender performance that disavows dance-based virtuosity. Her publications appear in *Dance Research Journal*, *TDR/The Drama Review*, *Women and Performance*, *emísférica*, *Theatre Survey*, *The Oxford Handbook of Dance and the Popular Screen* (Oxford University Press, 2014), and *Choreographies of 21st Century Wars* (OUP, 2016). Having trained at San Francisco Ballet School, the Martha Graham School, and The Ailey School on full scholarship, Osterweis danced with Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Mia Michaels R.A.W., and Heidi Latsky, choreographers, and has served as dramaturg for John Jasperse and Narcissister. She is on the Editorial Board of the Dance Studies Association and is Book Reviews Editor for *Dance Research Journal*. Osterweis currently lives in Los Angeles.

Image: Narcissister, *Upside Down*, video production still. Photo: Sarah Lyon



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PARTICIPANT INC is located at 253 East Houston Street, between Norfolk and Suffolk Streets on the LES, ground floor, wheelchair accessible. Subway: F to Second Avenue, Allen Street exit; or JMZ to Essex/Delancey. [participantinc.org](http://participantinc.org)

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