



Chrysanthe Stathacos and Hunter Reynolds
The Banquet (1992-2017)
25th Anniversary Screening
Monday, May 1, 7-9pm

Ephemera Office Enterprise: The Banquet
May 1 - 7, 2017

“*The Banquet* of Hunter Reynolds and Chrysanthe Stathacos, a multi-media performance staged at Thread Waxing Space on May 1, 1992, reminds us that the 1990s introduced some of the most significantly mythopoetic art produced since the Surrealists.”

--Roger Denson, *The Banquet*

On May 1, 2017, PARTICIPANT will celebrate *The Banquet* with a continuous screening of video documentation, filmed and edited by David Leslie. A concurrent exhibition of *The Banquet* archive, including photographs by Maxine Henryson and Michael Wakefield, costumes, and ephemera will be on view as part of *Ephemera Office Enterprise*.

Denson further describes the collaborative forces of Reynolds and Stathacos combining in *The Banquet*: “Their common need to overstep conventional time, identity, and social constrictions, plus their shared interest in conjoining the human body to the medium of art [...] drew the pair together to plot a performance that would distinguish their work from previous mythopoetic productions in poetically marrying the historic myths they exhumed to a very contemporary, if anguished, political dissent.” Denson’s essay on *The Banquet* will be published in the forthcoming anthology *The Alternative to What? Thread Waxing Space and the ‘90s*, also marking the 25th Anniversary of Thread Waxing Space.

On that same day, May 1, 1992, Rodney King publically stated, “People, I just want to say, you know, can we all get along? Can we get along?” in response to unrest on US streets following the acquittal of the officers who beat him. In 2011, revisiting the performance on the occasion of Reynold’s *Survival AIDS* at Participant Inc, Denson notes: “When a civilization’s artists, particularly those living on the cusp of an era of cultural and political destabilization, begin honoring myths that have long been in disrepute, sometimes for centuries, or when artists begin to blatantly alter and defile myths still revered by the status quo, it’s a sure sign that a notoriously censorial social order is slowly being eroded if not soon to be toppled and supplanted. Reynolds and Stathacos that night were exemplifying this political and cultural shift.”

In 1959 Meret Oppenheim created *Spring Feast*, at which she served a meal off of the body of a live woman. Chrysanne Stathacos and Hunter Reynolds are recreating and extending the metaphor of this banquet to include issues of gender, sexuality, feminism, AIDS and lust. On May 1st there will be the gala performance at 8:00 at Thread Waxing Space. *The Banquet* will consist of three inter-related performances within a gallery installation of photographs, paintings and sculpture by Reynolds and Stathacos.

At the banquet table will be Chrysanne Stathacos and the Maenads, (Kathe Burkhart, Anne de Cybelle, Janet Edminson, Zini Lardieri, Anne Pasternak, Ellen Salpeter and Susan Silas). The Maenads will discuss issues of sexual politics while eating off of the body of a naked man. Scott Spector and Zini Lardieri will create the exotic food feast.

Hunter Reynolds as Patina du Prey will be elevated on a rotated stage dressed in a large wedding gown with printed hair and blood spots. This performance will last the entire evening.

Ben Neill will perform solo excerpts from his new music/text work, *Downwind*. Neill will be performing on his self-designed instrument, the *mutantrumpet* with live interactive electronics. Neill will perform in a light environment created and manipulated live by Jim Conti.

The Banquet, from original press release, Thread Waxing Space, 1992

Chrysanne Stathacos is a multidisciplinary artist whose work weaves together ritual actions, technology, history, feminism, spirituality and the environment in hybrid works and projects that demonstrate a commitment to social art practice. *The Abortion Project*, a collaboration with Kathe Burkhart, which commemorated the *Manifeste de 343*, a bold demand for women's reproductive rights, was presented at Artists Space, Simon Watson Gallery, Real Art Ways, Hallwalls, and New Langton Arts between 1990 and 1993. AA Bronson included her performance and installation *Rose Mirror Mandala* (2006) in three exhibition projects including: *The Temptation of AA Bronson*, Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, 2013, as well as in exhibition projects at the Kunstverein Salzburg and the Kunstverein Graz, both 2015. Stathacos is presenting *1-900 Mirror Mirror (1993-96)* at Frieze Art Fair New York 2017 under the auspices of The Breeder, Athens.

Hunter Reynolds is a visual artist, AIDS activist, and Visual AIDS artist member. He was an early member of ACT UP, and in 1989 co-founded Art Positive, an affinity group of ACT-UP to fight homophobia and censorship in the arts. Reynolds has been using performance, photography, and installations to express his experience as an HIV-positive gay man living in the age of AIDS. His works address gender identity, political, social, and sexual histories, mourning and loss, survival, hope, and healing. Some of his best-known performance projects include *Patina du Prey's Memorial Dress*, *The Drag Pose Series*, *Blood Spot Series* and *Mummification Series*. He has collaborated on major performance projects including *The Banquet* with Chrysanne Stathacos and *I-Dea The Goddess Within* with Maxine Henryson. He is represented P.P.O.W.



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