



For Immediate Release

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PERFORMA 15 ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL PERFORMA COMMISSIONS BY EDGAR ARCENEAUX, WYATT KAHN, AND OSCAR MURILLO, AND PERFORMA PREMIERES BY ULLA VON BRANDENBURG, ERIKA VOGT AND HEATHER PHILLIPSON

New York — Performa, the internationally acclaimed organization dedicated to live performance across disciplines, announces additional Performa Commissions and Premieres to debut during Performa 15. Since its inception, Performa has been a leader in commissioning artists whose work have together shaped a new chapter in the multi-century legacy of visual artists working in live performance. Performa 15 will feature new commissions by artists **Edgar Arceneaux** (United States), **Wyatt Kahn** (United States), and **Oscar Murillo** (Colombia), and premieres by **Ulla von Brandenburg** (Germany/France), **Erika Vogt** (United States) and **Heather Phillipson** (United Kingdom), among others. **Performa 15 will take place on November 1 – 22, 2015 at various locations throughout New York City.**

“Since we work so closely with each Performa artist over an extensive period of time, and since each work has such a particular genesis and direction, each project feels like a one-person show,” says RoseLee Goldberg, Founding Director and Curator of Performa. “Hence our approach to rolling out announcements of artists in the biennial, a small group at a time. It gives the artists and the curators working with them the chance to prepare audiences for the unusual depth and complexity of this material, as well as a way of understanding each artist’s unique approach to ‘the live.’”

PERFORMA COMMISSIONS:

Performa 15 will feature Los Angeles-based artist **Edgar Arceneaux’s** first live performance, ***Until, Until, Until...***, based on the infamous televised performance of Broadway legend **Ben Vereen** as part of Ronald Reagan’s inaugural celebration in 1981. When it was broadcast nationally the final five minutes of Vereen’s performance were omitted, causing his satirical and powerful critique of the state of race relations at that time to be lost on viewers at home, triggering outrage from critics and commentators, as well as Vereen’s friends and fans, who viewed his appearance in blackface as shocking and insensitive. The five minutes of footage that never aired that night will be a point of departure for Arceneaux’s commission that plays with the intersection of history and memory, exposing the persistence of ghosts in the present, and reconsidering our collective understanding of the past. For Arceneaux, *Until, Until, Until...* occupies the slippage between the live and the televised, and investigates our relationship with time.

For his Performa commission, New York-based artist **Wyatt Kahn**, who is known for his constructed canvases that are simultaneously painterly and sculptural, will take these objects a dimension further, creating a **theatrical puppet show that features his paintings as puppets and himself as the puppet master**. Kahn's mischievous paintings-as-puppets discuss and critique Kahn as their creator and eventually rise up against him using various strategies they have gleaned from listening to the disembodied voices of daytime talk shows broadcasted on WNYC, played perpetually in the background of his Brooklyn studio. Utilizing puppetry, a comedic form of entertainment popular in the Renaissance, Kahn draws from a rich history of humorous artistic self-representation and situates himself as both subject and creator to generate a conversation between artist, artwork, and audience. The puppets will be scaled copies of his large paintings that shift between flatness and the illusion of depth, each made up of intricate sculptural assemblages of smaller individual panels, different in dimension, size, and shape. Animated as puppets, the paintings will draw on the high-spirited personalities and states of mind that brought them to life—complex, surprisingly humorous, and entirely derived from the artist's imagination.

Oscar Murillo's Performa 15 commission will explore concepts of production, migration, and the financial marketplace. Using an important historical site in downtown Manhattan as the context for a series of performances and installations, the commission will combine the collective energies and activities of the artist, his collaborators, and the audience. These themes are central to Murillo's time-based works and live interventions. For *A Mercantile Novel*, Murillo transported a candy-making factory from his hometown of La Paila, Colombia to David Zwirner, New York in 2014. Whilst highlighting differing notions of production and consumption, the installation explored the artist's biography through the lens of a globalized economy. For his Performa 15 commission, Murillo will conduct research within the National Archives housed at the Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House, drawing upon a wide range of materials including the records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the U.S. Mint, and the U.S. Customs Service. The commission will also include a lottery staged by the artist. Murillo has previously explored notions of play and chance economies; bingo has played a prominent role in his performances and paintings, and he previously staged a lottery at the South London Gallery in 2013 as part of his solo exhibition *if I was to draw a line, this journey started approximately 400km north of the equator*.

PERFORMA PREMIERES

Performa Premieres will showcase German-born, Paris-based artist, **Ulla von Brandenburg's *Sink down mountain, raise up valley***, a film installation that the artist has reimagined for a specially designed environment for Performa 15. Developed from a series of live performances that explore the rituals of the 1830s Saint Simonian movement, a short-lived cult often cited as the origin of early French Socialism, von Brandenburg created an atmospheric black and white film consisting of a single 18-minute, 16mm sequence shot. Presented in an intimate setting conceived by the artist, the theatrical and choral performance on screen elaborates on the Saint-Simonian humanist values of liberty, equality, and emancipation.

Los Angeles-based artist, **Erika Vogt** will present a new iteration of her **"Artist Theater Program"** that treats the stage as a site for a live exhibition of paintings, sculptures, performances, and poetry. For this development, Vogt convened a bevy of like-minded LA-based artists including Math Bass, Shannon Ebner, and MPA to collectively build a utopian community on stage. Inspired by Roland Barthes's seminal lecture "How To Live Together" (1977), the group negotiates ways of choreographing individual works so they can exist both with each other and apart, a metaphor for contemporary political concerns.

British poet and video artist **Heather Phillipson's *FINAL DAYS*** re-imagines a retail center as an inoperative and contradictory landscape. Structured episodically, *FINAL DAYS* consists of six videos shown on clustered monitors that function as sequential 'departments,' catering to the different clothing and grooming needs of the body. Bringing together screens, audio bleeds, and material conglomerations that resemble packaging, stacking, and merchandise, *FINAL DAYS* explores the technological bombardment of the contemporary retail experience. Phillipson will also present a live poetry reading within the

installation. *FINAL DAYS* was commissioned by Sheffield Doc/Fest with support from Arts Council England, presented in partnership with University of Sheffield, Serpentine Galleries, Forma Arts and Performa 15.

ABOUT PERFORMA:

Founded in 2004 by art historian and curator RoseLee Goldberg, Performa is the leading organization dedicated to exploring the critical role of live performance in the history of twentieth-century art and encouraging new directions in performance for the twenty-first century. Since launching New York's first performance biennial, Performa 05, in 2005, the organization has solidified its identity as a commissioning and producing entity. As a "museum without walls," Performa provides important art historical heft to the field by showing the development of live art in all its forms from many different cultural perspectives reaching back to the Renaissance. The Performa Biennial is celebrated world wide as the first biennial to give specialized attention to this remarkable history, transforming the city of New York into the 'world capital of artists' performance' every other November. Performa attracts a national and international audience of more than 200,000 and receives more than 5,000,000 website hits during its three week run. In the last decade Performa has presented 592 performances, worked with 732 artists, and toured commissioned performances in 17 countries around the world.

The Curatorial Team for Performa 15 is led by RoseLee Goldberg and includes Performa curators Adrienne Edwards, Charles Aubin, and Mark Beasley, as well as curators from a consortium of more than 30 cultural institutions. Performa 15 is produced by Esa Nickle.

For more on Performa and its programs including the Performa Biennial, please visit <http://performa-arts.org/>.

Join the conversation: @PerformaNYC #Performa10Years

CONSORTIUM PARTNERS:

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BIENNIAL SUPPORTERS:

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MEDIA CONTACT:

Concetta Duncan, SUTTON, +1 212 202 3402 / concetta@suttonpr.com

Becky Elmquist, Performa, +1 917.971.9401 / becky@performa-arts.org

****NOTE TO THE EDITORS****

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Edgar Arceneaux (b.1972 Los Angeles, lives and works in Los Angeles) makes drawings, installations, and films as complex arrangements of association that examine relationships between disparate histories. He has had solo exhibitions at the Kunstverein Ulm, Germany; Galerie Kamm, Berlin; Frehrkring Wiesehoefer, Cologne; Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects; The Studio Museum of Harlem, New York; and the Project, New York. Recent group shows include *True Stories* at the Witte de With, Rotterdam; *Social Strategies: Redefining Social Realism* at the University Art Museum, Santa Barbara, *Urban Aesthetics* at the African American Museum of Art, Los Angeles, and *One Planet Under a Groove* at the Bronx Museum, New York.

Following the tradition of minimalist abstraction, **Wyatt Kahn's** (b. 1983, New York) multi-panel paintings are seemingly emptied of content, yet their construction allows for a sophisticated interplay of forms to become the subject of each work. Wyatt Kahn will have a solo exhibition at the Contemporary Art St Louis Museum in 2015, and has had solo shows at LAXART in Los Angeles, USA, and was part of *ReMap 4* in Athens, Greece. He received his BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2006 and his MFA from Hunter College in New York in 2012.

Oscar Murillo (b. 1986, La Paila, Colombia; lives and works in London) creates paintings, video works, and performances tied to notions of community that stem from his cross-cultural ties to the U.K. and Colombia. Murillo's works and projects have been the subject of solo exhibitions at prominent institutions worldwide, including the Museo de Arte de la Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá (2015); Centro Cultural Daoíz y Velarde, Madrid (2015, part of ArcoColombia 2015); Artpace, San Antonio, Texas (2015); 40mcube, Rennes, France (2014, part of 4th Les Ateliers de Rennes – Biennale d'art contemporain); David Zwirner, New York (2014); The Mistake Room, Los Angeles (2014); South London Gallery (2013); Showroom MAMA, Rotterdam (2013); Rubell Family Collection, Miami (2012); and the Serpentine Gallery, London (2012). Important group exhibitions include the 56th Venice Biennale (2015); 31st Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts (2015); and The Forever Now: Contemporary Painting in an Atemporal World, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2014).

Ulla von Brandenburg (b. 1974 Karlsruhe, Germany; lives and works in Paris) creates complex, multi-layered narratives through film, drawing, installation, and performance. Permeated by recurring themes and images sourced from literature, expressionist theater, early cinema, and pre-Freudian psychoanalysis, von Brandenburg engages with popular cultural forms from multiple epochs as a means through which to explore contemporary collective experience. Von Brandenburg's work has been presented at Witte de With, Rotterdam (2014); 19th Biennale of Sydney (2014); Palais De Tokyo, Paris (2012); Performa 07, New York (2007), and Tate Modern, London (2007), amongst others.

Heather Phillipson (b. London, England, 1978) has had recent solo exhibitions and events at Tate Britain, Bunker259 (New York), BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Whitechapel Gallery, the ICA and include a video commission for Channel 4 television. Phillipson is also an award-winning poet. In September 2014, Phillipson presented the flavor of cooling enormities as part of the Park Nights series in the Pavilion 2014 by Smiljan Radic. In October 2014, she designed the stage of the Extinction Marathon at the Serpentine Sackler Gallery.

Erika Vogt (b. 1973, Newark; lives and works in Los Angeles) uses a range of media and techniques in order to explore the mutability of images and objects. Her installations are often suspended from ropes or on mobile racks, fusing elements of sculpture, drawing, video, and photography to produce heterogeneous constellations. Recent solo exhibitions have been presented at Triangle France in Marseille (2014), Hepworth Wakefield in West Yorkshire, UK (2014), and the New Museum in New York (2013). Vogt's work has also been exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Centre Pompidou, Paris; the Hammer museum, Los Angeles; and SFMOMA, San Francisco.