



For Immediate Release

GIRLMACHINE

WHAT: **GIRLMACHINE @ Performa 09**
WHEN: Wednesday, **November 11, 6 & 9pm**
\$10 (suggested donation) at the door
WHERE: **Italian Academy, Columbia University**
WHO: Created and Organized by
Carlos Soto & Charles Chemin,
Christian Wassmann, and Luisa Gui

Honoring the centennial year of Italian Futurism, GIRLMACHINE is a performance presented at the Teatro of The Italian Academy on November 11, 2009. Featured in PERFORMA09, the renowned biennial for new visual performance art in New York City, GIRLMACHINE will inaugurate the symposium “Beyond Futurism: F.T. Marinetti, Writer,” organized by Professor Paolo Valesio and the Department of Italian at Columbia University.

GIRLMACHINE is an investigation of Futurism’s ambiguous vitality and its complex relationship to the modern body, exploring notions of masculine identity and mechanized erotics. A Futurist club of men, women and objects created by a collective of artists across art, theatre, architecture and music. Amongst various selected texts of Futurist poetry, fiction, manifestos and diverse literary sources the piece will feature excerpts from *Una parentesi luminosa*, by the Italian writer Marella Caracciolo Chia (Adelphi, 2008), which follows the recently discovered love-affair between Umberto Boccioni and the married Italian aristocrat Vittoria Colonna.

GIRLMACHINE traces these themes through the lens of diverse sources—whether directly linked to the Futurist movement or not. The performance will unfold in an associative journey through poetry, novels, manifestos, obsessions, tropes and stereotypes, along with letters and texts of unknown diaries from the war front; taking certain conceits of Futurist masculinity as hyperbole. The directors Charles Chemin and Carlos Soto will work on the use of fragment. They will build vibrant tableaux by exploring the relations between still images and movements, silence and orchestrated words, repeated and sudden actions. Bodies, voices, decor, lights, texts will be treated like vivid material, like layers that could erect and be destroyed in an antagonistic escalation.

In the neo-Renaissance-style Teatro, (venturing even to the exteriors of the building) the architect Christian Wassmann will create a transforming stage set, almost an additional actor in the performance, employing light, reflecting surfaces and flexible materials.

GIRLMACHINE will be built and rehearsed during a 2 week Fall Residency at the Watermill Center in Long Island, founded by artist/director Robert Wilson. Co-organizer Esplor/Azioni, a Rome-based non-profit, is currently developing a sister-project in Italy.

Collaborators

Direction and Dramaturgy: **Carlos Soto, Charles Chemin**

Installation: **Christian Wassmann**

Music and Sound: **Tristan Bechet**

Costume Design: **Carlos Soto**

Assistant Direction: **Elena Gui**

Cast: **Jennifer Dees, Clara Galante, Ronald Guttman, Elke Luyten, Joshua Seidner, Alice Stern, Mai Ueda**

Production: **Luisa Gui**

Artist Biographies

Luisa Gui (b. 1979, Rome), Producer

Luisa Gui works as a curator and producer in visual art, performance, and film in New York City. Most recently, Luisa co-curated and co-produced the multimedia project, *HERE, Energies and Shadows*, awarded by Lower Manhattan Cultural Council. In 2008, she became Project Manager for the largest color LED display in the world, *GreenPix Media Wall*, in Beijing, coordinating its first video art program. In winter 2008, she organized the US premiere for the Russian independent film, *A Film About Anna Akhmatova*.

Charles Chemin (b.1983, Paris), Director

Chemin has performed for 15 years in Europe, with a great number of directors and choreographers. He has had a long collaboration with Robert Wilson as an actor, and recently as assistant director. He was in residency in several French National Dramatic Centers with *Compagnie Dahut Synthétique*, and was part of the *Comédie-Française* as an invited artist. Since 2008, Chemin has developed various works in collaboration with Carlos Soto. Chemin is recipient of a residency in Fecamp for a new creation.

Carlos Soto (b. 1980, New York), Director

Since 1997, he has worked with Robert Wilson—as performer, designer and assistant. Soto has also collaborated with Richard Foreman, Dan Graham, Tony Oursler, and Andrey Bartenev, among others; and has been exhibited in the Istanbul Biennial, the Benaki Museum, Athens, MUDAM, MoMu, Moscow Museum of Modern Art, and the Künstlerverein in Hamburg. From 1997 to the present, Soto has participated in numerous residencies in Istanbul, New York, Vienna. Soto was artist-in-residence at Kampnagel, Hamburg, in the autumn of 2008.

Christian Wassmann (b. 1974, Lucerne), New York-based artist and architect “After collaborating with many artist and architects I focus mainly on my own work now. I have a strong interest in site specificity and time. All my work should relate to something bigger or something outside its direct context. It should connect humans to space, to matter, and to the social and urban environment, ideally to the cosmos. It often revolves around the desire to give a physical presence to something that is not physical.”

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