

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, October 2012  
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Vaginal Davis

*HAG-small, contemporary, haggard*

November 4 - December 16, 2012

Opening Reception, Sunday, November 4, 7-9pm



PARTICIPANT INC is delighted to welcome Vaginal Davis back to New York City for her first major solo visual art exhibition, *HAG-small, contemporary, haggard*. The name HAG in part refers to a subset within the Queercore movement of the eighties, which reclaimed the negative connotations associated with the term HAG. The croan, the skank, the slattern, the fag hag, and the veritable sea hag all took on new states of exaltation within this movement. Although HAG had proponents on both coasts, it was more active in Los Angeles, where Ms. Davis was hatched.

This exhibition is in tribute to and inspired by the original HAG Gallery (1982-1989), which Ms. Davis opened at 7850 Sunset Blvd. in Hollywood, California. The new, botoxed HAG will function as a fractured gallery within the space of PARTICIPANT INC. As Davis puts it, "my medium is the indefinite nature of my own whimsy." HAG will feature new work that Davis has made while living in the Rote Insel section of Berlin, including her signature cosmetics-and-tempera paintings of women trapped in the bodies of women, lesbian domesticity wallpaper collages, and totemic bread sculpture, which Davis describes as Rapa Nui Moai monuments vs. the Venus of Willendorf.

During the run of the original HAG, Davis only featured the work of obsessive figures who didn't consider themselves artists and who did not go to art school. The gallery was located on the famed Sunset Strip at the Villa Rosa Rock n Roll Apartment Building, which was owned by Iranian Jews with a penchant for freaks. But then, who else would rent an apartment to a loud, unruly messticle like Vaginal Davis? Her next-door neighbor was John Drew Barrymore, the alcoholic and drug addled son of stage and screen star John Barrymore and father of actress Drew Barrymore. Barrymore's paintings and assemblages, composed of broken liquor bottles, hypodermic needles, and squished cockroaches, marked the opening season of HAG. Every piece sold but sadly the former actor almost OD'd two weeks after the closing night, as he used his proceeds for one big drug binge, aided and abetted by some tired death rockers.

During the seven years of HAG, guests were often found fornicating among anti-paintings, decomposing sculptures, edible fashion, psychotic/psychotropic performances, vomitorials, alpha bitch slaps, and feral mudslides. Over the years, HAG hosted work from Mari Kono, Charles LeDray, Rick Owens, Holly Woodlawn, Gorilla Rose, the late Wagner Vieira-the Brazilian David Wojnarowicz, Alice Bag, The Swing Set, The Cambridge Apostles, Michael Franti's The BeatNiggs, Tragic Mulatto, Clay Idols, Victor Banana, Tim Donnelly, Dora, Boofy Saint Marie, Nelson Sullivan, DeAundra Peek and the Peak Sisters, Peace Frog, Diane Paillette, Mark Maxwell, Quasi O'Shea, Gomorrah Wednesday, Momma Stud, Section Eight, Iris Parker, Johnny Dark, Janet Klein, Doberman, Colleen Pancake, Sex Red Bed Spread, David Monster, Tom Gallo, Ginger Surfer Valerian of the South Bay, Klaus von Brücker, Martin Nesvig, Glen Meadmore, Psychodrama, Miracle!, Lisa Suckdog & Jean Louis Costes.

**Ms. Vaginal Davis**, the Los Angeles born and braised doyenne of intersexed outsider art, has been a writer, performer, experimental filmmaker, and visual artist since her early teens. She first came to international attention with her literary tabloid *Fertile La Toyah Jackson Magazine* and its supplement *Shrimp*, the magazine for licking and sucking bigger and better feet. Both magazines were published from the original HAG gallery address in Hollywood.

Recent exhibitions include the commissioned piece *My Pussy is Still in Los Angeles (I Only Live in Berlin)*: Getty/Pacific Standard Time, Los Angeles, January 2012; *Vaginal Davis is Speaking From the Diaphragm*: Camp/Anti-Camp -The Queer Guide to Everyday Life, Berlin, 2012; *Tenderloin-Der Glock von der Lied*: Antony's Meltdown Festival, London, August 2012; *Memory Island*: Tate Modern, London 2011; and *Dejecta*: Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, January 2011. Since 2006 she has been living and working in Berlin, Germany, where she curates and hosts the monthly performative film event, *Rising Stars, Falling Stars*, Arsenal Institut für Film- und Videokunst.



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

**PARTICIPANT INC**  
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