

**New Museum Artists-In-Residence My Barbarian Present
“The Audience is Always Right”**

September 28, 2016–January 8, 2017

On November 3, My Barbarian will host *Post-Party Dream State Caucus*, a free public performance modeled after an unconventional political convention

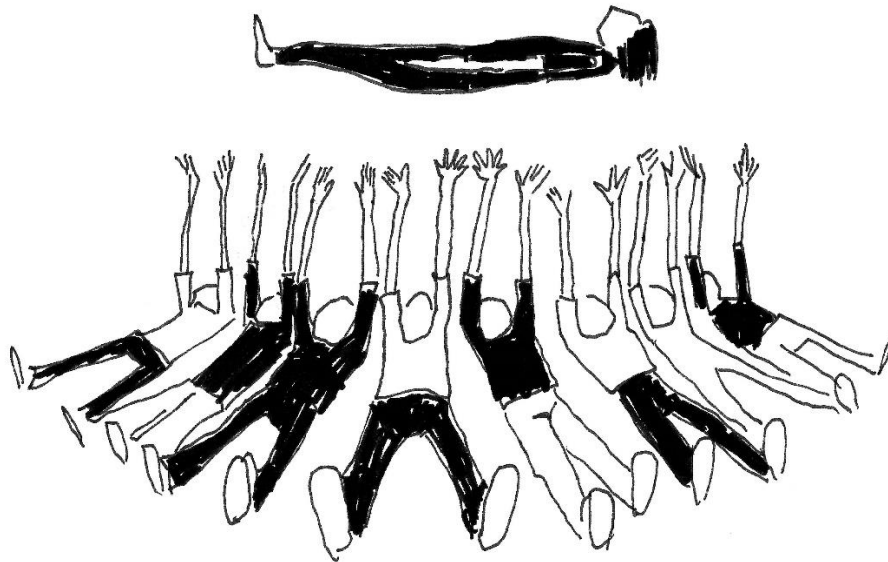


Illustration by Alexandro Segade for My Barbarian, 2015–2016. Courtesy the artists and Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects

New York, NY...Working at the intersection of theater, visual arts, and critical practice, the collective **My Barbarian (Malik Gaines, Jade Gordon, and Alexandro Segade)** uses performance to **theatricalize social problems and imagine ways of being together**. The group's New Museum exhibition and residency, "The Audience is Always Right," are organized as part of the Department of Education and Public Engagement's R&D Season: DEMOCRACY. The exhibition illustrates the history and international tour of the Post-Living Ante-Action Theater (PoLAAT), an eight-year project first initiated at the New Museum in 2008. For "The Audience is Always Right," My Barbarian presents an installation documenting the PoLAAT's various performances and many participants—professional and amateur alike—by means of an archive of ephemera and props, an eighty-minute single-channel video, and a large-scale mural that nods to such strategies as those utilized by the visionary Chicano art collective Asco as well as artists employed by the WPA under the New Deal in the 1930s and '40s. **The residency also includes a series of workshops, performances, and public programs.**

Composed of five techniques—Estrangement, Indistinction, Suspension of Beliefs, Mandate to Participate, and Inspirational Critique—the **PoLAAT methodology responds to historic theatrical models that attempted to create social change**, including Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed, Rainer Werner Fassbinder's *antiteater*, and Julian Beck and Judith Malina's Living Theatre. The project addresses these and other methods, often buried or overlooked, of critical and revolutionary theater from the 1960s and later, while situating its own enactment in (and against) the seemingly antirevolutionary contemporary moment. The PoLAAT occupies the space between memory and history, joke and laugh, and commentary and critique: It is the theater that happens after an experience but before action is taken. It is a rehearsal.

This exhibition is curated by Johanna Burton, Keith Haring Director and Curator of Education and Public Engagement; Travis Chamberlain, Associate Curator of Performance and Manager of Public Programs; and Sara O’Keeffe, Assistant Curator. The project is co-presented with the French Institute Alliance Française as part of the Crossing the Line Festival 2016.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Performance: *PoLAAT Intro: Post-Paradise* Thursday October 20 and Friday October 21, 7 PM

PoLAAT Intro: Post-Paradise is the first of two culminating performances of the Post-Living Ante-Action Theater. The “Post-Paradise” of the performance’s title refers to the Living Theater’s *Paradise Now* (1968), which Rainer Werner Fassbinder’s *antiteater* responded to with the production of *Pre-Paradise, Sorry Now* (1969). The PoLAAT situates its own introduction in the aftermath of Fassbinder’s project. An international cast of past PoLAAT participants, as well as new initiates, will engage in a ten-day master class led by My Barbarian leading up to this performance, which will consider the legacies of radical theater and politics, set against a contemporary backdrop of political energy and exhaustion.

The cast will include: **Wenzel Bilger, Vicente Colomar, Miguel Gutierrez, Ryan G. Hinds, Matana Roberts, Sahar Sepahdari, Ginger Brooks Takahashi, and Joce and Naty Tremblay.**

Performance: *Post-Party Dream State Caucus* Thursday November 3, 6:30 PM

Days before the election, My Barbarian and special guests invite you to become a superdelegate in an unconventional political convention. Prompted by speeches, anthems, and games, the audience will explore group identities and cast votes in a hyperbolically absurd caucus format. Your task: the promising and dangerous work of building “meaningful” consensus.

Performance: *PoLAAT Outro: Pre-Apocalypse* Thursday December 15 and Friday December 16, 7 PM

In a carnivalesque reverie, fever dream, and prophecy, My Barbarian will consider the end and ends of the Post-Living Ante-Action Theater. With the help of a cast of international and local performer-participants drawn from all walks of creative life, they will go in search of the dead authors of their unlikely future. The election will have been decided. What will we do now? Will this performance be a post-mortem, a farewell, a toast, or a eulogy?

The cast will include: **Morgan Bassichis, Jasmine Hughes, Obehi Janice, Amber Marsh, Sam Greenleaf Miller, Will Rawls, Manuel Rodríguez, Meir Tati, and Larissa Velez-Jackson.**

RESOURCE CENTER

“PoLAAT Recommends: An Expanded Sourcebook for the Post-Living Ante-Action Theater” September 28, 2016–January 8, 2017

Assembled from recommendations by My Barbarian and other artists, curators, and scholars who have intersected with the PoLAAT in various ways over its eight-year life span, this presentation brings together scripts, recordings, critical texts, and other research materials to offer an expanded definition of political theater and a unique set of references for understanding some of the precedents which, directly or indirectly, inform the theories and practices that comprise the PoLAAT method. Organized by Chamberlain and Alicia Ritson, Research Fellow.

SUPPORT

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Special thanks to Creative Capital, who supported international PoLAAT participants’ travel; to the Wexner Center for the Arts, who provided video production support; and to Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects.

ABOUT NEW MUSEUM

The New Museum is the only museum in New York City exclusively devoted to contemporary art. Founded in 1977, the New Museum is a center for exhibitions, information, and documentation about living artists from around the world. From its beginnings as a one-room office on Hudson Street to the inauguration of its first freestanding building on the Bowery designed by SANAA in 2007, the New Museum continues to be a place of experimentation and a hub of new art and new ideas.

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