

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW MUSEUM PRESENTS NEW VIDEO INSTALLATION BY PERFORMANCE COLLECTIVE MY BARBARIAN

New York, NY...The New Museum announced today a new exhibition of video work by the LA-based performance collective My Barbarian. *The Golden Age* (2007) is on view from February 6 through March 30, 2008, off of a landing along the grand internal staircase that connects the New Museum's third- and fourth-floor galleries. This is the New York premiere of *The Golden Age* and the first installation of the work at a major art museum.

The Golden Age is a two-channel video installation that positions the viewer in the center of a darkly playful confrontation with the legacy of the African slave trade. Adapted from the My Barbarian performance work *Voyage of the White Widow* (2007) commissioned by the De Appel, Amsterdam, *The Golden Age* employs a hybrid song-and-dance form, blending R&B music with the American folk tradition of the work song. As My Barbarian, dressed in sailor suits, performs a seductive, seemingly innocuous song about the colonized subject's loss of agency, an audience mimics their actions en masse, in a kind of narrative group dance, la the Hustle or the Macarena. As this song and dance—a play on the hidden double meaning of the slave work song—unfolds, My Barbarian and company chant the refrain, "They took your baby away, your baby away. Who put the gold in the Golden Age?"

My Barbarian is an artist collective based in Los Angeles whose interdisciplinary projects conflate fantasy and satire to explore/exhume cross-cultural mishaps and historical misadventures. The members, Malik Gaines, Jade Gordon, and Alejandro Segade have collaborated for eight years on an interdisciplinary practice that engages viewers critically while playing off of the effects of spectacle and entertainment. Recent works include *Pagan Rights* (California Biennial, Orange County Museum of Art, 2005-2006), an epic video restaging subcultural trends of 1960s spirituality, *Gods of Canada* (Part I: The Power Plant, Toronto, 2005, Part II: Montreal Biennale, CIAC, 2007), in which the group took on alter egos as Canadian superheroes to discuss political divisions between the U.S. and Canada, and *You Were Born Poor & Poor You Will Die* (Performa 05 Biennial, Participant Inc., NY 2005; REDCAT, LA, 2006), a rock opera fusing ancient world ritual with modernist attempts to appropriate such forms in order to exorcise the agony of class warfare in the present. My Barbarian has worked on a variety of projects including developing public reading groups, panels, and forums, and have performed in art, academic, and popular venues. My Barbarian has performed and exhibited work at REDCAT, Los Angeles; the UCLA Hammer Museum; the MAK Center's Schindler House; LACE, Los Angeles; Aspen Art Museum, Aspen; Participant, Inc., New York; Peres Projects Gallery, Berlin; and Torpedo, Oslo, among others. My Barbarian was included in the Performa 05 and Performa 07 Biennials. The project at the New Museum is organized by Eungie Joo, Director and Curator of Education and Public Programs.

The Golden Age is made possible by The Greenwall Foundation.

ABOUT THE NEW MUSEUM

Founded in 1977, the New Museum is the first and only contemporary art museum in New York City and among the most respected internationally, with a curatorial program unrivaled in the United States in its global scope and adventurousness. With the inauguration of our new, state-of-the-art building on the Bowery, the New Museum is the destination for new art and new ideas.

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