

SEPTEMBER

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DISCOTECA FLAMING STAR: LA MANO GIGANTE (A MUSICAL)

SEPTEMBER 10 – OCTOBER 15, 2011

OPENING: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2011, 7 PM

We're pleased to present the first solo exhibition of Discoteca Flaming Star at SEPTEMBER, titled LA MANO GIGANTE (A MUSICAL). The group, founded in 1998 by Cristina Gomez Barrio and Wolfgang Mayer, is an interdisciplinary art and performance project with alternating members that views its performances and exhibitions as political and social events. As they themselves describe it, Discoteca Flaming Star is "a location where the oracle speaks through one who has not been chosen, a love letter written in an enduring present, a love letter to thousands of artists, a location where artist, dancer, and musician friends can explore subjective desires, their implementation, and their limitations."

Conceptual shifts lead to visual tableaux and pop-musical scenographies that challenge the memory of its audience—a memory of something in the future, something that has not yet occurred and might perhaps never occur. As a formal continuation of their performances, Discoteca Flaming Star designs banners with fragments of songs or texts that are used as stage elements at performances or in a variety of other ways—as agit-prop instruments, cut-ups, or minimalist interventions into the space. DISCOTECA FLAMING STAR are dilettante fans without respect who exploit their knowledge and lack thereof to stage desire and present themselves on stage. Inspired by Anita Berber, Warhol's wig, history's ghosts, Gregg Bordowitz, Mary Shelley, Karl Valentin & Lisl Karlstadt, the Wiener Gruppe, Alvaro, Joey Arias, and Raven O, they perform songs about love, consumerism, passion, and feminism; belly dancing, tearjerkers—wonderfully bad songs that come together, even if they aren't supposed to.

The video installation LA MANO GIGANTE (A MUSICAL) is based on material gleaned during the performance of the same name, which was performed in February 2011 in collaboration with Johannes Paul Raether in Mexico City. The site of the performance was the monument to General Lazaro Cardenas in the Parque de España. The gigantic hand was erected in 1973 on commission by Spanish republicans, whom former president Cardenas granted Mexican asylum to in 1939. Designed in the modernist style of Latin American constructivism, the sculpture commemorates an encounter between two fighting groups: the Spanish republicans and the Mexican revolutionaries.

The fighting fist is open, and visitors can walk around on the surface of the hand, which is laid out like a plaza. Discoteca Flaming Star used the monument, which stands both for the utopia of a united left and the historical failure of this utopia, as a point of departure for a kind of anti-musical in which a variety of different fantasies and discourses find entry that are connected to the place and its history: the heroic architecture of the monument is associated with revolutionary and battle songs, but also with what is probably the most famous hand of cinematic history—the hand of King Kong, who in the first RKO production of 1939 and later in the remakes of 1976 and 2005 fell in love with the “white woman” and destroyed New York. It’s a motley act made up of an array of revolutionary data and the Mexican wrestling sport Lucha Libre, a mix of sport, circus, cabaret, and carnival that the masses love. LA MANO GIGANTE (A MUSICAL) addresses the hand as an expression of wanting, desire, utopia, ideological stagnation, tenderness, and monstrosity. For the eponymous exhibition at SEPTEMBER, Discoteca Flaming Star has designed an installation of videos and performance banners and presents a new series of collages made in connection with their exploration of the *Mano Gigante*.

Extensive information on the artists and exhibition program at SEPTEMBER can be found at our website www.september-berlin.com. You’re also welcome to contact us by mail at: office@september-berlin.com or telephone at: + 49 30 616 56770. The gallery is open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 12 to 6 pm.

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