

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, contact: [lia@participantinc.org](mailto:lia@participantinc.org), 646 492 4076



Itziar Barrio, *THE PERILS OF OBEDIENCE (PREMIERE)*

March 6 - April 17, 2022

Opening Sunday, March 6, 5-9pm

Appointments are required. Make one [here](#).

With an archival exhibition and web project on [participantafterdark.art](http://participantafterdark.art)  
Curated by Elizaveta Alexandrovna Shneyderman

And Itziar Barrio at HOME

As part of an organizational collaboration with [homehomehomehome.com](http://homehomehomehome.com)

291 Grand Street NYC

March 6-31, 2022

PARTICIPANT INC presents the concluding iteration of a twelve-year, multi-site project, Itziar Barrio, *THE PERILS OF OBEDIENCE (PREMIERE)*. *THE PERILS OF OBEDIENCE (TPO)* merges different media to generate a movie in real time, participating in a larger debate about labor conditions and subjectivity. As a whole, the project seeks to query the limits of film, performance, sculpture, and installation by deploying dissent as a tool to rewrite dominant narratives and open future horizons. Throughout the history of *TPO*, which has unfolded in Bilbao, New York City, Bogotá, and Rome, performers worked with directors to develop their characters. In each location, over time, this process was witnessed by audiences and recorded, to be edited later. As noted by art critic Ángela Molina, Barrio seeks to produce “an art of feeling, of bonds and symptoms that operate within a social order marked by class division and the imperative of capital.”

The exhibition premieres the three-channel, 98-minute film, *You Weren't Familiar but You Weren't Afraid*, that follows the journey of Stella, a revisited character from Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947). She leaves New Orleans, Stanley, and their abusive relationship and starts a new life in Bogotá, among the sub-proletarian characters of the Colombian film *La Estrategia del Caracol* (1993) where her polyamory causes conflicts. Later on, in Rome, Stella is a sex worker and the ex-lover of the dissident character of Pier Paolo Pasolini's film *Accattone* (1963). Enacting scripts, manifestos, and historical events, actors assert their subjectivity within existing power dynamics. By challenging conventional ideas around narrative, the text is performed as a palimpsest, reinvented through repetition.

**PARTICIPANT INC**  
253 East Houston Street NY NY 10002  
Weds - Sun, noon-7pm

Curator Johanna Burton has noted: “Barrio’s utilization of the technological (laying bare the means of production of film, for instance) and the manual (via highly tactile sculptures and other objects that are part of the larger project) create vibrant scenes in which an audience also plays a large part. In encountering Barrio’s work, viewers become part of – and thereby help shape – its next chapter.” In these live moments – rehearsals for an audience in a black box, installation environments in a white cube – the processes of work and embedded power dynamics were revealed, opening the possibility for a new narrative to be constructed in the exchange between all agents involved. This passage of bodies, languages, and characters through movies, cultures, and architectures, Burton continues, “points to the ways in which gender, race, sexuality, labor, desire, and more are the subtext of all negotiations, whether political or personal. Yet, rather than simply victims of circumstance, we may work to write, rewrite, or reroute the stories in which we play a part, whether small or large.”

For *THE PERILS OF OBEDIENCE (PREMIERE)*, a scripted environment functions as the setting for the video installation as well as recent prints, photographs, and sculptural elements that imply deep underlying structures and technologies of the body. Like the narrative, performative, and character elements, the installation of sculptural elements has developed over time, functioning as the lexicon and grammar that comprise an evolving field of operations in this essentially time-based work. Prior iterations focused on pedestals, holding, sustaining, and forms derived from mass-produced objects, particularly the iconic IKEA JEFF folding chair with its trapezoidal shapes. In this case, Barrio’s interest in the conditions produced by objects manifests in material choices. With the combination of materials as remotely opposed as concrete (with connotations such as industrialization, the low-cost, the working-class) and latex (a material one might think of as related to subculture, domination, or sexual practices), Barrio attends to the material’s unconstrained agency,

*TPO* functions as an art project, an archive, and a platform for public events. In addition to an archival exhibition within the exhibition, writer and curator **Elizaveta Alexandrovna Shneyderman** conceived a website-archive that will occupy the online platform PARTICIPANT AFTER DARK. Developing over the course of the exhibition as a living archive, the site catalogs the artist’s material and research oeuvre, indexing the mutual shaping that has transpired between the artist and the project – marking how Barrio has changed with and for the project and highlighting ephemera most relevant to those changes. Referencing the filing cabinets or stacks of a physical archive, the site’s navigation points to subqueries or topics that link to its constitutive elements.

#### *TPO Timeline*

**Rome**, *THE PERILS OF OBEDIENCE (+2)*, The Spanish Academy in Rome, 2019 [Directed by Federica Tuzi and Cristina Vuolo, and performers Lola Kola, Lilith Primavera and Ondina Quadri.]

**Bogotá**, *Casting THE PERILS OF OBEDIENCE*, Espacio ODEON with Rincón Projects Bogotá, Colombia, 2015 and *THE PERILS OF OBEDIENCE (+1)* Museo del Banco de la República with Rincón Projects, 2017 [Directed by Julio Correal, and performers Clara Sofía Arrieta, Anderson Balsero, Endry Cardeño and Andrea Quejuán.]

**New York City**, *Casting and Rehearsal THE PERILS OF OBEDIENCE* at Abrons Arts Center, 2013 and 2014; and *THE PERILS OF OBEDIENCE (0)*, Participant Inc, 2016. [Directed by Charlotte Brathwaite, with dramaturge by Anne Erbe, and performers Prema Cruz, Kelly Haran, Miriam A. Hyman and T.L. Thompson.]

**Bilbao**, *THE PERILS OF OBEDIENCE (-1)*, The Pilot at Bilbao Theater and Contemporary Dance Festival, 2010 [Directed by Juanjo Otero and performers Izaskun Fernandez, Maitane Muruaga, Gabriel Reig and Urtza Zuazo.]

**Special thanks** Lia Gangitano, Xavier Acarín, Johanna Burton, Niegel Smith, Erin Smith, Adrian Saldaña, Jaime Marco, Margarita Rodríguez Rincón, Chelsea Knight, Rachel Vera Steinberg, Ángeles Albert, Miguel Cabezas, Sarah Anderson, Federica Tuzi, Cristina Vuolo, Lilith Primavera, Juanjo Otero, Ken Saylor, and all the performers and theater directors for their generosity.

**Itziar Barrio** is a multimedia artist based in NYC. *BY ALL MEANS*, her survey exhibition at Azkuna Zentroa, Bilbao was curated by Johanna Burton, Director of The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) in Los Angeles and former curator at the New Museum. Barrio's work has been presented internationally at MACRO Museum (Rome), PARTICIPANT INC (NYC), Matadero Madrid, MACBA Museum (Barcelona), Belgrade's Contemporary Art Museum, Museo del Banco de la República (Bogotá), Abrons Arts Center (NYC), Anthology Films Archives (NYC), Salzburger Kunstverein, Espacio ODEÓN (Bogotá), Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk (Poland), tranzit (Romania), European Network for Public Art Producers (ENPAP), ARTIUM Museum (Vitoria-Gasteiz), and at the Havana Biennial among others. Barrio is a New Museum's incubator NEW INC member (2020-2022) and she was a 2018-2019 recipient of the Spanish Academy in Rome Fellowship. Barrio has received awards and grants by institutions including the Brooklyn Art Council, Ministry of Culture of Spain, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, Foundation for Contemporary Arts, New York Foundation for the Arts and BBVA Foundation. She has been an artist in residence at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, the International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP), La Escuelita Nicaragua and the Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art. She teaches at the School of Visual Arts and has lectured at NYU, Hunter College, MICA, Montclair University and the New School, among others. [www.itziarbarrio.com](http://www.itziarbarrio.com)

Image: **Itziar Barrio**, *You Weren't Familiar but You Weren't Afraid*, 2022, still, 3-channel HD, 98 minutes. [A horizontal, color, close-cropped video still of two entwined tattooed wrists. Each character wears a gold cuff bracelet with a lion's head motif.]



**Safety protocols:** Visitors and staff must wear a mask and practice social distancing. NYC requires visitors to be vaccinated against COVID-19 to enter.



PARTICIPANT INC's exhibitions are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature.

Our programs are supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

Archiving and documentation projects are supported by the National Endowment for the Arts.

PARTICIPANT INC is supported in part by an Artists Council Grant of the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation.

PARTICIPANT INC receives generous support from the Harriett Ames Charitable Trust; Agnes Gund Foundation; Marta Heflin Foundation; The Ruth Ivor Foundation; The Meredith E. James Charitable Fund; Jerome Foundation; Lambent Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation; Andrea Stern Charitable Fund; Still Point Fund; The Jacques Louis Vidal Charitable Fund; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; FRIENDS of PARTICIPANT INC; numerous individuals; and Materials for the Arts, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs/NYC Department of Sanitation/NYC Dept. of Education.

**TEIGER FOUNDATION** The Willem de Kooning Foundation 

PARTICIPANT INC receives support from the Henry Luce Foundation, the Willem de Kooning Foundation, and Teiger Foundation through the Coalition of Small Arts New York.

PARTICIPANT INC is located at 253 East Houston Street between Norfolk and Suffolk Streets. Closest trains are the F (2nd Ave) and the J/M/Z (Essex/Delancey); closest wheelchair accessible stop is the 4/6 (Bleecker/Lafayette). Entry is on grade and the gallery is barrier free throughout with an all gender, wheelchair accessible bathroom. Service animals are welcome.