

Comedy of Erros

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Fiona Alison Duncan is a Canadian-American author and organizer. She is the founding host of Hard to Read, a lit social practice, and its spinoff Pillow Talk. Past Hard to Read and Pillow Talk sites include The Standard hotels (Los Angeles, 2016-19); Jeffrey Stark gallery (New York, 2018-19); Fragile (Berlin, 2019); Mimosa House (London, 2019); and the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (2020). Duncan is the recipient of a 2020 Lambda Literary Award for her debut novel *Exquisite Mariposa*.

Pillow Talk was founded by Fiona Alison Duncan in 2018 as a spinoff of her literary social practice Hard to Read. Held in the semi-privacy of hotel suites and leased apartments, Pillow Talk events explore the intersections of sex, love, community, and communication through performance and conversation. Comedy of Erros is Pillow Talk's first art exhibition.

Established in North Hollywood, California in 1976, iconic American pleasure products brand **Doc Johnson** has always been an innovator. When Founder and President Ron Braverman bought a small rubber goods company and transformed it into a purveyor of "marital aids" more than 40 years ago, his vision played a key role in establishing what would become today's \$15 billion per year adult novelty industry. Now in its second generation as an adult industry leader, Doc Johnson is still family-owned, with Chad Braverman serving as Chief Operating Officer, and has grown to become the largest pleasure products manufacturer in America, boasting a catalog of more than 2,000 unique items actively in production. Doc Johnson has developed and released some of the most groundbreaking products on the market, including the Rabbit and the Pocket Rocket, continuing to raise the bar with award-winning innovations like the TRYST Multi Erogenous Silicone Massager. While other companies have moved their skilled labor operations overseas, Doc Johnson remains committed to American manufacturing and locally employs over 500 team members on a campus of more than 250,000 square feet, manufacturing over 75% of their high-quality products in North Hollywood. Doc Johnson was the product sponsor of Fiona Alison Duncan's Pillow Talk event series at The Standard hotel in Los Angeles throughout 2018. Torey Thornton's *Who's Soil Soils (Doc Johnson edition)* is the company's first artist collaboration.

Torey Thornton.

Ilona Staller (stage name: Cicciolina) (b. Hungary, 1951) was first elected to the Italian parliament in 1987 as an MP for the libertarian Radical Party. In the 1990s, she founded the Party of Love and ran for local office several times before founding DNA in 2012. DNA—Democrazia Natura Amore (democracy, nature, love). In the past, Staller's DNA party platform included the legalization of same-sex marriage, the reopening of former brothels ("closed houses"), a guaranteed minimum wage for young people, improvements to the judiciary, and the elimination of the privileges of the rich political "caste." Artist Jeff Koons and Ilona Staller married in 1991 and separated in 1993. They went through a bitter custody battle for their son Ludwig after Staller refused to stop doing porn. She ultimately won custody rights and Koons was so furious he reportedly destroyed all works depicting his ex-wife. A lengthy custody battle ensued. Staller alleged Koons had subjected her to physical and emotional abuse. Claiming he was the victim of child abduction, Koons fought a decade-long but unsuccessful legal battle which cost

him millions of dollars. In a 2008 lawsuit, Staller alleged Koons has paid just under \$310,600 in child support since 1998. The result of this case is unknown to us. Staller is 69 this year.

Florynce “Flo” Kennedy (b. Kansas City, MO, 1916, d. New York, NY, 2000) was an American lawyer, lecturer, actor, and activist. A pioneer of intersectional feminism and civil rights, Kennedy maintained a grounded, grassroots “no bullshit” politics, communicating between movements, from Black Power to sex worker rights, throughout her life. As a lawyer, she represented H. Rap Brown, Assata Shakur and the Black Panthers; Valerie Solonias, after she shot Andy Warhol (it was Kennedy’s idea to position Solonias as a radical feminist reacting to injustice); as well as Billie Holiday, and later her estate, and that of Charlie Parker, which were being exploited by the white music industry. A salon host and backstage advisor to many notable radical political figures, Kennedy was also active in the media, hosting her own public access television show, as well as organizing mediated actions on inequality in representation, lecturing alongside Gloria Steinem, and acting in films such as Hal Ashby’s *The Landlord* (1970) Lizzie Borden’s *Born in Flames* (1983). Kennedy’s book *Abortion Rap* (1971), co-authored with Diane Schuler, records the testimony of some of the 300 women who filed a lawsuit in early 1970 challenging the constitutionality of New York State’s abortion laws. Kennedy had been a lawyer on the *Abramowicz v. Lefkowitz* case, the first one to use testimonies of women who suffered from illegal abortions as expert witnesses instead of relying on physicians, a tactic that was later used in *Roe v. Wade*, which overturned restrictive abortion laws in 1973. A first edition of *Abortion Rap* is exhibited thanks to the Los Angeles Public Library Special Collections. *Color Me Flo: My Hard Life and Good Times*, Kennedy’s memoir/essay collection, is exhibited also thanks to the Los Angeles Public Library. As is a photograph from her archives held at the Schlesinger Library at the Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University: a shirt belonging to Kennedy that reads “Flo for President” alongside an illustration of her in a wheelchair (she had chronic back pain) kicking Newt Gingrich’s ass.

Clifford Prince King (b. 1993) is an artist and photographer living and working in Los Angeles. King documents his intimate relationships in traditional and routine settings that speak on his experiences as a queer black man. As an artist who did not attend college or formally study the medium, King’s imagery is uniquely his own. Layered within his tender portraits are nods to the beyond. Shared offerings to the past manifest in codes hidden in plain sight, known only to those who sit within a shared place of knowledge. A poster in a bedroom, a wig on a dresser, the labor of watermelon, small collections of items that signify a specific blackness and sensuality. All these could be missed. In these instances, King’s work begins to morph into an offering of memory; it is how he honors and celebrates the reality of layered personhood. Soft moments of refuge and uninhibited intimacy that is unapologetically honest. For *Comedy of Errors*, King, the youngest artist in the show, photographed artist Pippa Garner, our eldest, in her home.

Pippa Garner (b. 1942) pushes back against systems of consumerism, marketing, and waste, having created a rich body of work including drawing, performance, sculpture, video, and installation over her four-decade-long career. Her uncompromising approach to life and practice has allowed her to interact with the worlds of illustration, editorial, television, and art without ever quite becoming beholden to them. Garner began her practice in the 1960’s Pippa (then Phil) Garner was studying as a member of the highly regarded Transportation Design department at Art Center, California with plans to become a car stylist. It was the era of Muscle Cars and automobiles were pushing the limits of absurdity. Vehicles were being

designed to appeal to our most basic desires for sex and safety and as such overcompensated with weight and size. Garner replied with a sculpture portraying the inevitable result of this car romance: half-human half-car. Born outside of Chicago, Illinois, Garner now lives and works in Long Beach, California.

Vaquera means “cowgirl” in Spanish. True to the spirit of the name, Vaquera’s founder Patric Dicaprio wanted to round everyone up and start a movement. Dicaprio began creating collections in 2013 in reaction to what he felt was missing from the runway: relevant clothing fueled by vision and self-expression. With the addition of members Bryn Taubensee and Claire Sullivan in 2016, the brand expanded into a collective and was reinvented with an eye for commercial viability and longevity. Respectively from Alabama (Patric), Indiana (Bryn), and Virginia (Claire), the designers were united by their frustration with the fashion industry upon moving to New York, thus pushing them to use Vaquera to create the fantasy they wished to see. The designers work collectively to create narrative-based collections that aim to redefine luxury by creating conceptually rich clothing. Each season, the trio lands on a concept that explores the source of American tropes as they aim to unite individuals who identify as outsiders.

Matt Kenny (b Kansas City, MO, 1979) is an artist and writer living in New York. He has exhibited his work in numerous solo and group shows in New York, Rome, Toronto, and Copenhagen. His first solo show of paintings depicting the WTC monster was *See Forever* at The National Exemplar, New York in 2015. *Coercive Beliefs*, his 300 page epic-poem detailing the birth of Al Queda, was published in 2017. Kenny is currently working on the follow-up book.

Ishi Glinsky (b. Tucson AZ, 1982) is a sculptor, painter and installation artist, who works and resides in Los Angeles, California. Glinsky’s work investigates traditional practices of his tribe, the Tohono O’odham Nation, and other First Nations to create contemporary homages to sacred events and traditions. Each immersive installation, sculpture or painting, are fusions of intertribal celebration and resourcefulness, permanence or continual evolution, dependent upon the chosen material and the considered composition. Scale plays a role as a means to engage the audience with Indigenous practices and stories; each of Glinsky’s works are contemporary monuments to survival. Ishi Glinsky has shown at Maxwell Alexander Gallery in Los Angeles, CA, Human Resources Los Angeles, Shiprock Santa Fe, NM, Tucson MOCA and Open Studio Gallery in Tokyo, JP.

Fernando Méndez Corona (b. Mexicali Baja California, 1977) studied visual arts in bellas artes and completed a specialty in human figure at the Pratt fine arts in Seattle Washington. Often in multiple national and international individual and collective exhibitions and selected in various biennials of the entity, as well as honorable mentions. His work has been published in magazines such as MAY international, Artillery USA, Catadores Méx., Artbound usa, Complex usa and Artforum international. Among the mural works that are most found are: Artist Space, New York; Contemporary Berlin Art, Berlin, Germany; Kunstverein Munchen, Munich, Germany; Corcoran Museum, Washington D.C.; Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, CA. Additional murals can be found in Costa Rica, Panama, San Diego, Tijuana, Guadalupe Valley, Paris, London, Washington, and New Mexico, among other places. He is currently a Master of painting and drawing class at ceart Mexicali and a founding member / collaborator of Mexicali rose. Initially invited to paint a mural onsite at The Gallery At, following the

closure of borders due to the COVID-19 virus, Corona painted a “mural” as bedding that is affixed to a mattress custom fabricated for past Pillow Talk events, in addition to contributing four paintings.

Born and raised in Japan, **Takako Yamaguchi** is a longtime resident of Southern California. She has shown widely here, in New York and in other American cities. Solo exhibitions of her work have also been held in Japan, Berlin and Mexico City. She is a recipient of artist grants including Tree of life Individual Artist Grant, California Community Foundation / Getty Fellowship Grant for midcareer artists, a Gottlieb Foundation grant, and a City of Los Angeles Individual Artist Fellowship. Her works are held in both private and public collections including the Buck collection at UC Irvine, Nola Eccles Harrison Museum of Art, Logan, Utah, Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, Nevada, Long Beach Museum of Art, among others.

Reynaldo Rivera was born in 1964 in Mexicali, Mexico. He grew up traveling throughout Mexico and the United States—mostly between San Diego de la Unión, Mexico, and Los Angeles and Stockton, California. His large (and largely unseen) body of work captures queer clubs in Los Angeles in the 1980s and 1990s as well as house-party scenes. Part of Rivera’s project, as he digs through his archive, is remembering and lending visibility to a whole community of vibrant trans women and drag performers who often died young. The project is also a representation of a Los Angeles that has all but disappeared: Echo Park as a predominantly Latinx neighborhood rife with artists, writers, and performers full of flare and queer glamour, reminding us that L.A. is a place with a deep history and a short memory. Rivera has been immersed in a community of interdisciplinary practitioners: In 1996 he was one of two photographers at the Chance Event, a sprawling three-day festival at Whiskey Pete’s Casino in the Nevada desert conceived and produced by Chris Kraus, which also included DJ Spooky, Sandy Stone, Jean Baudrillard, Butoh dancers, and a Wall Street trader. Rivera has exhibited his work at Reena Spaulings, Los Angeles (2019), and has been published in *Granta*. A monograph of his work has been published recently by *Semiotext(e)*.

In 1968, **Neke Carson** and his Rhode Island School of Design classmate Martin Mull formed an art rock band that opened for Janis Joplin when she played at the school. The following year, after graduation, Carson moved to NYC where his RISD thesis project, Double Bubble Bath or Moon Man Fountain – a large sculpture where two people could sit inside plastic bubbles surrounded by water – was photographed by Philippe Halsman for an article on “Fun Art” in the autumn 1969 issue of *Horizon* magazine. Interested in kinetic art, Carson began producing conceptual drawings for apparatus that could directly address existential problems, particularly those surrounding signification and mortality. His Suicide Egg is a large plastic egg to be affixed high on a building that once crawled into would release its emergent, human, embryo to “be born a splat on the earth.” Bite me and drink what you love is a blood-filled cross to be placed alongside cold cuts in a supermarket freezer inviting vampires to destroy themselves in order to obtain their desire. Pumping Hot Blood is a clear plastic chair plumbed with tubes circulating warm red dye providing a relaxing external cradle that echoes internal physiology in both form and function. Carson addressed the Art world with a series of Gallery performances such as one entitled “Sold” where placed Red dots (indicating the piece was sold). He started selling red dots to interested customers. In 1972 Carson painted a portrait of Andy Warhol in his Rectal Realism style of portraiture. In 2019 he mounted a show of work over the years plus his current work. at the Mitchell Algu Gallery in NYC. Recently Carson gave a sold out lecture and piano concert at the Massimo Villa in Rome. He is currently photographing morning light in his studio.

John Greyson is video/film artist and a pioneer of the new Queer cinema. Since 1984, his many features, shorts and installations have explored such queer activist issues as police violence, prison, AIDS, solidarity, homonationalism and apartheid (both South African and Israeli). Titles such as *International Dawn Chorus Day* (2020), *Mercurial* (2018), *Gazonto* (2016), *Fig Trees* (2009), *Lilies* (1996), *Zero Patience* (1993), *The Making of Monsters* (1991) and *Urinal* (1989) have received over 60 best film awards at such festivals as TIFF, Berlin, Vancouver, Locarno and Hong Kong. He teaches in York University's Cinema & Media Arts department. The spirit of *Zero Patience* continues with his new collaborative project *Viral Interventions*, which is commissioning 16 new artists over 4 years to create new urgent works about AIDS and pandemics today. *Zero Patience* will screen online at Now Instant Image Hall from December 21-28, 2020 as an extension of *Comedy of Errors*.

Sojourner Truth Parsons' paintings have a powerful sense of narrative intimacy, where we, as viewers, experience highly-personal yet fictional slices of life. Like classical film noirs, her works combine dark surfaces, shadows, and fractured personas in a mix of illusion and desire. They incorporate psychic dramas where the drive for unity and completion is balanced by the pleasures of a dynamic multiplicity. While her marks and brushstrokes highlight her painting process, her fields of color, repetitions, reflections, and her figures' minimal forms engender a visceral, emotional subjectivity. Sojourner Truth Parsons (Vancouver, BC, Canada, 1984) lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, NS, Canada. Solo exhibitions include: "Milk river," Various Small Fires, Seoul, South Korea; "Sex and love with a psychologist," Foxy Production, New York, NY (both 2020.) "Holding Your Dog At Night," Oakville Galleries, Oakville, ON, Canada; "Dolphin, take me with you," Downs & Ross, New York, NY (both 2017); "Crying in California," Night Gallery, Los Angeles, CA; "Heartbeats Accelerating," Tomorrow, New York, NY (both 2016); "Truth Is My Butterfly," Mulherin, New York, NY (2014); and "Seven Songs," Katharine Mulherin Contemporary Art Projects, Toronto, ON, Canada (2013). Recent group exhibitions include: "l'Invitation au voyage," Esther Schipper, Berlin, Germany (2021); "This Sacred Vessel (PT. 1)," Arsenal Contemporary, New York, NY; "Staying alive," Lyles and King, New York, NY (both 2020); "Red Hills of Lardossa," Downs & Ross, New York, NY; "Sojourner Truth Parsons, Sean Steadman, Veronika Pausova," 11R, New York, NY (both 2017); "I Am Silver," Foxy Production, New York, NY; "No Ordinary Love," Galerie Sultana, Paris, France; and "Don't Look a Gift Horse in the Mouth," 4619, Los Angeles, CA (all 2016.)

Val Breeder is a rumor.