



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

EXHIBITION:  
BREYER P-ORRIDGE & Pierre Molinier

DATES:  
September 5 - October 12, 2014

RECEPTION:  
Friday, September 5: 6-8pm

“Oh, those Greeks! They knew how to live. What is required for that is to stop courageously at the surface, the fold, the skin, to adore appearances, to believe in forms, tones, words, in the whole Olympus of appearance. Those Greeks were superficial - out of profundity.” –Friederich Nietzsche

““And eroticism is capable of helping to in the discovery of that new world?” “More than that! It is identical with it, it’s progress itself.”” –Emmanuelle Arsan

INVISIBLE-EXPORTS is proud to present an exhibition of work by BREYER P-ORRIDGE & Pierre Molinier.

\* \* \*

“Here lies Pierre Molinier,” reads the epitaph of the mercurial transgressive titan of 20<sup>th</sup> century underground art. “This was a man without morality.”

Molinier (1900-1976) was a postwar artistic renegade born into belle époque France, a shape-shifting and iconoclastic self-fetishist, too bold and strange and self-directed an artistic visionary to fit perfectly at home among even the Surrealists, who were his closest radical ilk and his most sympathetic admirers. As a young artist, Molinier established himself as a painter of landscapes, but moved quickly to daring erotic collage and ultimately embarked on a now-legendary project of photomontage self-portraits of himself as a transvestite. They are a mesmerizing series of theatrical images exploring a labyrinthine, refracted identity, many involving dolls, dildos, and prosthetic limbs as “props,” that used Molinier’s own body as central malleable medium for a whole new range of expressive gestures that remain riveting and brave today, and inspired much later figures from Cindy Sherman to Ron Athey. In a retrospective assessment, the *Independent* called him “a transvestite Baudelaire who rather than words, chooses as his medium the corset, the mask and the chain.”

Genesis BREYER P-ORRIDGE (then known as Neil Megson) first encountered Molinier as a schoolboy in a book about surrealism, which was given as an award for “initiative” by the oppressive English public school that s/he attended on a scholarship. S/he has resisted and ruthlessly dismantled the strictures and brutal complacencies of that institution wherever s/he has encountered them in the fifty years since. One of the most rigorous and relentless agents of the postwar Anglo-American vanguard, BREYER P-ORRIDGE has interrogated the meaning and substance of identity in a peerless half-century program of willful reincarnation and shape-shifting. Embracing the body as not simply the vessel but the site of the avant-garde impulse, BREYER P-ORRIDGE has reinvented and reintroduced he/rself again and again—as Fluxus pioneer, groundbreaking performance artist, inventor of industrial music, “wrecker of civilization,” and, most recently, as pandrogyné, in a romantic project of identity and gender merging with her now-late “other half”, Lady Jaye (with whom s/he continues to collaborate as “BREYER P-ORRIDGE”, embodying both Genesis P-Orridge and Lady Jaye Breyer). In each “body of work” – COUM Transmissions, Throbbing Gristle, ruthless collage work and mail art, Pandrogeny –BREYER P-ORRIDGE, a living legend of the Anglo-American underground, reminds us that what is dangerous and what is important are never far apart—and that, when you believe something, integrity demands that you live by it too. That principle of true and total devotion to one’s own irresolvable impulses s/he discovered in Molinier—and the thread of influence that connects them can seem a sort of parable of the secret and often accidental ways that radicals and visionaries pass principles down the generations, like samizdat-in-a-bottle tossed into the sea for some malcontent in need to discover on some other shore, where he might be unable to live without it. And where it might seem to hold the key, even, to the evolution of humanity.

“His guerilla darkroom of desire exploded across my visual cortex and embedded its mercurial mandalas in mobius patterns of sensual shrapnel,” BREYER P-ORRIDGE has written, of a first deep encounter with Molinier’s work, a decade or so later. “The visceral wounding of my aesthetic was orgasmic and



permanent. Certain congruences and convergences of image were to be forever occupied by his touch. It was fortunate that I had developed my own manner of collaging to a place I felt confident about, so his beachhead into the unconscious didn't rattle me too much. For in his explorations of the most basic of all subjects...the human body...he applied patterns and interplays so meticulously that they felt as familiar at times as my own."

"I felt very comfortable admitting Molinier into my private pantheon of Occultural Saints alongside Brion Gysin, William S. Burroughs, Austin Osman Spare and Hans Bellmer," BREYER P-ORRIDGE has written. "So much so that when Colin Naylor, who at that time was editor of Art and Artists magazine, invited me to co-edit with him what turned out to be an encyclopedic reference book called "CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS" that ended up over 1000 pages long, I insisted "Only if you promise to include Brion Gysin and Pierre Molinier".

The affinity is inescapable: both are avant-avant-garde figures who embraced more fully the rhetoric of transgression made notorious by their contemporaries—indeed embodied and performed that rhetoric where others merely paid it lip service. And each, therefore, transformed completely the shape of what seemed possible to whole new generations growing up in their wake, and able to canonize pathbreaking radicals like BREYER P-ORRIDGE and Molinier in their own private pantheons. Molinier "seized the means of perception," BREYER P-ORRIDGE continued, "and re-configured it. Everything becomes raw material, malleable and neutral. There is no specific gender anymore. No male or female, merely surfaces and a canvas of skin stretched across multiple skeletal frames. The frame of reference, the "classic" and "male" nude is gone. Evaporated into painterly gestures. Lipstick is slashed across one face, more faces. It becomes closer to Japanese calligraphy than to make-up. And what is make-up, but conscious deception?"

"The irreversible compulsion of Molinier's montages, where men become women, become clones of themselves, become animalistic, become erotic, become gross, become romantic, generates a maelstrom of fluid possibilities. We are in the eye of his tornado, red slippers flash past, a witch, a dildo, a mask always a mask. Pierre Molinier insists we face the impenetrable fact of our obliteration. Yet simultaneously he describes a frolicking masqued ball, a carnival of interchangeable characters. All of who can be him and equally therefore all can be ourselves as well."

"Art like Molinier's and similar works attempt to solve this auto-destructive trajectory by proposing both a vision of time as a congregation of loops and looping that in themselves require a sense of responsibility for a future as we might all experience just that! And by proposing a massive rethink of our attitude to the human body. A final declaration that it is NOT sacred in any way, merely," BREYER P-ORRIDGE continued, "a cheap suitcase to give mobility to consciousness. Furthermore, a cheap suitcase that breaks down faster the more you "travel"."

And yet in perverting these "cheap suitcases," gestures toward alternative destinies might just be found.

\* \* \*

INVISIBLE-EXPORTS is located at 89 Eldridge Street, just south of Grand Street. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 11am-6pm, and by appointment. For more information, call 212-226-5447 or email: [info@invisible-exports.com](mailto:info@invisible-exports.com).