

FLASHPOINT

A CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION PROJECT

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Flashpoint Gallery Presents Jeffry Cudlin



Photo by Josh Cogan

BY REQUEST

June 25 – July 31, 2010

Opening reception: Friday, June 25, 6 – 8pm

WASHINGTON, DC – This June, the ideal Washington, DC art show will take over Flashpoint Gallery. Artist, curator, and critic Jeffry Cudlin has engineered a celebrity-obsessed exhibition that purports to reveal in excruciating detail what collectors, critics, and museum administrators think area artists should be making.

For *BY REQUEST*, Cudlin approached seven DC art world luminaries and asked each to fill out a 20 page survey. Questions were all multiple choice, and attempted to uncover everything from preferences regarding paint handling techniques; to opinions about museum “fluff” shows and art blogs; to each patron’s personality type. Pink Line Project founder Philippa Hughes; blogger and critic Tyler Green; The Phillips Collection director Dorothy Kosinski; Irvine Contemporary gallery director Martin Irvine; National Portrait Gallery Associate Curator of Prints and Drawings Anne Collins Goodyear; collector and curator Henry Thaggert; and uber-collector Tony Podesta all agreed to play along.

Once the surveys were completed, Cudlin recruited an atelier of seven area artists working in a variety of media and styles. Torkwase Dyson, Victoria F. Gaitán, Jason Horowitz, Jenny Sidhu Mullins, Cory Oberndorfer, Kerry Skarbakka, and Trevor Young all accepted commissions from Cudlin to create personalized pieces based on the survey data.

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There was one small catch: Cudlin insisted that he be depicted in every work of art, thereby inflating his own importance in brokering all of these transactions, and transforming himself into the show's biggest celebrity. The resulting images are at times outlandish, featuring Cudlin cross-dressing, holding a severed pig's head, and even sporting a pair of fake latex breasts, courtesy of an FX makeup artist.

In *BY REQUEST*, Cudlin plays with the notion—popular with many contemporary artists and theorists—that the chief content of art is social. If art ultimately depends on exchanges of information, capital, and power, then simply examining the agendas of people in positions of authority should tell us all we need to know about why art looks and works the way it does right now.

All of the finished pieces in the show will be assigned numeric scores by the seven patrons for whom they are intended. Critics need not second guess: the gallery will include informational displays of facts and figures indicating whether the patrons regard these works as successes or failures. *BY REQUEST* offers the promise of complete transparency for the DC art world and, perhaps, a model for other artists desperate to become relevant.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Jeffrey Cudlin is a satirical performance and conceptual artist. He lives in Washington, DC, writes art criticism for the Washington City Paper, and serves as Director of Exhibitions for the Arlington Arts Center in Arlington, Virginia. His projects as an artist and curator have been written about in *The Washington Post*, *Art in America*, and *Art Papers*.

ABOUT THE FLASHPOINT GALLERY PROGRAM

Flashpoint Gallery is dedicated to nurturing artists, expanding their visibility and encouraging dialogue between artists and arts patrons. As a nonprofit gallery, Flashpoint provides a special opportunity for artists and curators to present new media, site-specific installations, performance pieces and other experimental forms free from the constraints of commercial expectations. An advisory panel of noted artists and arts professionals oversees the programming for the gallery and provides mentorship and support to exhibiting artists. Cultural Development Corporation's (CuDC) Visual Arts Program is made possible in part through a generous grant from Altria Group, Inc. and from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities.

ABOUT FLASHPOINT

Flashpoint, a Cultural Development Corporation project, is a nonprofit, multi-disciplinary arts space dedicated to nurturing emerging artists and cultural organizations in order to build their professional capacity. Flashpoint provides services and training for cultural organizations to help strengthen their management capacity and offers exhibit and performance spaces that enable arts groups to focus on their artistic goals and expand their visibility. Flashpoint includes a contemporary art gallery, the 75-seat Mead Theatre Lab, the Coors Dance Studio and shared office space for arts organizations. Flashpoint Gallery is generously supported by The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region, The Kresge Foundation, the MARPAT Foundation, the Eugene & Agnes E. Meyer Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, Prince Charitable Trusts and many other generous partners. Hotel Helix is Flashpoint's 2009-2010 Hotel Partner. Barefoot Wine is Flashpoint's 2009-2010 Wine Partner.

Jeffrey Cudlin: *BY REQUEST*

Opening Reception: Friday, June 25, 6-8pm

Exhibition: June 25 – July 31, 2010

Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 12-6 pm or by appointment

For more information: Call 202.315.1310 or visit flashpointdc.org

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