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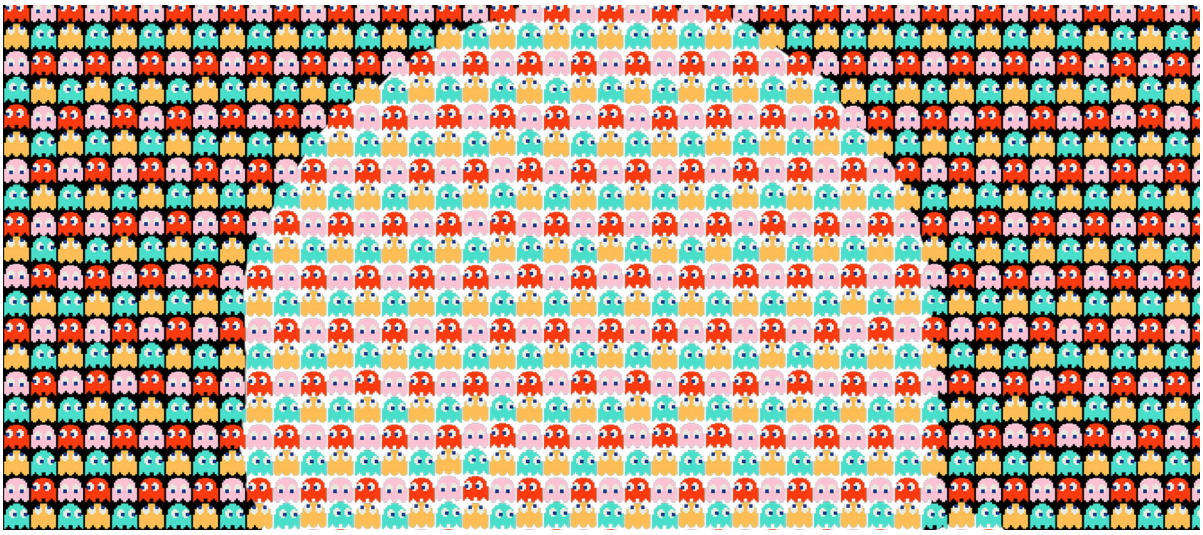

John Hanning & Curtis Carman
Color Dot Connect
A Project by Visual AIDS

September 11 – November 15, 2014
Opening: Thursday, September 11, 6-8PM

Mixed Greens is thrilled to present *Color Dot Connect*, an ambitious, site-specific window installation by John Hanning and Curtis Carman. The artists use popular, nostalgic, and often humorous imagery and materials (such as Pac-Man prints and feather boas) that draw from their personal experiences, showing the overlap and connectivity between their lives as well as their relationship to a broad, universal context.

John Hanning's work has largely been informed by his experience of growing up queer in the conservative South as well as living with HIV. Mixed-media collages often combine his childhood portraits with iconography such as Rubix cubes and the Virgin Mary, personalizing the widely recognizable imagery while placing his stories into a broader narrative, shared by many. Similarly, Curtis Carman's sculpture and performance work investigates constructed identities using a variety of recognizable materials and found objects, sprinkled with a spoonful of wit and frivolity. In addition to living with HIV, Carman's drag persona plays a central role in his work. Recently, he began applying drag costume elements such as sequins, rhinestones, and feathers to readymade objects, creating an over-the-top aesthetic he equates with the exuberant joy of life.

In *Color Dot Connect*, Hanning and Carman join forces for the first time, using dots and circles to visually and thematically anchor their collaboration. From prints of clustered Pac-Men to sequin-adorned basketballs to a halo wrapped with feather boas, the mixed media installation incorporates round objects, materials, and images from previous explorations to signify universality, infinity, and common ground. The sense of humor imbued in the work emanates a positive outlook that the artists have developed through the years. The title, borrowing the proverbial "connect the dots," refers to not only the similarity between the two artists experiences of living with HIV but also an attempt to share the joy of embracing life while having survived AIDS.

Curtis Carman received his MFA in sculpture from Hunter College, CUNY. In addition to his own performance work, he has appeared with Karen Finley, Michael Mahalchick, and Zachary Fabri. Carman's work has been exhibited at LMCC Swing Space, La Mama Gallery, The Jersey City Museum, General Public in Berlin, and Documenta XII in Kassel, Germany. Past awards include an LMCC Artist's Grant, a Visual AIDS Artist Grant, two Welfare Scholarship Grants, and a Tom Woods Award. Curtis Carman is proud to be a Visual AIDS archive member since 1999.

John Hanning is a Brooklyn-based collage and digital artist born in Arkansas. His work has been shown in numerous group exhibition venues including Leslie + Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art, NYC; Limner Gallery, Hudson, NY; SKH Gallery, Great Barrington, MA; and throughout New York City. In 2013, he teamed up with Visual AIDS for a storytelling-collage workshop in conjunction with the NYPL Exhibition, Why We Fight: Remembering AIDS Activism. For his most recent project, The Fulton Area Business Alliance selected Hanning to create a series of community art projects. Hanning is also the founder of COSMODESU INC, which owns and manages the rights for Cosmo, Hanning's stick-figure-alter-ego and virtual avatar.

Visual AIDS utilizes art to fight AIDS by provoking dialogue, supporting HIV+ artists, and preserving a legacy, because AIDS is not over. www.visualAIDS.org

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