

THE DAYS OF THIS SOCIETY ARE NUMBERED

March 6, 2011 - April 16, 2011



Featured Artists: **caraballo-farman** (Argentina-Iran/Canada), **Carolina Caycedo** (Colombia), **Mural Newspaper** (several nationalities), **Ruth Ewan** (UK), **John Hawke** (US), **Kiluanji Kia Henda** (Angola), **Nadja Marciniak** (Germany), **Takashi Horisaki** (Japan), **Brooke Singer** (US), **Dread Scott** (US)

The Abrons Arts Center is proud to present *The Days of This Society Are Numbered*, an exhibition inspired by French thinker Guy Debord's 1979 declaration that "The days of this society are numbered; its reasons and its merits have been weighed in the balance and have been found wanting; its inhabitants are divided into two sides, one of which wants this society to disappear." The show, curated by **Miguel Amado**, brings together artists that respond to, comment on, or depart from this situationist passage to examine the political, economic, and cultural crisis that characterizes the social world. The works on view play on the entropic nature of present times, in which a conspicuous questioning of the state of affairs generates a collective anxiety. Such a condition typically defines the decadence of a *fin-de-siècle* experience

rather than the auspicious beginning of a new century, which makes Debord's revolutionary reasoning not only prescient but also imperative today.

Mural Newspaper, which has been commissioned for the exhibition, consists of different derisory designs produced by eighteen artists displayed in the glass façade of the galleries in the tradition of wall-mounted posters, a popular form of mass communication — including the Chinese *dàzìbào*—which is radically used as a platform for collective protest as well. **Ruth Ewan's** stickers, and **Brooke Singer's** newsprint poster call to mind the history of capitalism and its critiques, as well as the consequences of its governing of everyday life, of which contemporary examples are the financial meltdown and the spread of corporate spirit. In **Dread Scott's** video, he wanders in Wall Street while lighting notes totalizing 250 dollars and singing "Money to Burn," an act that discussed the irrationality of the current economic system. **Nadja Marcin's** video documents several impromptu public performances in which she enacts absurd actions that challenged the viewer's perception of normality.

caraballo-farman and **John Hawke** speculate about the American way of life: the former's video installation, based on a clip culled from a talk show, explores media alienation; the latter's painting, reminiscent of official signage, alludes to the state's ideological apparatuses. **Kiluanji Kia Henda's** photographic series portrays Angola as a zone of conflict, echoing the Cold War period marked by regional wars that resonated a global struggle, through portraits that allegorically depict the apocalypse. **Carolina Caycedo's** steel machete with laser inscriptions of guerrilla groups in South America, in particular in Puerto Rico, evokes the imperialist narrative and its counter-revolutionary movements. **Takashi Horisaki's** large scale, dome-like sculpture made of colorful latex skins cast from derelict dwellings in abandoned neighborhoods around Buffalo, New York, is an architectural construction that suggests the utopian, community-driven counter-culture movements of the recent past that are surfacing today as an alternative societal model.

The Days of This Society Are Numbered is curated by **Miguel Amado**, 2010-11 curator-in-residence at the Abrons Arts Center.

