



Alan Pulner  
*Reading the Flame(s)*

June 27 – July 26, 2025

NOON Projects  
951 Chung King Road  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Thursday to Saturday  
Noon–5pm  
And by Appointment

+ 1 971 341 6648  
[noon-projects.com](http://noon-projects.com)  
[info@noon-projects.com](mailto:info@noon-projects.com)

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## NOON Projects Presents

### Alan Pulner *Reading the Flame(s)*

June 27 – July 26,  
2025

Opening Reception:  
June 27, 2025  
6–9 pm

951 Chung King Road  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

NOON Projects is honored to present *Reading the Flame(s)*, a solo exhibition by Los Angeles-based artist, educator, performer, and activist Alan Pulner. A foundational figure in the city's performance art scene since the mid-1980s, Pulner's work spans four decades and reflects a committed engagement with queer identity, community building, spiritual longing, and collective memory. *Reading The Flame(s)* is Pulner's first presentation at NOON Projects and first major solo exhibition since the 1990's.

*Reading the Flame(s)* takes its title and emotional heart from Pulner's 1989 painting *My Old Flame*. Created at the height of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and titled after the Billie Holiday standard, the song's lyrics are burned into the wooden panel: "My old flame can't even remember his name, but I'll never be the same, till I discover what became of my old flame." Below the lyrics is a haunting depiction of ghostly spirit figures, abstracted landscapes, and flames, channeling the emotions of so many, like Pulner, who were losing community members, friends, and lovers to the virus. The works in this exhibition expand on this legacy, each painting flickering between grief and joy, protest and beauty.

The flame, in its many meanings, anchors the exhibition. It is a symbol of queer identity ("flaming"), erotic heat, divine devotion, the torch songs of iconic divas, and the transformative fire of the phoenix. In Pulner's works, the flame becomes both subject and structure, guiding his process, illuminating his memories, refusing to extinguish.

Pulner paints on hand-cut, puzzle-shaped wooden panels—each one intuitively jigsawed and unconstrained by the conventional rectangle of traditional painting. These irregular surfaces depict collaged compositions taken from family photos, flickers of memory, fields of color, landscapes, abstraction, and poetry. Using collage—an inherently queer technique—Pulner reclaims the discarded and "worthless" into rich and complex quilts of meaning.

Some works angle off the wall into space, queering the historical narrative of painting by extending the plane and challenging expectations of display. Others are designed to be hung in multiple orientations, with several wires on the back side, inviting their future owners to shift the work's position over time—fostering a commitment to the work and playfully questioning "orientation." Some pieces stand freely as sculptures, resembling sandwich boards, protest signs, or stage sets. The works intuitively invite physical engagement, nodding to Pulner's background in performance and dance. The collision and multi-directional composition of imagery ask viewers to tilt their heads, search for familiar shapes, or surrender to the playful, imaginative logic of pareidolia. In Pulner's work, there is no single "correct" way—rather, invitation, movement, and play.

Language plays a vital role throughout *Reading the Flame(s)*. Words are reclaimed and celebrated, painted and etched onto the surface of the works. Historic gay slurs like "pansy" or "flamer" are transformed into sites of power and affection. Pulner's poems become lyrical gestures—acts of resistance and tenderness. Unlike puzzle pieces, the works have no clear mate; they come at us off the wall, stand on their own, hover, change direction and force us to imagine, unlearn, and remember.

NOON Projects is a gallery in Chinatown, Los Angeles. Our program showcases artists who work from the heart, with a focus on queerness, the divine, the natural world, craft, and social practices. We host an ongoing program of dinners, concerts, meditation groups, and community happenings.

We aim to create a welcoming space for artists and the community to connect and flourish. Please come by and see us – you are very welcome here.

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## Biography

### Alan Pulner

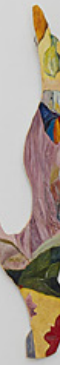


Portrait by Vivian Rubin

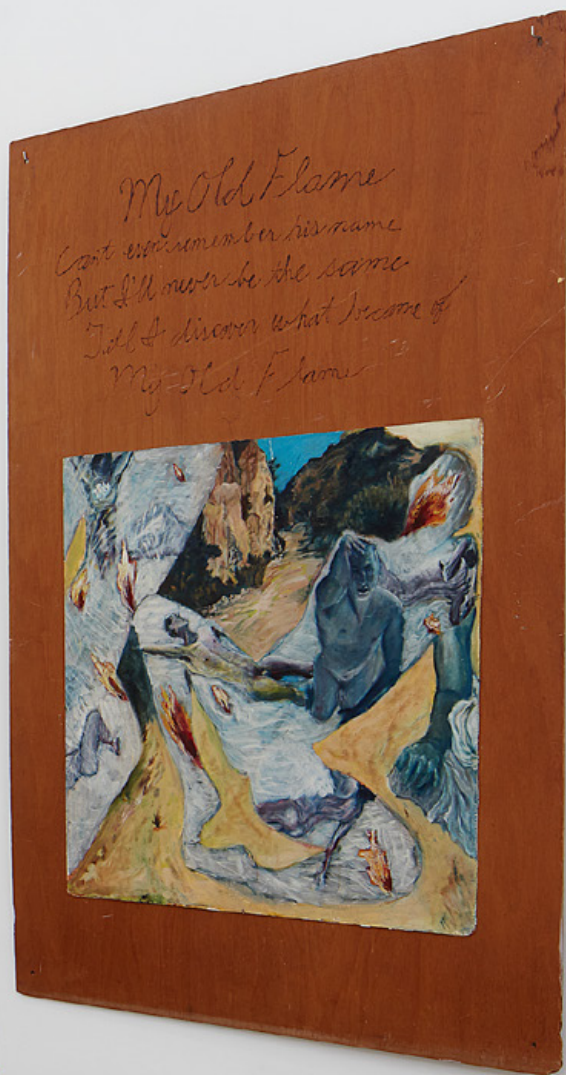
Alan Pulner's career stretches 4 decades, across performance art, theater, visual arts, activism and education. In 1988, Pulner co-founded *About Productions*, a pioneering Los Angeles arts nonprofit that created interdisciplinary performances and educational initiatives confronting historical narratives and exploring gender, culture, and sexuality, and was the co-artistic director until 2001. A long-time participant of the ACT UP Los Angeles chapter, Pulner's activist sensibility runs through both his performance work and visual practice, including his directing of *AIDS The Musical*, at Highways Theater, Santa Monica in 1991. As noted by *Los Angeles Times* critic Lewis Segal, Pulner's performance pieces are "nearly overloaded with ideas, humor, energy, and high ambition." His works have been presented at venues including the Santa Monica Museum of Art, Highways Performance Space, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE), New Langton Arts, and the Los Angeles Theater Center.

In addition to his artistic and activist work, Pulner was a National Board Certified elementary school teacher with the Los Angeles Unified School District from 1988 to 2020. Throughout his teaching career, he was a committed arts educator, leading professional development programs to integrate visual art into public school curricula.















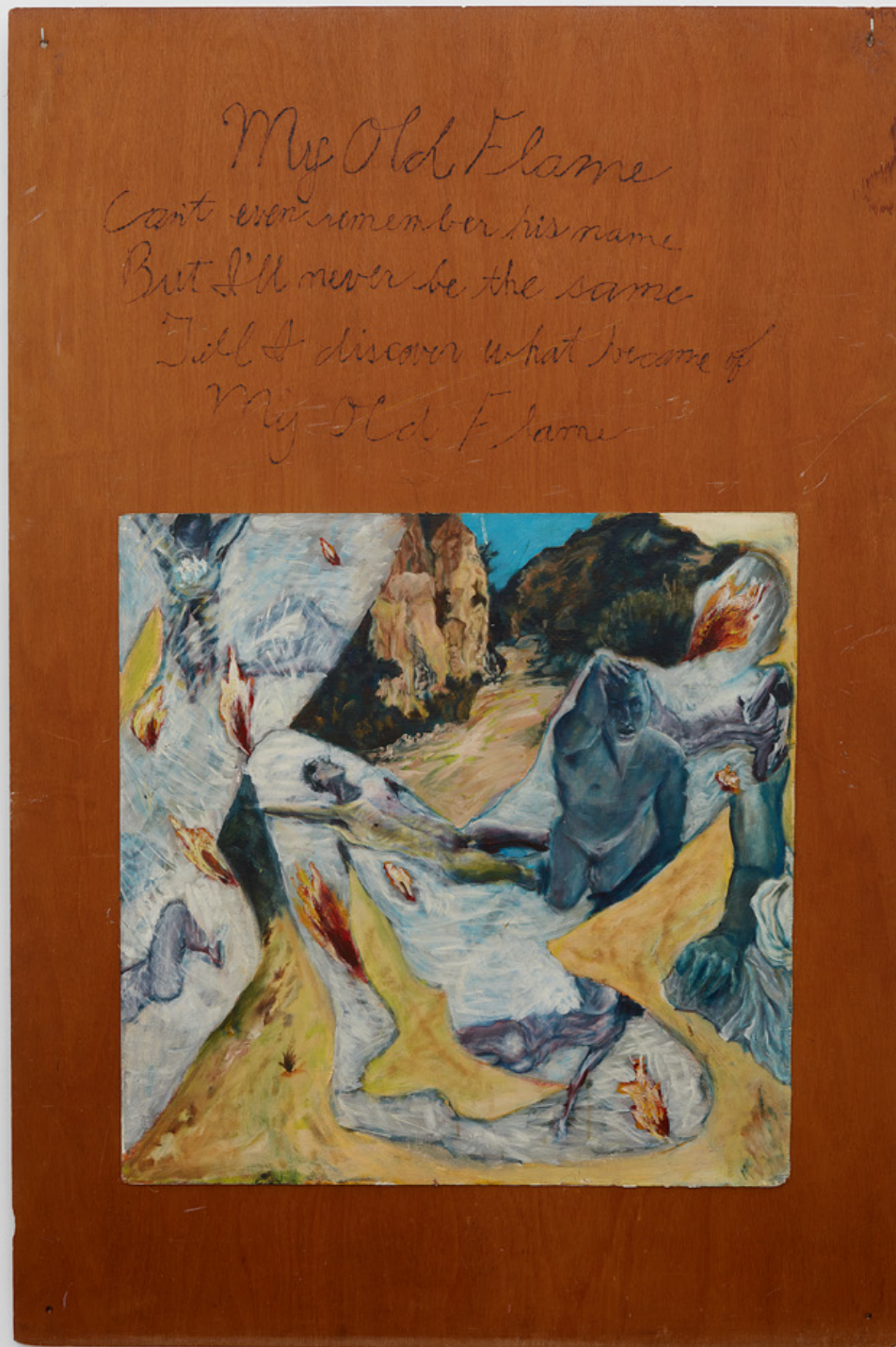












Alan Pulner  
*My Old Flame*, 1989  
Oil on panel with burnt lettering  
72 x 48









Alan Pulner  
*Dawning*, 2024  
Oil on Panel  
53 x 52 in.









Alan Pulner  
*Enough Isn't. Shekiyah.*, 2024  
Oil on panel  
50 x 52 in. (Orientation variable)





Alan Pulner  
*A Geography*, 2021  
Oil on panel  
48 x 48 in. (Orientation variable)



Alan Pulner  
*The Curtian Parts and..., 2020*  
Oil on panel  
56 x 46 in. (Orientation variable)





Alan Pulner  
*Passing Through....*, 2021  
Oil on panel  
43 x 48 in. (Orientation variable)



Alan Pulner  
*When Will I Know?*, 2020  
Oil on panel  
43 1/3 x 48 in.





**Alan Pulner**  
*Las. Which Way? This way..., 2025*  
Oil on panel  
22 x 48 in.



Alan Pulner  
*Is This Something For?*, 2019  
Oil on panel  
48 x 23 1/4 in.



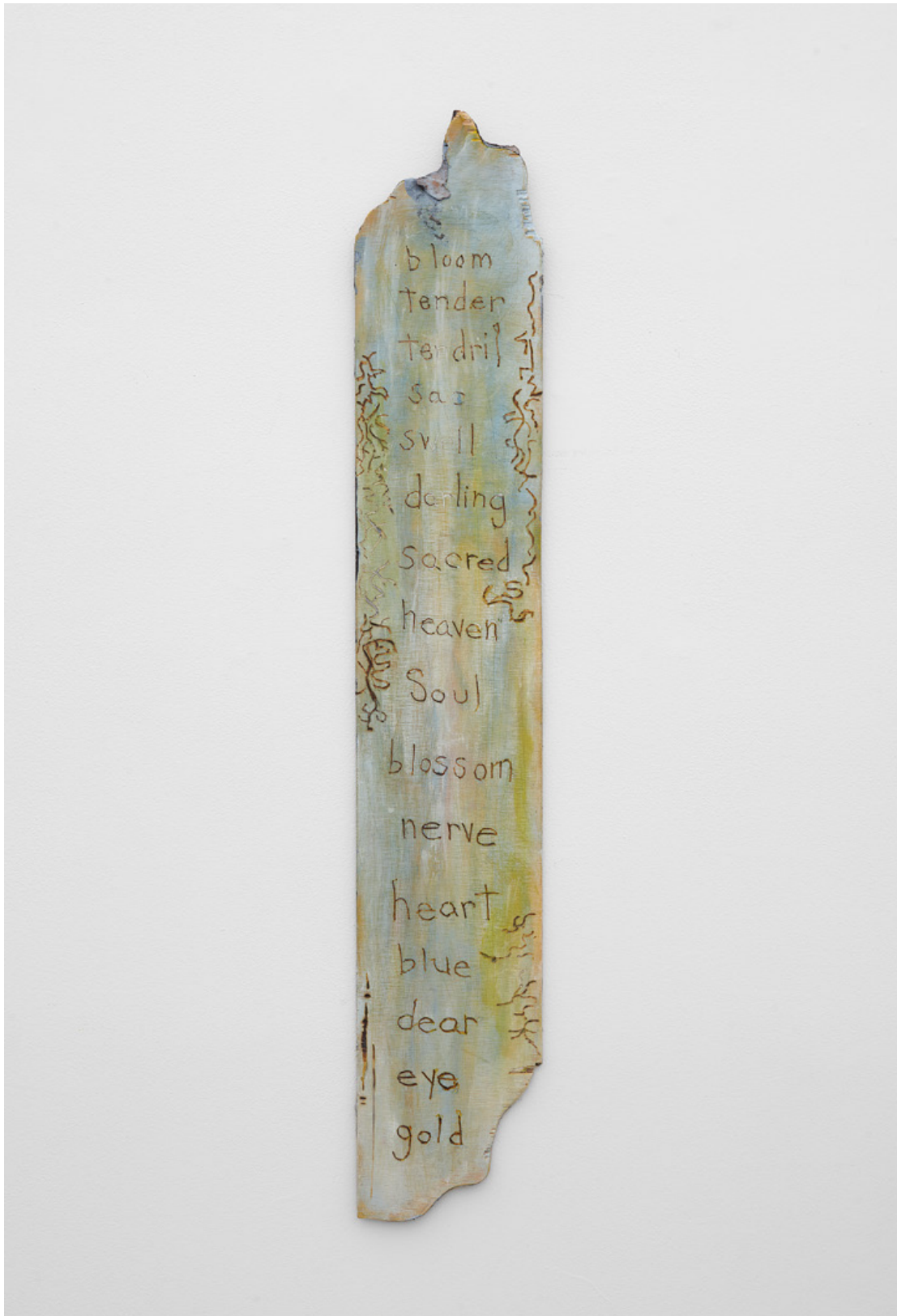


Alan Pulner  
*Afloat*, 2018  
Oil on panel  
15 x 48 in. (Orientation variable)



Alan Pulner  
*No Return. 'River. How to..., 2022*  
Oil on panel  
22 x 24 in. ((Orientation variable)





**Alan Pulner**

*Don't be a searcher wrapped in the importance of the quest. -Rumi, 2024*

Oil on panel with burnt lettering

40 x 6 3/4 in.



Alan Pulner  
*Fruitbowl*, 2019  
Oil on panel  
44 x 14 in.





Alan Pulner  
*Torch Song*, 2024  
Oil on panel with burnt lettering and hardware  
24 x 14 in.



Alan Pulner  
*Taco Time., 2023*  
Oil on panel  
15 x 23 in. (dimensions variable)





Alan Pulner  
*Stop Awake. Ready, it Doesn't Hurt., 2024*  
Oil on panel with hardware  
44 1/2 x 25 x 12 in.



**Alan Pulner**  
*You Mustn't. You Must.*, 2024  
Oil on panel and burnt lettering with hardware  
43 x 24 1/2 x 12 in.





Alan Pulner  
*Scintillating Chemistry. Don't Stop., 2024*  
Oil on panel with hardware  
17 x 9 1/4 x 4 3/4 in.







## Education

- 1977 BS, Performance Studies, Northwestern University, Chicago, Illinois  
1987 MFA, California Institute of the Arts, Los Angeles, California  
2004 Education Administrative Services Credential, California University, Los Angeles, California

## Exhibitions and Performance History

- 2025 *Reading the Flame(s)*, NOON Projects, Los Angeles, California  
2024 *Aperire*, Makery Gallery, Presented by the Arroyo Arts Collective, Los Angeles, California  
2022 *Arroyo Arts Collective Discovery Tour*, Los Angeles, California  
2014 *Properties of Silence* by Alan Pulner, Theresa Chavez, and Rose Portillo  
-2015 Encuentro Theater Festival, Carrie Hamilton Theater at the Pasadena Playhouse (also in 1999 at 2100 Square Feet Theater and Self Help Graphics)  
1998 *Memory Rites* by Alan Pulner, Theresa Chavez, and Rose Portillo, Common Ground Theater Festival, 2100 Square Feet Theater  
1997 *Vox* by Alan Pulner, Theresa Chavez, and Rose Portillo at Telluride Theater Festival and Actors Gang Theater  
1995 *Strange Country, This* (Part Three of the Gay and Lesbian Performance Project) by Alan Pulner, Kai Ganado, and Michael White Bear Claws, Los Angeles Theater Center (1995 Dramalogue Critics Award for Writing)  
1993 *Stormy Monday* (Part Two of the Gay and Lesbian Performance Project) by Alan Pulner and Charles Lane, Highways Performance Space, Burbage Theater  
1991 *Dream a Little Dream* (Part One of the Gay and Lesbian Performance Project) by Alan Pulner, Highways Performance Space, Santa Monica, California  
1991 *ACTUP Art Auction*, 21st Street Arts Complex, Los Angeles, California  
1990 *Old Flames, New Flames*, an installation at Highways Gallery, Santa Monica, California  
1989 *Rapture Stations in the Virtual Funhouse*, an interdisciplinary performance and installation project by Alan Pulner, John Goss, and Richard Zvonar at the Santa Monica Museum of Art  
1989 *The Perfect Lover*, solo performance work at Highways Performance Space, Santa Monica, California  
1989 *Raging at the Visible: AIDS in the City of Angels*, Gallery Theater at the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Los Angeles, California  
1989 *Send Letter, Photo...Please*, video work at Los Angeles and San Francisco Gay and Lesbian Film and Video Festivals  
1988 *Sonny Boy*, solo performance at LACE, Los Angeles and The Lab, San Francisco, California  
1988 *The Cliff Hanger's Fall or Unlearning in the Land of Big Dogs*, Olio Theater and Beyond Baroque  
1988 *Hamlet's Progress*, Lhasa Club, EZTV, Los Angeles, California



CV  
Alan Pulner  
(Continued)

Professional  
Achievements

- 1996 and 2006  
National Board Teacher Certification by National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
- 2003  
Pulner's students received art awards for La Opinion Art Competition at the Latino Art Museum, Long Beach
- 2002  
Award for Exemplary Art Instruction for Green LA Poster and Multi-Media Contest
- 1997-2015  
Developed and facilitated Professional Development workshops in a discipline based approach for elementary school instructors to teach visual arts practice, art history, and aesthetic valuing for students.
- 1992-2020  
Elementary School Teacher, LAUSD
- 1988-2001  
Co-Founder and Co-Artistic Director About Productions, a Los Angeles based arts non-profit company that produces and facilitates interdisciplinary performance works and educational programs. Its purpose is to generate cultural dialogue and challenge traditional assumptions about history, gender, and cultural and sexual identity.

Critic's Highlights

- "Alan Pulner is a locally based performance artist whose pieces are nearly overloaded with ideas, humor, energy, and high ambition...emotional generosity and intellectual rigor..."  
-Lewis Segal, Los Angeles Times, 1988
- "Fortunately, Pulner, like Sadownick, can write –and speak–eloquently and cleverly, driving home his political and personal observations by alternating between an attractive forthrightness and a mongering of metaphor that swings between the satiric and the ecstatic."  
-Peter Frank, LA Weekly, 1989
- "Pulner's distinctive performance works have charted an idiosyncratic world view of one gay man on the edge of Pacific in the 90's. His humor and visceral physical performance have moved and challenged audiences throughout the country during coast-to-coast tours.
- "Pulner is considered one of Los Angeles' most powerful performance artists and has been hailed, in the last two years, as a new gay voice."  
-Doug Sadownick, Gay News, 1989
- "Alan Pulner is an accomplished and versatile artist...His work in performance, video, painting and installation is ambitious and complex. He uses humor and the unexpected to engage the viewer in a visceral probing of various cultural and social paradoxes. He combines expression and analysis in a way that is particularly challenging."  
-Millie Wilson

alanpulnerart.com  
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A V A N T - G U A R D I A N S



BUCK CASTRO

ALAN PULNER • WRITER-PERFORMANCE ARTIST

"The idea of this project is to critique heterosexual culture," says Alan Pulner of his most recent play, *Dream a Little Dream of Me*. "Fundamentalists accuse us of being degenerates and of not having a historical place in the world. I'm saying, 'We do, motherfuckers!'"

Pulner offers biblically rooted arguments to counter the fundamentalists. "The story of David and Jonathan is obviously a gay love story," he says. "David says of Jonathan, 'My love for him surpasses my love for women.' Also, the first thing Jonathan does when he meets David is take his clothes off."

In *Dream*, the Los Angeles-based Pulner uses gay cult figures to dramatize his politics. Auntie Mame is pitted against Rock Hudson (the free spirit versus the closeted gay man), Judy Garland appears as "Judy Christ," and Billie Holiday relates homophobia to racism.

Currently, Pulner is preparing to direct *AIDS: The Musical*, with

music by Robert Berg and book and lyrics by Wendell Jones and David Stanley (Pulner's lover), at Highways, a performance space in Santa Monica, Calif., in August. Explains Pulner: "The work chronicles the options—healthwise, politically, and spiritually—that are open to someone who is HIV-positive."

Pulner migrated to Los Angeles to pursue acting but found that "being an actor in the conventional sense was being part of this horrendous machinery," he recalls. "It was very liberating to speak my own words, perform them, and reach people."

Two years ago he met his lover at an artist-activist meeting. "I had just done a piece called *The Perfect Lover*," Pulner says. "Then I met David, and it was perfect from day one. So perhaps my works predict my future."

—Kim Garfield



Los Angeles Times

PERFORMANCE ART REVIEW

# Alan Pulner in 'Fataphysical Revue' at LACE

Alan Pulner is a locally based performance artist whose pieces are nearly overloaded with ideas, humor, energy, high ambition. In "Sonny Boy," presented Thursday at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions on the opening program of a three-night series of split bills called "Fataphysical Revue," Pulner tackled with off-the-wall acuity one of the towering themes of human culture: our yearning for the infinite.

Beginning with a brainy, pointed discourse (in an outrageous Chico Marx accent) on scientific heresies of infinity, this one-act solo performance retraced Pulner's rebellion against the constraints of being stuck in time as a specific male-child in a particular family—his obsessive need for something more.

Between comic vignettes sketching possible alternate identities (black, female, macho, wimpy, just plain *different*), Pulner launched into passionate invocations of physics theory to project himself beyond the corporeal toward other states of being.

At first, Pulner's link between *son* and *sun* had seemed merely glib wordplay. But, ultimately, in the work's most daring and accom-



GARY FRIEDMAN / Los Angeles Times

Artist Alan Pulner re-enacts a scientific heresy of infinity.

plished passage, he drew all of his ideas together in a vision of traveling at the speed of light back through time and then—like a sunbeam or a breeze or a benign

god—intimately caressing the bodies of his mother and father at the moment of his own conception.

Against the emotional generosity and intellectual rigor of Pulner's contribution, the other pieces Thursday looked awfully safe and simplistic. "I . . . the Love," an interminable, two-character playlet by performance artist Chuck Z,

offered promising, unideas of two-screen videotape matched by promised sorties into institution and vocal expression. "Vote Nihilism," El piro's overextended videotape of presidential campaign boasted a firmer command plus Shapiro's authority as the unabashed candidate ("a dangerous dangerous times").

"Fataphysical Revue" tonight at 8 with choreographer Kiken Chen and poet Jacl —LEW

"A MAGNIFICENT STORY OF CHALLENGE AND OF HOPE... EXTRAORDINARY"

—Carm Siskel, SISKEL & EBERT

"TWO THUMBS UP"

—SISKEL & EBERT

THE LAST TEMPTATION





# CALENDAR

## PERFORMANCE PICK OF THE WEEK

### STORMY MONDAY

Straight outta the personal ads! Charles Lane and Alan Pulner, two of L.A.'s most enigmatic interdisciplinary artists, join forces for "Stormy Monday" (a.k.a. Part Two of the Gay and Lesbian History Performance Project), in which a GBM meets a GWM in an all-night laundromat. Running barefoot through the prickly terrain of bagels and church-choir screamers, these tongue-in-chic iconoclasts confront touchy (but not touchy-feely) topics such as race relations and sexual stereotyping, even



as they tickle the fancy of even the most P.C. among us. Either Pulner or Lane alone would be reason enough to go see this new work, but the combination is particularly enticing. Actor and opera singer Lane has developed quite a following as a consummate crooner of oldie standards, which he imbues with his own boy twists. He has also been seen in such performance works as Daniel Martinez's "Ignore the Dents," sings with the Los Angeles Music Center Opera Chorus and the Los Angeles Master Chorale, and is a tenor soloist at St. John's Episcopal Church. Pulner is well known in local performance circles, particularly for his solos and multimedia, multi-artist megashows at the Santa Monica Museum of Art, Highways, LACE and elsewhere. (He directed the 1991 hit *AIDS! The Musical!*) "Stormy Monday," directed by Bob Devin Jones, is part of About Productions' 1993 season and is presented in conjunction with GLUE (Gay and Lesbian United Employees). At the North Hollywood Regional Library, 5211 Tujunga Ave., N. Hlywd.; Sun., Feb. 21, 1 p.m.; free. (818) 766-7185; and at Highways, 1651 18th St., Santa Monica; Thurs.-Sat., Feb. 25-27, 8:30 p.m.; Sun., Feb. 28, 7:30 p.m.; \$10. (213) 660-8587.

—Jan Breslauer

LA WEEKLY FEBRUARY 19-FEBRUARY 25, 1993



