



ZACKARY DRUCKER

Performance Artist, Filmmaker

The most memorable work to date by 27-year-old performance artist Zackary Drucker may well be a piece entitled *The Inability To Be Looked At and the Horror of Nothing to See*, staged four times in 2009, where Drucker lays on a table wearing only underwear and a blond wig with a steel ball in her mouth. A prerecorded tape of Drucker's voice instructs audience members to pluck out body hairs with provided sets of tweezers. The artist's tone is reminiscent of guided spiritual meditations while she consoles her listeners for their sadistic hair-pulling act with pronouncements like, "Don't be afraid, the bitch can take it." This piece has come to represent the duality of Drucker's work: a direct, unapologetic confrontation between the audience and her body, gender, and voice. "I wrote that piece in the summer of 2008, when I was participating in a performance-art boot camp in the Mojave Desert run by Ron Athey and Julie Tolentino," says the upstate New York native, who moved to Los Angeles in 2005 to attend school at CalArts. Drucker seems to have learned a lot from such performance-art masters—and in fact, she lives and works in a Silverlake apartment that Athey leases, where a few scenes of Bruce LaBruce's queer L.A. cult film *Hustler White* (1996) was filmed. Drucker, a transgender artist whose work often celebrates and amplifies the viewer's inability to affix easy norms and codes, is one of the leading participants in a new generation that is rediscovering performance as a space for revolt, expression, and creative bedlam. Drucker has also been incorporating film and video into her practices—often collaborating with other queer and transgender performers in overt, uncompromising, sexually vocal works. In *You Will Never, Ever Be a Woman . . .* Drucker and Van Barnes, who Drucker describes as a close friend and sort of sister, demean and embrace each other in a domestic setting, demanding privacy while playing up for the camera. "I've always been interested in mixing signals," Drucker says. "I don't think any of us are easily defined. Trans people have a tendency to adhere to normative culture, but I think all the rules and truths are being redefined."

ZACKARY DRUCKER AT HER HOME IN SILVERLAKE, LOS ANGELES, OCTOBER 2010. BRA AND UNDERWEAR: DRUCKER'S OWN. TOP: MARC JACOBS.