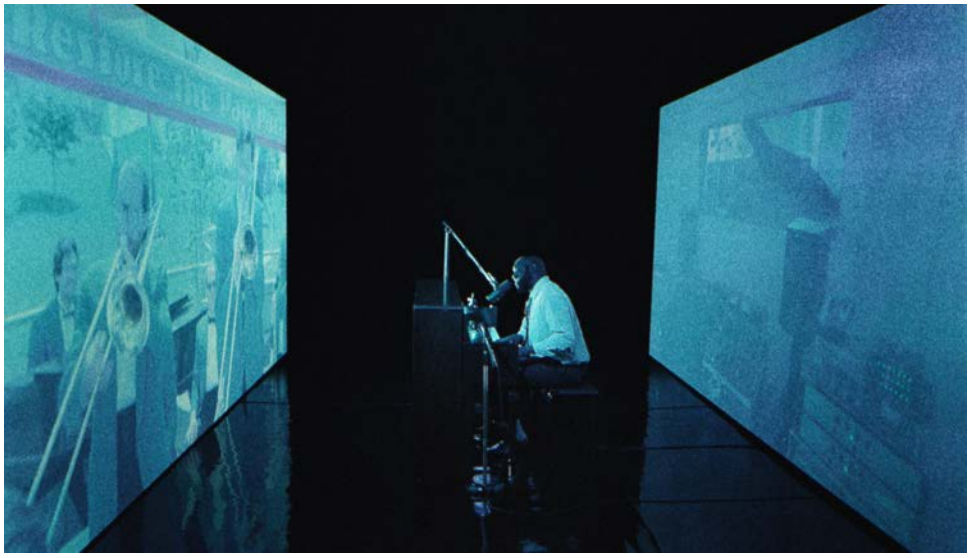
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE contact: lia@participantinc.org, 646 492 4076



Jonah Mutono, *Notes on Mirror Cinema*
Curated by Serubiri Moses for Participant After Dark
Video premiere on participantafterdark.art

Sunday, October 4, 7pm, *Hope*
Sunday, October 11, 7pm, *The Washing*
Sunday, October 18, 7pm, *Point of No Return*
Sunday, October 25, 7pm, *Apocalypse*

> "Humanity has a long-standing fascination with engineering its own destruction; a tension captured vividly in the man-made apocalyptic cinema of the late Cold War. *Notes on Mirror Cinema* utilizes the visual and emotional patterns of films like *Miracle Mile*, *Threads*, and *The Day After* not merely as aesthetic backdrop, but as a reflective surface. The cinematic panic of imminent annihilation, the absurdity of the countdown, and the desperate urge to save oneself under pressure act as a direct foil to my own arrival in Los Angeles. Chasing the life the city promised on screen, I found that the paranoia and claustrophobia of the cinematic fallout shelter perfectly mirrored the crushing expectations, 'arterial red' ambition, and fragile momentum of my own artistic journey. This performance translates that shared dread into a live space, framing the apocalypse not as the end of the world, but as the turbulent, necessary rupture of self-discovery." -Jonah Mutono

PARTICIPANT AFTER DARK is pleased to premiere **Jonah Mutono, *Notes on Mirror Cinema*.** Released over four weeks beginning on Sunday, October 4, *Notes on Mirror Cinema* features an in-gallery live recording of four songs overlapping with Mutono's forthcoming music album, performed within a mirror-stage installation comprised of two large-scale video projections. The first chapter, *Hope*, begins with *I'll Find My Baby There*, a ballad that centers personal experiences of living in Los Angeles, chasing the American dream. Over the next three distinct chapters, *The Washing*, *Point of No Return*, and *Apocalypse*, the film moves from the mundane and despondent toward the chaos and mayhem of an imagined rupture.

Mutono's artistic research is a major component of the project, particularly films like *Miracle Mile*, *The Day After,* and *Threads*, using sound and music production to engage with cinematic language. This research also informs the innovation of Mutono's sound and vision for his forthcoming album.

Mutono has noted, "The visual journey of *Notes on Mirror Cinema* is dictated by a deliberate shift in color temperature, pulling directly from the palettes of 1980s apocalyptic cinema. The performance space [was] initially bathed in a sterile, melancholic Azure Blue, mirroring the mundane 'waiting period' and cold tension that precedes cinematic disaster, as well as my own quiet periods of DIY recording and internal anxiety. However, as the performance reaches its narrative rupture, the lighting abruptly shifts to an overwhelming, Arterial Red (the *Miracle Mile* hue). This jarring transition physically places the audience inside the 'apocalypse,' acting as a metaphor for the hyper-competitive din of Los Angeles and the violent, necessary death of old identities."

Chapter One Credits

Hope
A film by Jonah Mutono

Curated by Serubiri Moses
Directed by Itziar Barrio and Jonah Mutono
Produced by Lia Gangitano

Edited by: Itziar Barrio
Director of Photography: Hany Osman
Cameras: Itziar Barrio, Hany Osman
Live Sound: Quentin Andrianasitera
Technical Director: Harry Kleeman
Color Correction & VFX: Christian Rush, Blake Bohls, Jonah Mutono
Production Assistants: John Brattin, Harry Kleeman
Pre-Production Assistant: Ryan Harman

MUSIC
I'll Find My Baby There
Written by Jonah Mutono & Martin Hadley
Produced by Jonah Mutono
Recorded Live at Participant Inc, New York City, April 2026

Chapter Two Credits

The Washing
A film by Jonah Mutono

Curated by Serubiri Moses
Directed by Itziar Barrio and Jonah Mutono
Produced by Lia Gangitano

Edited by: Itziar Barrio
Director of Photography: Hany Osman
Cameras: Itziar Barrio, Hany Osman

Live Sound: **Quentin Andrianasitera**
Technical Director: **Harry Kleeman**
Color Correction & VFX: **Christian Rush, Blake Bohls, Jonah Mutono**
Production Assistants: **John Brattin, Harry Kleeman**
Pre-Production Assistant: **Ryan Harman**

MUSIC
Unwind
Written by **Jonah Mutono & Al Carlson**
Produced by **Zach Lipkins**
Recorded Live at Participant Inc, New York City, April 2026

Jonah Mutono is a British-Ugandan multi-disciplinary artist and writer. His debut album, *GERG*, was released in 2020 to acclaim from NPR and Elton John, establishing Mutono as a distinctive voice at the intersection of R&B, folk, and pop.

Exploring transience and queer identity, *GERG* found an audience within the LGBTQ+ community and beyond. Since its release, Mutono has expanded his practice across film, television, and other media, increasingly working with sound as part of his broader artistic practice.

Born in London and raised between Philadelphia, Uganda, and the English countryside, Mutono's musical language reflects an unusually varied upbringing. He began piano lessons at four and later trained as a basso profondo. He initially intended to pursue opera before the popular music of artists including Sufjan Stevens and TLC redirected his imagination. In 2014, he independently released his debut single, "Reds," which quickly found an international audience online.

Questions of impermanence remain central to Mutono's work. Born to refugee parents and navigating an uncertain immigration status of his own, he increasingly explores these ideas through ambient and textural music, songwriting, and visual media.

Described by NPR's Stephen Thompson as "the velvet voice of reason," Mutono continues to build a body of work defined by emotional precision, restraint, and an unwillingness to separate the personal from the formal. He lives and works in Westchester, New York.

Serubiri Moses is a Ugandan author, editor, and curator. He is known for his focus on global art history, and is the author of several book chapters, including "Can Planting Trees Tell an Alternative Art History?" (2021) and "Death and the Stone Age: Ugandan Art Institutions, 1941-1967" (2017). He is the co-editor of *Forces of Art: Perspectives from a Changing World* (Valiz, 2021) and *Reza Aramesh: Action By Number* (SKIRA, 2024), and the *After Okwui* series at e-flux journal. He teaches as an adjunct assistant professor in the Art History department at Hunter College, CUNY; formerly as Visiting Faculty at the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, and is currently a PhD Candidate in the Center for Research and Education in Art and Media at the University of Westminster, London.

PARTICIPANT AFTER DARK is a virtual exhibition, performance, screening and archive space launched by PARTICIPANT INC in October 2020. Since 2022, artist **Itziar Barrio** has been directing AFTER DARK, collaborating with artists to produce newly commissioned web projects, videos, and archival websites, among other tailored projects from preproduction to their virtual exhibition.

PARTICIPANT invited artist **Glen Fogel** to design and develop AFTER DARK for the inaugural 2020-21 season, collaborating with artists on live-streamed performances, videos, and modifications of the site for their projects' specific needs. AFTER DARK was conceptualized as a blank slate for artist's projects, removing as much institutional framework as possible and allowing total flexibility.

Image: Jonah Mutono, *Notes on Mirror Cinema*, 2026, 4K, Video and Sound, Video Still: Itziar Barrio

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