

THE NEW YORKER

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Hannah Black

The show's title, "Soc or Barb," nods to Rosa Luxemburg's antiwar declaration from 1916: "Bourgeois society stands at the crossroads, either transition to Socialism or regression into Barbarism." The young Manchester-born, Berlin-based artist responds with a fragmented, allegorical installation. A throng of lumpy sculptural figures—aliens, barbarians, or, perhaps, both—wear infinity symbols on T-shirts, while a video titled "New Dawn" plays on a trio of monitors. As day breaks on another planet and morning's pink light slowly creeps into the frame, we try to connect the dots of the accompanying sound collage: personal conversations, philosophical texts, a fascist British marching song, a Céline Dion ballad. It's an inventory of metaphorical dawns, from the New Soviet man to far-right "new orders" to a new romance. But Black's installation also subverts such grand pretenses, presenting an endless loop of sunrises, witnessed by a barbarian horde. *Through Feb. 19. (Bodega, 167 Rivington St. bodega-us.org.)*

THE NEW YORKER, FEBRUARY 6, 2017