

Unusual and really last minute press release

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Franz Vila: straight out of two decades cave

Last seen in 1990 with Lisa Welch in Copenhagen. Since then not heard of again. Speculations that he was abducted by the CIA or secretly killed by guerrillas or that he died of AIDS were not uncommon. Only in 1998 his name seen in Siberia, Bonn and New York next to subtle movement dancer, Maureen Flemming, and rich note composer, Phillip Glass, collaborating in a non-surprising piece called "EROS". Not surprising because Franz' most important piece in the seventies was "M'Eros" and his videos "FaXion", "Movieyeur" and "Xex" had have cult distribution for almost two decades through "Monday Wednesday Friday Video Club"⁽¹⁾ of New York and "Facets Multimedia" of Chicago.

What it is surprising is that today Franz Vila dares to come out of his cave in one corner of minuscule Gallery X. We have to remember that with the exception of his little known but great and long rapport with Leo Castelli, Franz always avoided dealers and galleries. As a matter of fact, his work has never been shown in a gallery. "Reaganoics", for example, was only shown in the Potato Wolf series in PBS affiliates and the The Kitchen in Soho. His installation of painted cans, "Flea Market", was only shown in the Sea Street with Collab artists in Coney Island. The closest to a gallery show was his mobile "Citizens" and his sculpture "Power" at "ABC NO RIO" on Rivington Street and the "A. Moore Store Show" at Broom Street, which Brooks Alexander Gallery sponsored.

His habit of showing at unconventional places like the Brooklyn Terminal Show brought him to his relationship to spontaneous artist Keith Haring when young Keith started making his drawings in the black poster panels of New York subways. None the less, Franz's habit explains his over-enthusiasm for the "Time Square Show"⁽²⁾ which he has always considered the apex and turning point of alternative art in the history of the American art scene.

The buzz about Franz Vila is that he is the pro-new-criteria artist.

1. He denies to have a recognizable style, none of his pieces look alike or look as if made by the same artist.
2. He solemnizes imperfections or mistakes. He is probably the only artist who uses hi-tech to produce lo-tech art. All his videos are in VHS, he doesn't have any originals in Betacam or 3/4's even though for over twenty years he has had access to three-chip cameras and the Betacam studio of architectural installations video artist Dieter Froese⁽³⁾.
3. He takes unbelievable time to make a piece. It took him 10 years to make the 10 minutes video "Danna Gittele" - a year to write it, three years to shoot it and six years to edit it - changing every single detail thousands of times. Even international

humor sculptor, Tom Otterness', cash incentive of \$200 nor Guggenheim awarded video artist, Shalom Gorewitz', suggestion of the "Experimental Television Center" for which Franz won a residency twice, could get Franz to speed up his pace. He finished it years later, when supporters had given up thinking he will ever finish it.

And now out of justified curiosity to see this new part of his art work and to provide many with the chance to meet him for the first time Gallery X and Stefan Eins Fashion Moda will present his one time show *The pine is not* from 1 to 6 PM only on June 4th, 2000 at the Gallery X on 23 West 129th Street.

Considering this unavoidable short notice we encourage the press to call us prior to the event and the public to please RSVP Gallery X at (212) 534-7044

1. Descriptions found under Franz Vila in the listing of <http://brickhaus.com/amoore/>

2. Article on page 50 in **Art Forum**, October, 1980. Also in **Art in America** and other publications.

3. A review could be found on page 122-3 of "New Media in Late 20th Century Art" by Michael Rush, London Tens & Hudson.