

ARTISTS SPACE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mr. Dead & Mrs. Free: The History of Squat Theatre
March 30-May 25, 1996
Opening Reception: Saturday, March 30, 6 to 8 p.m.
with **Roy Nathanson** of the Jazz Passengers performing

Artists Space is pleased to present **Mr. Dead & Mrs. Free: The History of Squat Theatre**, a two month-long exhibition of original Squat Theatre stage props, films, and videos. This retrospective, curated by Squat Theatre's Eva Buchmuller and Artists Space director Claudia Gould, will provide audiences with the rare opportunity to experience first-hand some of the most audacious theater created anywhere during the seventies and eighties.

An integral part of the downtown avant garde during the 1970s and '80s, Squat Theatre was founded in Budapest in 1969 by Anna Koos, Peter (Breznyik) Berg and Peter Halasz, members of the University Theater of Budapest. The group moved to New York in 1977 because of troubles with Hungarian authorities, where it quickly became famous for the Artaudian fireworks that were part of that era. At its storefront theatre on West 23rd Street, just down the block from the Chelsea Hotel, the action within frequently spilled out onto the street. Passers-by would also press their faces against the glass and peer inside, simultaneously putting the paying audience on display and becoming part of the performance themselves. In this way the unrehearsed authenticity of the street became juxtaposed with Squat Theatre's highly stylized images, infusing the proscribed theatrical experience with the energy and excitement of real-life unpredictability. This, then, is the essential quality of Squat Theatre that we hope to recreate for audiences at Artists Space.

Artists Space's two month-long exhibition will include the sets of *Pig Child Fire!* 1977; *Andy Warhol's Last Love*, 1978; *Mr. Dead & Mrs. Free*, 1981; *Dreamland Burns*, 1986; and *L-Train to Eldorado*, 1989. Original Squat Theatre 16mm films will be screened on two Saturdays, April 6 and 13, 4 to 6 p.m.

In what is normally the **Project Space**, Artists Space will re-create the Squat Cafe, where the history of Squat will be recorded in photographs on the walls and videos of Squat performances will be shown during gallery hours. In addition, evening events are scheduled every Tuesday and Thursday night in May.

This exhibition is made possible by the generous support of the Mark Rothko Foundation, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation Inc., Robert Frank, June Leaf Frank, and Louise H. McCagg.

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Artist Friends of Squat Select Films, Videos, Readers and Performers
Tuesday and Thursday nights, April 30 to May 23, from 7 to 9 p.m.

Aside from presenting their original theater performances, Squat Theatre regularly hosted musicians and screened independent films and videos both in their theatre space and in the Squat Cafe, upstairs from the Squat Theatre on 23rd Street in New York City from 1980 to 1984. In conjunction with the exhibition **Mr. Dead & Mrs. Free: The History of Squat Theatre**, Artists Space has invited original artist friends of Squat and other contemporary filmmakers and performers to select emerging artists to screen videos, read, or perform on the following nights:

- Tuesday, April 30: **Michelle Har Kim** reading from her most recent poetry
+ *3° of Knowledge*, an essay film by Squat Theatre's
Anna Koós
+ **Rebecca Moore** and her band perform
- Thursday, May 2: **Perry Hoberman** selects *Cable Xcess*, a video by **Kristin Lucas** (5 min. video)
+ *Suicide Box*, a video by the **bureau of inverse technology**
+ **Peggy Ahwesh** selects **Caspar Stracke** and **Julie Murray** of **Panoptical Motor**, with **Bradley Eros**, **Ikue Mori**, and **Komiko Kimoto** (50 min.)
+ *Cosmodrom*, a film by **Fridolin Schönwiese** (30 min.)
- Tuesday, May 7: **Eva Buchmuller** selects **Bern Nix** and his trio
+ **Robert Frank's** film, *Hunter*, with Squat Theatre's
Stephan Balint
+ one song by Hungarian rocker **Jenö Menyhárt**
- Thursday, May 9: **Ann Magnuson** selects *Ferrum 5000*, a film by **Steve Doughton** (15 min., 16mm)
+ **Mica TV** selects short collaborative and independent video projects by **Diane Nerwen** and **Les LeVeque**
+ **John Cale** selects musician **Gary Lucas**

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Tuesday, May 14: Vito Acconci reads

+ Nico selects **Odes, Bliss Blood, Blush, Sally Timms**

Thursday, May 16: Marc Ribot performs

+ midnight movies in prime time, including *The Family Crisis* by **Peggy Ahwesh**; *She Had her Gun All Ready*, with **Lydia Lunch** and **Pat Place**, by **Vivian Dick**; *Soul City* by **M. Henry Jones**; *Anathema*; by **Julie Murray**; and **Robert Frank's** outtakes and home movies.

Tuesday, May 21: Jim Jarmusch suggests Ari Marcopoulos, short films and videos (30-40 min.)

+ **Tom Jarmusch's** video, *Friends* (30 min.)

+ **Birgit Staudt and Joerg Soechting's** video *Marc Ribot--Descent into Baldness* (30 min.)

+ **Zeena Parkins** on solo electric harp (20-30 min.)

Thursday, May 23: Joseph Kosuth and Cornelia Lauf select Aki Fujiyoshi and her made-for t.v. sculptures (30-40 min.)

+ **Elliott Sharp's** solo performances for **Christian Marclay's** music box guitar and his own doubleneck guitarbass

Admission: \$5.

Our Centre Georges Pompidou video program is made possible in part through a generous grant from the New York State Council for the Arts Media Department. We also thank Ralph McKay for Squat Theatre program assistance.