

THE IMITATED LIFE ARTS LISTINGS

RARE PARTICIPATORY WORK BY YVES KLEIN TO GO ON VIEW AT INDEPENDENT PROJECTS IN NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 7 – 15

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From November 7-15, 2014, Dominique Lévy gallery will present a tribute to Yves Klein at the inaugural edition of New York's Independent Projects, taking place at the former DIA building on West 22nd Street in Chelsea. This presentation comes just one year after the gallery's own inaugural exhibition, *Audible Presence: Lucio Fontana, Yves Klein, Cy Twombly*, attracted international attention for its re-contextualizing of Klein's work and contributions, including his historic *Symphonie Monoton-Silence* (1949). Dominique Lévy represents the Estate of Yves Klein.

Curated by associate director Begum Yasar in collaboration with Daniel Moquay, director of Yves Klein Archives, the Independent Projects presentation will feature important works by this foremost postwar European artist, along with significant related archival materials. A centerpiece of the installation is *Sculpture tactile*, a work conceived by Klein in 1957 and never before exhibited. *Sculpture tactile* remained unrealized in the tragically short career of Klein, who died prematurely in 1962 at the age of 34. But the obscurity of this work owes equally to its daring sensuality and to the still relatively conservative attitudes that pervaded the European art scene in the late 1950s. In a way, the French art world of 1957 may not have been yet ready to fully encounter the ingenuity and audacity of the ideas of this young artist.

Dominique Lévy's exhibition at Independent Projects will include the first prototype of *Sculpture tactile* from 1957, which is smaller than a life-size version that would have been used if Klein had presented the work in his lifetime. And while the box has been shown in exhibitions at the Centre Pompidou in Paris and the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, the inaugural Independent Projects will be the first time that a re-fabrication of the box will be animated as a complete work of art with the inclusion of a living sculpture—male and female nude models alternately inhabiting the box.

Klein's idea of 1957 was one of the very first examples of what has since come to be known as "relational aesthetics." The visitor is invited to put their hand through the holes on the sides of the box and feel what is inside the box without seeing it. The tactile and sensuous and yet simultaneously uncanny experience of touching the nude skin of a stranger that one cannot see is what completes the box as a work of art. Since then several variations of this work have made their marks in the history of avant-garde performance art from the Japanese Fluxus artist Ay-O's "Finger Boxes," to Valie Export's Tapp- und Tast-Kino (Tap and Touch Cinema), in which the artist wore a tiny "movie theater" around her naked upper body on the streets of ten European cities between 1968 and 1971, so that her body could not be seen but could be touched by anyone reaching through the curtained front of the "theater."

The other component of Dominique Lévy's Independent Projects exhibition is an excerpt of the recording of Klein's own voice having a dialogue with himself, Dialogue avec moi-même (1961), which begins with [DELETED: "an excerpt from" so as not to repeat the word "excerpt" twice] the extended D major chord of the first part of the Symphonie Monoton-Silence. Dialogue avec moi-même is a spoken sequence of introspective self-critique by Klein, with the artist musing on the nature and enigma of artistic creation and his own practice. The English translation of the excerpt of the dialogue will be playing on continuous loop on a video screen with the voice of Klein synchronized. The dialogue video will be displayed side by side with a small close-up picture, photographed by Harry Shunk and János Kender, of Klein's face engulfed in an intense gaze. The beginning of Dialogue avec moi-même goes as follows:

In the process of creating something, by oneself ... the main thing is to know in sum that truth does not exist. Only honesty exists. Honesty is always in bad taste since, after all, honesty is so human; it is only ... a collection of laws, of learned ways of see-ing, etc. etc. But honesty does sometimes go beyond the frame-work of the human; then it becomes, even in humans, some-thing greater. It becomes life, life itself, a power, that strange life force that belongs neither to you, nor to me, nor to anyone. Life, it is life.