

TEXT FOR SOCIAL MEDIA EVENT

Komikaze Collective Comic Book Show 20 years anniversary at Galerie Utopia

GALERIE UTOPIA

4lthangrund

KOMIKAZE

Web: <https://komikaze.hr/althangrund-wien/>

Insta: https://www.instagram.com/komikaze_hr/

Galeria Utopia | Alte Mensa, Kulturzentrum 4lthangrund | Augasse 2-6, 1090 Wien
Sa, 13.1. | 12 - 15h: Exquisite corpse workshop
Exhibition open **12.1-10.2.2024.** / Tuesday to Friday 11:00 - 17:00h
with guided tours upon request

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12.1./ 18 h / Galerie Utopia: Exhibition opening and book presentation

13.1./ 12 - 15h / Galerie Utopia: Exquisite corpse workshop

14.1./ 12 - 15h / Galerie Utopia: Comic Book Shop and Merchandise

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“Komikaze” is a publisher and a network for spreading comic activities on the world wide web, electronic and brief press distribution of mostly young authors' comics. The aim is to link “Komikaze” comic activists from Balkan region and the world in order to exchange information and concrete comic products. In the context of related actions for the organization (armless) resistance against the progressive globalization and the increasing taste of institutionalized artistic production.

The Komikaze program represents free and altruistic activities of artists from different geo-strategic areas, which connects independent and uncompromising attitude, called the alternative, in relation to the existing dominating artistic practice. Partners and spatial priorities are related to non-profit autonomous zones of culture.

In 2015 Komikaze launched the relevant project FEMCOMIX which includes a growing collection of female comic artists and is an attempt to underline the strength and potential of female author expression in the field of contemporary comics with a focus on presenting a smaller selection of authors. Selection is made from the komikaze edited issues (print and web). In 2020 Komikaze received the award for the best alternative edition at the largest European comics festival at Angouleme, France.

EXHIBITION TEXT

Komikaze Collective Comic Book Show 20 years anniversary at Galerie Utopia

Komikaze is a network of creative individuals coming together as a collective active on the international scene with DIY comic books, illustrations, and graphics production.

Originating from the grassroots in Zagreb (Croatia) in 2002, Komikaze is marking its 20th anniversary with a new comic book publication and exhibition tour. Following successful programs in Graz, Sarajevo, Zagreb and Belgrade, the exhibition is now at Galerie Utopia in the Cultural Center Althangrund in Vienna, featuring the artistic concept of Ivana Armanini and Tomaž Zaniuk.

With 390 members worldwide, the Komikaze collective represents an intriguing network that reimagines utopian societies through artistic imagination as cultural critique and comment on the social and environmental reality.

The independent publishing methods by Komikaze set an example of self-organized artistic methods that have remained active for twenty years rejecting to enroll commercial mainstream sector.

For the past twenty years, Komikaze has been a promoter of independent comic book authors, predominantly in the Ex-Yu region, while engaging in collaborations worldwide. The collective has garnered numerous awards, including recognition at the prestigious Angoulême, one of Europe's largest comic book festivals based in France.

Over the past years, Komikaze has collaborated with AKC Attack! Autonomous Cultural Center Zagreb as a program with a focus on street art, independent comics, city mural actions, workshops and artist residencies reflecting on the social and political circumstances through surreal artistic expressions.

Concerning the background of the alternative and the underground scene where Komikaze is highly recognized, it is relevant to say how members and people form the collective come from the cultural spheres of punk, techno, rave and noise culture with discourse in feminism and philosophies of anarchism, often connected with social movements and activism engaged in the public space.

The artworks of Komikaze, we can frequently see in self-organized galleries, streets, occupied spaces, squats, independent zones, festivals, info-shops, zines, books and of course, imaginative places creating wonderful worlds as a meeting point for creative forces.

Using the drawing as a medium, Komikaze discusses social norms implemented by the establishment with the class, gender, race, and national inequalities coming from the patriarchal governing structures.

Rebellious audited towards such hierarchical constructs which create a capitalistic society of consumerism, Komikaze reacts with art content based on humor but also grotesque style as tragicomedy extracting the people's voices and laughs as an ultimate weapon against repressors.

Historical background on independent printing strategies refers to the 19th-century underground channels often used for the purpose of informing people about political actions.

So-called SAMIZDAT (eng: self-published, Russian: самиздат, BKS - Samo izdat, Ukraine: samviydav, Polish: drugi obwieg) are printed text pamphlets circulating from hand to hand among working class often in social and anarchist anti-authoritarian movements in Eastern bloc. This method was used as a self-organized production activity to avoid censorship by the ruling class.

Today such activities refer to the subcultures in DIY activities opposing the mainstream commercial sector and corporate production which are the strategies of Komikaze in the concept of independent authors publishing.

Under the parole ...

“There is no action or art that is not socially engaged. and non-commitment is also a form of action.”

... it is evident that this collective has wider streams and a network of people which we could characterize as an anti-art movement, the terminology associated with the Dada movement.

By it means, Komikaze is definitely challenging the cultural scene by questioning the meaning of art from the perspectives of professional vs non-professional - commercial vs alternative positions - as well as formal labor sector vs nonformal labor sector rejecting conventional standards defying criteria as a means of what art is, and what art should be.

Discussing the position of public space engagement and its relevant presence in today's time, it is interesting to host an exhibition of Komikaze at Galerie Utopia in Althangrund Cultural Center space for self-organized civil societies.

The nomadic body of Komikaze visiting Galerie Utopia attends to open the public space for dialog, music, art, and creativity as a space for sharing ideas, knowledge, and skill in this collaborative temporary autonomous zone.

Curator Galerie Utopia, Marko Markovic