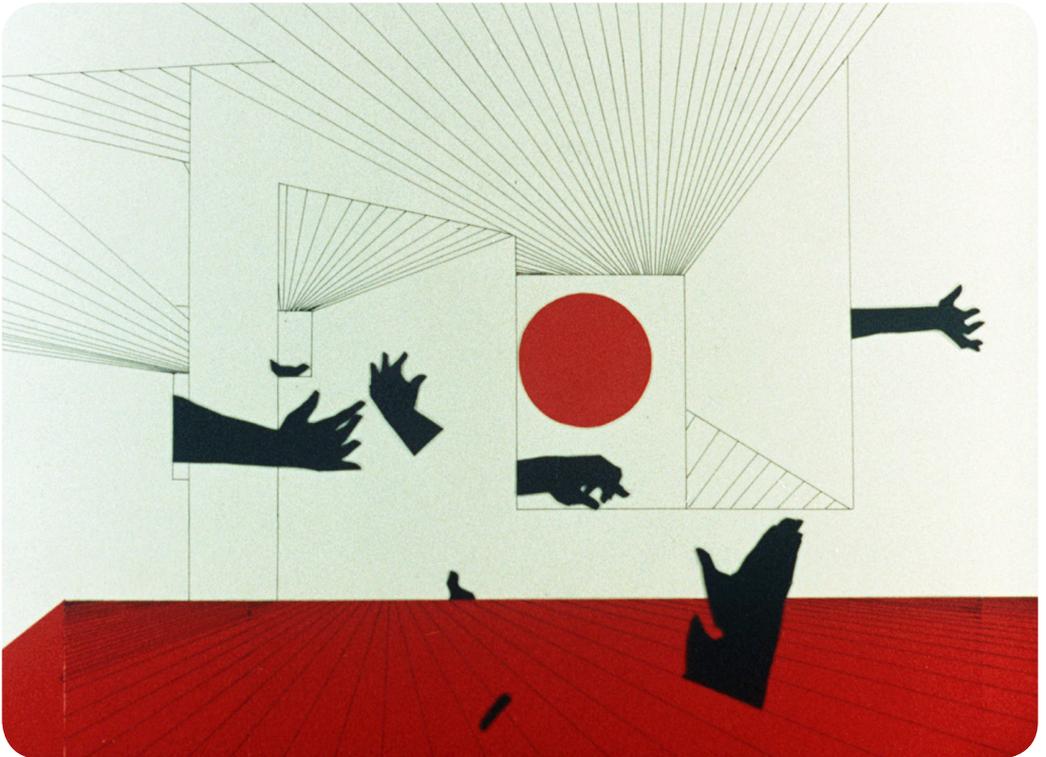


TATE FILM

VLADO KRISTL: DEATH TO THE AUDIENCE

7–16 November, Tate Modern



Vlado Kristl *Prometheus* 1965/66, film still. Courtesy Filmmuseum München

TATE
MODERN



Vlado Kristl, *Der Damm* 1964, film still. Courtesy Filmmuseum München

VLADO KRISTL: DEATH TO THE AUDIENCE 7–16 November Tate Modern, Starr Auditorium & Starr Foyer

The failed uprising is always better than the sultry air of paradise. – Vlado Kristl, *Sekundenfilme*, 1971

Vlado Kristl (1923–2004) was an iconoclastic and divisive figure who produced a remarkable range of work from pioneering animations and experimental films to poetry, performances and painting. A founding member of the EXAT '51 art group in Zagreb, Kristl left Croatia in 1962 after his early film *The General* was banned. Relocated in Germany, he went on to create an incomparable body of work in the context of post-war European cinema. His work has a central position in the avant-garde in Yugoslavia, as well as the emergent radical political cinema in Germany, influencing participants in the Oberhausen manifesto and the New German Cinema of the 1960s and 70s. The most extensive presentation of his films in the UK to date the season includes works made in Zagreb such as his iconoclastic Cervantes adaptation *Don Kihot* 1961, early films awarded at the Oberhausen film festival such as the joyous *Madeleine, Madeleine* 1963 and his last video work *Weltkongress der Obdachlosen / Conference of the Homeless* completed in 2003. We'll also present a range of his radical feature



Vlado Kristl *Italienisches Capriccio* 1969, film still
Courtesy Filmmuseum München

films that have been subtitled in English for the first time from his debut film *Der Damm / The Dam* 1966 to his monumental masterpiece *Tod Dem Zuschauer / Death to the Audience* 1982. An accompanying display in the Starr Foyer brings together Kristl's artist books, exhibition catalogues and poetry anthologies that he published throughout his life. Kristl's constant revision and reframing of his work in his publications makes explicit the radical, restless energy that coloured his practice.

Despite his pivotal role in many art and film movements, Kristl strived for independence throughout his long and varied career and always resisted aesthetic or political affinity. This was often manifested through creative destruction and his constant desire to collapse authority in all its forms. Widely travelled, Kristl lived for a time in Chile and France before settling in Germany living in Munich and Hamburg where he proved to be an influential if controversial teacher at the Hamburg Academy of Fine Arts (HfbK). With a dedication that is extremely rare today, Kristl combined everything that he had learned in numerous artistic spheres in his films.

Across Kristl's work from his paintings to animated films his lines dart and scribble against flattered planes, forms are created and then torn apart. The radical reduction of

the components of an image across his work from early animations such as the incendiary *Prometheus* 1966 to his remarkable late films such as *One Half of Wealth for One Half of Beauty* 1994 create powerful dramas of form and movement always on the verge of collapse. Often blending live action with his drawings and text, Kristl's hybrid works exist between media, challenging the limits of each, from the stark black and white compositions of *Arme Leute* 1963 to the long takes of *Tod Dem Zuschauer / Death to the Audience* 1982, where he uses duration as a strategy to embrace the material conditions of cinema. His work embraces play as much as it does chaos, from his lyrical and absurd anti-military film *Italian Capriccio* 1969 to his Dadaist first feature *Der Damm*, a manic combination of Marx Brothers and *Jules et Jim* 1962.

During World War II Kristl worked together with agitprop groups creating posters, flyers, illustrations and cartoons. As a member of EXAT '51, Kristl exhibited with Ivan Picelj, Aleksandar Srncic and Bozidar Rasica, at the first exhibition of abstract art in Yugoslavia at the Croatian Association of Architects in Zagreb, 1953. Starting a cycle of creation and destruction that coloured his life, in the late 1950s Kristl rejected the rigid geometry of his EXAT '51 period, and sought to re-affirm the materiality of painting and began working with film.

At the renowned Zagreb Film animation studio Kristl quickly distinguished himself with his formally radical animations including his early masterpiece *Don Kihot* 1961. This was followed by his controversial film *The General* 1962 an absurdist drama that was read as a critique of General Tito, leading to all extant copies of the film being destroyed and prompted Kristl to go into exile in Germany. Kristl embraced the opportunities offered in his adopted home and entered an exceptionally prolific period, producing numerous films, paintings and a

remarkable series of publications combining his designs, drawings and poetry.

In Germany he made some of the key works of independent cinema of the 1960s such as *Arme Leute* and *Madeleine, Madeleine* and also began his cycle of unique anarchistic feature films. The three feature films in the season highlight different aspects of his engagement with the form and provocative ideas about the film industry, its moribund state and its potential renewal through destructive actions. His first film *Der Damm* 1964, featuring Kristl in a central role, was made with a small budget before the emergence of the New German Cinema of the 1960s, its innovative form and experimental soundtrack distinguish it in the period. *Obrigkeitsfilm / The Film of the Authority* 1971 is Kristl's key political and anti-establishment film of the 1970s exploring different forms of resistance to order. His work from this period stands alongside, and was celebrated by his contemporaries such as filmmakers Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet (who appear in *Obrigkeitsfilm*) and Rainer Werner Fassbinder. He was acknowledged as a key figure in the Munich avant-garde alongside radical theatre, and ProT founder, Alexei Sagerer and filmmaker Herbert Achternbusch and novelist Peter Handke quoted Kristl's poetry in his work.

His celebrated 'non-film', *Tod Dem Zuschauer*, is a unique master work, made to destroy the cinema and its institutions. The film seeks to overthrow the conventions of passive spectatorship. Featuring a loose ensemble of friends and students, the film unravels on the streets of the city in long takes designed to test the audience's patience. This remarkable and uncharacterizable film is interwoven with Kristl's personal biography, featuring his drawings and animation that reflect on his life and experience as a political exile in Germany.

by George Clark



Vlado Kristl *Madeleine, Madeleine* 1963, film still
Courtesy Filmmuseum München

VLADO KRISTL 1: EARLY FILMS Friday 7 November, 19.00–21.00

Dust makes idiots beautiful. – Vlado Kristl, *Sekundenfilme*, 1971

These celebrated works show the breadth of Vlado Kristl's early practice, ranging from the political allegory of *Arme Leute* 1963 to the incendiary cut-out animation *Prometheus* 1965. Many of Kristl's works during this period were shown at the International Short Film Festival in Oberhausen. He won the main prize there for his classic film *Madeleine, Madeleine* 1963 about a tennis game interrupted by a thunder storm. *Italian Capriccio* 1969 made in Italy is an anti-military film that blends subversion with formal abstraction anticipating his radical films of the 1970s.

Introduced by Madeleine Kristl.

MADELEINE, MADELEINE
Vlado Kristl, West Germany 1963, colour,
11 min. Produced by: Rob Houwer

Madeleine, Madeleine portrays a tennis game interrupted by a sudden cloudburst and choreographs a number of figures in the context of this event. Yet without consideration for continuity or narrative aspects, the minimal plot is brought to waver and dwindle, giving way to

redundancies, confusion, and stupefaction. – Christine Noll Brinckmann, *Viennale cat.*, 2004

ARME LEUTE / POOR PEOPLE
Vlado Kristl, West Germany 1963, black & white, 10 min

The film was a response to the destruction of *The General* in Yugoslavia. Because, in the opinion of the producer, the film was not suitable for an audience, a version I have nothing to do with was completed by Peter Schamoni under the title *The Pot*. – Vlado Kristl, 1988

PROMETHEUS
Vlado Kristl, West Germany 1966, colour,
10 min

Prometheus gave fire to men to help them. He rebelled against the gods. Men, however, use fire to kill. – Vlado Kristl, *Prometheus* 1996

ITALIAN CAPRICCIO
Vlado Kristl, Italy 1969, colour, 30 min

The question of militarism is being asked by each and every one to everyone and to oneself. Someone is living all dressed up in water and when he emerges to bask on the beach he undresses. Returning to water he puts on his clothes again. (This is a described film event that has nothing to do with its contents. The true contents are ambiguous.) First – go there, where you know nothing and nobody, shoot what you can shoot without paying, without any plan and predetermination. The outcome, then, is something that did not yet run in your head. Everything else is neither of interest to you nor to others. And secondly – the aspect of the method: do the movie in a way, that it will remain entirely unnecessary, unintelligible, unusable, without any effect. – Vlado Kristl, *German Experimental Films 1969/70*, Ed. Rosa Von Praunheim.

Programme duration: 61 min

VLADO KRISTL 2: CROATIAN AVANT-GARDE Saturday 8 November, 16.00–18.00

There's absolutely no communism; we'll have to make do with anarchy. – Vlado Kristl, *Sekundenfilme*, 1971

An influential figure in the Croatian avant-garde, Vlado Kristl's groundbreaking animations produced at the Zagreb Film animation studio and his first live action film *General I resni Clovek / The General*, are explored in the context of works from the Cine-Club movement in Croatia with films by Ante Verzotti, Milan Šamec, Mihovil Pansini, Tomislav Gotovac, Vladimir Petek and Ivan Martinac.

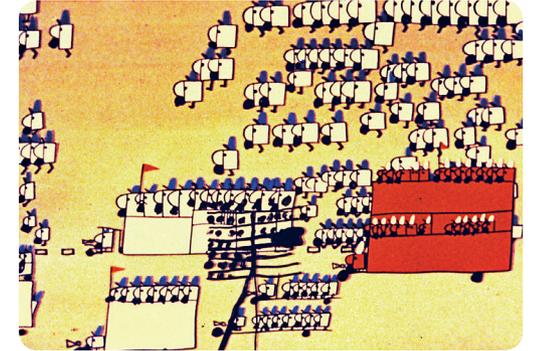
Illustrated talks explore the legacy of Vlado Kristl, EXAT '51 and the Croatia Cine-Clubs with film historian and president of the Croatian Film Club Association Hrvoje Turkovic and curator and writer Branka Benčić.

KRADA DRAGULJA / JUWELENRAUB / GREAT JEWEL ROBBERY
Vlado Kristl, Yugoslavia 1959, colour, 10 min

Because as an emigré I had no right to express my opinion, the state officials, led by those vandals and arse-lickers Peruzović-Vukotić, forced an official director on me who then chopped up the film I'd already completed, threw out any critical or personal opinion and, to top it all, added a banal text. At least the drawings weren't entirely disposable, and so what you have is a lightly sketched torso, or 'the legs of a torso'. – Vlado Kristl, 1988

DON KIHOT / DON QUIXOTE
Vlado Kristl, Yugoslavia 1961, colour, 10 min

I made the film without permission and secretly, at night, supported by a few friends and a sales director. Just as we started to shoot it we were discovered – I was thrown out, the director was



Vlado Kristl *Don Kihot* 1961, film still.
Courtesy Filmmuseum München / Zagreb Film

dismissed, the film banned. They blocked any contact with the people from Oberhausen who at the time came to visit me in Zagreb, Wehling, Hoffmann, Strobel. Through a chance contact, the Oberhausen Film Festival organisers heard that the film existed and insisted on its release until they finally got it in 1962. First I took the film to the festival in Tours where I was thrown out because they saw *Don Quixote* as Charles de Gaulle although when I made the film it was more Lumumba that I had in mind. – Vlado Kristl, 1988

ENCOUNTERS / SRETANJA
Vladimir Petek, Yugoslavia 1963, colour, 8 min

Vladimir Petek (born 1940) was energetically exploring in the 1960s what film could do as a medium if used in nonstandard ways. The young amateur filmmaker scraped and colored the film stock, animated frames by drawing on them, pierced the film stock, glued narrow-format film on wide-format, cut pieces of film in half and glued different halves together, tried pixilation, reversed negatives and positives, and more. ... *Encounters* offers a portrait of a woman (Ksenija Filipović, his then-girlfriend) whose face becomes mysterious, desirable, and endlessly captivating on film, all the more so because of Petek's various interventions in the film stock. – Diana Nenadić, *Artists, Amateurs, Alternative Spaces: Experimental Cinema in Eastern Europe, 1960 – 1990*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, Spring 2014



Vlado Kristl *General I resni Clovek* 1962, film still
Courtesy Filmmuseum München

RONDO

Ivan Martinac, Yugoslavia 1962, 6 min

I have listed all the elements of film language: (the brain of the film – the length of the shot; the eyes of the film - shot scale, angle, camera movements, movements within the shot, and the soul of the film – sound). I urged from that time (and before it) for the film that is built on these elements ... Therefore I urged for 'pure' film. – Ivan Martinac, *Martinac*, Split: OPUS, HFS 2001.

GENERAL I RESNI CLOVEK / THE GENERAL
Vlado Kristl, Yugoslavia 1962, black & white,
10 min. Courtesy of Slovenian Film Centre

I wanted to stay in Germany, but then got this offer along with the promise that I'd have completely free reign. The film was against the dictatorship, against Tito's police state. On completion it was immediately seized and all the photos and documents destroyed. I got official notification that the film, along with all the copies and negative would have to be burned. I fled to Germany. (In 1975 Patalas acquired a copy from Yugoslavia for the Munich Film Museum. I was called in to confirm that it was the film I'd made, and it was.) – Vlado Kristl, 1988

TWIST-TWIST

Ante Verzotti, Yugoslavia 1962, 16mm,
black and white, sound, 2 min

Verzotti, who was an exception within the Kino Klub Split, was interested in a cinema of proto-abstract patterns, reductionism, and rhythmical orchestration of purely optical and acoustic phenomena. His ideals could best be described as painting with the camera and creating 'visual music.' He accomplished them with his debuté film *Twist-Twist*, whose title alludes to the song and dance first popularized in 1960. The film uses the choreography of reflections on the sea's surface and sets them to the sounds of jazz music. – Diana Nenadić, *Artists, Amateurs, Alternative Spaces: Experimental Cinema in Eastern Europe, 1960–1990*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Spring 2014

TERMITI / TERMITES

Milan Šamec, Yugoslavia 1963, black & white,
1.40 min

Milan Šamec (1942–2007) made *Termites* as a rebuttal of anti-film, a demonstration through which Šamec hoped to take the idea that 'anyone can make an experimental film' and bring it to its absurd logical conclusion. To make his film, Šamec exposed film stock unevenly to developer and called the resulting footage of 'dancing' spots and specks created by the process 'termites' In order to parody the new music heard at the Zagreb Music Biennale, which was admired by the anti-film avant-gardists, Šamec created a soundtrack by rhythmically tapping and scraping on radiators. Ironically, the result was so visually and aurally impressive that it served as evidence that a parody can sometimes become a homage. – Diana Nenadić, *Artists, Amateurs, Alternative Spaces: Experimental Cinema in Eastern Europe, 1960–1990*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Spring 2014

SCUSA SIGNORINA

Mihovil Pansini, Yugoslavia 1963, 7 min

Antifilm is almost everything the conventional film was not up to now.... Antifilm means freeing from all the myths, authorities, from rules, laws and terror. – Mihovil Pansini, *Knjiga Geffa '63 /Geff 63 Book*, Zagreb, 1967

K3 OR CLEAR SKY WITHOUT CLOUDS

Mihovil Pansini, Yugoslavia 1963, 2 min

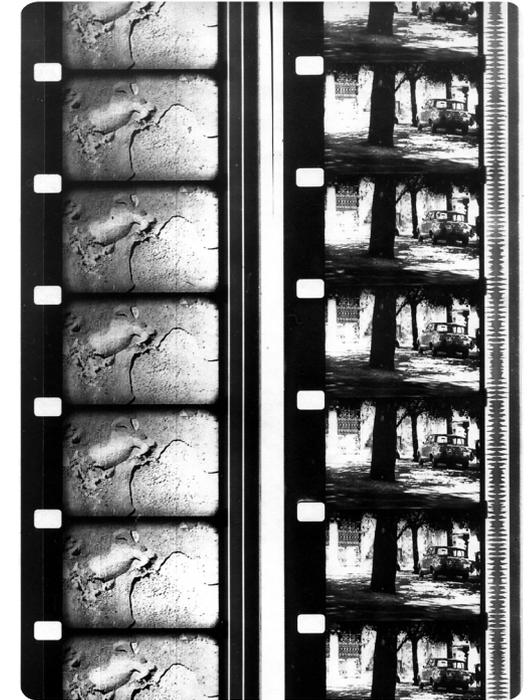
Amateurs are lovers of film for free. This making for free gives them liberty and directs them to avant-garde and non-conformism. They can put up questions that are 'forbidden', and give answers that are 'not permitted'. – Mihovil Pansini, *Knjiga Geffa '63 /Geff 63 Book*, Zagreb, 1967

MORNING OF A FAUN

Tomislav Gotovac, 1963, black and white,
sound, 8 min

I am constantly intrigued by what there is in the relation between my eyes and what it is I am looking at. ... On the one hand I am expressing my awe towards the rhythm of things which I recognise among others, but at the same time I struggle within myself: where I am in it? And it is not enough for me to be my own movie, that as soon as I open my eyes in the morning, I am watching a movie. ... But considering that I cannot present my eyes to the crowd and say: look; so it has to come out somehow....

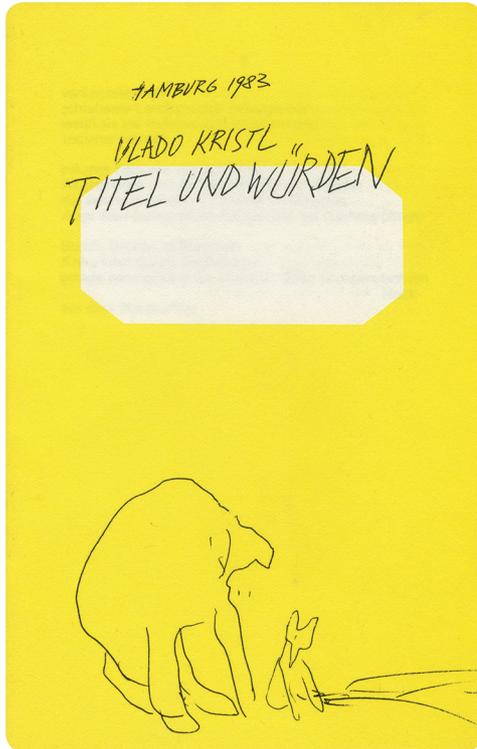
The structure of *Faun* was grammatical. It was like a Jonas Mekas manifest of the underground... to make something which would be like a flag. – Tomislav Gotovac, Eds. Aleksandar Battista Ilić & Diana Nenadić, trans. by Susan Jakopec, Graham McMaster, HFS Hrvatski filmski savez, Zagreb, 2003, interview by Goran Trbuljak and Hrvoje Turkovic originally published in *Film*, NO 10–11, Zagreb, 1977



Tomislav Gotovac *Morning of a Faun* 1963, film still
Courtesy Hrvatski Filmski Savez/Croatian Film Clubs' Association

As in other of his films, this one opens with the music of Glenn Miller and his big band sounds. The terrace scene is accompanied by the soundtrack from a section of Godard's *Vivre sa Vie*. The cracked wall sequence is silent, while the street scene incorporates part of the soundtrack from Hollywood's *The Time Machine*. This sets up a counterpoint to the visual images, its off-screen violence adding mystery to the otherwise mundane street ... Gotovac's references to Godard and George Pal illustrate his fondness for the narrative tradition, and his juxtaposition of 'quotes' from their soundtracks with his own visuals adds ambiguity and depth to his work. – *The Other Side: European Avant-Garde Cinema, 1960–1980: A Film Exhibition*, American federation of Arts, New York, 1983.

Programme duration: 65 min



Vlado Kristl, *Obrigkeitsfilm / The Film of the Authority*, 1971 film still. Courtesy Filmmuseum München

VLADO KRISTL 3: FILM AND AUTHORITY Saturday 8 November, 19.00–21.00

While some people believe that film is a medium for realising a political programme, we believe that the invention and revival of the medium can be the most genuine political programme, i.e. you can tell from the film itself which approach is realistic. – Vlado Kristl, *Sekundenfilme*, 1971

Vlado Kristl's radical anarchist feature films set out to destroy hierarchies, whether perceptual, narrative, aesthetic or social. In *Obrigkeitsfilm / The Film of the Authority* 1971 a group of men, women and Kristl with his camera debate how to resist authority in all its forms. All cinematic professionalism is avoided as Kristl explores how to live and make films politically. The film starts with a fire and filmmakers Jean-Marie-Straub and Danièle Huillet appear surrounded by smoke heralding the burning of Munich and the end of capitalism. Kristl thought this would be his last film after being crushed by the conformist middle class society of the time.

Introduction by Martin Brady, King's College London

DER BRÄUTIGAM, DIE KOMÖDIANTIN UND DER ZUHÄLTER / THE BRIDEGROOM, THE COMEDIENNE AND THE PIMP

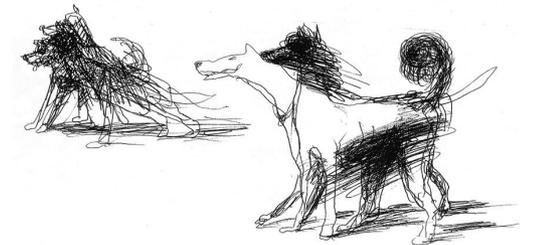
Jean-Marie Straub & Danièle Huillet,
West Germany 1968, black & white, 23 min

I don't believe in the cinema. Even when it's Godard who says these things, it's interesting and has meaning, but it gives me a stomach ache. I don't fetishize the cinema at all. I think of it as an instrument, a tool. I could say that the deconstruction one makes in *The Bridegroom, the Comedienne and the Pimp* is interesting, but the whole film is the history, the story, of a hatred and that is all. The hatred is affirmed at the beginning, in the inscription on the wall: 'Stupid old Germany. I hate it over here. I hope I can go soon.'

Then there is the street with the girls (sic). Then there is the play, which contains the characters that place themselves against the inscription from Mao printed on the back wall. That says, "Even if the arch reactionaries are still, today, tomorrow, the day after tomorrow..." Again it's hidden, you can't read it. The enemy is flexible, anyway. And in front of all this is a very precise spectacle. It's not only a parody of bourgeois theater. The characters who appear later are within it, and the class struggle begins to appear within it. – Jean-Marie Straub, 'Moses and Aaron as an object of Marxist reflection' interviewed by Joel Rogers, *Jump Cut*, no. 12/13, 197

OBRIGKEITSFILM / THE FILM OF THE AUTHORITY Valdo Kristl, West Germany 1971, 90 min

The great and fantastic Spanish architect Gaudí, the best exponent of Liberty style in architecture, died this way: there are rumours that he was run over by a tram while he was walking, humbly dressed. Anyway he was one of the many poors of the city. They simply left him to bleed to death on the curb. Middle class society and the system are exactly like this. One needs to be strong in order not to be run over. I consider this my last film. As a consequence of the whole world's aversion towards these problems it is impossible to find any financial or social support to keep on working. – Vlado Kristl



VLADO KRISTL

KULTUR DER ANARCHIE (GEGEN DIE KONTRAREVOLUTION) / CULTURE OF ANARCHY (AGAINST THE CONTRA-REVOLUTION)

by Vlado Kristl

12.13 OCT. 1975

It is unbelievable

How shamelessly the counter-revolutionaries behave:

'You can't change anything with an evening in the theatre, or with a book, a film or a concert. Certainly not people. And definitely not directly.'

These shits make allegations just like the police, claiming you are a thief or murderer and leaving it up to you to deny it. No you pigs! Not like that.

Where else can change happen if not here? In the media. Where concepts and rules are fought over and born. Formulated and made comprehensible to everyone. There's nowhere else, no other means, no other path to change. The fact that it is possible to leave after an evening in the theatre without any change having occurred was written into the play in the first place. A play which could change things can't or won't be staged. Because it has to be directed against existing institutions. No book is published which doesn't already represent good business in advance. So no change, from nursery school onwards. No painter can exhibit, mobilise or inform people about his concepts if they don't conform to the apparatus already in place. How

can they change anything if they are only shown in order to confirm what is already there rather than change it?

These over-bred German actors who file away endlessly at their expressions, dialogues and gestures and their nit-picking are lamentable officially-sanctioned puppets. Puffing themselves up. The exertions of empty bodies. A sight for sore eyes and ears. Textbook fiddling. And then years later they think they were really something. And then one of these mummies tells his lecture theatre slaves that art can't change anything, and because he's an arsehole and a lick of academic arseholes who has never asked a single question in his entire life, it gets printed. So why art, then? To remain human they answer stupidly and academically. So what is remaining human then? And in no time we understand what staying human, or becoming one in the first place, is all about.

Without shared concepts a dictator can't command his soldiers, a pastry chef can't make his cakes. No information can be exchanged. You remain blind, lonely and dumb. You wail when you're hungry or in pain. You mate with women and if necessary eat your own children. Everything is only imaginable because we have formulated a value system and got to know how to exercise power. All of this occurs through the media. They generate ideas, the measure by which everything, large or small, appears the same so that we can communicate. With one another. Nothing can make any headway without these basic models created by the media. On the

one hand they are a means to an end, on the other the basis and foundation, the very stuff of what we call a human being, what allows us to process anything we encounter into the polarities of good and evil as we see fit. That's why we have the chance to peddle lies. Over centuries, millennia. Again and again. Yes!

But one can also comprehend truths again and again. Just as clearly. Every picture, every play, every film and every appearance on stage of a dancer, orchestra, singer, every speech, every book, every sculpture, every creative work only exists if it overturns existing conditions. Only then.

Within an ensemble, where the water bearer has to steal the show from the star, through to ignoring the rules of the game, of the author or director... of the publisher and the financial planning. So that the hierarchy of the laws of business are put into question, the functioning social contract, the state and human society in general. For the time being this is the only way to turn off the road to inevitable disaster for humanity which has been looming for the last hundred years. And which has been palpable for every echelon of society since it became possible for civilised industrial nations to produce the atomic bomb.

Their rules are no longer of any use whatsoever. Absolute, unconditional rejection of all concepts which reinforce anything. All of those which claim something is achievable. Affordable and acceptable. It is a situation in which only unflagging, unending criticism, dissolution and neutralising of all institutions and attitudes of organisation, including the division of labour, can offer any hope of progress. Everything else represents a retreat into one's death. There is only one fertile ground on which this task, once recognised, can set seed and flourish. The media, through which a person is created and defined.

No physical entity defines what a person is. No colour and no talent. Not physical strength or gender, no tenacity of life. Only the media make him what he is. And only they have changed him and will define what change means for him. And to conclude... the word "meanings" is of his own making and only he can decide for himself if something is to be meaningful for him, can give it a name and substance. And no one outside the media can change, think, or say anything or mean anything to anyone else. That's how it is. So those who are celebrated, who are printed, who become someone that everyone knows, who are public property, only want to serve power and have their own share of it, so when they talk about the possibility of change they speak a pile of crap and shit from the bottom of their poisoned hearts. [...]

We will die of hunger in the richest country in the world. But that is the fate awaiting those who can change the world... and want to do so.

Down with primitive people! Down with false people! With people barricaded in their institutions! With mendacious people! With successful people! With those who obey authority! With obedient, deferential, fearful and religious people! Down with the woman who sleeps with men like this, who lives with them or loves them! Down with the man who is friends with this woman! Down with the parents who educate their children to death with a love of law and order! Down with a youth that doesn't revolt, which doesn't drive forwards towards freedom for all! Down with old people who have become so conservative that they look back longingly to a time of servitude and arse-licking! Long-live anarchy!

Originally published in Filmbletter No. 7, Kommunales Kino Frankfurt, 1975.

English translation by Martin Brady

VLADO KRISTL 4: ANTI-FILMS**Wednesday 12 November, 19.00–21.00**

I have decided to employ a method of shooting which favours the worst take, which makes the deployment of practiced and well-known techniques irrelevant to me, which enables me to avoid things which would probably come easily or appeal to my taste and judgement, one which will automatically enable me to avoid any conventional notions of the kind lurking within me and others. – Vlado Kristl, *Sekundenfilme*, 1971

To work against something, to oppose something explicitly, these days means working consciously for it. – Vlado Kristl, *Sekundenfilme*, 1971

This classic love triangle is completely unhinged by Kristl in his first feature *Der Damm / The Dam* 1964. The soundtrack and images go their own separate ways, characters attempt to escape from the frame or appear fragmented in extreme close-up. The film was realised with minimal means, fulfilling the promise of the Oberhausen manifesto to produce a new cinema liberated from convention. *Der Damm* will be preceded by extract from Edgar Reitz's mock-television programme *Kino Zwei* 1970. Made for the 75th anniversary of cinema, it features artists and filmmakers who make predictions for the future of film.

KINO ZWEI

Edgar Reitz, West Germany 1970,
Super8 transferred to video, colour,
7 min [extract]

Filed on Super8 Edgar Reitz' 1970 spoof television magazine programme *Kino Zwei* assembles a series of field reports which explain technological and socio-political innovations in cinema and television. These include an invisible cinema, a headset in which films are projected directly onto the retina. In this extract Vlado

Kristl, introduced as a visiting professor from Lappland, explains his idea of a traffic jam cinema standing by a motorway in which popular holiday destinations are projected into the sky to be enjoyed by people stuck in traffic.

Excerpt shown with thanks to Edgar Reitz.

DER DAMM / THE DAM

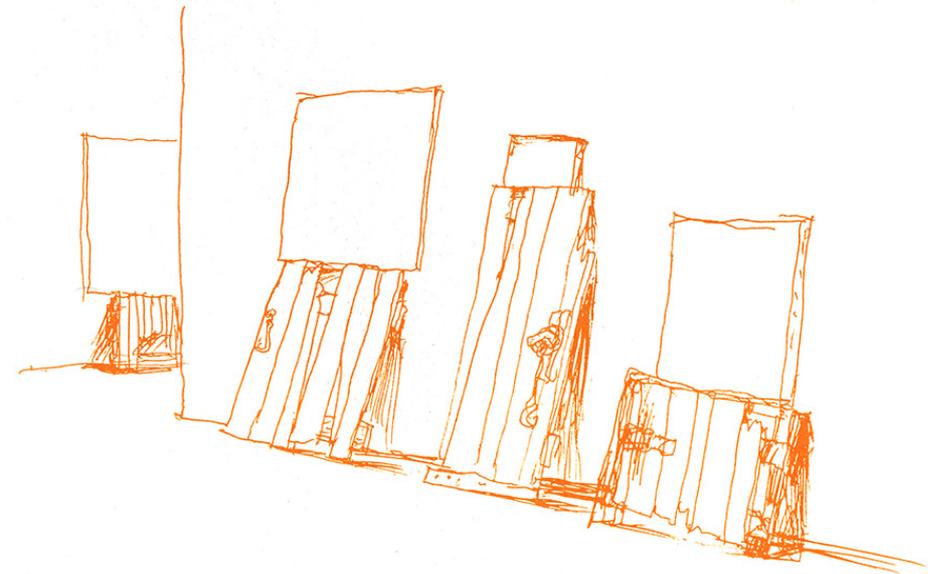
Vlado Kristl, West Germany 1964, black & white, 81 min

At the instigation of Kluge I was forbidden from shooting in the grounds of the Hochschule für Gestaltung where Schleiermacher was also professor. Schleiermacher's jealously-guarded plan to bring out the first 'young German film' even led them to accuse us of having stolen cameras from Reitz. We were put under house arrest by the police. Shortly afterwards Schleiermacher was suspended from the Hochschule at the instigation of the Kluge group. – Vlado Kristl, 1988

Vlado Kristl, who died this summer [in 2004], almost unnoticed, is and will remain one of the great destroyers and inventors of cinema. The poetic freedom and political urgency, the anarchic gesture and the stubborn obstinacy of his works make Vlado Kristl a realist in the sense of the Marx Brothers and Karl Valentin and an incomparable figure in the West German postwar cinema. As in most of his films, Vlado Kristl acts as the protagonist in *Der Damm*. He undertakes the Sisyphean task of dragging stones in a quarry while competing with a stocky porter for the courtship of a beauty. The beauty finally shows her favor to the stocky porter and Kristl turns from a failure to an awkward pessimist. In *Der Damm* Kristl has revolutionized the abstract form of the eternal love triangle. – Thomas Brandlmeier, *Viennale catalogue*, 2004



Vlado Kristl, *Der Damm* 1964, film still. Courtesy Filmmuseum München





Vlado Kristl, *Tod Dem Zuschauer / Death To The Audience*, 1984 film still
Courtesy Filmmuseum München

VLADO KRISTL 5: DEATH TO THE AUDIENCE Friday 14 November, 19.00–21.00

A sign says 'Young German Cinema'. In a meadow, behind a house, some young men are shooting a film and talk non-stop about the old cinema. They constantly accuse each other of making old films. When the money appears they stab each other.

Another sign says 'Old German Cinema'. It's the old foxes, colleagues from theatre, television, film, Hollywood stars. They all talk about the new film they are shooting or acting in. The producers persuade the directors to shoot new films, distributors talk about the new cinema, a new epoch. When no money appears they stab each other. – Vlado Kristl, *Sekundenfilme*, 1971

Filed on the streets of Hamburg, between parked cars with a cast consisting of friends and a large German Shepherd, Kristl's monumental film *Tod Dem Zuschauer / Death To The Audience* challenges all expectations about making and watching a film. Kristl rebels against the fixed modes of spectatorship; it is 'a non-film for non-viewers.' The long takes in which the cast perpetually wait for filming to begin, gives way to drawings and animation that reflect on Kristl's life and experience as a political exile in Germany. *Die Verräter des jungen deutschen Films schlafen nicht* 1982 is a masterful oblique animation criticising the failed promises and conformity of filmmaking.

DIE VERRÄTER DES JUNGEN DEUTSCHEN FILMS SCHLAFEN NICHT / TRAITORS OF THE YOUNG GERMAN FILM AREN'T ASLEEP Vlado Kristl, West Germany 1982, colour, 6 min

It is absolutely crucial that the sound is turned up as loud as possible. It should hurt your ears and your head. Apparently it's written clearly on every tin. But it is to be expected that the projectionists would rather protect their equipment or don't take this demand seriously. – Vlado Kristl, 1988

TOD DEM ZUSCHAUER / DEATH TO THE AUDIENCE Vlado Kristl, West Germany 1984, colour, 102 min

Since the traitors have taken film captive you can't make films any more. Film is dead! There's only one option available. You take the camera and the rest of the material, if you can get your hands on it, and just let it run. Irrespective of whether anyone is in front of the camera or behind it, or whether there's no one there at all. If you just let the camera run and don't try to interfere, or to influence anything in any way, then you achieve something you can call a new language. Because then you don't need the demagogical method (Helmut Herbst always says 'pedagogical') to reach your professed goal – that method which these days is usually inescapable and just pops up automatically when people enter into a relationship with each other.

Be that as it may, if we treat our man-made resources (the camera) with equality and allow them equal creative freedom then we will experience a corrective in our practice. Instantly everything changes in the world. The master/slave relationship which has been lurking around in our heads up to now has to be corrected. – Vlado Kristl, 1988.

Programme duration: 108 min

VLADO KRISTL 6: THE END OF ORDER Sunday 16 November, 16.00–18.00

The basest of all instincts is the instinct to be orderly. – Vlado Kristl, *Sekundenfilme*, 1971

I hope one day power will drive everyone up the wall. – Vlado Kristl, *Sekundenfilme*, 1971

No thoughts more to be thought.
– Vlado Kristl, *Sekundenfilme*, 1971

Taking its title from *Ende der Ordnung / The End of Order*, the last book Kristl published in Munich in March 2004 shortly before his death, this final programme presents key works from Kristl's late period. Ranging from his rediscovered Super8 film *Tigerkäfig* 1971, a proposal for an impossible performance to be viewed from an airplane, to his last video *Weltkongress der Obdachlosen* 2003 of his late collaborations with actress **Carola Regnier**. These works celebrate improvisation and freedom as much as they protest against the repression of art and humanity. With titles that act as manifestos – such as *Als man noch aus persönlichen Gründen gelebt hat / When People Were Still Living for Personal Reasons* 1993 or *Kunst ist nur außerhalb der Menschengesellschaft / Art is only outside Human Society* 2002 – these final works present a unique vision for the place of art in society and a call for it to be liberated from order and convention.

TIGERKÄFIG / TIGER CAGE Vlado Kristl, West Germany 1971, colour, 14 min

At the event 'Art Zone 71 Munich' I wanted to perform the street plays 'Tiger Cage' and 'Once again bank robbery, but now in honesty'. But it failed. It failed right at the beginning. The promoters, the Young Socialists ... rejected and removed some texts of mine. Imagine: this in the 20th century, from the Young Socialists. Moreover, the city paid on their behalf, or



Vlado Kristl *Tigerkäfig / Tiger Cage* 1971, film still
Courtesy Filmmuseum München

they paid me on behalf of the city not a penny. That leaves me speechless, by what right, what conception did they inflict such encroachments on me? And therefore I have cut myself off...

Meaning: Nobody will perform. And this story about the tiger cage henceforth presumably can only be looked at in this film. – Vlado Kristl, 1971

DIE SCHULE DER POSTMODERNE / SCHOOL OF THE POSTMODERN Vlado Kristl, Germany 1990, colour, 15 min

In this sense, postmodernism also has to be seen as a system, one that is acknowledged, one with which one can create houses, locomotives, (films), everything... That has nothing to do with art. That is just a parlour game. – Vlado Kristl

KUNST IST NUR AUSSERHALB DER MENSCHENGESELLSCHAFT / ART IS ONLY OUTSIDE HUMAN SOCIETY

Vlado Kristl with Markus Nechleba, Carola Regnier and Dieter Reifarth, Germany 2002, colour, 9 min

Vlado Kristl rejected the word anarchy. Nor did he like the word utopia, nor the term experimental film. As a matter of fact he didnt like any words if they werent freed from the conventional ways of thinking. Following the shooting of *Kunst ist nur außerhalb der Menschengesellschaft* he was only pleased when hardly anything he expressed in his poems performed, thrown and hurled against any hostile and alien environment by Carola Regnier was understood. – Markus Nechleba, *Viennale catalogue*, 2004

DER LETZTE KLON / THE LAST CLONE

Vlado Kristl, Germany 1998, colour, 6 min

The Academy of Arts in Hamburg (HfbK) destroys all art and all artists. It seems as if a military unit has lined up for the final solution, it looks as if the whole of mankind has been assigned to carry out the liquidation of art. Is art dead? Yes. Art is definitely dead. All that is left to a human being is his 'I'... to try cloning – Vlado Kristl, *Klonen Klonen Saga*, Filmmuseum München, May 2002

WELTKONGRESS DER OBDACHLOSEN / CONFERENCE OF THE HOMELESS

Vlado Kristl with Johanna Pauline Maier, Markus Nechleba, Carola Regnier, Germany 2003, colour, 5 min

Delegations of the homeless from all over the world march in. This is a film in which there is nothing to see. – Vlado Kristl, 2003



Vlado Kristl with Markus Nechleba, Carola Regnier and Dieter Reifarth, *Kunst ist nur außerhalb der Menschengesellschaft / Art is only outside Human Society*, 2002 film still. Courtesy Filmmuseum München

ALS MAN NOCH AUS PERSÖNLICHEN GRÜNDEN GELEBT HAT / WHEN PEOPLE WERE STILL LIVING FOR PERSONAL REASONS

Vlado Kristl, Germany 1993, colour, 8 min

The friends of humanity – the painter, the musician, the poet and the Prima ballerina – and all others are enemies of humanity. – Vlado Kristl, *Klonen Klonen Saga*, Filmmuseum München, May 2002

DIE HÄLFTE DES REICHTUMS FÜR DIE HÄLFTE DER SCHÖNHEIT / ONE HALF OF WEALTH FOR ONE HALF OF BEAUTY

Vlado Kristl, Germany 1994, colour, 9 min

Anything that complies with standards is a wasted effort to Vlado Kristl: 'I believe in only doing those things that decompose and tear conventional systems apart.' Kristl's métier are borderlines. His paintings and animated films are interspersed with clear dividing lines, only for him to blur and mess them up. His graphics are scribbled over and over again until the whole surface becomes black. His oil paintings, unless someone buys them in time, are painted over and over again. He destroys any form that begins to grow. – Thomas Brandlmeier, *Viennale catalogue*, 2004

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Branka Benčić is an independent curator and founder of *Cinemaniac/Think Film* at Pula Film Festival, Croatia (est. 2002) and curator of *Artists' Cinema* series at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb (since 2012). Within *Cinemaniac* she has curated *Think Film 2013*, *Cinemaniac X – Contemporary Art and Film 2011*, *Invisible MAFAF and alternative film practices in ex Yugoslavia 2010*, *Architecture and Cinema 2009*, *Babette Mangolte, films and photography 2008*. Independent exhibitions and screenings: *Damir Ocko Studies on Shivering* (KM Halle für Kunst und Medien, Graz, 2014), *Great Undoing – 55th Annale*, Poreč 2014; *Video Television Anticipation* (Museum of Contemporary Art Belgrade 2013, with A. Sekulic), *Strategies of self-representation in Croatian video art since 1970s* (Marseille 2012), *Clueless Geometry of Misunderstanding* (Torino 2010). Writes on contemporary art and media and published the monograph *Everything is Connected, the context of cinema clubs – amateur, alternative and experimental film and New Art Practice*, 2012.

Hrvoje Turković (born 1943 in Zagreb, Croatia). Turković has extensively published film reviews, essays, theoretical papers, encyclopedic entries and books on film, TV and visual art. Turković was the initial president of the Croatian Society of Film Critics (1992–1994), and the current president of the Croatian Film Club Association (from 1998), member of the Advisory Board for Cinema at the Ministry of Culture, Croatia, and is currently a member of the Board of Governors of the Croatian Audiovisual Center. He was editor of *Studentski list* and currently chief editor of the *Film Encyclopedic Dictionary*. He was curator of Multi-Media Center in Zagreb (1976–1977), and he has worked at the Academy of Drama Art, lecturing mostly on film theory from 1977 to 2009.

Dr Martin Brady teaches in the German and Film Studies Departments at King's College London. He has published on film (Straub-Huillet, Haneke, Bresson, Seidl, Wenders, experimental film, literary adaptation, GDR cinema, Kafka and film, 'slow cinema'), music (Arnold Schönberg, Paul Dessau), literature (Paul Celan, Elfriede Jelinek, Peter Handke), philosophy (Adorno), Jewish exile architects, the visual arts (Anselm Kiefer, Joseph Beuys), and disability (the portrayal of thalidomide). He has also translated Victor Klemperer's *LTI* and Alexander Kluge's *Cinema Stories* (with Helen Hughes).



SCREENING SCHEDULE

VLADO KRISTL 1: EARLY FILMS 19.00–21.00, Friday 7 November

Introduction by Madeleine Kristl

Madeleine, Madeleine Vlado Kristl, 1963, 11 min
Arme Leute / Poor People Vlado Kristl, 1963, 10 min

Prometheus Vlado Kristl, 1966, 10 min
Italian Capriccio Vlado Kristl, 1969, 30 min

VLADO KRISTL 2: CROATIAN AVANT-GARDE 16.00–18.00, Saturday 8 November

With presentations by Hrvoje Turkovic and Branka Benčić.

Krada dragulja / Juwelenraub / Great Jewel Robbery Vlado Kristl, 1959, 10 min

Don Kihot / Don Quixote Vlado Kristl, 1961, 10 min
Encounters / Sretanja Vladimir Petek, 1963, 8 min

Rondo Ivan Martinac, 1962, 6 min
General I resni Clovek / The General Vlado Kristl, 1962, 10 min

Twist-Twist Ante Verzotti, 1962, 12 min
Termiti / Termites Milan Šamec, 1963, 1.40 min

Scusa Signorin Mihovil Pansini, 1963, 7 min
K3 or Clear Sky Without Clouds Mihovil Pansini, 1963, 2 min

Morning of a Faun Tomislav Gotovac, 1963, 8 min

VLADO KRISTL 3: FILM AND AUTHORITY 19.00–21.00, Saturday 8 November

Introduction by Martin Brady

Der Bräutigam, die Komödiantin und der Zuhälter / The Bridegroom, The Comedienne and The Pimp Jean-Marie Straub & Danièle Huillet, 1968, 23 min
Obrigkeitsfilm / The Film of the Authority Vlado Kristl, 1971, 90 min

VLADO KRISTL 4: ANTI-FILMS 19.00–21.00, Wednesday 12 November

Kino Zwei Edgar Reitz, 1970, 7 min [extract]
Der Damm / The Dam Vlado Kristl, 1964, 81 min

VLADO KRISTL 5: DEATH TO THE AUDIENCE 19.00–21.00, Friday 14 November

Die Verräter des jungen deutschen Films schlafen nicht / Traitors of the Young German Film Aren't Asleep Vlado Kristl, 1982, 6 min
Tod Dem Zuschauer / Death To The Audience Vlado Kristl, 1984, 102 min

VLADO KRISTL 6: THE END OF ORDER 16.00–18.00, Sunday 16 November

Tigerkäfig / Tiger Cage Vlado Kristl, 1971, 14 min
Die Schule der Postmoderne / School of the Postmodern Vlado Kristl, 1990, 15 min

Kunst ist nur außerhalb der Menschengesellschaft / Art is only outside Human Society Vlado Kristl, 2002, 9 min
Der letzte Klon / The Last Clone Vlado Kristl, 1998, 6 min

Weltkongress der Obdachlosen / Conference of the Homeless Vlado Kristl with Carola Regnier, 2003, 5 min
Als man noch aus persönlichen Gründen gelebt hat / When People Were Still Living for Personal Reasons Vlado Kristl, 1993, 8 min

Die Hälfte des Reichtums für die Hälfte der Schönheit / One Half of Wealth for One Half of Beauty Vlado Kristl, 1994, 9 min

CREDITS

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Page 8: Cover of *Titel und Würden* by Vlado Kristl, 1DM Verlag, Michael Kellner, Hamburg 1983

Detail from *Die Partei der Intelligenz* by Vlado Kristl, Saarländisches Künstlerhaus, Saarbrücken, 1992.

Page 9: Detail from *Vlado Kristl zum 80. Geburtstag* by Vlado Kristl, Weltstatt Kino, München, 2003

Page 10: Detail from *Postmoderne* by Vlado Kristl, Michael Kellner, München, 1988

Page 13: Cover of *Als man noch aus persönlichen Gründen gelebt hat* by Vlado Kristl, 1DM Verlag, Hamburg 1986

Detail from *Vlado Kristl zum 80. Geburtstag* by Vlado Kristl, Weltstatt Kino, München, 2003

Page 17: Detail from *Die Partei der Intelligenz* by Vlado Kristl, Saarländisches Künstlerhaus, Saarbrücken, 1992.

Backcover: *Ausstellung Kunst findet ausserhalb der Welt statt* by Vlado Kristl, Galerie Kalus Lea, München, 2003.

Quotations from Vlado Kristl were translated from German by Martin Brady originally published in the following sources:

Sekundenfilme / Second Films by Vlado Kristl, edited by Wolf Wondratschek, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1971.

Vlado Kristl retrospective programme, München Filmmuseum, 1988



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