

foreign & domestic

TINMANTIS

ELITE FINE ART

May 22 – June 28, 2026

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Foreign & Domestic, 24 Rutgers Street, New York
opening Friday, May 22, 6-8pm

He has slogans too.

Things like: **No friends, no trends**. Did he make it up?

He also likes to pose with weapons, but we'll get to that.

A Testament In Defense Of The Madman Known As TINMANTIS

I don't remember who first told me about **TINMANTIS**, and I don't have time to figure it out. My memory is like a moldy Swiss cheese. But I do have an eye for art, and I believe that **TINMANTIS** is great genius whose work demands our close attention. It's a production full of surprises and novelties, exotic visual pleasure alternating with perplexingly hateful threats. He makes great quantities, the better to smother us, to drown us all with wave after majestic wave.

We gave him a key to the city, and he used it to stir a pot of bitter juices.

Who is he, and what? **TINMANTIS** manifests a determined commitment to obscure the most basic facts of his life. It's well known that I am also a person who has obfuscated my identity, so I may have an insight, yet I really have no clarity about why I behave this way. I can tell you that it stretches far back into my childhood. I always hated having a name — it seemed like the first step down a rocky, rocky road to hells of parental surveillance and punitive social judgements. I experience someone asking my name as something of an assault. Of course, you have to prepare in advance for such assaults, by having six extra names that you go through, like a cheating gambler shuffling a deck of cards.

I bring this up because **TINMANTIS** has the same problem or some version of it. I don't know if he has some dark secret he's hiding... But you don't have to have a dark secret to not want anybody to know who you are, or what you do, or what you think about...

There's a good line by so-called "Bob Dylan"... If my thought-dreams could be seen, they'd probably put my head in a guillotine...

We are, of course, living in a time when the phenom of social media means that the forces of evil have full access to everything we think and do, for better or for dystopian worse, and odds are this is just proper preparation for a grotesque future culling of the human race based on our Facebook posts. Place your bets! *Don't darken the sky with clouds that bleed!*

Anyway, I am fully transparent compared to the darkling maze that is **TINMANTIS**' identity. He poses in pictures always with a mask, a white mask like something you would put over someone's head before you execute them. Except it has eye-holes, and it's quite dirty.

He tops it with a black beret, apparently referencing an ancient stereotype ridiculing French artists. It's a joke from post-WW2 cartoons, after America's abstract expressionists had seized the planetary art-world crown and enjoyed looking snottily down at the deposed Frogs.

Or maybe it's about beatnik culture? Wherever the source, it's not funny. I don't know, but it's the kind of mistake a surreptitiously invading space alien might make.

Furthermore, I am just being polite when I refer to **TINMANTIS** as a he, because even though he presents as a bio-man, I've had my doubts!

Anyway, I started telling this guy via Insta how much I liked his art and how I thought he was a genius, very sincerely. He later told me that he didn't sleep for three days because I was the Mark Flood. Back when it meant something — boo-hoo.

We decided to trade work, and I traded him ten or so trademark Mark Floods for a nice roll of his paintings on paper.

I knew at least that my little time capsule of the **TINMANTIS** legacy would be safe for the future. At the time, I felt like he was dangerously under-known. Because whenever you see a genius/nut with a huge pile of great Art nobody knows about, sometimes there's a tragic loss. Because huge piles of art are as fragile as butterflies' wings.

Kafka's last wish, from his deathbed, was that his best buddy burn all his writings, which had never been published, and which he kept in a big trunk. The buddy assured him he would ash that shit, and then, thank Heaven, he published them all.

In other news, **TINMANTIS**' practice bristles with technical novelty. Those who know me know that I look for technical novelty in art, because art cannot be great without it. With it, you cannot help but make art that has never been made before.

A good example of one technical novelty apparently pioneered by the Mantis is in his series of portraits of

historical figures made with chains. He will draw the portrait by doling out lengths of fine chain onto a support. He then spray-paints, stenciling the chain.

You end up with a charmingly novel style of portrait, made with a line that references slavery. Chain, like the chain of a swing-set more than anything. Yet, he did all the presidents of the USA and many other colonizers, so there is a strange political edge poking out of the winter landscape of his general madness.

He has also gone down the glitter road, and as you know, it is a classic case of technical novelty in the service of madness.

I could go on celebrating the violent stumbling downward of an entire civilization that is **TINMANTIS**, and I shall in an irrational way, *but since **TINMANTIS** came, the whole world is upside down. He didn't even write a catalog résumé on the **TINMANTIS** run of glorious days. Or a book of aesthetic rules he wisely disobeyed! He didn't volunteer all the different ways he was willing to pay and pay and pay. Leave us alone, **TINMANTIS**. Please leave us alone! Spare us your touch, cruel demon! Your genius is like a bony finger dipped in an acid bath!*

This is the end of my sane thoughts on the genius, and perhaps an empty and un-amusing musing on the acceptance and study of the art of **TINMANTIS** as a mental disease.

Thank you,
Mark Flood

ELITE FINE ART is the first solo exhibition by **TINMANTIS**

A written interview by Pujan Gandhi will accompany the exhibition.

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