

# Meet the Artist

by

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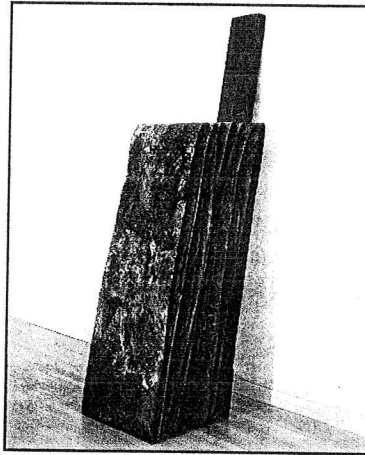
The painter and sculptor **Johannes Girardoni** represents exactly what one could call a phenomenon in the artworld — a very young artist expressing himself in a very mature way, which attracted immediately the interest of gallery owners, art critics and the public.

Born 1967 in Graz to a well-known business family, Johannes spent his childhood in Vienna, where he had, through his parents, the chance to get into a close relationship with such important Austrian contemporary artists as Arnulf Rainer and Josef Mikl. Spending plenty of time in their studios Johannes' own interest in art and in painting grew rapidly.

In 1982, the family moved to California, then to Boston, and Johannes attended the Bowdoin College in Maine. Instead of following his father's footsteps he decided to study art and history. A decision which was justified by his excellent marks and the enthusiastic comments of his teachers. His parents who were supporting the young artist in a rather impressive way, moved again after his graduation — this time to the heart of the actual artworld, to SoHo, where they live right now next door to all main galleries.

To get in contact with galleries is not as easy as one

would imagine and usually the artist needs someone to introduce him. In Johannes' case it was a highly recognized gallery owner, the art writer and critic Pater Menneges, a Jesuit priest from Cologne, Germany. He recommended Johannes, fascinated by the deep, spiritual paintings he had seen in the artist's studio, to Stephen Haller, also a very well known SoHo gallery owner. Haller immediately took Johannes under contract, gave him several one-man shows and was able to find many collectors for his work in the United States and in Europe.



Fortunately, all this fast success did not spoil Johannes as it was the case with many other young artists. On the contrary, he works even more diligently, always searching to combine the spiritual world with the pure painting: "I am interested in the mystical relations between the spiritual world and the physical world. It shows more and more in my art. For instance, I use hinges in my pictures, the visitor should not only be involved through the visual aspect but through the physical as well. Therefore, I also use nature in form of wood or other materials I find in the streets." Johannes Girardoni's next show at Stephen Haller Gallery will be in spring 1993.