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ART

Making the Art World a Better, and Better-Dressed, Place

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by **Todd Eberle** April 14, 2010, 11:00 PM

For the past decade, the New York art world has been greatly enriched by two visionary women, Yvonne Force Villareal and Doreen Remen, who, with director Casey Fremont, comprise the Art Production Fund. Founded by Force Villareal and Remen, both fashion plates in their own right, the not-for-profit has struck the hard-to-find balance between the art and fashion worlds and done it with smarts and sexiness, something that can be woefully lacking in the art world.



New Yorkers became intimately acquainted with A.P.F.'s activities this winter with "Art Adds," a series of works by artists Alex Katz, Yoko Ono, and Shirin Neshat that appeared on the ad spaces of 500 taxi tops. It amounted to a 24/7 art campaign, with an estimated five million "viewers"—an audience that few, if any, art projects can claim. For the past five years, A.P.F. has had a sell-out run of its artist-commissioned beach towels, from the "Works on Whatever" collection; you can wrap yourself in terry-cloth pieces by Cindy Sherman, Julian Schnabel, Marilyn Minter, and Rob Pruitt, among many others.

If, in the past five years, you happen to have made the art pilgrimage to Marfa, Texas, to the holy grail of Donald Judd's Chinati Foundation, you have seen *Prada Marfa*, a façade of a Prada store with stocked windows, only you can't enter and can't buy anything. It's the one and only surrealist designer pop-up shop that's a permanent installation, a project A.P.F. produced, with artists Elmgreen and Dragset, literally in the middle of nowhere. In 1998, A.P.F. put itself and Vanessa Beecroft on the international stage with Beecroft's *Show* at the Guggenheim, where Gucci-era Tom Ford helped cover an army of girls with sparkling bras and panties while they stood and slouched and laid on the floor of the museum's rotunda.

A.P.F. has sponsored more masculine pursuits, such as, in 2007, Aaron Young's *Greeting Card* at the Park Avenue armory, where another army, this time of stunt motorcycle riders, created a massive painting by making "burn-outs" on 9,216 square feet of plywood panels sealed with underpainting.

On Monday night, at the world-famous Boom Boom Room at the top of the New York Standard Hotel, A.P.F. threw itself a 10th-birthday celebration that could have passed as an A.P.F. performance unto itself. The circus-like gala was M.C.'d by rap legend Fab 5 Freddy and included performances by Kembra Pfahler and by Terence Koh, who painted his hand gold. Linda Yablonsky, the sage recorder of the art world, had a booth called "Personal Genius." Sadly, I never did find my way back to Linda for her estimable wisdom, what with all the free-flowing Dom Pérignon (I was "working"—I have a challenging job).

The apexes of the art and fashion worlds were there in full force, and, in a rare moment, became a single, blurred entity to celebrate the fabulous ladies of Art Production Fund, as well as the guests of honor, Warhol icon "Baby Jane" Holzer and art philanthropist Jennifer McSweeney. Here's to another decade of Yvonne, Doreen, and Casey's making the art world a better place. And, certainly, a better-dressed place ...



Yvonne Force Villareal and Doreen Remen, co-founders of the Art Production Fund.

