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Subject: Nome d'us, May, Vienna

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To: Anna Andersson, Stefania Batoeva, Maria Gorodeckaya, Adrienne Herr, Vera Karlsson, Miranda Keyes, Atiéna Lansade, Cecilie Norgaard, Matilda Tjäder

Dear all,

I have been offered a solo exhibition with Shore in Vienna in May, this year. Shore is a gallery initiated and run by Paul Makowsky, formerly of Super. This will be the inaugural show. As I have worked with Paul before, exhibiting in Berlin and Brussels, this opportunity is based on an already existing relationship based on previous work and lay the foundation for the offer. Shore is therefore symbiotic of a generous body, rooms that are hospitable.

This support structure is something that I want to keep building on, one that lends itself to opportunities to share the process, communicate and co-work. I see the singularity of the solo as a myopic view of what could become if I extended this hospitality to you.

The genesis of this show is therefore the decision to turn what is the singular (solo) into the manyfold (group) opportunity. This is the backbone of the show; The instinctual sharing. But the rhizome of the concept branch into a wider scheme. I would like the show, shared, to not only oppose the trope that we, artists, seek our names in bold, solo, rather than see the strength being one of many, a group.

I would like to contextualise this value of the group and the communication within, which can be far more giving than the monologue of the self. Further I would like to oppose the banal notion that women's ambition often is a detriment to the ambition of other women and the countless trite metaphors that ensues. The tropes and synecdoches of the exhibiting female identifying artist. The dull stereotype that any woman who is ambitious and driven, drives this through with ruthless singularity, paradoxically when seeking the meaning of 'exhibition' the english dictionary offers;

noun

noun: **exhibition**; plural noun: **exhibitions**

Phrases

make an exhibition of oneself — behave in a very foolish or ill-judged way in public.

"she looked around the bar to see if she was making an exhibition of herself"

The genesis of the show is therefore an opposition to the analogies of women exhibiting, from many angles. This is the context that the shared opportunity exists in but not necessarily only an agency which will be the literal premise of the show. I feel that the context being present through the thought process is more important to create the body of work between us, than to subjectivise all that is shown to this topic and to clarify its critique with further written statements.

Meaning that this is the clear underlying thought and premise for the opening up of the show, from solo to group but not necessarily one that needs another voice, than that of the work we make under this cover.

This show will be part of a larger thought -

“Maybe there is a substitute for exhibiting” this collective question, statement and context is one which I have been working within for some time. Maybe it seems paradoxical to ask this question within the format of exhibiting, but it is not strictly a search for dichotomies; a fault-finding in institutions, it is an exploration of potential emancipatory effects on exhibiting, on showing, on declaring a space as name, deviations from the singularity of the artist, the opposition to dogmatic ownership and the possibility to open up one's opportunity to others to change the content. A kind of support structure systemology, perhaps. ‘Nome d’us’ will conclude the theme and will generate part of the content for a book that I am realising under the same title with Shore later this year, in which all work would figure.

I would like to ask if you would like to be part of the interstice that I would like to create as a chasm in the singular, into which I would insert us, as group. If so, your work will be housed in the named unnamed (Nome d’us) temporary collective, that are of the rooms of Shore. The work can enter into dialogue and/or form connections with other work in the show, we can co-work and collaborate, both in stage of thought and states of exhibition. This is not an anonymous body of work. By the ‘named unnamed temporary collective’, I mean rather that we have the collective understanding of the concept of the show which will be given voice and agency through our work, rather than explained and clarified through text. The work will exist in separate states and situations, however claim no singular voice but echo into a choir.

Nome d’us is a play on words. Nom de guerre is a name (nom) of war (guerre), a pseudonym / persona that you enter into to be able to perform a task, which requires you to take on another role / self. Here I use it in a format which gives the group - us - a collective cover, a title ohne title, a meta name; no me, us.

All my best,
Sanna Helena Berger