

Helmhaus Zürich

22 September to 19 November 2017

An Exhibition for You

With Tonjaschja Adler, Nicole Bachmann, Stefanie Knobel, Eilit Marom, Anna Massoni, Elpida Orfanidou, Adina Secretan, Simone Truong, Sophie Nys, Andrea Oki, Ceylan Öztrük, Yeliz Palak, RELAX (chiarenza & hauser & co), Vreni Spieser, Felix Studinka, Peter Tillessen, Gian-Andri Töndury, Alexander Tuchaček

You write. But who do you write for? Who are you addressing when you write about an art exhibition? Who do you have in mind? The connoisseurs or the philistines? Anybody and everybody? Or just yourself? Or primarily the art journalists? We make exhibitions. But who do we make them for? This exhibition is “for You”! We’ve given some thought to the way an art exhibition can be not just about myself but about you too. And we’ve attempted to play out the immense potential of “You” in today’s society.

We’ve had Generation Y, and Generation Why, and Generation Why Not, and even Generation I. We’re all for Generation You! Because we think that we’ve optimized ourselves quite enough for the neoliberal system and that it’s now time to improve the rapport with You. Because we would rather reach out to overcome the deliberate populist political divisions instead of patting ourselves on the shoulder for the rectitude of our convictions. And because we would rather burst the digital and social bubble instead of succumbing increasingly to the self-centredness of social media.

For this group exhibition, we have embarked on an experiment. Since April, we’ve been meeting up as a group – artists, curators and other Helmhaus staff – every last Friday of the month at 4 p.m. in the Helmhaus library. To act as a You for each other. In order, perhaps, to become a We. And the upshot of our five meetings? That We is not so easy to achieve. Maybe because the artistic approaches are so different, maybe because of the risk that the overall collaboration will defuse one’s own argumentation. (We will keep on meeting during the exhibition – and then we hope to meet You! On 29 September 2017, at 4 p.m. and on 27 October 2017, at 4 p.m.)

And You? Who are You? Who is the “Exhibition for You” actually aimed at? We’ve mulled that question over for hours on end during our meetings. Are we making art for the same people you are writing articles for? Do we want to impress our own colleagues with our works or do we want them to appeal to a whole range of different Yous – ideally people we don’t even know? (Such as the participants in the Problem Zone Discussion on 16 November 2017, at

6.30 p.m., who will be addressed directly during the exhibition and invited to come up onto the stage.) An exhibition for You, perhaps? You tell us.

Perhaps it will also be an exhibition about You. Or an exhibition with You. Or even an exhibition that would not exist without You. For instance, because You have to reckon with being told why somebody would sleep with You (Simone Truong). Because You have to decide for yourself which of the countless theories put forward You would accept (Gian-Andri Töndury). Because You cannot escape the personal exchange between two long-distance lovers, spelled out in capital letters on the original garments (Vreni Spieser). Because You have to accept the challenge of becoming an animal before You become You (Alexander Tučaček). Or just because ...

Events (see invitation card for details)

We have invited a feminist economist, a communications expert, members of a dance group for senior citizens and the spirit of a past relationship. We talk about unknown dealers, about trees as Yous, and about the responsibility we have towards You, or about how we like to be touched. Is there something for You in any of that? As we said: You tell us!