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The Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation Announces

Alexis Heller and Tatiana Muñoz-Brenes
as Recipients of Inaugural Curatorial Open Call

Fall 2022 Exhibition to Examine Gender-based Violence in Latin America through the Work of Female and Non-Binary Contemporary Artists

New York, NY – June 21, 2022 - The Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation is pleased to announce Alexis Heller and Tatiana Muñoz-Brenes as the recipients of its first-ever curatorial open call. Together they will stage an exhibition at its space, The 8th Floor.
“We decided to establish the open call for curators after determining a need for this kind of opportunity to exist within an established exhibition space,” explained the Foundation’s Artistic Director Anjuli Nanda Diamond, who continued, “we have been delighted and inspired by the response we have received from the curatorial community, and have decided this initiative will become a staple of our exhibition program at The 8th Floor in the future.”

*El Corazón Aúlla (Heart Howls): Latin American Feminist Performance in Revolt* will be curated by both Heller and Muñoz-Brenes, opening on September 29, 2022 and running until January 21, 2023. The exhibition will look at gender-based violence in Latin America, through the eyes of artists and activists who bear its daily burden. Working from Peru, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, El Salvador, Chile, Brazil, and Argentina, the female and nonbinary artists included in this exhibition harness their practices for rebellion. Using their own bodies, they activate the spaces of rage, fear, madness, refusal, ritualized mourning, and feminist community care that they inhabit in their fight for survival. Performance is a particularly powerful tool for confronting brutal absence and loss, because like life itself, the ‘aliveness’ is experienced in the moment. Once the performance or person has passed, we are left only with documents, ephemera, and memories.

As Heller and Muñoz-Brenes explained in their submission statement: “The pieces shown are an example of the growth of Latin American feminist performance, committed to the miscegenation that represents both the origin of our historical past and the hybrid notion of performance itself. As a visual language, performance confronts the viewer with an event of bodies, and prompts an emotional response without the mediation of speech. Gender violence, reaching its highest peaks in feminicide and state violence, is a topic that should be howled when shouting it is not enough, and that should go through political corporality and affections, when reason and common sense are not enough to bring about change. These performances, their aesthetic decisions, and their particular social contexts answer questions that other artistic media cannot answer, or that could not establish an alliance with the viewer in the search for social justice.”

The curators were selected from a pool of applications by their peers. In addition to an exhibition budget, they will be guided and supported in their administrative, planning, and promotional endeavors by the curatorial team at the Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation.

**Alexis Heller** received a BA in Psychology from Wesleyan University and an MA in Social Work from Columbia University. She began an independent curatorial practice in 2012 centering marginalized LGBTQIA+ and Feminist histories. Heller has organized a number of exhibitions at the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art in NYC, Smack Mellon in Brooklyn, as well as several alternative art spaces. She currently lives between New York and Costa Rica.

**Tatiana Muñoz-Brenes** is an art curator and researcher. She holds degrees in Art History and Psychology from the Universidad de Costa Rica. Muñoz-Brenes work focuses on LGBTQIA+ art and her curatorial interests include community museums, sustainability, and collection research. In addition, she has extensive experience in international projects, lectures, publications and museum training.

**About the Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation**
The Foundation believes in art as a cornerstone of cohesive, sustainable communities and greater participation in civic life. In its mission to make art available to the broader public, in particular to underserved communities, the Foundation provides direct support to, and facilitates
partnerships between, cultural organizations and advocates of social justice across the public and private sectors. Through grantmaking, the Foundation supported cross-disciplinary work connecting art with social justice via experimental collaborations, as well as extending cultural resources to organizations and areas of New York City in need. sdrubin.org

About the 8th Floor
The 8th Floor is an independent exhibition and event space established in 2010 by Shelley and Donald Rubin to promote artistic and cultural initiatives. Inspired by The Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation, the gallery is committed to broadening the access and availability of art to New York audiences. Seeking further cultural exchange, The 8th Floor explores the potential of art as an instrument for social change in the 21st century, through an annual program of innovative contemporary art exhibitions and an events program comprised of performances, salon-style discussions, and those organized by external partners. the8thfloor.org

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