



## DIZER NÃO

### OPEN INVITATION

*In May 2021, we sent the following text to 50 artists inviting them to be part of the “Dizer Não” project. What is exposed in this exhibition is part of the result of this invite. In the meantime, a website is being built.*

There is an insistent question hammering today in the minds of artists, producers and workers from the cultural sector in Brazil alike: how do we react to the barbarities of the present? From the government's denial of the pandemic to outright lies about the country's environmental policy; from the condescending, racist, transphobic, homophobic and misogynist mindset and policies that attempt to facilitate gun ownership – for how long will we be forced to tolerate people being killed by covid-19, by the targeted violence against our minorities, by environmental policies that are able to destroy an entire community at the stroke of a pen, or even tolerate hundreds of thousands going through “food insecurity” (a nickname for an old acquaintance: hunger)?

Is it possible, at this moment, to articulate a critical response coming from the arts and culture sector? How to insert art back into the public debate so that it might be able to make, through its sharp questioning and imagery, a broad yet precise and forceful critique of the situation in which we find ourselves? How does one continue not only producing, but also publicly exhibiting and funding current projects? How does one find the time to reflect when their own survival is at risk? How does one create opportunities in a time of social isolation, in the midst of the dismantling of the precarious ways of financing artistic actions, especially when the government labels artists as “layabouts”? Would the appropriate reaction be to stop everything? In an attempt of a radical refusal of everything that this institutional power represents.

These are the questions that this project addresses: can art **SAY NO**? What is feasible to put in motion today? How can it be done? Is it possible for us to reflect together on what artists and other cultural agents should – in an ethical sense – do or not do? What is effectively up to us (artists, producers and cultural workers) in this situation? What are the limits of our actions?

It was this constant oscillation, between acting and not acting, that this project took shape. It was, and still is, between the will to fight and the mourning that is imposed on us daily, between the importance of symbolic, language and thought experiments; and the confrontation with death, with the insignificance of life, that we move back and forward. We must go on, we can't go on. We'll go on. In echoing Beckett's final lines in *The Unnamable*, we go back and forth in wavering, ambiguous, dismayed motions.

Going against the reasoning that hastily decreed the obsolescence of physical exhibitions, we decided to try one more time. Insisting on the presence of the object, on the possibility of bodily enjoyment, on contact with matter -- even in times when the encounters between people have (rightly so) been strictly regulated. As organizers, we propose to build, with the help of each artist who takes part in the project, two complementary platforms: a formerly abandoned printing press in São Paulo, and a website. Those who are not inclined to participate in one of them can contribute to the other. Declines from our invitation may also be shared publicly on the site, as a gesture to embrace all forms of **"SAY[ing] NO"**.

In addition to this text, which presents the principles of the project, we would like to indicate a group of works - some of which are well known - that were present in the process of building this proposal. They served as a conceptual basis and form a kind of referential nucleus, reminding us that aspects of what we are addressing have already appeared in the work of other artists: Cildo Meireles *“Fiat Lux: o Sermão da Montanha”* (1974-1979); Francis

Allys “*Paradox of Praxis 1: Sometimes Making Something Leads to Nothing*” (1997); Jota Mombaça, “*Veio o Tempo em que por Todos os Lados as Luzes Dessa Época Foram Acendidas*” (2018) ; Juçara Marçal, *Encarnado* (2014) and Regina José Galindo, “*Monumento a los Invisibles*” (2018). We believe that these artworks speak to the urgency of our situation more than ever.

Our objective is to reignite value and worth in spontaneous production processes, by representing them as a tangible dissatisfaction of artists and insisting on presence and materiality of art, even when we are under direct threat. This is a proposal to stand together, against the extent of our own limitations and the limitations of the time in which we live in. Through this project, we try to make public what is being thought and produced in these dark times, hoping that we can **SAY NO** to these atrocities, together.

## **ARTISTS**

Ana Dias Batista  
André Komatsu  
Bertô  
Bruna Kury e Gil Porto Pyrata  
Cildo Meireles  
Clara Ianni  
C. L. Salvaro e Frederico Filippi  
Coletivo ...mesmo alienado  
Cuca Ferreira  
Daniel Jablonski  
Denise Alves-Rodrigues  
Edu Marin  
Elizabeth Slamek  
Fernando Burjato  
Flora Leite  
Graziela Kunsch  
Isael Maxakali  
JAMAC  
João Loureiro  
Juçara Marçal + Decio 7  
Kadija de Paula & Chico Togni  
Kauê Garcia  
Laura Andreato e MuitasKoisas  
Leda Catunda  
Lia Chaia  
Lícida Vidal  
Lucimélia Romão  
Marcelo Amorim  
MUSEUL\*RA  
Pablo Vieira  
Paola Ribeiro  
Rafael Amorim  
Raphael Escobar  
Regina José Galindo  
Rochelle Costi  
Shima  
Sol Casal  
Vânia Medeiros  
Wagner Pinto

## **DIZER NÃO**

22 July – 19 September  
Rua Cruzeiro, 802 – Barra Funda, São Paulo – SP  
instagram [@dizernao](#)  
facebook [@ProjetoDizerNao](#)