

**BROKEN
EGO**

Through Broken Ego:

five steps towards organization

Though it might be imperceptible at first, Broken Ego, Victoria Colmegna’s first solo show in Los Angeles,tackles delicate issues regarding the heart of political organization. Her starting point is a critique of the structure, today in decay, that permitted the reproduction of power relations and the extraction of wealth in modern society: that structure is the high school clique.

In 2008, at Appetite Gallery in Buenos Aires, VC worked with the twelve signs of the Zodiac represented by twelve men. She lodged the young actors on a farm on the outskirts of Buenos Aires near the Luján River. She fed them, made them talk, challenge, clash with and love each other. The signs of the Zodiac constitute the organizational principle of politics: a primary political faculty of men with the capacity to distribute power on a cosmological scale. Together they form a brotherhood of gods, each bound to a specific domain of action, interacting and sharing power. In a word, she made them leaders. But one of them stings, poisons and sets the story in motion.

1. Sweet Valley and sisterhood:

the title of your best work

(A work in commission)

Broken ego contains three points of access. The first is a series of works incorporating drawings VC commissioned James L. Mathewuse, the legendary illustrator of the Sweet Valley book series, to commemorate her graduation from art school in 2015. The schoolgirls depicted in the series, and in the book series which inspired them, do not share power beyond their field of interests, nor do they need to. In their conversations about boyfriends and dogs, the girls are unproductive; cheerleaders of a model of productivity that ignores them. Work, in the strict sense of the word, is done by the domestic help. They are social scientists of leisure devoted to the study and innovation of personal relationships. Small betrayals and calculated gossip, the inner workings of the

social are populated by a thousand and one ephemeral intrigues the likes of the ones Mme de Staël wrote about, with their spiced up false innocence as the sexual and logical opposition to the masculine aspiration to violence. The ego has not yet entered the world, and maybe never will: once the school girl is ex-matriculated her only option is confinement through marriage.. Isn’t it?

Sweet Valley embodies the paradigm of the commissioned work as a path toward the individual exhibition.

2. Hardy Boys--

Cocaine is for guys--

Group masturbation

(Not included in the solo show; a series of works made at highschool kept by her parents.)

Hardy Boys (A series of stolen science stool seats stamped with faux fur framed hardy boys book covers) together with VCs’ show at Galeria Appetite (2008) address the development and administration of the brotherhood. Forming at the tender age in which the skin’s pores excite and semen emanates, the brothers joke all day long, extracting sap from the trees and the sweat of the workers of the whole world, always with their friends and with their codes of conduct, sharing themselves and leaving long lasting white stains of loyalty.

In 2013, VC mounted an exhibition in an apartment at the top of Kavanagh building (a rationalist monument that crowns the Retiro neighborhood in Buenos Aires). The piece consisted of men’s rugby-style jerseys designed by Victoria Colmegna. The sweaters were hung on the wall facing the viewer, each sweater’s cuffs weaving into its neighbors, like men standing side by side, forming a single body. This is the embrace of total power that imposes a singular rule over existence, like men marching in a row through the streets. The brotherhood is obsessed with rules: the code is not to break the code. Contrary to Aleister Crowley’s motto, the law demands the law not to be broken. Thus, the brotherhood limits and postpones the emergence of chaos in order to grant privilege: the male organization is a recursive search for

the organizational form whose iteration is the history of injustice. Rereading the classic English schoolish bildungsroman (Waugh, Connolly, etc.), VC locates the key to this structure: the exhaustive identification of the individual with the organization he belongs to. Hardy Boys and the show at Appetite explore the possibility of not including the original work in the exhibition, an alternative to the solo show.

3. Judas

(A guest work)

The last supper marks the fracture of the Brotherhood. Power can no longer be shared and reality is left in the hands of a new, insidious magic. Judas' Scorpionic leap creates a new economy based on mobile capabilities instead of the regulated organization of force. Betrayal reveals the self-destructive production of the ego, set in motion when Judas breaks from the individual-group identification, under the new sign of an individuated and therefore disorganized libido.

Judas embodies the model of the work exhibited on institutional loan as a means of accessing the solo show.

4. Selfhood: frenemies, creative elite, masturbation (compulsive, individual) and the new deplorable

(A ghostwritten piece called The 7 year itch).

In the center of the first room 8 winter jackets hang from a metal coat rack. A humming sound hovers around them. At arm's length, upon closer inspection, voices can be singled out. Each jacket contains speakers which are connected to mp3 players. The separate audio channels play atmospheric sounds from different locations that might attract people : a cafe, a shopping mall, an swimmingpool, a bedroom. These various places are distributed according to the topography of the human body as seen from the perspective of an ectoparasite (a flea, tick or scabie): so the crotch of the jacket may be envisioned as a night club, an jacket collar an airport, etc. The sounds

are interrupted by moments of dialogue, an exchange of touristic intelligence between the subjects frequenting these places of transit and repose: where can I get a good sandwich, how do I find a decent apartment, who can I trust here, etc. These individuals network and exchange like spies without any government to report to. Are they nothing but would-be entrepreneurs who can only think where to go next? Is it any better in your country? When the Brotherhood breaks, there is only chance, opportunity and disorder. Subjective autonomy is gained at the expense of structure and stability. The Brotherhood divided the world in its circular recursive code, but in doing so made it coherent, complete, apprehensible. Now the world is a collection of autonomous fragments and the individual wanders without any plausible intention. Selfhood is the term VC chooses to describe the young artist as the foundation of this new state. The features of this stereotypical creative, semi-destitute individual are also the traits of the schizoid as once depicted by modern psychiatrists like Pyotr Borisovich Gannushkin: a figure that is cynical, inauthentic, depersonalized, alternately feeling empty and full of hidden, grandiose fantasies. Withdrawn, aloof, impervious to others' emotions, afraid of intimacy, marginal or eclectically sociable in groups, vulnerable to esoteric movements owing to a strong need to belong, tends to be lazy and indolent. Asexual, free of romantic interests. Secretive, voyeuristic and with pornographic interests. Vulnerable to erotomania, tending toward compulsive masturbation and perversions, absent-minded, engrossed in fantasy, vague and stilted speech, it alternates between eloquence and inarticulateness, autistic thinking with tendencies to fluctuate between sharp contact with external reality and hyper reflectiveness of the self, reverting to a self-centered logic and a centrifugal use of language. This global workforce, portrayed as a collection of fleas: the disempowered cultural producers with no regular income, unfulfilled projects and a markedly weak ability to get organized and gain access to power are the new deplorables who only want to jump from one jacket to the next. But hidden in their absurd,



erratic and frequently superfluous interactions is the cipher to something else.

The 7 year itch enacts the model of the ghost-written, collaborative work as a decisive effort towards the solo show.

5. The Super-Personal and the feminist (wing of the Russian revolution)

(for a future work)

So there are many paths into the solo show through Broken Ego; but no actual solo show. The show is over-curated, populous, somewhat apocryphal, under-acknowledged. It's transpersonal; as in things done by many. By mixing, committing, hosting, inviting, ordering, demanding, asking and begging different things from different people VC found the cipher for selfhood's unresolved dilemma: transpersonal agency. Just look at the show: at the peak of networking, exchanging and including others, everything is kindred. Everything has something, difficult to define, in connection. The problem of receiving transpersonal agency is that we do things with other people all the time, new things, things we couldn't even mention without causing surprise, tenderness or exaltation, but we don't have the tools to think about them properly. We have only the clichés of the old organizations and its's after taste of corruption. But to write something for another person to use is to simulate being another person and thus be able to support her and build energy, it's like raising the neighbor's kid and not even knowing what kind of relationship you're building. Ghostwriters are the aunts of the world: transpersonal heroes who channel and formalize the other people's feelings. Can a show be devised by thinking like that, by projecting oneself that much onto others? Can organizations emerge by thinking like that?

The question of transpersonal agency (or super-personal entities) isn't the newest item in the agenda of radical intelligence. "We must bare in mind," wrote Anatoly Lunacharsky almost a hundred years ago, "that the struggle is for an ideal: the victory over individualism and of communal life based on a natural

merging of personalities into super-personal entities." The new entities Lunacharsky was thinking about were not the old fraternities conceived to share power, nor the exhausting binge-networkings of the young ambitious future despots but real kinds of association like marriage, friendship, a party, or just the preference for such or such an author: structures that the subject can have confidence in; bonding is substitution for frenemy. In times of the Russian Revolution, some of these ideas were shared by the feminist wing of the Bolshevik party. Alexandra Kollontai and Inessa Armand founded the Zhenotdel, the Department for Women Issues of the Revolutionary State in 1919. It was a completely new institution the size of a ministry not only devoted to improving the conditions of women's lives and promoting their rights. The Zhenotdel was also a huge thinking experiment about how all aspects of a woman's life past the Revolution would be: marriage, motherhood, sisterhood, friendship. What could these words mean in the future? This was the starting point. So should VC look forward, leap-frog the solo show and establish a new Zhenotdel? And what would it be like? A party? A school? A spa?

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The 7 hour itch
Sound sculpture comprised of hanger and 10 jackets.



Imaginary champagne order

#93 **The Incredible Madame Aline** Ali thinks she can read fortunes and tell the future...with bad results?

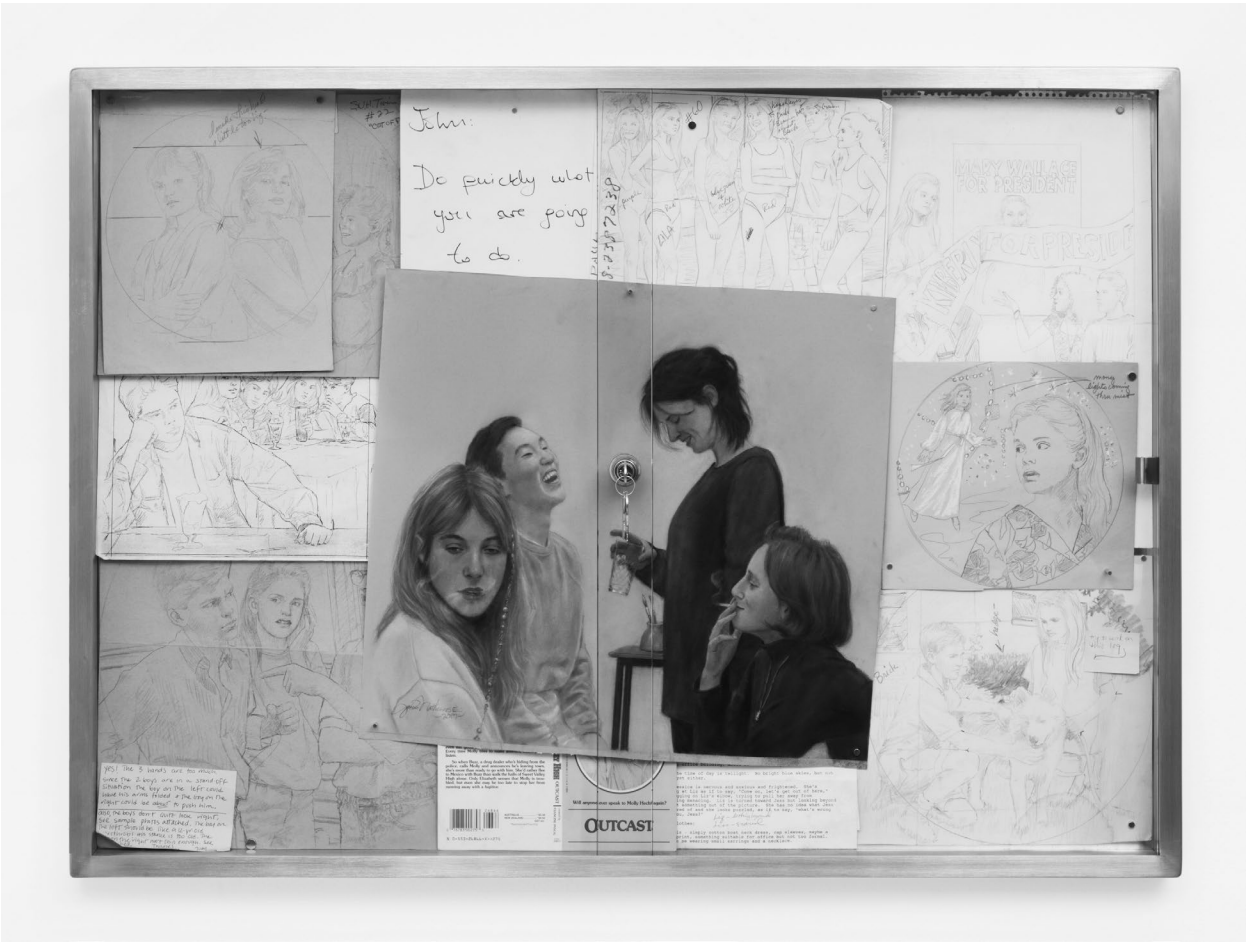
#90 **The Cousin** War Guess who's dating Robbie's dream guy?

#43 **Hard Choices** Will Elif's life ever be the same?



Campus Cool

- #2 **Secrets** What J wants J gets! Even if someone gets hurt.
- #20 **Crash Landing!** Will Julian loose her best friend?
- #4 **Power Play** The twins have taken sides, against each other!
- #103 **Clara solves it all!** Does Clara have all the answers?
- #WW2 **Reconstructing Art School** Its punk to do what can't be done



Broken Ego

- #27 **Team Work** Can the twins prove they are not babies anymore?
- #52 **White Lies** will Bonnie despise Reece when she finds out the truth?
- #22 **Out of place** Is there room in Sweet Valley for an outsider?
- #8 **First Place** Will Sarah risk everything for a horse?
- Super Chiller**, The Carnival Ghost





My way/Flesh

#6 Dangerous Love Are Christopher and Hannah heading for disaster?

#54 Two-Boy Weekend Has Jennifer found someone new?