



***Sex sells – beyond the historical matrix
The female gaze on men and women. The male gaze on men.***

June 5 – August 3, 2024

Opening: Thursday June 4, 7 – 9.30 pm

Artists

Johnny Abbate, Bernadette Anzengruber, Henrietta Armstrong, Pancho Assoluto, Norbert Bisky, Joanna Buchowska, Luke Carter, Rick Castro, Collagism, Kerstin Drechsel, Ute Essig, Tony Franz, Andreas Fux, Cihangir Gümüştürkmen, Renate Hampke, Kirsty Harris, Florian Hetz, Norbert Heuler, Rinaldo Hopf, Male shibari, Jan-Holger Mauss, Anja Müller, Marcel Odenbach, Detlev Pusch, Michael Sayles, Eva Schwab, Tanja Selzer, Marianne Stoll, Thomas Synnamon, Ingo Taubhorn, Stefan Thiel, Petra Tödter, Elmar Vestner and Georg Weise

Preliminary exhibition text

Since time immemorial, women have been seen and depicted as objects in art. The mythologies and later, in the Baroque period, the stories from the Bible were the alibi for men to negotiate the object of desire in its nakedness. The Greek art, however, in ancient time, and thus the Roman art, negotiated nudity equally for both sexes.

Only in recent times, when prudery has fallen (and a new one appears on the horizon again), has the man also become the object of desire, specifically and gratefully taken up by the advertising industry in order to bring the product to be advertised to men and women. On the other hand, proudly swollen pants on handsome men, sometimes even a naked man, are no longer a rarity. Abercromby & Fitch plays perfectly with the lust for men towards men.

The upcoming exhibition deals visually in extracts with the (desiring) gaze of women on men and on women. The male gaze on men is generally rarely heterosexual and if it is, it is dictated by penis envy. The flood of known paintings of men by men neglects the organ that defines him when he is depicted naked - usually in the context of exposed women. The male gaze on the woman is deliberately omitted from this exhibition. It has been too dominant for ages.

The instrumentalization of the naked woman as an object of male desire has only been curbed with the rise of the women's movement. The me too debate since 2017 has given awareness a new and aggressive drive. Today, no car showroom would advertise its latest models with well-busted women.

The gaze negotiated here, often also understood in erotic and explicit terms, aims to trace the self-empowerment that is characteristic of women and mostly gay men. The intermediate stages of the LGTB community are conditionally included. The gaze meanders between self-assurance, the self-confident statement and desire. Almost all media will be represented including AI. The exhibition planning is in the process of being formulated. It is work in progress.

Only my own aesthetic view and the desired openness and curiosity are parameters for the curation.

Semjon H. N. Semjon, April/May 2024

Image: Andreas Fux, Detail from *Fürchte Dich nicht* from the series *Im letzten Viertel der Nacht* 2016, 50 x 50 cm, artist C print