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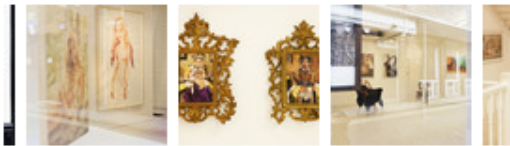
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courtesy ShowStudio

EXHIBITION  
**Selling Sex, the women's choices**



*"It is a well known fact that the majority of images we consume are created by men, and too often feminism is an easy target for commodification in the wider context of contemporary culture."*  
Who said/wrote this?

The SHOWstudio team discovered a shocking set of statistics, as stated in the press release, that reveal the fact there are only three professions in which a woman can earn more money than a man: pornography, prostitution and modelling. This, as much as the discovery of the under-representation of female artists in art museums, TV, and other media, influenced the curators of SHOWstudio to produce this exhibition. Entitled Selling Sex, this exhibition features exclusively female artists. The works on display explore the artists' views on sex and the female nude and examine the way these subjects are portrayed. The photographers, artists, sculptors and jewellers featured in this challenging exhibition are emerging as well as well-known names and include Kim McCarthy, Sarah Lucas, Christina Soulou, Liz Cohen, Jessica Lagunas, Danielle Lurie, Betony Vernon, and Stefanie Schneider among many others.

Selling Sex shies away from the clichéd images of female sexuality and explores the feminine nude from a feminist perspective. The works confront themes such as sexuality, nudity, voyeurism and objectification and the message of the different photographs, paintings, videos and sculptures is exceptionally diverse.

German photographer Stefanie Schneider, for example, uses expired Polaroid film stock to create hazy images with a distinct, dream-like quality and washed-out, saturated style. The photographs of her Lollipop series feature loosely woven story lines and alluring female characters and arrest the viewer by refusing to succumb to reality and keep alive the confusion of fact and fiction. Liz Cohen's series of photographs, on the other hand, are a portrait of feminine diversity and the ability to transform. *Bodywork*, the series on display at SHOWstudio, not only examines a wide range of psychological and sociological issues, but also exhibits a desire for love and respect and issues of shifting identities.

The images on display by French photographer Marianne Maric mirror her perception of the body as architecture. Speaking of her work, Maric says, 'I've been constantly taking pictures of my girl friends. My work shifted gradually from shooting them in sophisticated outdoor settings toward a more tridimensional, sculptural approach to the female body.'

Anatomy, by photographer Malerie Marder, is a series of call girls and their clients in a brothel in Rotterdam. The photographs give the viewer access to those most personal moments, strongly conveying feelings of shame, secrecy and sensuality.

This exhibition is not only a direct response to the lack of female artists' representation in major galleries and in the creative media, but also examines the difference between a female and a male perspective on women. How does a woman's image of a nude woman differ from a man's version? Does it resist the traditional constructed gender roles? Is the male gaze more voyeuristic? Is an image of a naked woman's body, produced by a female artist, more empowering? Selling Sex asks the viewer many questions without necessarily supplying any answers. But by successfully tackling the imbalance of gender representation, it makes the viewer think about the perception of gender identities and the role of women in visual culture. One fact becomes increasingly apparent: the battle between the sexes is still happening.

**Anna-Maria Pfab**

*Selling Sex*  
Until Friday 1 June 2012

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**LINKS**  
<http://www.showstudio.com>