

## **SHAME! Exploring Masculinities**

Tentoonstelling, publicatie en  
evenementen programma

**23 oktober 2020 t/m 31 januari 2021**

**Curated by Ernst van Alphen**

Ernst is a curator, author and professor of literary Studies at the Department of Film and Literary Studies of the University Leiden. He recently published *The performativity of provocation: the case of Artur Żmijewski* (2019), *Immediacy versus hypermediacy, straight versus un-straight: staged photography as re-mediation* (2019), *A monument for future memory: the Ringelblum archive as classical archive* (2018), *Attention for distraction: Modernity, modernism and perception* (2018), *Visionaire beelden* (2015) *Staging the archive, Art and photography in the Age of New Media* (2014).

About the artists and their work:

### **Jeanette Christensen (NO)**

<http://www.jeannettechristensen.no/>

The work *La reproduction interdite* is a representation of the Norwegian terrorist Breivik, and is based on Margritte's well known work of 1937 with the same title, now in Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen. The forbidden reproduction in the title is ambiguous: it concerns the kind of masculinity embodied by terrorist Breivik, but also Breivik's refusal to show any self-reflexive awareness of his right-wing masculine attitude in acting out his terrorist ideals.

### **Marlene Dumas (NL)**

<https://www.marlenedumas.nl/>

Marlene Dumas is considered one of the most significant and influential painters working today. Together with the curator, Dumas selected a number of drawings for *SHAME! Exploring Masculinities* that have never been on show before. With her work, she gives new content to the meaning that painting can still have today, in an era dominated by visual culture. Her intense, emotionally charged paintings and drawings address existentialist themes and often reference art historical motifs and current political issues. Dumas often finds inspiration in newspaper and magazine images from her immense visual archive. The artist believes that the endless



stream of photographic images that bombards us every day influences how we see each other and the world around us. Dumas addresses this onslaught by revealing the psychological, social, and political aspects of these images. Her drawings and paintings have an enormous directness and expressiveness, which the artist pairs with a certain analytical distance. Dumas does not shy away from controversial topics. In both her visual work and her writings, Dumas reflects on contemporary painting and what it means to be an artist.

### **Arnoud Holleman (NL)**

<http://www.arnoudholleman.nl/>

De-mythologization is a recurring theme in the work of Arnoud Holleman. De-mythologization is a myth in itself, the myth of liberation from pretensions, the shedding of ballast, the myth of a floating life, unbound, receptive to everything that is supposed to exist around us.

Holleman has never limited himself to one discipline. He participated in theatre projects of Mugmetdegoudentand and with Arjen Ederveen made the television programs Driving Miss Palmen and Television. With Gert-Jan Dröge he made Glamourland, in which the phenomenon known as 'Dutchman' was put into perspective. His efforts for theatre and television also express the need to put his own artistry into perspective. He emphatically goes beyond the boundaries of art and takes part in the world, instead of distancing himself from it.

Seven drawings of penises in various forms and sizes (Black pencil on 9" x 11" sheets of paper) were first published in Butt magazine # 4, in summer 2002 and later in Butt book - adventures in 21st century gay subculture, 2006. They are based on dating site profile pics, named 'Dieter', 'Bram', 'Henk', 'Andrew', 'Harry', 'Erik', 'Martin' and 'Edward'.

### **Hans Hovy (NL)**

<http://hanshovy.nl/>

Usually, the surrealist-erotic platform scenes of Alberto Giacometti assume the gruesome forms of a battlefield. The works of Amsterdam based artist Hans Hovy on the other hand are chiefly playful and light-hearted, despite the ironic designation *The World of Sodom and Gomorra*. In an age dominated by me-too conflicts, this portrayal of sexuality is not only literal and emphatic, it is also liberating. Hovy's arcadian depiction of sexuality should not be regarded as a naive idealization. The scenic depiction of sexuality as a battlefield is, as with Giacometti, more common, and for that reason Hovy's playing fields are more provocative. Or maybe Hovy's depiction of sexuality is provocative precisely because it is a naive idealization. Because ever since Adam and Eve were banished from paradise, sexuality lost its innocence once

and for all. Nonetheless some of Hovy's sexual playing fields have titles such as *Total Innocence of Small, Little, Lovely*. The distinction between good and evil seems, with these works and their titles, to be denied or ignored. Whereas Adam and Eve become aware of their sexuality outside of paradise and cover themselves in shame, Hovy's works seem to express no sense of shame whatsoever. It is rather a matter of total devotion. The form of sexuality that is being evoked here can, in imitation of Sigmund Freud, be called polymorphous in the most literal sense. It concerns forms which, no matter how diverse they are, can merge effortlessly with each other. The consequence of this is fluidity of all associations: male, female, top or bottom, all fixed positions and roles are inverted or interchangeable. The many inner spaces shown in Hovy's works are no longer typically female, nor can the protrusions be considered typically male. Both bodies and platforms have inner spaces and bulges.

**Natasja Kensmil (NL)**

<https://natasjakensmil.nl/>

The subject matter of Natasja Kensmil's drawings (but in other ways also of her paintings) is consistent with situations of violence and temptation. We recognize images from genres which provide the dominant tones in contemporary popular culture: porno films, crime films and the newspaper and television reporting on war and crime. What these genres have in common is that temptation is suggested as violent and violence as tempting. These themes so contrary at first sight become one confused territory in her work. It is because of that confused territory, that her work has mythical dimensions. In the ancient stories such as those of Samson and Delila, Salome and John the Baptist, Judith and Holofernes, the themes of temptation and violence are also inextricably intertwined. In the mythical stories Kensmil evokes, men and women are well matched. There is never a cliched scenario with physically strong men and weak women who need to resort to secretive seduction techniques because they are not equipped for violence. Kensmil depicts the collision of a world of men with a world of women, without this collision being moderated or channelled by a stereotyped plan. The collision is raw: both extremely violent and impressive in a seductive way.

**Nalini Malani (IN)**

<http://www.nalinimalani.com/>

Nalini Malani is a contemporary Indian artist. In her early career she primarily worked in the realms of painting and drawing. Since the 1990s her work expanded to other forms of media like video, film and projected animation. Her works are characterised by the expansion of the pictorial surface into

surrounding space culminating in a layered visual narrative that takes the form of ephemeral wall drawings, shadow play, installations, multi projection works and theatre. She adheres to the vision of the artist as a social activist. Her artworks are often politically motivated and focus on themes of displacement, conflict, transnational politics, critical examination of gender roles and the ramifications of globalisation and consumerism. Throughout the course of her artistic career, she has strived to give voice to the stories of those marginalised by history with a focus on human and universal aspects of conflict and the relationship between the exploiter and the exploited. Literature has been a recurrent source of inspiration and reference for Malani. Her work has been featured in several international museums including Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and the MoMA Museum of Modern Art New York. She lives and works in Mumbai.

**Philip Miller (ZA)**

<https://www.philipmiller.co.za/>

Philip Miller is a South African, international composer and sound artist based in Cape Town, South Africa. His work is multi-faceted, often developing from collaborative projects in theatre, film, video and sound installations.

Miller is currently an honorary fellow at ARC (The Research Initiative in Archive and Public Culture) at the University of Cape Town. One of Miller's most significant collaborators is the internationally acclaimed artist William Kentridge. His music to Kentridge's animated films and multimedia installations has been heard in some of the most prestigious museums, galleries and concert halls in the world, including MoMA, SFMOMA, The Guggenheim Museums in New York and Berlin, Tate Modern, London, La Fenice Opera House, Carnegie Hall and in Australia at the Perth Festival.

Miller's work for Shame! Exploring Masculinities is the soundscape 'Special Boy', a personal and moving piece addressing shame and masculinity. Miller describes shame as a retrospective issue, as a kind of collision between childhood experiences and adult perspectives on them and 'Special Boy' as a way of working through earlier shame, a reclamation and re-appropriation.

**Ina van Zyl (NL/ZA)**

<https://www.inavanzyl.com/about/>

Again and again this artist focuses on a body part, or a small object such as a piece of fruit. She zooms in on it, isolates it, blows it up. The link between object and context, in other words, detail and whole, has been broken. The body parts are no

longer part of anything; they have become isolated, and in their isolation they have become autonomous. The sheen body parts, or other kind of objects evoke the opposition between shame and shamelessness. The sheen suggests the pride of the glans that covers the objects as well as the paint. This pride is so outspoken that it suggests to be the effect of an overcoming of shame through pride, dignity, self-display and exhibitionism. But shame, seen as a social isolation that hovers between introversion and extraversion manifests itself on the skin: a blushing face or the fallen face with eyes down. The sheen on the skin is in that respect not only a symptom of pride, but also of the isolation in which shame results. But finally, in Van Zyl's work shame is overcome by shameless pride of representing blown up details and body parts.

**Artur Żmijewski (PL)**

<https://culture.pl/en/artist/artur-zmijewski>

The works "Gestures" by the Polish artist are a record of gestures of contempt, hatred, and exclusion. The photographs have been taken using the classic technique of chronophotography, which captures human movement through multiple exposure. Each picture is a study of a specific confrontation aimed at the viewer. This analysis is extended through the addition of snapshot camera-recorded films, consisting of sequences of images on 35 mm film. However, in recording actual public scenes, Żmijewski enacts them in the studio using professional actors, thus neither analyzing the roots of the violence nor ascribing them to any particular identity. He looks at the gestures themselves and their morphology, beyond context or ideology. A range of aggressive gestures becomes a synthesis of behaviours, which outside the studio exist as a mean of expression both in private and public spaces, where they constitute social relationships based on domination and exclusion.

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Ontwerp beeldmerk: **Lotte Lara Schröder**

*SHAME! Exploring Masculinities* is open for the audience from 23rd October till 31 January 2021. For programme in the exhibition and exact visiting hours, see: [h401.org/shame](http://h401.org/shame)

Because of the regulations against Corona, there is no regular vernissage. An online registration of a 'private viewing' by curator Ernst van Alphen and a number of the participating artists will be put online.