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# 10 Female Artists Exploring Their Sexualities At A Show At Museum Of Sex



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I write about New York's art gallery system and museum structure. [FULL BIO](#) ✓

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There is an intriguing conundrum in the Museum of Sex's viewership. With its explorations into outsider art, photography, fine arts, and of course, erotica, it obviously attracts a large portion of art savvy viewers. But there are also of plenty of people who are drawn to it for cheap naughty giggles. Therefore, there might be plenty of viewers who find themselves shocked when coming across raw art imagery that puts the sexualities of its creators on display. The upcoming exhibition, *NSFW: Female Gaze*, will undoubtedly make some feel uncomfortable. Curated by curator and fine art photographer Lissa Rivera and Editor-in-Chief of VICE Creator's Project Marina Garcia-Vasquez, the exhibition provides a portal into the raw and diverse forms of sexualities that are reverberating throughout the work of young women in contemporary art and, in turn, are altering the ways in which female sexuality is presented in the broader culture of fashion, cinema, television, literature, and otherwise. Drawing on photography, video, illustration, craft-based art, and painting, *NSFW* highlights young female artists that brazenly challenge their audiences by using their own sexualities and desires as creative catalysts. This exhibition will no doubt thrill as much as it will confound, and excite as much as it will repel. "People come to the Museum of Sex to see their own desires reflected," says Rivera. "And when they don't, many feel alienated. We wanted this exhibition to make people question the nature of art and beauty."

If there is one theme that unites the disparate artists on view in the exhibition, it is that all of their work lays out their own identities. This is not solely art work as voyeurism; this is art work as life, and as love, and as sex, and as identity. The exhibition is a reminder to artists that our own identities can always provide fertile grounds for artistic exploration. "We want people to be inspired to use their own identities in their art work," says Vasquez.

"Because the media and representations of sex in media aren't just limited to whoever decides what goes into the sex tips in *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, there's a whole generation of kids who have grown up with less censorship," continues Rivera. "This feels like a whole new frontier to explore in contemporary art."

Below are just some of the excellent works in the exhibition that expound upon the show's central theme.

Aneta Bartos: Series Title: Boys      Medium: Photography

Polish, New York-based fine art photographer Aneta Bartos, who according to *Adult Magazine* self-defines as a "ferocious 86-year old immigrant hustling in Canarsie," has gained a cultish following for both the haunting, grainy quality of her images (cultivated by blowing up expired polaroid film) and also the sexually explicit and often disturbing thematic content of her work. She is probably best described as a voyeur photographer, looking in onto the sexual acts of others, but she has also been an exhibitionist in the past, posing in front of the camera for a project with three other female photographers and also with her 72-year-old bodybuilder father in an intense examination of the father-daughter relationship for a project called *Family Portrait*. But it is Bartos' role as voyeur that takes precedence at *NSFW* with three images from her project *Boys*. In the series, three unidentified men are pictured masturbating inside a room at the Carlton Arms Hotel. Bartos' gaze is felt in the images, and she depicts the act of jerking off as a kind of ritualistic seance. Somehow, she imbues a nobility into the act of self-pleasure.