

Clages

Brüsseler Straße 5
D-50674 Köln
T + 49.221.99209181
office@mariettaclages.de
www.mariettaclages.de

Blush

Curated by Fabian Flückiger

Eliza Ballesteros, Vaginal Davis, Mona Filleul, Tarek Lakhri, Walter Pfeiffer, Michaela Schweighofer, Monika Stricker, Maria VMier.

March 14th - April 26th 2025

Blushing is more than just a physical reaction - it is a moment of revelation, where inner emotions emerge outwardly. It is a deep cultural and psychological response to shame, vulnerability, and the collision of inner desires with external norms. In this moment, the boundaries between the public and the private blur, and the body becomes a vessel for hidden emotions. This emotion, whose origin lies in the Latin word *emovere*, describes a movement outward - a desire for liberation. It is the moment when unconscious desires come to light and the pent-up heat seeks an escape.

The exhibition *Blush* explores this complex interaction between inner and outer forces, focusing on the bodily expression of shame and desire. It interrogates the tensions between personal desires and the societal, cultural, and biopolitical norms that often place them in conflict. The exhibition raises questions about how identity and sexuality are negotiated within a space shaped by both individual experiences and collective knowledge.

In the spaces of the exhibition, visitors encounter works that present bodies in ambiguous states of revelation - from physical tenderness to painful rejection. These bodily works are in constant confrontation with their own vulnerability, and their forms and movements speak to the tension between the desire to hide and the need to be freed.

Materials and objects, symbolically blushing, are used in the exhibition as carriers of these emotions. They weave together history and present, rural and urban contexts, as well as intimate and societal dimensions. These works simultaneously reflect on the cultural constructs of gender and sexuality that shape us and provide a glimpse into the individual experiences that challenge and expand these constructs.

The exhibition also initiates a reflection on language as both a tool and a limitation of expression. In an increasingly emotionally charged social climate, it demonstrates how language both connects and divides us, playing a key role in the negotiation of intimacy and identity.

Blush is an invitation to recognise the invisible, yet deeply rooted conflicts within us all - the contradictions between what we feel and what we are allowed to show. It challenges visitors to reflect on their relationship to shame, desire, and belonging, and to consider the many forms of self-revelation in a societal space.

A heartfelt thanks to the participating artists and their studios, a private lender, as well as the galleries dépendance, P420, Galerie Allen, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Andrew Reed Gallery, Deborah Schamoni, Air de Paris, Gaulti Zitter, Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi, the Clages Gallery team, Marietta Clages, Marie Hütter, Pauline Keßler, Georg Papadopoulos, Edgar Unger und Charlotte Werner.