

THE PLEASURE PRINCIPLE

Opening: Saturday, September 21, 7-9pm

"Most definitions of pornography have less to do with specific sexual acts and more to do with what pornography is generally defined against: art." Juana María Rodríguez ¹

Maccarone is pleased to present 'The Pleasure Principle,' a group exhibition commissioned by Pornhub, at 300 South Mission Road in Los Angeles. The exhibition will run from September 21st through December 1st, 2019, featuring artwork by Lynda Benglis, Amy Bessone, Louise Bourgeois, Delia Brown, Kathe Burkhart, Nao Bustamante, Cameron, Renee Cox, E.V. Day, Martha Edelheit, Mary Beth Edelson, Tracey Emin, Karen Finley, Trulee Hall, Hilary Harkness, Ann Hirsch, Marilyn Minter, Narcissister, Bettie Page, Laurie Simmons, Annie Sprinkle, Anita Steckel, Doris Wishman, and Bunny Yeager. The exhibition takes form in painting, photography, interactive performance, film, and sculptural installation.

'The Pleasure Principle' highlights a pan-generational group of artists who challenge the censorship of sexual imagery. The show focuses on visionaries who have taken a stand against respectability politics, pushing the limits of imagery one might expect to find in an art gallery. The male gaze has always dominated popular erotica, but these artists disrupt this long and troubled history by carving out their own erotic space. For decades, they have asserted diverse and nuanced expressions of sexuality and sexiness, on their own terms. Amidst increasingly restrictive social media and rampant cancel culture, the exhibition privileges the subversive and the pornographic, the abject and the occult, the sexual and the sexualized.

Collectively, the featured works divorce the erotic body from its objecthood as a pure means for sexual arousal and gratification. The impetus of 'The Pleasure Principle' is to disrupt the historical status of the carnal form as passive object of pleasure. The exhibition space is a platform for unfettered artistic expression, similar to the zone Pornhub has created for uninhibited sexual content on the Internet. Maccarone appreciates Pornhub's initiative to commission a curatorial dialogue between pornography and art, a conversation not commonly acknowledged in the current cultural climate. It is an innovation for a porn-tech superpower trafficking in the glut of online visual content to facilitate an aesthetic IRL experience.

The Pleasure Principle's opening will feature live performances by Karen Finley, Delia Brown, and Narcissister, as well as film screenings by Doris Wishman.

Karen Finley revives her interactive performance, *Sext Me if You Can*, wherein the artist paints personalized portraits based on private, anonymous sext messages sent by participants.

In *Live Drawing*, Delia Brown reanimates the traditional setting of the artist atelier, creating drawings of live models in the gallery space.

Narcissister activates her sculptural installation, *The Face (Performing male facial features)*, originally commissioned by Artpace San Antonio.

A selection of films by Doris Wishman, a prolific independent director, will be screened in the outdoor courtyard during the opening reception.

Gallery hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 11 am to 6 pm.

Please visit www.maccarone.net for details on all performance dates and to commission a portrait through *Sext Me if You Can*.

For more information on The Pleasure Principle exhibit, please visit www.pornhub.com/art/pleasure-principle.

Audio equipment for The Pleasure Principle has been generously provided by Beats by Dre.

¹Rodríguez, *Sexual Futures, Queer Gestures, and Other Latina Longings* (NYU Press, 2014), 147.