



Marsha Owett: *Fifty Shades of Red* Opens at Alfstad& Contemporary

Opening Night Reception: April 7 | Friday, 5:30 - 8:00pm

Exhibition Dates: April 7 – May 28 | Tuesday - Saturday, 11:00 - 5:00pm

SARASOTA, FL - Alfstad& Contemporary is pleased to present *Fifty Shades Of Red*, the second solo exhibition of New York-based artist Marsha Owett.

Sex and photography are all about manipulating perception. Desire to capture or prolong a moment can blur some details as it brings others into heightened focus. In Marsha Owett's latest body of work, *Fifty Shades of Red*, we're never quite sure what we're looking at, but we can't help but feel it.

Sight and touch are two of the most closely related senses—an image of a texture can elicit a palpable response, and a teasing lack of visual information invites our tactile minds to wander. In pieces such as *Shade 8*, floral and human flesh are compressed through a shallow depth of field. A flower petal or sliver of skin might reveal their imperfections, but not their contexts. It's a titillating subversion of gestalt theory—a cropped white rose could be a thigh, a finger tip could be a breast.

Challenging conventions of aging and sexuality, “imperfections” are often the only detail in focus in an image. Owett's eye for evocative texture is turned towards her own body, defiantly exposing vulnerability. These macro shots of flesh are often draped in rose petals, framing the artist's skin in a sensuous palette. Each image feels simultaneously honest and luxurious—resolutely sexy in their embrace of passing time.

In other images, flowers act as surrogates for the body. Through a practice likened to action painting or automatic drawing, Owett shoots thousands of photos of the flowers, acting out fantasies upon her proxy flesh. The resulting images, which feature no post-production, alternately convey lust, trauma, desire, or heartbreak in fifty shades of red.

Marsha Owett is a Russian born artist. Her work has appeared in solo shows at Splashlight Gallery, the Muse Center of Photography and Moving Image, Alfstad& Contemporary, as well as in group exhibitions at David Zwirner Gallery, Postmasters Gallery, Northern-Southern, and Underline Gallery, among others. Her work has been featured in the Wall Street Journal, site95 journal, and Deep Sleep Magazine, and named Critics' pick in new York Magazine. In 2016 Owett co-curated a group exhibition “MIMIC: A group exhibition about mimicry, illusion, and material transformation in art” at Air Circulation Gallery with critic Paddy Johnson.

Alfstad& Contemporary is located at 1419 5th Street, Sarasota, FL 34236 in the Sarasota Design District.
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