

# ROMAN ROAD

## PRESS RELEASE

### ALIX MARIE

### *SHREDDED*

Private View:  
Friday 10 May 2019, 6 – 9 PM  
Exhibition:  
Saturday 11 May – Saturday 13 July 2019

Opening Hours:  
Wednesday – Friday, 10 AM – 6 PM  
Saturday, 12 PM – 5 PM  
and by appointment

In *Shredded*, Alix Marie's second solo exhibition at Roman Road, she presents some of her latest projects, materialising her prevailing study of gender construction and performativity into new forms of art. On entering the exhibition, visitors are audibly immersed in a gym environment; distinctive sounds of workout machines surround the displayed works, which highlight muscular physiques and body parts in varied ways. With her new pieces in *Shredded*, Marie creatively expands on her investigation of the performance of virility in bodybuilding and demonstrates the tensions with social constructions of masculinity today.

In her recent projects, Marie examines the sociocultural idealisation of the body, looking at male bodybuilders whose pictured skins and body parts she uses as the foundations for her new artworks. Bodybuilders sculpt their physiques, controlling and developing their musculature in a quest to achieve the ideal shape and aesthetic. *Shredded* features selected pieces from three new bodies of works by Marie stemming from this investigation, which together also show how she harnesses and subverts different mediums to uncover unprecedented potentials that at once destabilise our deductions.

Marie's *Olympians* (2018) is a series of unique works accentuating muscular body parts. Taking pages from popular bodybuilding magazines, she uses black permanent markers to delineate the shapes of the models' exposed arms, legs or torsos, and fills the remaining background, removing the identity of the sitters and leaving only their sculpted forms on view.

With *The more he starts to bring that water out the better he has a tendency to appear* (2019), Marie has enlarged and printed images of muscular torsos on the lids of Perspex boxes containing water. Displayed flat and atop metal stands, a spotlight hovers above each of these boxes, projecting light over the toned bodies. The pictured torsos appear as though they are sweating due to the effect of the heat from the lamps, tangibly evoking the idea of physical exercise and the intense regimes bodybuilders undergo to maintain their desired physiques.

Marie has employed wind blower fans for her *It's like somebody is blowing air into your muscle* (2019), attaching printed fabrics depicting close-up images of male bodybuilders' skins around the bases to make them inflate and expand towards the ceiling. The fans have been set on a timer, causing the fleshy draperies to swell and then slowly deflate again. Witnessing the bulging arms gradually collapse, the extreme tension quickly followed by the release, provokes us to consider what happens to bodybuilders' physiques when they stop working out or retire; their efforts inevitably eventually vanish. By using air, a weightless substance, to enlarge the depicted muscles, Marie's moving sculptures also suggest that bigger muscles do not necessarily symbolise more strength, leaving us to question the stereotypical perceptions of masculinity.

*Shredded* opens on Friday 10 May and will be on display at Roman Road until 13 July 2019.

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Alix Marie, *Flex Study*, 2019

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Alix Marie (b.1989, Paris) works across the mediums of photography, sculpture and installation. She graduated from Central Saint Martins College, London, in 2011 with a first class honours degree in fine art and later completed an MA in photography at the Royal College of Art, London. In 2017 she won the Portfolio Review Award, was selected for the 11th edition of Foam Talent Call, and her first artist book *Bleu* was published by Morel Books. Marie was recently nominated for the EMOP Arendt Award 2019 and her work is featured in the touring exhibition *Bodyfiction* as part of this year's European Month of Photography. Recent exhibitions include *La Femme Fontaine*, Roman Road, London (Solo, 2018); *Large-scale reconstruction: Body. Time. Context*, FotoDepartament, St. Petersburg (2018); and *ADYTA*, Ratinger Tor, Düsseldorf (Solo, 2018), as part of Duesseldorf Photo Weekend 2018.

## ABOUT ROMAN ROAD

Roman Road was founded in 2013 by Marisa Bellani and initially began as a project space. The peculiarity of the premises has had a direct impact on the gallery's programme since its beginning. Tall and with a small footprint, the space led the director to challenge artists to employ the architectural elements in order to develop or restructure a body of work. Artists have frequently been asked to use the exhibition as a medium and have managed to transform the gallery room into a unique work of art. In 2014 the building underwent refurbishment to instate an additional private viewing space that gathers varied works by the gallery's represented artists, which are viewable by appointment. Since completing this renovation in 2015, Roman Road has established a qualitative programme, including participations at art fairs, and has seen its represented artists become internationally recognised by institutions and collectors.

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