

Ehrlich Steinberg
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Wednesday - Saturday 11am-5pm

November 8 - December 20 2025
Opening: Saturday November 8 5-8pm

Louis Blue Newby
Reading in Bed

Ehrlich Steinberg is pleased to present the solo exhibition *Reading in Bed* by London-based artist Louis Blue Newby. The exhibition includes a new series of the artist's 'dust paintings', alongside sculpture and site-specific installation. Newby examines the concept and physical parameters of the archive, exploring the relationship between public and private life, personal and communal eroticism, and the often overlooked material and psychological residues that underlie archival practice.

While the storing of printed and visual materials is traditionally associated with carefully controlled environments, Newby utilizes and foregrounds substances that typically signal contamination or abjection. Throughout the exhibition, mediums such as Crisco, dust, glitter, and rust are rerouted as methods to create and preserve an image, forming a language of intimacy and desire that inverts the staid logic of conservation.

On the gallery's front windows, the artist has installed a 'privacy screen' composed of glitter and Crisco—a brand of vegetable fat historically used as a lubricant within gay male sexual subcultures. Functioning as a threshold between the private space of the gallery and the public space of the street, the work both obscures the view of the interior while granting privacy to those inside.

The artist's exhibiting 'dust paintings' are composed through intricate layers of found pornographic imagery sourced online and from out-of-print magazines. Painted wooden panels are coated in jewel-toned colors using UV printing, then screen printed with Crisco and finely ground dust collected by the artist from domestic spaces. Encased in plexiglass, the works underscore the tension between bodily and archival vulnerability within the controlled aesthetics of display.

In the back gallery, a framed panel conceals a chastity-cage key beneath multiple layers of gesso, its corresponding lock inset in the wall nearby. The work is made using a traditional gesso recipe consisting of rabbit skin glue, chalk, and marble dust. As the gesso is applied, moisture causes the key to rust which gradually bleeds onto the surface, leaving a faint, bruise-like image.

In the sculpture upstairs, a found community library box houses a collection of pornographic literature. Painted shut with layers of designer gloss paint, the work transforms a symbol of civic openness into a sealed vessel of longing and fantasy. Together with the gallery's Crisco-smeared windows at the entrance, the sculpture bookends the exhibition's recurring ideas of privacy, exposure, and denial. Here, the intimacy of looking becomes inseparable from what is hidden or not seen.

The exhibition is accompanied by "Stories for...Reading in Bed", a new text by Donna Marcus Duke.

Louis Blue Newby (b. 1996, London, UK) lives and works in London, UK. Newby received a BA from Chelsea College of Arts in 2018 and an MA from the Slade School of Fine Art, London. Previous exhibitions and fair presentations include *Losing Braincells* at Paris Internationale with Ehrlich Steinberg, Paris, FR (2024); *Inner Heat* with Laila Majid at Goldsmiths CCA, London, UK (2024); *Display* at Ehrlich Steinberg, Los Angeles, CA (2024); *Gloss: A Measured Response to New Video Art* at Vanderbilt University Art Gallery, Nashville, TN (2024); *Deep Inside (Public Facing)* at Soft Opening, London, UK (2023); *Blueprints of Hope: Celebrating Queer Spaces* at UCL Octagon Gallery, London, UK (2023); *ALL NIGHT* at Sherbet Green, London, UK (2022); Sessions Arts Club, London, UK (2022-23); *The Artist Room* at the Tom Of Finland Foundation Arts & Culture Festival (2022); *SKINFLICKS* at Xxijra Hii, London, UK (2022); *Testing Ground* at FILET, London, UK (2022); *MELTDOWN* at Ridley Road Project Space, London, UK (2022); *healthy pink* at springseason, London, UK (2020). In 2019, Newby was selected as part of Bloomberg New Contemporaries, exhibiting at Leeds Art Gallery and South London Gallery. Other awards and funding include the Nancy Balfour Scholarship (2021); OMNI Artist Award (2021); The Elephant Trust (2020) and the This is This Award (2018). Newby's moving-image work *south florida sky*, a collaboration with artist Laila Majid, was selected as part of the Dazed X Circa Class of 2022.