

## When was the last time you felt ashamed?

Shame:

Carlos got invited to do a show at carlier | gebauer in Berlin, so we both went to the opening dinner. The whole thing already felt a bit chaotic because the gallery owner spent most of the night openly flirting with the waitresses while everyone pretended not to notice. Very art world.

A few days later, he turned up at my friend's exhibition at a project space, except he wasn't alone. He came with his assistant, who, according to basically everyone, was very much *not* just his assistant.

A few days later, his wife, who is also half the gallery, called my friend to congratulate him on his two exhibitions and apologize for missing the last one. My friend, completely innocently, goes:

— No need to apologize; your husband was here with his assistant.

Silence. Then suddenly she starts crying on the phone. Full emotional collapse. She confesses that the “assistant” was actually his lover and that they were going through a horrible moment in their marriage. She and my friend ended up talking for ages, with him basically becoming her therapist for the afternoon.

Fast forward about three months. My friend and I somehow got free tickets to Art Basel and were wandering around the fair when we passed their gallery booth. The second he saw her, he completely panicked. I kept telling him: “You literally counseled this woman through her marital crisis, just go say hi.”

So he finally walks over, visibly nervous, and says hello.

She looks at him blankly and goes:

— Do I know you?

Shame:

*Shame* is basically two hours of watching a hot, deeply miserable man spiral because he's so addicted to sex that actual intimacy makes him short-circuit. Shame stars Michael Fassbender as this emotionally vacant New Yorker whose entire existence revolves around anonymous hookups, porn, and avoiding anything remotely real. But the second his emotionally chaotic sister crashes at his apartment indefinitely, his carefully controlled sex-zombie routine starts falling apart causing his life to be even more literally fucked. Shame and intimacy sit uncomfortably close to each other, bound by a shared vulnerability: both require exposure, but they diverge in how that exposure is received and framed, especially in the arts.

Shame:

Thomas Hirschhorn's *Pavillon Simone Weil* essentially asked: what if an art project tried to give *everything* away? Free library, free alcohol, free internet, free alcohol, free entry.... freedom? The whole thing was framed as this radical “participatory project,” built with migrant and homeless associations, where everyone was supposed to see and be seen, no awkward boundaries, no hierarchy, pure democratic visibility. Very utopian. Very noble. Very “we're changing the world through communal hanging out.” But then reality entered the chat. Because while Hirschhorn seemed obsessed with the ethics of looking and showing — who gets visibility,

who controls the image — the pavilion itself quickly became a spectacle for all the wrong reasons. Visitors got into fights; volunteers started complaining about exhausting working conditions, and suddenly this million-franc experiment in freedom started looking less like a social sculpture and more like an HR nightmare. The dream of radical openness turned precarious almost immediately, and before long, people were already talking about shutting the whole thing down.

What a shame.

Two adults are in a room looking at a 90s PC with Facebook open. She is sitting down while he brushes his teeth, relaxed, like this is part of their nightly routine. I assume it's their home because of the warm yellow light overexposing the left side of the photograph, giving the whole scene a slightly intimate, late-night, internet feeling. On the desk, there's an empty plate, a miniature red beach chair, a printer, a cream in a tube, and a small digital camera. Behind them is a large window with peach-and-white floral curtains, and outside it's completely dark. Both are wearing T-shirts. He has shorts with a repeated logo along the drawstring, though I can't make it out because the photo is slightly out of focus. Her shirt has peach, black, white, and brown stripes in different widths; her magenta-colored leggings match the color of the office chair she is sitting on.

This was the first time I saw the work of Anjesë in an exhibition of non-photographers at Amore. Later, she told me this room was her teenage room, and the adults were her parents, who used Facebook to communicate with her family members in Kosovo. An intimate scene that she decided to share. A decision that involved exposure. We talked.

You can tell the difference between a brave person and a coward, and both are valid; you just have to be able to recognize yourself, and that in itself is an act of bravery. This was said by Roberto Bolaño about poets. Reading and writing are solitary pursuits. By contrast, in the arts, the feeling of shame is always hidden within exposure; it is an emotion that "wants to hide itself" (Anjesë mentions Andrea Büttner), but this concealment exists as dark matter. A rhythm is present which Anjesë calls "the lines of force," emerging and disappearing: openings and interruptions, transparency and obstruction, much like the figures in her paintings. I think about her parents.

Shame is about being seen, a contradiction in itself. The word exhibition literally means to expose yourself, even if it's just for yourself. I guess, as Carlos who is hooked on Wittgenstein is always repeating to me: "My work consists of two parts: one part which is here, and a second part of everything which is not here. Precisely this second part is the important one."

*Text by Manuela Morales Délano  
For "The Shame Show" by Anjesë Dellova  
Amore, Basel 08.05.2026 - 05.06.2026*