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Always on the forefront of cultural discourse, women's bodies have been under inspection since Adam and Eve came on the scene. Criticized, shamed, sexualized, commodified: often simultaneously.

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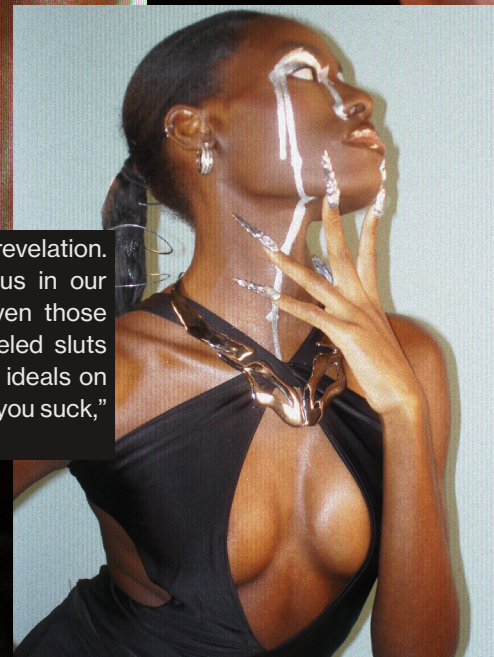


With men's awareness of the social, artistic, and political power in women's sexuality, came the need to keep it controlled. For their pleasure, of course.

The objectification of the female form has been a largely male, capitalistic project.

However, the culture is having an epiphany: we're realizing the power in our sexuality, how it's been used against us, and how to wield it for ourselves.





The irony is how so many men react to this revelation. In a desperate attempt to re-imprison us in our roles, sexually liberated women (and even those with an iota of self-confidence) are labeled sluts and whores. "Society wants to put these ideals on you but if you accept or own it in any way, you suck," says Teresa.

MACHINA exists to parody the patriarchal perception of women as things, while celebrating their beauty through a feminine lens. Sleek, fast cars, metals, and machinery evoke stereotypical images of masculinity and radiate an aura of sex. An odd correlation with roots in commercial culture, patriarchal ways of understanding and our pseudo-sexual relationship with owning luxurious items.

Cool and expressionless, yet tinged with eroticism. Stark against a dilapidated industrial backdrop, the women mirror a post-capitalist reality where what's real or fake, metal or flesh, blurs by the day. While MACHINA may indirectly appease the "male gaze," it's completely indifferent to it. It's a personal celebration of beauty, womanhood, and the erotic.

But is the criticism of these harmful ideas really harmless? Does it inadvertently perpetuate them? Are we so accustomed to our objectification, that we're simply accepting it?

Is it reactionary?

These questions are impossible to refute. In a matter as personal as the body, we can only come to our own conclusions. Interpretation is also a form of autonomy.