

## Chelsea Ellis and Todd Watts

August 11 - September 30, 2023

Opening Reception: Friday, August 11, 5-7pm

Join us for a philosophical exhibition that asks questions and makes us ponder who we are and where we're headed while incorporating new methods of representation and reflection. The work is thoughtful, beautiful and extremely well crafted. If you want to know where photography is headed, pop in and take a look.

- Denise Froehlich Dir. MMPA



Chelsea Ellis, Aurum, 2023, Photograph, 66 x 46 inches

In my photographic work, I use my body and paint to create composite portraits of humanoid forms that blur the boundaries between the familiar and unfamiliar, investigating structures of the human body and posing the questions: Who are we? What are we? - Chelsea Ellis



Todd Watts, You Know, Tell the Others, 2023, 46 x 66 inches. Courtesy of the Caldbeck Gallery

I make photographs. It is said that a photograph captures a moment in time, an event perhaps. That may be, but the source of this notion originates from the mechanical manifestations of cameras, lenses, and film. People do not capture moments of time. How would we do that? Our personal experience of time is fluid. The events in our lives do not hold still.

My pictures do not capture moments. They are photographs, but they do not depict particular events. Grace Hartigan put it this way, "One of the most difficult things of all, is not to have the painting be a depiction of the event but the event itself." Her words are a well known mantra of contemporary art. But we don't need to know the histories surrounding a picture to add it to our personal history.

In every way, art and life are inseparable. At the beginning of each day, I can speculate but cannot know what will happen. An unexpected conversation may completely alter my assumptions or the lack of an ingredient may impact my dinner plans. It is the same when I make art.

When I make my pictures I speak to them, often out loud, and they whisper back. The work is completed when, as in any conversation, the subject changes. The conversation remains encapsulated only in the work, to be continued by myself or by anyone else. After lunch perhaps, or during a long flight to Paris, or right now. -Todd Watts

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