

MUSÉE

VANGUARD OF PHOTOGRAPHY CULTURE

Lucas Blalock & Julia Rommel: Hunks | Bureau

February 2026

By Isabela Ferreira



Lucas Blalock, *F/D/u/a/n/n/e/c/r/I/a/n/l/g Shoes*, 2025. Archival inkjet print. Image is courtesy of the artist and gallery.

The two-person exhibition operates on a premise borrowed from art history pedagogy. Dual slide projectors cast images side by side, training viewers to perceive through comparison and contrast. At Bureau on Duane Street in New York, running from Jan. 17 through Feb. 21, 2026, Hunks pairs Lucas Blalock's photographs with Julia Rommel's paintings in a dialogue that initially seems unlikely. The title offers no explanation, letting the work itself articulate what these practices share.

Blalock's photographs announce their construction openly. A cartoonish wedge of cheddar sits against patterned fabric. Its surface is marked by painterly trails from aggressive photoshop editing. Dress shoes double and triple through digital manipulation. A lightbulb angles from stacked butter sticks. The images refuse to hide themselves. His approach transforms post-production into a form of mark-making. The photographer's presence returns to a medium often understood as mechanical capture. Occasionally he inserts fragments of his own body into the frame.



Julia Rommel, *Wine and Cheese*, 2025. Oil on linen. Image is courtesy of the artist and gallery.

Across the gallery, Rommel's paintings operate through an equally procedural manner. Raw linen articulates across dimensional forms in her studio. Stretcher bars, rectangular prisms, steepled columns. Gesso first, then the paint. She removes the staples, unfolds the fabrics and examines what groundwork she has laid. The paintings reveal this process through their surfaces. Stapled linen strips mark perimeters. Viridian streaks emerge from gray and gold planes. Months-old applications of oil paint superimpose themselves before yesterday's additions. What initially reads as near-monochrome control has loosened into considered effusions. Turbulent yellow fields call across the room to Blalock's cheese wedge.

Essayist Nicole Kaack notes in the exhibition materials that both artists test their media's limits. They make visible the sounds of their own making. Blalock quotes Jean-Luc Godard, "Every film documents its actors acting." Rommel's works function as paintings of paintings. The comparison extends beyond formal similarity. Both practices layer moments that refuse to cohere into reassuring chronology. They persist in what Kaack calls anachronistic simultaneity. The clone stamp and eraser tool find their painterly equivalents in scissors and staples, Gamsol rags and exhumations.

Hunks distinguishes itself from typical two-person exhibitions through how the pairing generates a third position. The works don't merely complement each other. They create productive tension around process, revision and the artist's relationship to their medium. Bureau has staged an encounter that functions less as comparison and more as triangulation. Each practice extends the other. Details that might otherwise remain set aside become visible.