

Helene Appel / Paul Hutchinson

Exhibition dates: March 4 – April 11, 2026

This two-person exhibition brings together paintings by Helene Appel and photographs by Paul Hutchinson, presenting two distinct but closely aligned approaches to realism, observation, and the depiction of everyday objects. Across painting and photography, both artists focus on overlooked or background elements of daily life and objects that exist quietly in the world and are often passed by without attention.

In Appel's paintings, such objects are singled out and rendered at a 1:1 scale. Removed from their functional context and painted with extreme care, they take on a sense of autonomy, occupying space as objects rather than representations alone. Her work is rooted in close observation, yet resists conventional realist painting methods. Instead, each painting process is dictated by the subject itself: grains of sand are built up through single, dot-like applications of paint that mirror their actual size and merge with the exposed weave of the canvas; a car headlight is constructed with the precision of a technical drawing. While the results appear realistic, the paths toward that realism are slow, alternative, and highly specific—processes that emphasize attention, duration, and intimacy. These works function as portraits as much as depictions.

Hutchinson's photographic practice similarly centers on the everyday, often focusing on objects and fragments embedded in urban life—shoes, materials, surfaces, moments that carry social, cultural, and emotional residue. His images are grounded in realism and lived experience, yet they exceed straightforward documentation. Through framing, proximity, and accumulation, seemingly banal motifs begin to convey something more ambiguous and expansive. Hutchinson's work is driven by a sense of wonder for the everyday, allowing ordinary objects to register as carriers of memory, social conditions, and personal history.

While working in different mediums, Appel and Hutchinson share a commitment to observation and to the act of seeing as a form of engagement. In both practices, realism is not a fixed style but a method of attention, one that allows boundaries between object and image to soften and dissolve. The depicted objects, whether painted or photographed, appear to extend beyond the limits of the picture plane, generating a surplus of meaning through detail, scale, and concentration.

This exhibition highlights the artists' shared interest in how careful, sustained looking can transform the familiar into something quietly enigmatic.