

NICELLE BEAUCHENE GALLERY

Friends in Both Places

June 26–August 15, 2025

Opening Thursday, June 26, 6–8 PM

Nicelle Beauchene Gallery is pleased to present *Friends in Both Places*, a group exhibition featuring a blend of paintings, photography, sculpture and mixed media works by 24 artists. The exhibition spans both floors of the gallery's Tribeca space.

As its point of departure, this presentation looks towards a quotation from the great American bard Samuel Langhorne Clemens, known to most by his nom de plume Mark Twain. A devilish wit, Twain once mused, "I don't like to commit myself about heaven and hell—you see, I have friends in both places." While inherently preoccupied with polarities both literal and abstract—mining such juxtapositions as luminosity and darkness, salvation and damnation—the exhibition presents no verdicts, instead offering viewers a spectrum with ample gray area in which they alone can orient themselves. With heavenly skewing compositions intermingled among the hellish, it is the viewer's subjective perception of the works on view that classifies them as one or the other—perhaps, even, as both or somewhere in between.

Drawing inspiration from the theme of the Last Judgement, a concept shared by Abrahamic religions and Zoroastrianism, the exhibition explores contemporary contemplations of the topic, an oft repeated art historical subject that has inspired the likes of Michelangelo and Hieronymous Bosch through to more recent canonical figures such as Wassily Kandinsky.

Much as Twain's quote underscores the complexity of the nation of his youth, a country torn apart by the divisions of the Civil War, *Friends in Both Places* takes the dichotomy of heaven and hell as a vehicle through which to better confront the intricacies and ambiguities of our contemporary moment. Throughout history, in times of devastation or anguish, some artists have offered up imagined representations of radiant futures as a salve to soothe destabilizing anxieties while others have opted to reckon directly with the realities of humanity's current state, in both cases attempting to make sense of and expand the boundaries of the finite world in which humankind resides. *Friends in Both Places* collates a selection of aesthetically seductive works which, regardless of where they fall on the spectrum of diabolical to divine, seek to plumb the depths of human experience and initiate an interrogation of profound truths.

This presentation features works by Gertrude Abercrombie, Silas Borsos, Lewis Brander, Seth Becker, Tobias Bradford, Maria Calandra, Shannon Cartier Lucy, Kari Cholnoky, Ann Craven, Sue de Beer, Brock Enright, Michele Fletcher, Sky Glabush, Dan Herschlein, Hydeon, Dana James, Scott Kahn, Gina Litherland, Bonnie Lucas, Mia Middleton, Chris Oh, Cindy Sherman, Alice Tippet, and Alexander Tovborg.