

# Simchowitz

Thérèse Mulgrew  
'Skin Contact'  
01/15 → 02/05

Simchowitz is pleased to present *Thérèse Mulgrew: Skin Contact*, the artist's first Los Angeles exhibition, on view from January 15 through February 5, 2022. This series dates from a particular joyous moment in the recent past—Spring 2021, when a world long shuttered started to slowly open again. Eager to hug friends and finally spend time together, touching and in person, these canvases exude an air of anticipation.

Mulgrew's works are steeped in the sensuality of spring and summer, when the air is warm and everyone wants to stay out late. These pieces are immediately sensual, and at times comically sexual, oozing soft red light. Come hither, some paintings seem to whisper. They're a curious marriage of baroque dramatism with a David Lynch edge.

The artist's subjects are mainly close friends and on occasion acquaintances with striking features, oftentimes artists or professionals in the world of fashion. Most objects and jewelry in the paintings are the artist's own, discreet glimpses into her world. Painting people she is deeply connected to and others in her community expands that autobiographical element, as these pieces reflect her own surroundings.

The objects Mulgrew is drawn to are nostalgic—landline telephones, film cameras, and kitschy porcelain sculptures appear like offerings before a red curtain. Her classical still-lives assume a dramatic quality. Lit theatrically, the artist places these crisply rendered objects center stage. A master of sheen, her texture on fruit, fabric, and glass emits an almost trompe l'oeil effect. Inspired by film and photographs in movies, her works feel cinematic, almost like movie stills.

Mulgrew's most compelling element are her figures' hands, the most important part of the human body in her view. Drawn to hands since she was young, hands are for the artist a calming thing to look at, which remind her that she is human. Watching how people hold things, how fingers stretch and extend, is compelling to Mulgrew as a painter. In the end, she wanted to work with her hands again, pursuing a practice that is both physical and tangible.

