

BARCLAY HUGHES

April 28 - June 17, 2023

The people in this series of photographs have a physical existence, but no real identity. There is no evidence of what brought them to this moment in their lives. I see these people, hundreds of them, on a daily basis. They pass me on the street, stand alone, or wait in front of me at a crosswalk. Their fleeting existence engages my curiosity and I imagine their identity. I do not talk to them or ask their name – I avoid all contact. An exchange occurs in which their truth is replaced with my fiction.

My opinions and judgements are projected onto these people and then diffused through the use of color, texture and composition. My notion of who these people are remains hidden within the construction of the image as a whole. The choice of people, gesture, expression, and the environment they exist in establishes my gaze. It was exhilarating to go out and shoot the world in front of me. However, the more I went out, the less I shot. There were times that I would spend hours on the same few blocks and only take five or six pictures. I remember sitting on the train thinking of all that I saw – the clearer that became the harder it was to find. Those images began to live in my head and not out in the world. It was difficult to reconcile. I had to find that clarity that I felt, and see it in front of me. So, I began framing the shots, creating the environments and focusing all of my attention on that. The environments were the images I was seeing – the color the light. I could compose a palette and wait patiently for the people to enter the frame and complete the picture.

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New York (430/04), 1999 | C-Print, Ed. of 5 | 71 x 92 cm



New York (450/13), 1999 | C-Print, Ed. of 5 | 71 x 92 cm