

Nick Hoecker | *Nature*
March 6th–April 18th, 2026

Sebastian Gladstone Gallery is pleased to present *Nature*, an exhibition by Nick Hoecker, opening March 6, 2026. The show follows *Last Cool Hive* (2024), Hoecker's first solo exhibition, presented at the gallery's Los Angeles location. Moving between found photography and engineered wall assemblages, Hoecker, an interdisciplinary artist who describes himself primarily as a sculptor, has developed a practice in which recontextualized images and repurposed domestic and automotive fragments are configured into works that feel both exacting and emotionally exposed. In *Nature*, that language expands to include newly introduced functional furniture.

The exhibition opens with *Poser*, an image from an ongoing series of found photographs sourced through online estate sales and reprinted at a uniform scale and frame. The title is literal and sly. The subjects pose, and so does Hoecker, who enters photography conceptually rather than by taking the picture himself. Across the larger series, standardized framing pulls intimate images of gay desire into the fiction of a single hand, a serial structure only partly visible in the lone work shown here. Still, *Poser* functions as a thesis, setting the terms of the exhibition from the start: appropriation and projection, image and object, "Photography opens a portal for fantasy," Hoecker says, "and sculpture brings the body back to the ground."

At the center of *Nature* is an extension of the *Heritage* series, a body of work that translates the punishments and seductions of masculinity into a visual language shaped by repression, attraction, and emotional pressure. Here, Hoecker returns to the codes and penalties that structured his early life, beginning with his father, who, in the artist's account, "dismissed homosexuality." The series began with a Mazda Miata, which he bought for himself while knowing his father derided the model as a "hairstresser car." Between them, sexuality remains unspoken, displaced onto the coded vocabulary of automobiles.

In *Heritage I* (2020), Hoecker mounted the car's interior door panel against a symbolic field: an inverted German wool blanket stretched over a reversed steel frame, giving the work the frontal authority of a painting. The car part arrives loaded with familiar codes of performance, power, speed, and utility, yet its isolation changes the charge. What was shaped by a macho ethos of function is recast through gay strategies of decoration, staging, and display. In this series, blankets operate as both material and metaphor. Born to a German father and Cuban mother, Hoecker treats origin as surface, the first ground on which the self is composed. "In that relationship between fabric and car part, I found a language for inheritance, masculinity, and the pressure between me and my father," Hoecker says. A central move in his practice becomes clear here: what first reads as hard, technical, or cold reveals itself as personal record.

Without naming any of this directly, his father made a gesture of recognition. "After the first two shows he gave me a wheel from his car. That felt like a beautiful way of breaking down the wall. The *Heritage* works no longer had to be only about the Miata," Hoecker explains. In sobriety, the artist could return to his own adolescence with clearer eyes. His assemblages splice inherited masculine aesthetics with Catholic residue, turning memory into structure. The sourced-object sculptures operate as both confessional and shrine; reconditioned and shared, they become acts of reclamation.

An American Standard urinal, the exact model from the artist's Catholic school, a site marked by repeated bullying and humiliation; a rusty surfboard from his childhood, left in storage after a cruel outing at age eleven made him unwelcome among his peers; and rare wheels from his father's British racing car, a Triumph TR6, congeal into a dense psychological landscape. For all their specificity, Hoecker presents them as only part of the story. Biography is paired with the byproducts of a rich interior life, shaped by artists and subcultural figures including Joseph Beuys, Jean Genet, Jack Pierson, Robert Rauschenberg, and Henry Rollins. In some works, those influences appear directly in the form of photographic monographs, including *Good Bye America* by Volker Corell, *Teenage Lust* by Larry Clark, and *Beautiful Men* by Crawford Barton, presented in custom plexiglass enclosures.

Nature also introduces a suite of lichen-based tarp works titled *Freshman*, *Sophomore*, *Junior*, and *Senior*, a naming structure that maps organic growth onto the four-year arc of high school. Cut from the same weathered tarpaulin and marked by exposure and corrosion, these works carry the exhibition's concerns into a quieter register. If *Heritage* traces the conflict between inherited and imagined selves, this group points toward another form of becoming, less driven by punishment and performance than by time, contact, and accumulation. "My hand is in the cropping and the stretching," Hoecker says, "but the composition was made by nature." Framed and stabilized by the artist, they extend Poser's authorship game while offering a softer image of identity: a process built through exposure, time, environment, and accumulation.

- Michael Bullock