

CHAPTER NY



For immediate release

Tourmaline

Transcendent

June 12 – July 31, 2026

Chapter NY is honored to present *Transcendent*, Tourmaline's second solo exhibition with the gallery. The Miami-based artist presents a new body of photographs alongside a short film that continues her longstanding engagement with the memory and political imagination of Marsha P. Johnson (1945–1992), one of the most vital figures of the LGBTQ rights movement of the 1960s and 70s. Drawing from personal archives and her own image-making practice, Tourmaline approaches history as a life force reactivated through beauty, collective remembrance, and human presence.

A luminous series of cinematic self-portraits, staged within the canals of Venice, anchors the exhibition. Central to these works is the memory of the "Marsha P. Johnson Cruise," during which Johnson gathered friends aboard the Staten Island Ferry and invited them, if only briefly, to orient themselves toward pleasure and possibility while gazing toward the Statue of Liberty. In *Transcendent*, Tourmaline reimagines that gesture as an ecstatic passage through Venice by water taxi, turning luxury and introspection into a quietly radical act. Produced as silver gelatin and dye sublimation prints, the photographs exist fluidly between devotional portraiture, fashion imagery, and historical document. A radiant Tourmaline appears at once iconic and deeply corporeal: adorned in sequins, silver fabrics, and star-patterned garments styled by collaborator Claire Sullivan, she emerges as both coy Lady Liberty and sunlit apparition, channeling Johnson's infectious spirit and carrying forward her proverbial torch.

This sensibility extends into a series of photographs made atop the roof of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection. Shot from the vantage point of a historic portrait of Guggenheim herself, Tourmaline is framed against Venice's ancient architecture: sites of beauty and cultural prestige shaped by histories of empire and uneven access to freedom. Revisiting Guggenheim's legacy, Tourmaline embraces pleasure and glamour as modes of freedom that Johnson radically expanded in relation to trans life. The artist has described these works as emerging from a "receptive mode," where sensuality and self-fashioning become rigorous aesthetic and political practices. Often pictured with the camera remote visible in her hand, Tourmaline foregrounds the constructed nature of the image, treating fantasy not as escapism but as a deliberate strategy of survival and self-definition.

The exhibition's accompanying film, *A Flower That Lives Forever* (2025), returns to Johnson's narrative through archival footage of interwoven with an interview featuring her friend, the recently departed artist Augusto Machado. Filmed decades later at the site of the original Staten Island "Cruise," Machado recounts the gathering while Tourmaline's Venice images drift into view, collapsing temporal distance into something intimate and dreamlike. Ferry railings, flowers, sunlight, and passing skylines dissolve into footage of Johnson laughing, performing, marching, and moving through daily life. Across both the photographs and the film, water becomes a recurring site of renewal: transforming spaces historically associated with surveillance and restricted transit into environments where beauty, friendship, pleasure, and joy operate as forms of resistance.

Tourmaline (b. 1983, Roxbury, MA) lives and works in Miami, FL. She received her BA from Columbia University in 2006. Tourmaline has had solo exhibitions at The Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, AU; Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Boston, MA; MASP, Sao Paulo, BR; Kunsthalle Brandhorst, Munich; MUDAM, Luxembourg; and Chapter NY, New York. Her work was included in the 2024 *Whitney Biennial* and the 59th *International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia* as well as notable group exhibitions at the Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia, PA; Cultuurcentrum Strombeek, Grimbergen, BE; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek, DK; South London Gallery, London; MASS MoCA, North Adams; the Tate Modern, London; the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the 7th *Athens Biennale 2021 ECLIPSE*, Athens; the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn;

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The Bronx Museum of the Arts, Bronx; MoMA PS1, Long Island City; The High Line, New York; The Kitchen, New York; BFI Flare, London; Portland Art Museum, Portland, OR; Aspen Museum of Art, Aspen, CO; BAM Cinematek, Brooklyn; The New Museum, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; MOCA, Los Angeles; the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; and the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.

Tourmaline's work is included in the permanent collections of MUDAM, Luxembourg; Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn; J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; Tate Modern, London; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

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