

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**OPENING RECEPTION:  
SUN, JAN 13, 6-8PM**

**MATTHEW  
WATSON:  
COMMISSION |  
BARTER | FOR SALE**

**ON VIEW: JAN 13-FEB 24**

Matthew Watson extends the traditional mode of representation to conceptual ends, turning portraiture away from a conversation of class to the delineation of his community and its potential value. Here, interpersonal relationships replace feudal lines of power. Traditional skill and technical acuity are endowed with an ideological purview towards the present. Watson makes transparent the lineage and connections of art world hierarchy, allowing us to see it through a lens of positioning and proximity.

*Commission | Barter | For Sale*, Watson's first exhibition at Joe Sheftel Gallery, presents twenty-first century subjects in a manner originating from the sixteenth century. The individuals depicted serve different roles – dealer, collector, mentor, artist/critic, colleague – roles that contribute to the very paintings in which they are represented. In short, the exhibition presents a map that reveals Watson's ever-evolving professional relationships, from mentors and business associates to benefactors and peers.

Varying in size from 9" x 7" to 29" x 29", the paintings on view are concerned with portraiture – where court life and feudal systems gave way to a newfound nobility. In these new paintings, the figure is often portrayed in front of another artist's work – Jutta Koether, Dan Graham, John or Ann Chamberlain, or Alex Da Corte. A series of relationships emerge where the represented figures are tethered by what is pictured behind them. Watson deploys the court painter's use of iconography, replacing indications of wealth with contemporary art references, bringing into focus the power of intellectual value.

For press inquiries and images, please contact the gallery at [mail@joesheftelgallery.com](mailto:mail@joesheftelgallery.com).

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**GALLERY HOURS: WED-SUN 11AM-6PM**