

CHAPTER NY

For immediate release

Elective Affinities
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One night ... I awoke in a room in which a cage and the bird sleeping in it had been placed. A magnificent error caused me to see an egg in the cage instead of the bird. I then grasped a new and astonishing poetic secret, because the shock I experienced had been provoked precisely by the affinity of the two objects, the cage and the egg, whereas I used to provoke this shock by causing the encounter of unrelated objects.¹

–René Magritte

The title of the exhibition, *Elective Affinities*, originates from an 18th century scientific term describing the merging of disparate chemical compounds. The phrase took on greater metaphoric meaning in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's 1809 novel of the same name, in which Goethe applied the theory to unlikely romantic partners. In 1932, it appeared again in the title of a painting by René Magritte that prominently features a large egg inside of a birdcage. The subject of the painting came to Magritte in a momentary hallucination and prompted his realization of the poetic value in pairing two related objects despite their immediate incoherence.

Chapter NY presents a group exhibition featuring artworks made within the past year that express an *elective affinity* to one another. Although the works in the exhibition display a wide range of mediums and subjects, they are latently connected through the artists' shared experience of the present moment. The artists concurrently delve into their own memories and dreams to imagine new forms and subjects. Some allow literary and filmic references to guide their practices, while others repurpose everyday materials and objects to build unusual surfaces. Together, their works showcase the predilections of a moment in time, notably synergistic despite their formal and conceptual disparity.

For more information, please contact info@chapter-ny.com

¹ Quoted in Paquet, Marcel, *Magritte*. Cologne, Germany: Taschen (2006), p. 26.