



Over the Influence Presents

Jonathan Edelhuber

Warmer Mornings Sharper Nights

1 April to 7 May 2023



Jonathan Edelhuber, *The Weight of Transience*, 2023, Signed on back, Acrylic and Spray paint on canvas, 187 to 137 cm, 74 to 54 in, Photo courtesy of the Artist and Over the Influence

**Over the Influence is proud to announce Jonathan Edelhuber's exhibition *Warmer Mornings Sharper Nights* at the Los Angeles gallery space from 1 April to 7 May 2023.**

Skulls are commonly considered a morbid symbol, a reminder of our mortality and the transitory nature of human existence. In modern society, a skull is most often used to denote poison, danger, or impending threat. A phenomenon that perhaps bespeaks our collective strained relationship with death or lack thereof. However, in ancient times, cultures from Mesoamerica to the Middle East celebrated the skeletal emblem, considering it as much, if not more, a reminder of life, resurrection, and prosperity. All the way into the 14th and 15th centuries, the skull sat firmly between memento mori and carpe diem.

Tennessee-based artist Jonathan Edelhuber is committed to restoring that lost sense of joy, vitality, and vibrance to the misinterpreted motif. *Warmer Mornings Sharper Nights* features thirteen paintings, oil and acrylic, and six sculptures, wood, that celebrate the ecstatic joy of existence. Brightly colored, highly textured, and densely layered, the skulls, rendered in the artist's signature graphic pop-art style, vibrate with life. Their various expressions evoke feelings often reserved for those with nose cartilage still intact, like delight, amusement, and surprise, and encourage viewers to imagine them laughing, jesting, or conversing.

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“There’s so much beauty and happiness in being human. I’m thinking of music, art, food, raising kids, community,” explains Edelhuber. When asked why he’s chosen to neglect the flesh, he cites a desire to strip away identity, to delve beneath gender, race, and class. It’s true, there’s something fundamentally human about the animated, technicolor heads that inspires a fundamental fellow feeling. To see one another as members of the same species with the same anatomical structure, as this exhibition wills us to do, is to see each other first and foremost as humans, with far more in common than not.

Despite the lack of muscle, skin, and hair, the viewer's imagination rushes in to ascribe the skeletal figure's human feelings, gestures, narratives, and, when placed together, relationship dynamics. In “Here for a Time,” which depicts two skulls angled toward one another, one sees them as leaning in for a kiss or about to butt heads. With the individual portraits, like “Burning and Cooling No.2” and “Brave New World,” their enormous, empty eyes appear to be aimed directly at the viewer, in want of a connection, confrontation, or both.

While Edelhuber may resist the art world's current preoccupation with identity, his distinct style reads like a fingerprint. Florescent colors, robust patterns, and rich textures abound. That the artist’s process is both physical and intuitive is clear from his palpable presence in the paintings. Evidence of erasure, rupture, and addition is indelibly preserved on the canvas’ surfaces affording the works not only a spatial depth but a temporal one as well. Each painting or sculpture reveals a different stage of its creation, from blunt, flat strokes and splatters to robust finishes and scraped-down layers.

There’s an urgency, an improvisational quality, and a roughness that leads one to half expect the paint to still be wet or to find the artist just around the corner, a brush in hand. While this impression belies the careful compositions and color pairings, it emphasizes the work’s exuberance and celebrates the very act of mark-making. The result is a triumphant merging of theory and practice, where the content celebrates vitality as well as the materiality of the work, a lasting record or testament to the artist’s own life force. Although not his alone.

Fans of Edelhuber’s oeuvre know his fascination with influence and lineage; his work often features the names of his canonical muses, such as Pablo Picasso, Cy Twombly, and Helen Frankenthaler. “Not necessarily what they painted, but how they painted, is always on my mind,” says Edelhuber, citing Robert Motherwell and Katherine Bernhardt as particularly present in this exhibition. In this way, the artist is also preserving and progressing their legacies and the legacies of all those who came before them in the great human tradition of artmaking, and so rendering *Warmer Mornings Sharper Nights* a celebration of life but also life after death.



## Artist Bio

*B. 1984, Hope, AR, USA – Lives and Works in Nashville, TN, USA.*

Working primarily in oil and acrylic, Jonathan Edelhuber's paintings, drawings, and sculptures meld elements of the modernist motifs of Picasso and Matisse filtered through a pop sensibility borrowed from comics and cartoons.

Jonathan Edelhuber (b.1984) an Arkansas native, earned a B.F.A. with an emphasis on Graphic Design from Harding University. He has exhibited in Los Angeles, London, Berlin, New York and Nashville, Tennessee where he currently lives and runs his painting and sculpting practice.

### **Exhibition dates:**

1 April to 7 May 2023

### **Location:**

Over the Influence Los Angeles  
833 East 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
CA 90013

### **Contact:**

Krysta Eder  
Director  
[krysta@overtheinfluence.com](mailto:krysta@overtheinfluence.com)

Camilla Russell  
PR & Marketing Director  
[camilla@overtheinfluence.com](mailto:camilla@overtheinfluence.com)