

## CRITICS' PICKS

## New York

**Talia Chetrit**

LESLIE FRITZ

44 Hester Street

September 3–October 6

Talia Chetrit is often listed among a group of photographers—from Lucas Blalock and Virginia Poundstone to Michele Abeles and Walead Beshty—said to be more interested in the medium's physical supports than its social implications. Chetrit's previous output has zeroed in on bodies and objects—a nipple buried under chains, a square of goose-pimpled flesh—insisting on the indexical mark of the photograph as if to announce that, indeed, this is reality bona fide. If Chetrit's concern with the medium's technicality is about veracity, it's interesting that in her latest work, she has departed from making studio-driven images that deal purely with objects, instead crafting images that confront narrative and personal story, where truth is a most puckish creature.

For her third solo exhibition at this gallery, Chetrit retrieved rolls of film she took of her family as a young girl, redeveloping some and restaging others. A self-portrait of the artist at thirteen: Chetrit is comely in a short white skirt; she leans against a bench surrounded by potted flowers, her legs splayed open in front of her. An image of her mother, glamorous in a white bathing suit, reveals a scar typical of plastic surgery under her chin. If the artist's earlier work suggests an anxiety about the way the photographic machine governs its social function (by zooming so closely in on objects, she limited narrative), these images are messy with potential stories.

Chetrit's fascination with amateur photography then seems part two in her rebus vis-à-vis the medium's technical capacity for fidelity: At a moment when personal identity is increasingly directed by a delirium of lavishly manipulated digital images (ushered in by photo-sharing services like Instagram that have set people lusting after the camera lens, modeling their daily experiences to fit its frame, all in the name of public definition), these dated photographs are pungent with an authenticity unique to a camera of an earlier age.



Talia Chetrit, *Self-portrait (Profile)*, 2013, silver gelatin print, 25 x 19".

— *Allese Thomson*