

Theodore

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Chris Moss Time Wounds All Heels

December 15, 2022 – January 28, 2022

Reception Friday December 16, 5-8 pm
Gallery hours Thursday–Saturday 12-6 pm
Door/Elevator buzzer #610

Theodore is pleased to present *Time Wounds All Heels*, Chris Moss's third solo exhibition with the gallery.

Chris Moss uses the simple visual elements that signify a face as the basis for almost all his work. The limitations of this practice allows for an endless exploration of mutation and variation. In the artist's own words:

I've been working with this icon, :) for over 10 years. It's become a solid character or group of characters in my personal pantheon. The avatar – two dots and a line – is the lowest-

common-denominator visual representation of the individual online. As remnants of our social media landscape, it's not hard to imagine these could exist outside communication technology as totems, future archaic emoji.

Moss's new paintings are bigger, grander, wilder than previous iterations. The elements of the avatar are present but become immersed in the patterns and textures of paint and color. Identity is present but subsumed by pure painting, but the avatar persists as a leering companion, presenting the conundrum of simultaneous familiarity and distance. Avatars promise contact through social media. Friends? Frenemies? Who knows...

I think everyone is worried. We set out to find everyone we'd ever known since grade school, then we decided we'd rather not know them that well. We got good and lonely and then we all got worried. It's not a great place to be but it seems like we've been here for a while and we'll be here for a good while longer so we might as well get used to being worried and lonely together. You want to talk about it?

As random as our social media contacts and exchanges may seem, they provide Moss with an unlimited supply of words and phrases to attach to his anonymous avatars.

In the past I have used weed names coined by amateur botanists, bad internet passwords, and homeland security's list of words being tracked across the internet to title my paintings in large series. Lately titles come into the studio as I'm working. They're song titles, or lyrics, earworms I attach to the supports of paintings, coincidental fragments I pick up and put here and there.

Titled by chance, these disembodied faces with reductive features resemble enlarged punctuation marks. Together they form an ensemble of empathetic possibilities distorted by a riot of painterly color and pattern.