

TEMPLON

II

LEONARD MARTIN

ICON ART, March 7, 2026

LÉONARD MARTIN: CHEF MENTEUR

Exhibition Mar 7 - Written By Stella Lee



For his first exhibition at the GALERIE TEMPLON in Paris, young French artist Léonard Martin is presenting works created during his residency in New Orleans, as part of the Villa Albertine, the prestigious artist residency program of the French Institute.

January 10 - March 14, 2026

The exhibition brings together some fifteen new paintings and a sculpture, recounting the artist's American experience. "Chef Menteur" a title borrowed from a highway crossing New Orleans, evokes the uncertain boundary between appearance and truth. Plunged into the heart of a Louisiana marked by social and racial tensions, climate change, and ecological disasters, the artist chose to explore carnival, that paradoxical space where burlesque rubs shoulders with tragedy, where madness responds to the rigors of an overwhelmed world. A place of crossroads and contrasts, the New Orleans carnival brings together Catholics and Protestants, Creoles and Caribbean people, blacks and whites, women and men, rich and poor. A true social microcosm, it exposes the human comedy in the open air: pride is displayed, inequalities are replayed.

In this festive turmoil, where floats pour out streams of plastic objects, Léonard Martin collected these ephemeral fragments to reinvest them in his pictorial practice. Plastic waste becomes the raw material for a reflection that is both political and ecological, a symbol of a saturated world where plastic invades the streets, the water, and ultimately even our blood.

Inspired by the fragmented structure of reality, Léonard Martin composes a series of fragmentary images, between memories and visions, traces and narratives. His works are based on montage techniques borrowed from cinema and literature: cut-up, which consists of fragmenting and recomposing reality, and stop motion, which introduces an idea of movement through sequences. Their combined effects produce discontinuous compositions, where each painting seems to be extracted from a mental film. Each canvas, each motif, functions as a political skit with multiple entries. Carnival, a sublime parody of the contemporary world, reveals the eternal tension between the visible and the real, between mask and face.



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Léonard martin, Parade Tracker III, 2025