

A KISS IN THE FOREST

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SOLO EXHIBITION BY SIMON MARTIN

西蒙·马丁 个展

Curator: Myriam Kryger

策展人: 柯梅燕

8th NOVEMBER 2025 – 18th JANUARY 2026

OPENING IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ARTIST

SATURDAY, 8th NOVEMBER

ICICLE CULTURAL SPACE SHANGHAI

ICCF GARDEN

2, Hengshan Road- Xuhui district, Shanghai



A kiss in the forest, 2024
Oil on canvas, 33 x 41 cm

© Simon Martin, ADAGP 2025. Courtesy of Galerie Jousse Entreprise, Paris

The ICICLE Cultural Space – Shanghai presents *A Kiss in the Forest*, the first solo exhibition by Simon Martin in China.

Regarded as one of the most talented young French artists of his generation – one who restores painting to its most intimate and poetic dimension – Simon Martin quickly gained recognition on the French art scene after graduating from the Beaux-Arts de Paris, with a body of work of rare sensitivity.

Bringing together a group of recent oil on canvas created between 2023 and 2025, the Shanghai exhibition explores the timeless motif of the embrace. Each painting preserves a trace of it – a moment, a breath, a glimmer.

The soft, matte palette is rooted in muted, powdery tones, where light does not reflect but diffuses, absorbed by the surface. This chromatic treatment imparts to the whole a subdued, spectral atmosphere, in which reality fragments within memory, allowing the remnants of sensation to resurface. His painting unfolds within a space of slowness and silence, favoring evocation over narration, ambiguity over assertion.

"At once near and far, his figures linger on the edge of absence. Diffuse, evanescent, they inhabit the threshold of the visible – between waking and dreaming, appearance and disappearance.

In these subdued canvases, behind half-erased figures, there surfaces the premonition that all beauty is threatened with vanishing, that every sensation is destined to fade into the night. From this aesthetic of withdrawal arises a silent and secret sensuality, surrendered to the mist of remembrance, to the unspoken realm of desire."

– Myriam Kryger, exhibition curator

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born in 1992 in Vitry-sur-Seine, Simon Martin lives and works in Paris.

A graduate of the École des Beaux-Arts de Paris in 2017, he was quickly recognized with several prestigious awards, including the Bertrand de Demandolx-Dedons Portrait Prize (2017) awarded by the Friends of the Beaux-Arts. In 2019, he was a finalist for both the Emerige Revelations Grant and the Antoine Marin Prize.

Before turning thirty, his works had already entered major public and private collections, notably those of the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris and the Agnès b. Foundation.

Since 2020, he has been represented by Galerie Jousse Entreprise, which has already dedicated four solo exhibitions to him in Paris, including one presented at FIAC (now Art Basel Paris) in 2021. In 2023, Galerie Peter Kilchmann presented a solo exhibition of his work in Zurich.

Simon Martin has participated in numerous group exhibitions in France and abroad, in major museums and art institutions such as MO.CO, the Mucem, and the Fondation Pernod Ricard. In 2024, as part of La Journée des peintres, his work was shown at the Musée d'Orsay.

His paintings are regularly exhibited at major European art fairs, including Art Basel Paris.

A Kiss in the Forest marks his first solo exhibition in Asia.



Insomnia, 2024

Oil and acrylic on canvas, 60 x 120 cm

© Simon Martin, ADAGP 2025. Courtesy of Galerie Jousse Entreprise, Paris



Video about nostalgia and lip-syncing under the rain, 2025
Oil on canvas, 180 x 90 cm
© Simon Martin, ADAGP 2025. Courtesy of Galerie Jousse Entreprise, Paris



Kiss, Prequel I, 2025
Gouache on canvas, 33 x 41 cm
© Simon Martin, ADAGP 2025
Courtesy of Galerie Jousse Entreprise, Paris



Kiss, Prequel II, 2025
Gouache on canvas, 33 x 41 cm
© Simon Martin, ADAGP 2025
Courtesy of Galerie Jousse Entreprise, Paris



Daffodils II, 2025
Gouache on canvas, 38 x 46 cm
© Simon Martin, ADAGP 2025
Courtesy of Galerie Jousse Entreprise, Paris



Daffodils, 2024
Oil on canvas, 46 x 55 cm
© Simon Martin, ADAGP 2025
Courtesy of Galerie Jousse Entreprise, Paris

A KISS IN THE FOREST

“Things must be given time to pass through you, to permeate you, like wind through leaves.”

Simon Martin’s painting proceeds from that slow absorption of the world evoked by Philippe Jaccottet, poet of silence and restraint – a slowness that is not a refusal of reality, but a way of merging with it, a way of inhabiting time in order to feel its secret texture.

Although nothing in his environment seemed to predestine him for painting, it imposed itself on him at an early age, as something self-evident – a silent calling whispered by the paintings he glimpsed during his childhood visits to museums.

For him, there is neither premeditation nor intention: painting is not a project but a state – a state of porosity to the world, of sensitive openness to life, of trust in matter itself.

To let things happen rather than seize them; to brush rather than grasp.

His works impose nothing; they gather the traces of sensation, the remnants of a reality dissolved in perception and memory – fleeting impressions, ephemeral dazzlements that imprint themselves in us without order or continuity: the sight of moss on a tree, the memory of a kiss.

It is around this timeless motif of the embrace – real, dreamt, often barely suggested – that the Shanghai exhibition unfolds.

Each canvas retains a trace of it – a moment, a breath, a glimmer – not as a scene, but as an atmosphere.

Two indistinct bodies intertwine and blend with the night; two blurred silhouettes kiss in the darkness of a forest; two flowers bend toward one another, about to touch.

In Simon Martin’s work, everything relies on suggestion and ambiguity.

His restraint heightens perception: the less he shows, the more he makes us feel.

From this aesthetic of withdrawal arises a silent and secret sensuality, surrendered to the mist of memory, to the unspoken realm of desire.

His painting, at once corporeal and impalpable, maintains that fragile balance between caress and vanishing.

In Simon’s paintings, everything drifts and dissolves.

Both near and far, his figures linger on the edge of absence. Diffuse, evanescent, they inhabit the threshold of the visible – between waking and dreaming, appearance and disappearance.

The use of muted, often chalky tones reinforces the spectral dimension of the work. The chromatic range settles into desaturated, powdery hues – faded pinks, withered mauves, misty violets, washed blues, muffled greens. Superimposed in fine, translucent layers, these colors become a porous substance; light spreads through them as if through a veil – a light that does not reflect, but absorbs and envelops, a light that softens and dims rather than reveals.

It is a painting without sheen or contrast, all in matteness and indeterminacy, like the faces and silhouettes that traverse it. The surfaces seem rubbed, worn, patinated – like ancient frescoes worn by rain and time. Each work appears to emerge from a place both intimate and immemorial.

Yet Simon's motifs come from the immediacy of his daily life: photographs of his friends who often pose for him, or images gathered from the digital stream. But he retains only a fragment, from which the painting slowly unfolds. In his studio, he works patiently, in layers and recoverings – he begins, he waits, he returns to it. Each painting is born from that oscillation between control and surrender.

A particular softness runs through his paintings – a trembling softness that does not seek to soothe, but to suggest the vulnerability of things. It speaks of the fleeting nature of what moves us, of that fragile instant when presence shifts into absence, memory into forgetting. In these subdued canvases, behind half-erased figures, there surfaces a quiet unease – the premonition that all beauty is threatened with disappearance, that every sensation is destined to fade into the night.

To paint, then, is to hold for a moment what is slipping away,
to give form to what is lost,
and to keep alive the possibility of an encounter –
fragile, intimate, suspended –
like a kiss in the forest.

Myriam Kryger, October 2025



13 images per second I, 2023

Oil on canvas, 50 x 61 cm

© Simon Martin, ADAGP 2025

Courtesy of Galerie Jousse Entreprise, Paris



13 images per second II, 2023

Oil on canvas, 50 x 61 cm

© Simon Martin, ADAGP 2025

Courtesy of Galerie Jousse Entreprise, Paris



13 images per second III, 2023

Oil on canvas, 50 x 61 cm

© Simon Martin, ADAGP 2025

Courtesy of Galerie Jousse Entreprise, Paris

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

EDUCATION

2012-2017

Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux-arts de Paris

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2025

A Kiss in the Forest, curated by Myriam Kryger, ICICLE Cultural Space, Shanghai, China

The River, Jousse Entreprise Gallery, Paris, France

2023

What Sleeps Beneath the Petals, Jousse Entreprise Gallery, Paris, France

13 Images per Second, Peter Kilchmann Gallery, Zurich, Switzerland

2021

Simon Martin, FIAC, Grand Palais Éphémère, Paris, France

2020

2 p.m. on the Bed, Jousse Entreprise Gallery, Paris, France

2018

The Summer of Others, MONTEVERITA Gallery, Paris, France

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2024

Artissima Fair, Turin, Italy

Extinguish the Fire, Cradle the Ennui, curated by Lena Peyrard, Galerie Sébastien Lepeuve, Clichy, France

Le Jour des Peintres – 80 contemporary French painters meeting visitors, invited by Thomas Levy-Lasne, Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France

A Room of One's Own, curated by Margaux Plessy, Château La Coste, Le Puy-Sainte-Réparate, France

Contemporary Figurative Painting in the agnès b. Collection, La Fab., Paris, France

The Bark of Things, with Nathan Bertet, Xolo Cuintle, and Masha Silchenko, Jousse Entreprise Gallery, Paris, France

Vanishing Act, Material Fair, Mexico City, Mexico

Sophie, group exhibition in homage to Sophie Vigourous, Jousse Entreprise Gallery, Paris, France

2023

Personal Message, curated by Delphine Roche and Nicolas Jaeger, Tour Orion, Montreuil, France

The Immortals, curated by Anya Harrison, MO.CO Panacée, Montpellier, France

Seeing in Painting: The New French Figuration, curated by Anne Dary, travelling exhibition – Musée des Sables d'Olonnes; Musée Estrine, Saint-Rémy-de-Provence; Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dole, France

2022

Everything I Do Has an Underlying Political Question, Peter Kilchmann Gallery, Zurich, Switzerland

The Model Friend, curated by Mathieu Mercier, MUCEM – Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilisations, in partnership with the Pernod Ricard Foundation, Marseille, France

Between Your Eyes and the Images I See There, curated by Anaël Pigeat and Sophie Vigourous, Pernod Ricard Foundation, Paris, France

Phantom, curated by Sarah Mercadante and Benoît Blanchard, Arthur Rimbaud Museum, Charleville-Mézières, France

Ianua, Jousse Entreprise Gallery, Paris, France

2021

Eyes Closed, Perrotin Gallery, Paris, France

2020

Off-Screen Views and Landscapes, The agnès b. Collection, La Fab., Paris, France

To Thomas, curated by Lucas Morin and Sasha Pevak, La Box, Bourges & Ygrec, Aubervilliers, France

2019

The Cliff Effect, exhibition for the 6th edition of the Révélation Emerige Grant, curated by Gaël Charbau, Voltaire, Paris, France

Not at All, It's Plainly Figurative! You're the Spiritual One, My Love!, curated by Anaël Pigeat and Sophie Vigourous, Jousse Entreprise Gallery, Paris, France

On View, curated by Henri Guette, Vitrine 65, Paris, France

Antoine Marin Prize Exhibition, Julio Gonzales Municipal Gallery, Arcueil, France

Accords / Double Séjour + Journal of an Anosmic, curated by Thomas Havet, 7 rue Elzévir, Paris, France

The Color of Light, TAJAN Space, Paris, France

2018

Selected Works, Bubenberg, Paris, France

Felicità 18, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Paris, Paris, France

2017

Surface Without Target / After Photography, curated by Anaid Demir, Espace 22 Visconti, Paris, France

(AN)SUITE #4, curated by Valérie Boubert, Lasécu, Lille, France

Mémos, agnès b., 17 rue Dieu, Paris, France

2016

Tropicália, L'Inlassable Museum, Paris, France

Micro Salon#6, L'Inlassable Gallery, Paris, France

2015

Iris Time, L'Inlassable Museum, New York, USA

{647912}, L'Inlassable Gallery, New York, USA

Micro Salon #5, L'Inlassable Gallery, Paris, France

2014

Ideal Time, Everything Is Fine, L'Inlassable Gallery, Paris, France

The Antechamber of Radiant Substance, L'Inlassable Gallery, Paris, France

Micro Salon #4, L'Inlassable Gallery, Paris, France

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS & FOUNDATIONS

Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris

Agnès b. Contemporary Art Collection

AWARDS

Winner of the Friends of Beaux-Arts de Paris Prize –

Bertrand de Demandolx-Dedons Portrait Prize (2017)

PUBLICATIONS

A Room of One's Own, Château La Coste, October 2024

The Immortals, MO.CO Montpellier, February 2023

Seeing in Painting: The New French Figuration, Anne Dary, 2023

The Cliff Effect, Guillaume Benoit, Emerige Endowment Fund, 2019

The Color of Light, Marc Desgrandchamps, Tajan, September 2019

ICICLE PARIS – SHANGHAI 2025 SEASON

WAVEMAKERS FROM CHINA, JAPAN & FRANCE

In the second half of 2025, ICICLE continues to expand its artistic platform with an ambitious program of four solo exhibitions dedicated to young talents – either particularly promising or already widely recognised on the contemporary art scene.

In Paris, Japanese artist Shiori Eda, then Chinese visual artist Cai Lei each engage in their own way with the theme of landscape: mental, sensitive, or architectural landscapes, inhabited by fragile figures or enigmatic structures. In Shanghai, two French painters, Félix Deschamps Mak followed by Simon Martin, unveil powerful works – either strikingly frontal or softly muted – where the human figure, theatrical or ghostly, takes centre stage.

This mirrored program furthers ICICLE's mission: to reveal, accompany and foster dialogue between the creative forces of East and West.

– Myriam Kryger, Cultural director of ICICLE and curator
of the exhibition spaces in Paris and Shanghai

EXHIBITION CALENDAR

ICICLE CULTURAL SPACE – Paris

Shiori Eda
Beyond Sky and Earth
9 September – 10 October 2025

Cai Lei
Invisible Spaces
22 October – 15 December 2025

ICICLE SPACE– Shanghai

Felix Deschamps Mak
My Friends
20 September – 2 November 2025

Simon Martin
A Kiss In The Forest
8 November 2025 – 18 January 2026

ICICLE CULTURAL SPACES IN PARIS AND SHANGHAI

ICICLE opened a cultural space comprising an art gallery and a bookstore within its flagship in Shanghai in 2016, followed by a second in Paris in 2019. These two spaces converge to create an artistic platform based on the two pillars of visual arts and books, aiming to enhance exchanges and discoveries. Informed by a philosophy of the importance of encounter, the cultural programme articulates this desire for dialogue and hybridization. The ICICLE Cultural Spaces are home to a community of artists, writers and thinkers for whom aesthetic research and ethical reflection are inseparable.

On the 3rd floor of the ICICLE store at 35 avenue George V, the ICICLE Cultural Space in Paris presents exhibitions dedicated to art and design and includes a unique bookshop combining Lao-Tseu and Marguerite Duras, Mo Yan and J.M.G Le Clézio. With over 500 carefully selected books, the bookshop is divided into three sections: Creating, Thinking and Living according to Nature. It offers a time for materials and images - architecture, painting, art, crafts - a time for words and ideas - philosophy, poetry, literature, history, sinology - and finally a time for practices and tastes - tea and Tao arts, martial arts, meditation techniques, inner or nomadic journeys.

ABOUT ICICLE

ICICLE was founded in Shanghai in 1997, crafting high-quality clothing and accessories from the finest natural materials with an emphasis on comfort. It has since achieved international recognition as a manufacturer and retailer of exceptional contemporary ready to wear and accessories with sustainability at heart; a way of dressing for modern life, signed 'MADE IN EARTH'. The success of ICICLE is the vision of a couple, the founding partners, YE Shouzeng and TAO Xiaoma.

Their company philosophy is based on a trinity of Chinese values:

敬天 (Jing Tian) : Sincere reverence for nature.

爱人 (Ai Ren) : Kindness for others.

惜物 (Xi Wu) : Cherish what is given to us.

The mission is to connect man and nature by proposing clothes to live and work in, with respect for the environment and always paying tribute to the natural. Vertically integrated, the company employs an uncompromising approach to sourcing premium materials, pioneering intentional design and cutting-edge manufacturing techniques in its own factories. Products are created to last as long as possible, with a refined design aesthetic, where rigour meets relaxed elegance, espousing a responsible design process so as not to waste resources. This gentle minimalism ensures garments of intrinsic natural beauty which are friends for life. Today, ICICLE has developed 231 stores in more than 100 cities in China. In 2013, a Creative Centre was established in Paris, with the appointment of Bénédicte Laloux as Creative Director. ICICLE opened its global flagship store at 35 Avenue George V in Paris in 2019.

ICICLE is part of ICCF Group (Icicle Carven China France), a Franco-Chinese fashion group with international stature established in 2021 that unites ICICLE in China with the Parisian fashion house CARVEN in France. This unique alliance materialized in 2024 through the inauguration of ICCF Garden—an architectural embodiment harmoniously housing the group's pillars, ICICLE and CARVEN, alongside the artisanal culinary experiences of Silex Restaurant and Silex Gourmet Café, on the exclusive Hengshan Road of Shanghai.

PRATICAL INFORMATION

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ICCF GARDEN
No.2 Hengshan Road, Xuhui District, Shanghai
Monday to Sunday, 10am - 8pm

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