Martí Cormand

Mirroring

November 19 – December 19, 2026



Martí Cormand, *Mirroring: Vermeer 2 (from The Music Lesson, 1665),* 2026, Oil on board, artist frame, 20 x 16 in (50.8 x 40.6 cm).

Bienvenu Steinberg & C is pleased to present *Mirroring,* an exhibition of new paintings by Spanish-born artist Martí Cormand, his tenth in New York. The exhibition will be on view from November 19 to December 19, 2026. In *Mirroring,* Martí Cormand addresses the dichotomy between the original and the copy. Working with museum catalogues of European paintings—mostly from the medieval and Baroque periods—he focuses on the diffuse reflection of the images projected on the gloss of the adjacent page. The result is a game of doubles and mirages. From the time humans understood their reflection on the surface of water to be a visual fiction to our own era's obsession with selfies, the mirror image has transitioned from being a natural phenomenon to a fundamental artifact. Narcissus's mistake was to see his double not as a metaphorical limit, but as a real possibility in which he ended up drowning. The Spanish poet Raphael Alberti even suggested that Narcissus was the true inventor of painting. The mirror does not reproduce reality; it questions and transcends it.

In Martí Cormand's words: "Mirroring was born from a chance encounter. While browsing through a catalog from the Museo del Prado, I noticed that the image on one page of the book faintly reflected onto the opposite page. Inside the gutter where the pages connect, the image appeared sharp. But as the page curved, the reflection began to disappear, giving the impression that the image was evaporating. That's when I realized that the curvature of the glossy paper was able to visually dissolve three centuries of European painting.

I work with very thin layers of paint: each layer becomes a veil that lets the layers underneath peek through. Because too many layers could smother the light, I must be very cautious with the touch of the brush to let the painting breathe. My work subjects the history of painting to a process of distillation. Through paper-thin oil layers, the images shed their material weight, leaving behind a residue of our own historical memory. In

Mirroring: Vermeer 2, I was interested in the play of mirrors Vermeer used in *The Music Lesson.* In the original painting, the woman has her back turned to the viewer; the only way to see her face is to look at the tilted mirror—an optical device the Dutch Baroque painter used to expand the space and reveal the character's psychology. The woman's body remains sharp because it is in close proximity to the book's gutter. Moving to the left, however, the scene is warped by the physics of an open book. The viewpoint no longer points toward the interior of the painting, but toward the printed medium that reproduces it *(Martí Cormand, 2026)."*

In Cormand's paintings, the European tradition becomes a memory where the past evaporates with the turn of a page. The viewer flipping through the catalog is the true activator of art history: if the observer moves, Vermeer disappears.

Born in Barcelona in 1970, Martí Cormand lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Select exhibitions include: Parrish Museum, Water Mill, NY (2024); 20/21 Espacio de Arte, La Palma, Spain (2024); Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT (2020); Gregory Allicar Museum of Art, Fort Collins, CO (2018); Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art, CO; Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME (2011); Arranz-Bravo Foundation, Hospitalet de Llobregat, Barcelona, Spain (2010); Aldrich Emerging Artist Award Show, Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT (2007); Villa Arson, Nice, France (2006). Public collections include: Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; The Alfond Collection of Contemporary Art at Rollins College, Winter Park, FL; Arte y Naturaleza, Madrid, Spain; Ayuntamiento de Alcobendas, Alcobendas, Spain; Caja Madrid, Spain; Fundació La Caixa, Barcelona, Spain; Fundació Vila Casas, Barcelona, Spain; Honda, La Garriga, Spain.