The Green Gallery welcomes *Dive Bar Loops / Five Bar Loops*, Nolan Simon's second exhibition with us in eleven years.

Eight paintings reimagined a seat at a bar after the occupant has left — finished drinks, a champagne cork, egg shells, a dried lime. Everything is painted to scale and rests along the bottom edge of the canvases which are hung at bar height. Standing in front of them puts you where the last person sat: a leftover moment waiting on the next encounter.

Simon's glass and smoke are rendered with a crispness borrowed from seventeenth-century Dutch and Italian still life, set against black grounds worked into a faux wood grain or pitted like craters — blunt dimensionality against the faux-3D objects. In each scene light emanates from an unseen overhead bar lamp, and past its reach there's nothing. The dried lime tells us time has passed. An occasional cigarette in a prosthetic ear tips these arrangements into erotic pareidolia.

The dreamlike matter-of-factness has a local ancestor in John Wilde and the Wisconsin Magic Realists, on view at the Milwaukee Art Museum now, though Simon's images arrive differently — staged, shot and directed before they're painted, then slowed down to the speed of oil oxidation. The paintings are just as unwilling to explain themselves.

Not a smoker himself, Simon paraphrases Camus' famous final line of *Sisyphus* inviting us to instead to imagine Sisyphus smoking. On the cigarettes recurring through the series, Simon says: *"Even though everyone understands the downsides, I'm watching a group of people pick it back up. In a way it is the negative consequences that make the gesture attractive. It's almost more a symbol of Death Drive at this point than a symbol of the phallus."*

The show runs Sept 11 through Oct 10. Please join us part way through the run of the show for a reception with the artist on Sept 25.

Nolan Simon (b. 1980, Detroit) lives and works in Detroit. He has had five solo exhibitions at 47 Canal, New York, most recently *Cut off from the World, Attached to One Another* in 2024, and three at Lars Friedrich, Berlin, along with solo presentations at What Pipeline, Detroit, and Reisebürogalerie, Cologne. Group exhibitions include the Kölnischer Kunstverein, Greene Naftali, Lisson Gallery, Marlborough Chelsea, Mitchell-Innes & Nash, White Columns, and SculptureCenter. His work has been reviewed in *Artforum*, *The New York Times*, *ARTnews* and *Flash Art*, and is held in the collections of the University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor, and the Aïshti Foundation, Beirut. He writes on painting for *Artnet News*. His first exhibition at The Green Gallery, *Impressions*, was in 2015.