

NOAH LATIF LAMP

Chemtrail Paintings

Antwerp, 2026

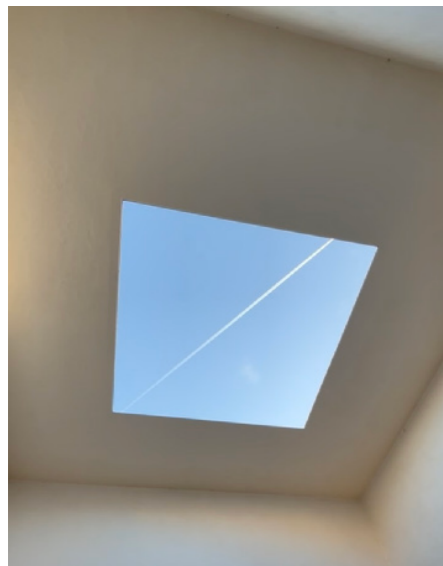


Tommy Simoens
Contemporary Art Gallery

NOAH LATIF LAMP

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James Turrell *Skyroom* at Muhka, Antwerp
Late December 2025; photo: Yuka Keino

Two years after his exhibition *MISSING* at Tommy Simoens Gallery in Antwerp, Noah Latif Lamp finds himself in the north of Mexico, working on a new series of paintings between the former Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea.

This displacement is not merely biographical, but symptomatic of a broader condition that continues to inform Lamp's practice. The paintings emerge from a world increasingly shaped by crisis, control, and the lingering effects of emergency governance.

If the state of exception, as described by Giorgio Agamben and discussed in relation to Lamp's work in the catalogue of his exhibition *MISSING*, reorganises law, bodies, and behaviour, it also recalibrates perception itself. Living under conditions of permanent emergency does not merely exhaust political agency; it alters how the world is seen. Images become unstable, potentially incriminating, or retrospectively dangerous. A small boat at sea can no longer be read innocently; even its mere appearance risks being framed as a threat - and instantly instrumentalised in a larger political scheme, particularly in the Caribbean. Visibility itself becomes suspect. The exception no longer needs to be declared — it is absorbed into the act of looking.

Within this climate, shaped by decades of securitisation and accelerated in Trump's America into a radically mediated vernacular of paranoia and mistrust, even the sky loses

its neutrality. What once functioned as background — atmospheric, continuous, indifferent — becomes a charged surface onto which ideology, fear, and suspicion are projected. This shift marks a broader rupture between visual regimes. In much of American abstract modernism — from mid-century colour-field painting to later Light and Space practices — the sky has functioned as an image of transcendence, clarity, and perceptual promise. James Turrell's *Skyspaces* offer a clear example: immersive fields of light that propose perception as a purified experience, carefully detached from social conflict, historical violence, or political contingency, and rooted in the legacy of 1950s American abstraction.

Lamp's *chemtrail* paintings operate in reverse. The familiar, almost banal sight of airplane trails cutting across the sky is rendered as an unstable sign, entangled with one of the most persistent conspiracy narratives circulating within American hard-edge subcultures. Lamp neither depicts paranoia nor confirms it. Instead, he paints the conditions under which such projections become unavoidable. His skies hover between abstraction and accusation, between painterly gesture and ideological residue, refusing the comfort of perceptual innocence. This logic is consistent with earlier works such as *False Flags* and *Little Brother*. In *False Flags*, Lamp burns 195 national flags in private, without spectacle or hierarchy, collapsing symbolic difference into a single ambiguous act. The work does not target any specific nation; rather, it addresses the system of nations as a whole, exposing

how symbols of collective identity become volatile under conditions of permanent emergency, where loyalty, threat, and dissent are continuously renegotiated. Meaning here is not destroyed, but destabilised.

Little Brother extends this instability into the realm of technological mediation. The inclusion of a GSM signal jammer gestures toward the feedback loop between surveillance and counter-surveillance that characterises contemporary protest and state control. Like the chemtrail paintings, the work does not offer resistance as resolution, but interference as a condition: a reminder that once certain thresholds of monitoring are crossed, neutrality is no longer possible, and every signal is already compromised. Seen together, these works extend the core concerns of *MISSING*: the erosion of trust, the blurring of juridical and perceptual boundaries, and the exhaustion produced by constant interpretive pressure. Just as the “missing” subject may no longer be someone taken but someone who has withdrawn, the sky here no longer offers transcendence but doubt. It becomes a site where looking itself is implicated.

In this sense, the chemtrail paintings register the afterimage of the state of exception. They show what remains once emergency has become ordinary: a world in which abstraction can no longer claim innocence, and where even the most minimal visual fields are saturated with ideology, fear, and unresolved tension. —T.S.

Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
50 x 50 cm



Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
40 x 30 cm



Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
50 x 40 cm



Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
50 x 40 cm



Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
50 x 50 cm



Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
50 x 40 cm



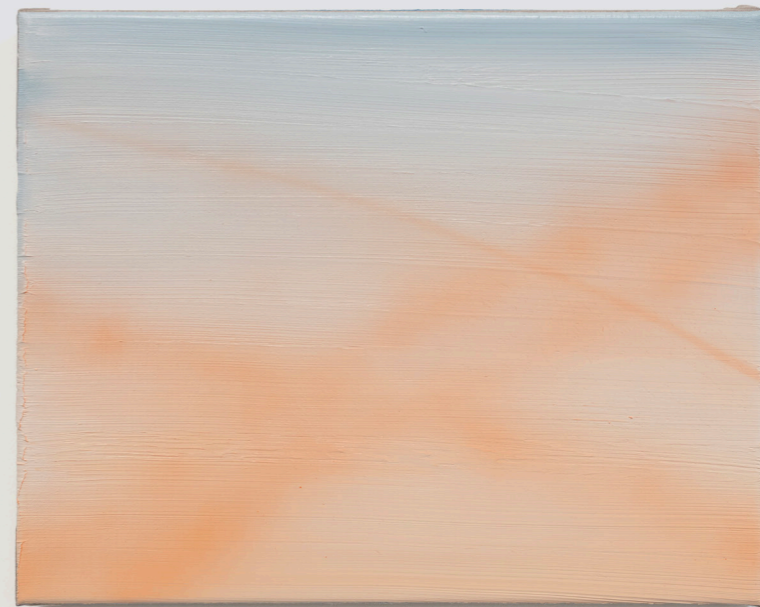
Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
50 x 50 cm



Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
40 x 30 cm



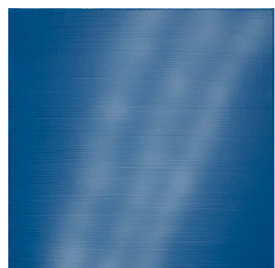
Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
50 x 40 cm



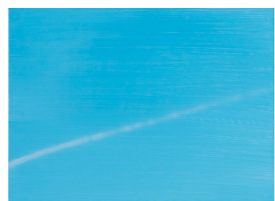
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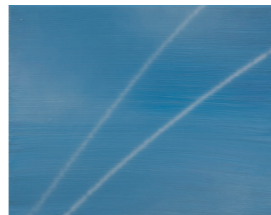
Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
50 x 50 cm
€ 6.500



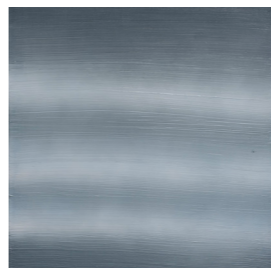
Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
40 x 30 cm
€ 4.500



Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
50 x 40 cm
€ 8.500



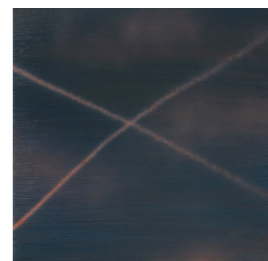
Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
50 x 40 cm
€ 8.500



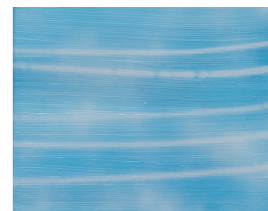
Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
50 x 50 cm
€ 9.500



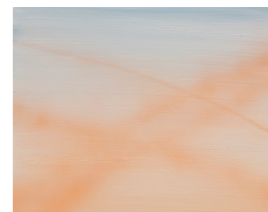
Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
50 x 40 cm
€ 8.500



Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
50 x 50 cm
€ 9.500



Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
40 x 30 cm
€ 4.500



Noah Latif Lamp
Chemtrail, 2026
Oil on canvas
50 x 40 cm
€ 8.500

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tommysimoens.com
info@tommysimoens.com
[@tommysimoensgallery](https://www.instagram.com/tommysimoensgallery)
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