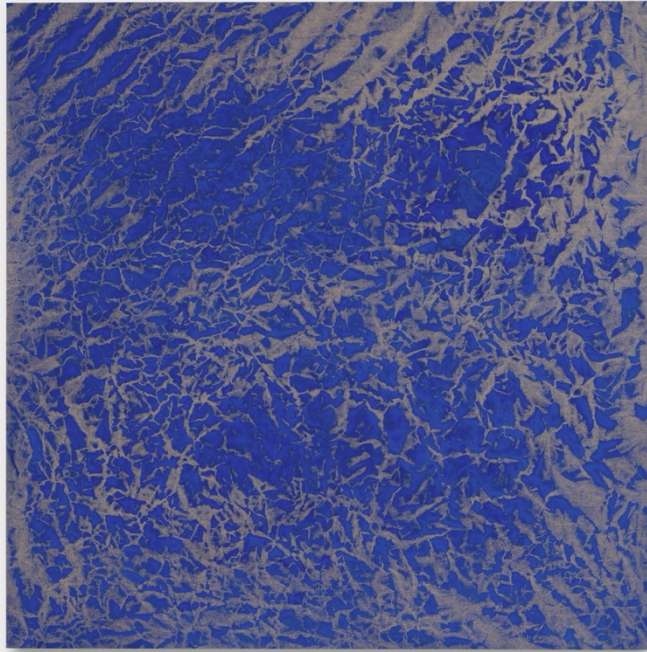


NORR COHAN



Blue Monad #1634, 2026. Pigments, oil and alkyd on linen canvas (Ultramarine Blue Green Light, Titanium White). 60 x 60 in (152.4 x 152.4 cm)

VICKY COLOMBET

Memory of the Surface

52 WALKER ST | SEPT 17 – OCT 24, 2026

NORR COHAN is pleased to present *Memory of the Surface*, an exhibition of new and recent paintings by Vicky Colombet, on view from September 17 through October 24, 2026, at the gallery's 52 Walker Street location. This is the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery. Working between New York, the Hudson Valley, and Paris, Colombet has spent decades making paintings that do not depict landscape so much as behave like one. Dense, three dimensional, at times photographic, they are made of pure pigment often drawn from the earth itself; and, as such, earth becomes both material and subject. Her abstractions carry a rhythmic, almost variable logic, echoing the geometries nature repeats at every scale — ripples on the surface of water, waves lapping up sand, tectonic plates forming vast topographies. The result is what the artist calls an "inner landscape," not paintings of a specific place, but immersive worlds in and of themselves, built not to resemble nature but from its very material. "My painting is nature," Colombet has said, "and my time is that of the painting."

Colombet's process begins with raw pigment, ground by hand and suspended in a mixture of oil and solvents, a technique refined over five decades. Working with her canvas laid flat rather than upright, she moves the pigment across the surface with brushes of goat and squirrel hair chosen for a softness that leaves no visible stroke, releasing the pigment's own radiance as it settles into the canvas. Each pigment behaves differently — settling, pooling, resisting, or dispersing according to its own weight and chemistry — and Colombet exercises exacting control over how it is allowed to move. And yet the aim, finally, is for her own hand to recede, so the painting arrives by way of forces outside her control:

gravity, chance, the temperament of a given mineral. The impulse is not unlike the one she has pursued through decades of Buddhist practice: a quieting of the self in favor of letting things happen as they will.

Raised in Paris to a French father and a mother of Filipino descent, Colombet spent much of her childhood traveling with her family across Southeast Asia and India, an early encounter with Eastern philosophy inseparable from her later work. In the early 1970s, she began working under Henri Dimier (1899–1986), returning around this same time to the philosophy of her childhood at Plum Village monastery under Thích Nhất Hạnh — an emphasis on presence and mindfulness that distinguishes the void as a place to connect rather than divide. By the early 1980s, she had arrived at a style that withheld any sign of having been painted at all, surfaces reading instead as photographic prints or naturally occurring formations, her hand almost entirely suppressed.

Among the paintings on view, *Blue Monad #1634* takes its name from philosopher Gottfried Leibniz's idea of the monad, a single indivisible unit that contains, in miniature, the whole of the universe within it — an idea Colombet's own surfaces seem to enact, built from countless minute perceptions rather than any single image. Rich ultramarine blue fractures across a raw linen ground, reading up close as pure incident and, from across the room, as something closer to a river delta or a satellite photograph. *Sun (Monet Series)* and *Sun Light #1495 (Monet Series)* extend Colombet's long dialogue with Monet, whose canvases — dissolving form and subject into pure light and atmosphere — she has taken as a touchstone throughout her career; in both, horizontal bands ripple around a soft, luminous center. *Antarctica #1641* carries that same lustrous quality further, continuing a series begun in 2014 in response to the melting of the polar ice caps: rendered entirely in silver, its dense network of fractures and veins forms a territory that remains unknown. Standing before these works, color and form extend past the edges of one's own field of vision; the paintings ask less to be read than to be entered.

Colombet has exhibited extensively both in the United States and abroad. In 2020, the Musée Marmottan Monet paired her work directly with Claude Monet's own in the exhibition *Unexpected Dialogues: Monet/Colombet*, an honor rarely extended to a living artist, accompanied by a museum catalogue. This fall, her work returns to the Musée Marmottan Monet as part of *Histoires de Paysages — de Monet à Hockney*, curated by Pierre Wat, before the exhibition travels to the Musée de Grenoble in Spring 2027. She is currently included in *The Durand-Ruel Legacy*, curated by Marianne Mathieu at Geelong Gallery in Australia, on view through October 2026. Her work is held in the collections of the CAPC Musée d'Art Contemporain, Bordeaux; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg; the Tucson Museum of Art; the Buffalo AKG Art Museum; and the Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris, among others.

For inquiries regarding *Memory of the Surface*, please contact Sascha Feldman at sascha@norrcohan.com or 212.714.9500.

For press inquiries, please contact press@norrcohan.com.