ARTHUR ROGER | GALLERY
432 Julia Street | New Orleans, LA 70130 | 504.522.1999
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Nicole Charbonnet*: America the Beautiful*

PRESS RELEASE

Exhibition Dates:	December 5, 2026 – February 13, 2027
Opening Reception:	Saturday, December 5 from 6–8 pm
Gallery Location:	432 Julia Street, New Orleans, LA 70130
Hours:	Tuesday–Saturday, 10 AM–5 PM
Contact Info:	504.522.1999; www.arthurrogergallery.com

The Arthur Roger Gallery is pleased to present *America the Beautiful*, an exhibition of paintings by Nicole Charbonnet. The exhibition will be on view at the Arthur Roger Gallery, located at 432 Julia Street, from December 5, 2026 – February 13, 2027. The gallery will host an opening reception with the artist in attendance on Saturday, December 5, from 6–8 pm.



America the Beautiful brings together two bodies of work that appear at first glance to occupy opposite ends of the artistic spectrum: "Pictures of Nothing," an abstract series constructed from found materials containing marks made by others, and "Film Stills," a figurative series rooted in the conventions of cinematic realism and scenes from American Westerns. Though visually distinct, both series explore the visual mythology of postwar America—an era when Abstract Expressionism and the Western projected an image of American confidence, autonomy, and limitless possibility.

In Charbonnet's examination, the cowboy and the Abstract Expressionist painter stand as parallel icons of American individualism: each confronts an open territory—the frontier or the blank canvas—imagined as a space for self-invention. Yet both myths rely on a fiction of emptiness that obscures preexisting histories and human connections. In "Pictures of Nothing," Charbonnet subverts the myth of the solitary, heroic gesture by building paintings from discarded fragments—recycled paper, scraps of fabric, and outdated wallpaper sample books. Through an additive and subtractive process of collaging, cutting, layering with paint, plaster, and marble dust, and repeatedly sanding the surfaces, she creates visual palimpsests that privilege interdependence, accumulation, and relationship over conquest and autonomy.

"Film Stills" approaches this same cultural inheritance through the iconography of the American West. While honoring the seductive beauty and promise of the frontier landscape, the works recognize the tension between national mythology and historical reality—acknowledging the systems of power, extraction, and dispossession that underlie the fantasy of the self-reliant hero. Placed in dialogue, loops of both lasso and abstract gesture appear as worn, nostalgic symbols ripe for reimagining, inviting viewers to look beneath the image of the solitary individual, to recognize a deeper web of shared histories and human connection.

Born in New Orleans, Nicole Charbonnet received her B.A. from the University of Virginia and her M.F.A. from Boston University. She also studied in France at the Académie Goetz in Paris and the Cleveland Institute of Art's school in Lacoste. Working from her off-grid converted factory studio in New Orleans' Irish Channel, she has exhibited nationally and internationally and received numerous honors and awards, including grants from the Pollock-Krasner, Elizabeth Greenshields, and Art Matters Foundations, as well as a residency at the Aspen Institute.

For more information, please contact the Arthur Roger Gallery at 504.522.1999 or visit our website at arthurrogergallery.com.