

[Simmons at Hauser & Wirth](#)

[Artist Website](#)

Read a [conversation](#) between critic Marrily Kerr and Simmons from 2002 for Flash Art Magazine, “If These Walls Could Talk: Gary Simmons.”

In 2013, the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth installed [FOCUS: Gary Simmons](#). Take a tour of the exhibition and watch an interview with the artist in an episode of [Art This Week](#).

Read a 2015 interview in [BOMB Magazine](#), where Simmons discusses a new work, *Recapturing the Memories of the Black Ark*.

The California African American Museum in Los Angeles commissioned a [site-specific painting](#) to be on display from 2017 to 2019. Watch a [video](#) about *Gary Simmons: Fade to Black* on YouTube.

“[Artist Gary Simmons Manipulates Materials and Memories](#)” by Greg Herbowy explores Simmons’ oeuvre and career and was published as an artist feature by New York’s School of Visual Arts.

[Gary Simmons: Green Past Gold](#) was installed at Simon Lee Gallery in London in 2018. Read about the exhibition in [Fad Magazine](#) and watch a video from [Frieze](#) about the exhibition’s opening.



Simmons, ca. 2022  
Photograph: Tito Molina

The University of Washington’s Henry Art Gallery commissioned an exhibition entitled [Gary Simmons: The Engine Room](#) in 2021. The exhibition included a large-scale wall drawing, new paintings and sculptures, and an installation. Read an article in [The Stranger](#) about the exhibition, which features a life-sized garage for Seattle-area musicians to practice.

Hauser & Wirth started [representing](#) Simmons in 2021. His 2014 artwork, *Recapturing the Memories of the Black Ark* now serves as an event stage for the Black Ark series held in the courtyard of Hauser & Wirth Los Angeles. Read an LA Times [interview](#) about the performance space and Simmons’ first solo exhibition with the prestigious gallery, [Remembering Tomorrow](#). Read a conversation between the artist and Thelma Golden in [ARTnews](#) and an interview in [The Talks](#). Watch a [video interview](#) with the artist about his childhood and early experiences with the intertwinement of American popular culture and structural racism.



Simmons in his LA studio, ca. 2018  
Photograph: HRDWRKER/Tito Molina

Gary Simmons (American, b. 1964)

**Rogue Wave**, 2021

Oil and cold wax on canvas

Private Collection; L2023:117.1

Gary Simmons is perhaps best known for his series of “erasure drawings” that appear to be ghostly smudges on a partially erased chalkboard. In the early 1990s, Simmons began introducing racist cartoon characters as a way of investigating their presence in popular culture, where prejudice routinely surfaced under the guise of “humor.” However, the artist turned away from Black caricatures for decades, only returning to the subject after the murder of George Floyd in 2020. **Untitled** is part of a new body of work that uses cartoon characters to confront the cycle of institutionalized racism and abuse in the United States. The large-scale painting features Mickey Mouse in *Steamboat Willie*, fighting to keep the boat afloat during an intense storm. By evoking this iconic character, Simmons asks: “Are racialized bodies ever done battling the tides?”

*On view January 22 – April 27, 2025*





Gary Simmons (American, b. 1964)

**Crow's Nest Fog**, 2012

Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2022:54.2

Los Angeles-based painter and sculptor Gary Simmons is best known for his series of “erasure drawings,” which evoke the ghostly smudges of a partially erased chalkboard. This style originated in the 1990s, when Simmons secured studio space in an old Manhattan vocational school with a set of abandoned rolling classroom chalkboards. **Crow's Nest Fog** depicts a ship's “crow's nest,” or the lookout platform on top of the main mast from which sailors could maintain a wide field of view. With Simmons' characteristic smudges, the image appears blanketed in a thick fog. The painting addresses legacies of the teaching of history in the United States, particularly stories of migration, displacement, and racism that have long been either woefully overlooked or deliberately suppressed.

*On view August 24 – November 27, 2022*