

## LEONARD BABY

*Leonard Baby Loves You*

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## FORTNIGHT INSTITUTE

21 East 3rd St. NYC

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Not to be mistaken as nostalgic, Leonard Baby's paintings are nudging us awake to the present instead of daydreaming of a romanticized past. Leonard Baby borrows images from films as the basis for his compositions, referencing disparate genres from *The Young Girls of Rochefort* to *The Parent Trap*.

Baby isolates a single shot; a pair of hands on a table or a figure with their face turned away. The painting, *It's a Game of Give and Take*, depicts a street scene, the legs of someone on a bicycle, and a vintage car paused on the road in the middle ground, all under a blue sky in what looks like Mayberry - a fictional community that was the setting for popular American television sitcoms. He evokes a whimpering memory, the transporting flash of recollection that slips away from us the instant we feel its presence.

In the paintings, *Pills and Pastries* and *In My Own Way I'll Let You Know*, Baby uses the classic composition of a still-life, delightful cakes and bottles with glasses resting on a table. However, Baby includes a hand or hands reaching toward the objects to activate the still-life display. The identity of the person reaching is never revealed as he offers not even a glimpse of their face. A narrative or story is alluded to in each painting but not entirely told. We imagine what might be happening outside of the painting and who the hand belongs to and what might occur.

Something curious happens while moving from one painting to the next. The clear and certain images from different films swirl together; the dog on an ironing board melds with the girl weeping in her bed as if they are happening in the same house that we are walking through. The paintings all together are united with their *Looney Tunes* color palette to form a bond masking their different cinematic origins.

Baby holds each painting in his lap while he paints rather than using an easel. This method of painting sustains a high level of intimacy which is further implied by the use of soft pink color brushed along the wood edges of each painting. The wood panel format stretches the scene out in a wide cinematic format. The paintings beckon to be held close and carried away like a keepsake.

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Leonard Baby was born in 1996 and grew up in Manitou Springs, Colorado. He currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Baby has shown work with Pamela Salisbury Gallery in Hudson, NY, Kutlesa Gallery in Glodau, Switzerland, The Artist Room in London, UK, and The Lodge in Los Angeles, CA.