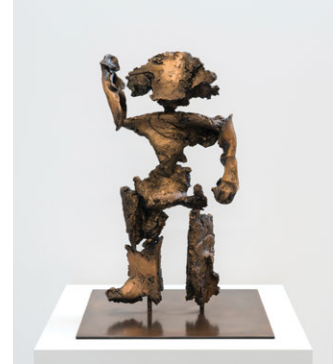


MIGUEL ABREU GALLERY

JEAN-LUC MOULÈNE

September 10 – November 5, 2025
88 Eldridge Street

Goltor, Le Buisson, 2025
Bronze (Fonderie de Coubertin)
18 1/2 x 12 1/2 x 12 1/2 inches (47 x 31.8 x 31.8 cm)
Edition of 3 + 2 APs
[JM2022.25]



This statuette titled *Goltor*, a compression of ‘Golem’ and ‘tractor,’ was assembled from various pieces of mud marked by traces of tractor tires. The arms rotate. Turned into a bronze, this talismanic figure refers to an incomplete or unfinished human being, mentioned once in the Bible in Psalm 139. In later Talmudic literature and medieval Jewish folklore, the name Golem evolved to describe a creature magically animated from inanimate material, such as dust or clay, through incantations and sacred letters. The space where the word “truth” would traditionally appear on the Golem’s forehead has been left blank.

The work belongs to a category of objects Moulène calls ‘Bébus’ in homage to *Le Grand Jeu*, a short-lived French journal from the late 1920s published by a group of writers, poets, and artists, which included Roger Vaillant, René Daumal, Roger Gilbert-Lecomte, and Josef Sima. The movement’s aim was to rediscover “the simplicity of childhood and its possibilities of intuitive and spontaneous knowledge” through pataphysics, extrasensory research practices, and the use of mystical texts and drugs. It sought and promoted the deregulation of the senses and organized ‘séances’ during which a chosen object was placed on the meeting’s table to be discussed by all. Wild and imaginative projections would ensue, bestowing on the object quasi-spiritual powers. Moulène places one of his own talismanic objects at the inaugural point of most of his exhibitions as an attempt to disseminate its singular force into the space of the show.

Redux, Le Buisson, 2025
Bone glue, nerve glue, hide glue
4 1/2 x 4 1/2 x 6 1/2 inches (11.4 x 11.4 x 16.5 cm)
[JM2023.25]



Made with a mixture of heated bone, nerve, and hide glues, the skull shrinks as the glues cool down, which amplifies the basic structure of the skull.

PiTech X, Le Buisson, 2025
 Bronze (Fonderie de Coubertin)
 4 x 5 x 7 1/8 inches (10.2 x 12.7 x 18.1 cm)
 Edition of 3 + 2 APs
 [JM2025.25]



Moulène initiates making *PiTech X* and *PiTech Y* by wrapping a medical skull in a sheet of clay. He then pulls the clay off the skull with his hands to turn its surface inside out. In this inverted state, akin to an act of reanimation, the concave eye sockets protrude out.

PiTech Y, Le Buisson, 2025
 Bronze (Fonderie de Coubertin)
 5 1/8 x 5 7/8 x 8 1/4 inches (13 x 14.9 x 21 cm)
 Edition of 3 + 2 APs
 [JM2021.25]



Rupture, Le Buisson, 2025
 Glass, concrete, bone, polystyrene, steel, silicone
 17 5/8 x 17 3/8 x 27 7/8 inches (44.8 x 44.1 x 70.8 cm)
 [JM2019.25]



Échantillon et module, Le Buisson, 2025
 Honeycomb cardboard, glue, zinc, copper
 31 1/8 x 18 x 23 5/8 inches (79.1 x 45.7 x 60 cm)
 [JM2020.25]



Shaped and built with relatively inexpensive honeycomb cardboard, this lightweight, tower-like, abstract object leans leftward in a quasi-precarious position. The arrangement of pennies glued to the top of two adjacent panels semiotically reaffirm the effect of fragility and uncertainty.

Ecorché aux yeux vairs, Le Buisson, 2024
Concrete, metal, glass
21 1/4 x 9 1/4 x 9 1/4 inches (54 x 23.5 x 23.5 cm)
[JM2013.24]



The *Écorchés* adopt the same production process that was used for the *Tronches* series, inaugurated in 2014. Blind and mute as they are, the *Écorchés* come from latex funhouse masks, whose orifices have been sewn shut. The masks have been turned outside in, filled with concrete, rubbed with wax and waste oil, then adorned with dangling glass earrings. As with *Tronches*, Moulène destabilizes and plays with the age-old artistic genres of portraiture and monuments by neutralizing their representations as the two active materials—light and elastic, and heavy and hard—find a kind of uneasy, yet materially generated, objective equilibrium.

Bio St, Le Buisson, 2025
Plywood, plastic anatomical models, tar, epoxy resin
11 x 70 7/8 x 29 1/2 inches (28 x 180 x 75 cm)
[JM2016.25]



“Here it’s the entrance, but through the main door,” says Moulène, “in the sense that one can be quite literal with this work regarding the question of figuration. And a figuration that, indeed, builds a body. It is the figuration of a representation, one could say. And like any representation, it builds a body. The job of producing presence, by contrast, entails the deconstruction of all representations to find oneself in presence. That’s it. So, the direct path was to place the organs along a street, an avenue as if they were organs of power or organization. The shape of the buildings and edifices come directly from medical block diagrams. They are medical readymades, if you will.

“We want to study the cross-section of a bone, layer by layer, here you have it. There is also a cross-section of the skin, with the hair on top. We haven’t failed to notice that we’re dealing with the organs of power, that we can talk about organs as elements of social organization: the heart of power, for instance, or the armed wing.”

Ténèbres, 2024

Glass (CIRVA)

14 1/4 x 25 1/4 x 16 7/8 inches (36.2 x 64.1 x 42.9 cm)

[JM1991.24]



“Without question,” says Moulène, “we are entering a period of darkness. It is also the task of this work to signal towards how I feel.

“If you blow two glass bubbles, what can the first bubble do? It can expand, it can liquefy more or less. Glass is the only material whose liquefaction is not brutal, the liquefaction takes place gradually as you raise the temperature. There is no change of state of the material, like you have with water, for instance, which suddenly becomes solid, suddenly becomes vapor. With glass, it’s a continuous process; it’s the only material that reacts that way. It’s a material that is subject to gravity and temperature, but basically, it’s a material that resembles what happens in the stars, in the cosmos, as we are told: temperatures and gravities that hold together.

“You have to make the bubble turn, it’s so hot that it would fall to the ground if you didn’t. You have to turn it to fight gravity and give it its shape, which is linked to a rotational force. People have enacted the same kind of delirium with ball games and marble games. Marble games, all over the world, would be an imitation of what we see in the stars.

“The second bubble produces a flattened disc. It results from opening the bubble as it turns full speed at the end of the rod. The glass begins to flatten out until it reaches the shape of a perfect disc. These are the two basic shapes that emerge, and both constitute struggles against gravity. One bubble inflates, and the other flattens out. While hot, we decided to interpenetrate these two primary objects of glass, as if two planets had encountered one another.”

Noir Pâle, 2025

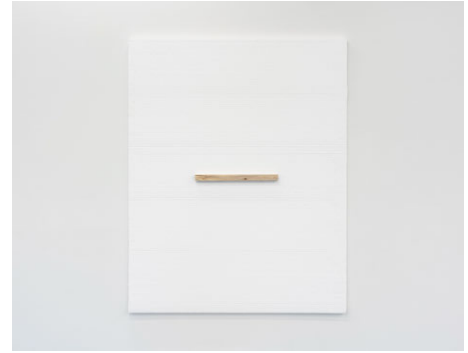
Glass (CIRVA)

13 1/2 x 24 x 15 1/2 inches (34.3 x 61 x 39.4 cm)

[JM2029.25]



Liquidambar horizontal, Le Buisson, 2025
Polystyrene, wood, aluminum
60 x 48 x 2 inches (152.4 x 121.9 x 5.1 cm)
[JM2026.25]



This work is made of a piece of Liquidambar wood, also known as sweetgum, combined and affixed (without glue) to a large sheet of Polystyrene. Moulène's interest lies in the chemical reaction that might occur from conjoining the two materials, the organic and the synthetic, which share a same molecule. Here, the artist reflects on how we never seem to seek nature's opinion on the ways we humans use it. This is also a case of 'painting beyond itself,' that is as a pure experiment in chemistry.

Historical background:

- In 1786, an English scientist distilled the resin from a Liquidambar tree and extracted an oil he named Styrax.
- In 1835, the German chemist, Eduard Simon, distilled the resin of *Liquidambar orientalis*, combined it with perfume and obtained pure styrene, a liquid he called Styrol.
- Following the various studies of French chemist, Marcellin Berthelot, around 1866, German chemist, Hermann Staudinger, in 1925, combined several molecules and invented Polystyrene.

Liquidambar vertical, Le Buisson, 2025
Polystyrene, wood, aluminum
60 x 48 x 2 1/4 inches (152.4 x 121.9 x 5.1 cm)
[JM2027.25]



Liquidambar lateral, Le Buisson, 2025
Polystyrene, wood, aluminum
60 x 49 3/8 x 1 inches (152.4 x 121.9 x 2.5 cm)
[JM2028.25]



Iliac Bones, Le Buisson, 2025

Bone, bone glue

Left: 15 x 18 x 5 inches (38.1 x 45.7 x 12.7 cm)

Right: 17 x 18 x 5 inches (43.2 x 45.7 x 12.7 cm)

[JM2017.25]



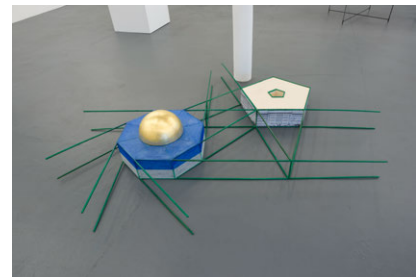
Moulène poured bone glue over two hip bones. The resulting, undulating puddles produce a kind of halo effect produced by the very base material of the hip bones themselves. For the artist, bones are of long lasting interest partly because they make up the last, solid frontier of the human body.

Octo-Pentagone, Le Buisson, 2025

Wood, glue, staples, cardboard, printed paper, tissue paper, nitrocellulose varnish, oil paint, shellac, dyes, polystyrene, epoxy, gold leaf

16 3/4 x 96 7/8 x 116 7/8 inches (42.5 x 246 x 297 cm)

[JM2011.25]



The solution for this work was set geometrically by moving around the two central objects.

The US Department of Defense headquarters—recently renamed Department of War—uses the shape of a pentagon, for instance, while the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem is in the form of an octagon. “I think it’s an absolute singularity,” says Moulène. “I drew it several times. It’s quite simple, really: you superimpose two layers in Photoshop, one with a pentagon, the other with an octagon, and once they are set to the right dimensions, you tamper with the outer lines of the forms until the two objects lock into place, or three things align. However, I was looking for an alignment that would make the geometry ambiguous...”

“Why these green lines that extend beyond the whole structure? Back in the 1980s, the first digital objects were green threads, green vectors. Here the geometry refers to this type of digital drawing. Yet mentally, like with a handmade drawing, the lines extend into space. An analogically drawn line, in a way, is immediately infinite, whereas in the digital space, when you draw a line, it’s a start-stop situation. There is no extension; the lines don’t stretch out. You’re going to point, drag, point, drag, etc., but there is no longer an occupation of space. To put these issues into play is to problematize them in a certain way. I might add that the octagon is fabricated with Asian-inspired techniques, while the pentagon is made with a neo-brutalist technique. I read about these construction materials used for real architectural models; I didn’t make it up.”

Os 24 faces, Le Buisson, 2025

Cardboard, wood, plaster, gummed paper tape, glues, tar,
BIC ink with shellac, BIC ink with epoxy

64 1/8 x 74 x 107 7/8 inches (163 x 188 x 274 cm)

[JM2006.25]



For Moulène, bones constitute the final, solid frontier of the human body. *Os 24 faces* is a geometric abstraction of the artist's favored knucklebone (goat or sheep bone), in part because of its atypical cubic shape, which may be engaged from diverse perspectives. It is comprised of 24 triangular-shaped faces cut, assembled, and hand-painted by the artist with various materials.

Caisse à souffler, Le Buisson, 2025

Acacia wood, wool

18 1/2 x 17 1/4 x 15 1/2 inches (47 x 43.8 x 39.4 cm)

[JM2007.25]

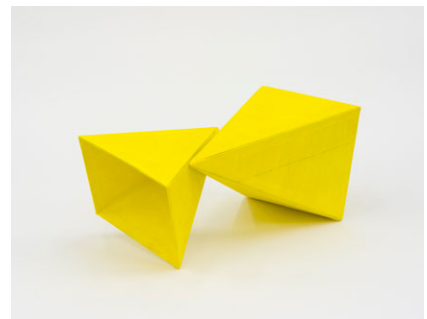


Adjacentes jaunes, Le Buisson, 2024

Cardboard, adhesive paper, dry pastel

10 1/2 x 10 x 23 1/2 inches (26.7 x 25.4 x 59.7 cm)

[JM2003.24]



Adjacentes jaunes is the first abstract object made for the show and set furthest from the gallery's entrance in Moulène's chosen reverse chronology. Two cardboard pyramids, colored with sharp yellow dry pastel, become subject to accretions of material encounters and are configured to softly rub against one another, sharing contact surfaces without interpenetration. Adjacency, as a precise geometric relation, refutes resolution of contradictions through unification. "The zone of resolution, until now," says Moulène, "was the common space. I say no, because the common space, right now, is slipping away from us. We need to invent something else."

Bipulsion, Le Buisson, 2025
12 cardboard cones, metallic paints
16 3/4 x 32 x 24 inches (42.5 x 81.3 x 61 cm)
[JM2009.25]



Adopting the same basic concept of geometric adjacency as *Adjacentes jaunes*, this work expands the object from two to twelve cones, using two attractors as opposed to one.

Fixed and Holed, Le Buisson, 2025
Cardboard, glass, plastic, glue
42 x 24 1/2 x 30 inches (106.7 x 62.2 x 76.2 cm)
[JM2008.25]



“With this work, I had to start over. It derives completely from the forces of the standard chair. It is enlarged because I could not change the size of my glass shields. It holds the same principle of force distribution, shaped by pieces of cardboard. There is not a single nail, nothing; only cardboard and zip ties, well known in New York. The question of the body has a representation, at least of its absence. As with any armchair, it’s about an absent body.

“It’s a position of withdrawal, one that allows you to be absent from the point of view that would embrace the entire space. We are in the presence of figures for a cult whose religious nature we do not know, or perhaps for a game, yet which nevertheless seriously borrow from the tradition of the study of hospitality from all over the world. Questions of weight, material, apparent fragility, the nature of perception—all of that plays simultaneously to make this piece a little sacred, quite simply. In addition, it’s a nod to the fact that every time we do an exhibition, there is a standard model in the corner.”