

TEMPLON

II

WILL COTTON

GALERIE MAGAZINE, June 6, 2025

8 Must-See Solo Gallery Shows in June

From Will Cotton's paintings and drawings of cowboys, unicorns, and mermaids in confectionery landscapes to the recreation of Diane Arbus's seminal 1972 *Museum of Modern Art* retrospective

BY PAUL LASTER

Rounding up the best gallery exhibitions across the United States each month, *Galerie* traveled from New York to Chicago and Los Angeles to discover the top solo shows for June. From Will Cotton's paintings and drawings of cowboys, unicorns, and mermaids in confectionery landscapes at Templon in New York to the recreation of Diane Arbus's seminal 1972 *Museum of Modern Art* retrospective at David Zwirner in Los Angeles, these are the not-to-be-missed shows this month.



Will Cotton, *The Siren's Offer*, (2024).

1. Will Cotton at Templon | New York

Celebrated for his realistic Candyland compositions featuring confectionery landscapes and fantastical portraits of femme fatales floating in cotton candy clouds, [Will Cotton](#) creates contemporary art with a classical flair. Constructing representational objects of desire from symbolic sweets, Cotton blurs the lines between childish cravings and adult fantasies. His art direction for Katy Perry's music video "California Gurl" earned him pop culture acclaim, while his recent transformation of Rockefeller Center's public spaces with large-scale murals and sculptural installations captivated the Midtown tourist and business crowd.

The New York-based artist's recent paintings and drawings of cowboys, unicorns, and mermaids in the exhibition "Between Instinct and Reason"—his first solo outing with Templon New York, after showing with the gallery in Europe for 15 years—present fantasy realms that transcend Hollywood's film fairy tales. Cotton portrays trident-wielding mermaids as manipulative narcissists and seductive sirens who lure macho Marlboro men—when they aren't trying to tame wild unicorns—to their demise. He casts his characters into delightful dreamscapes filled with tempting treats, creating surreal "Venetian Hour" scenes featuring guests who could undoubtedly upstage almost any bride and groom.