

Galerie
Nicolas Robert

La peau du regard (Skin of sight)

Mel Arsenault, Haley Bassett, Maude Corriveau, Claire Drummond, David Elliott, Andréanne Godin, Samuelle Grande, Tristram Lansdowne, Laurent Le Bel-Roux, Natia Lemay, Jérôme Nadeau, Simon Petepiece, Devon Pryce, Carl Trahan, Justin Weiler

July 18–September 5, 2026

Opening Saturday July 18

Galerie Nicolas Robert is pleased to present *La peau du regard (Sight of Skin)*, a group exhibition featuring works by Mel Arsenault, Haley Bassett, Maude Corriveau, Claire Drummond, David Elliott, Andréanne Godin, Samuelle Grande, Tristram Lansdowne, Laurent Le Bel-Roux, Natia Lemay, Jérôme Nadeau, Simon Petepiece, Devon Pryce, Carl Trahan, and Justin Weiler.

Laura U. Marks describes the phenomenon of haptic visuality as one in which "the eyes themselves function like organs of touch." Standing before a work, this can mean feeling cool grass beneath you before you recognize it as a landscape, finding in the curve of a painted arm the touch of a beloved, or sensing the weight of a familiar gesture; a hand moving a brush across canvas, a body taking shape beneath it before you register it as a painting at all. This experience runs through the whole exhibition, where ceramic takes the imprint of bone, beading accumulates labour bead by bead, painting keeps the trace of the hand beneath the finished image, and casting keeps the pressure of a vanished weight.

Mel Arsenault fuses mineral powders and clay into glass skins that give her forms the grain of skin or scale, echoing the synsacrum, a bird-and-dinosaur bone whose echo in us is the pelvis, as if one could touch, from outside, what the body only feels within. Haley Bassett, meanwhile, patiently beads a worn work glove: connection, labour, and energy passed from one hand to another, the weight of a repeated gesture settling bead by bead into the object.

Maude Corriveau paints still lifes wrapped in knotted, draped fabrics that seem almost alive, their retroreflective cloth shattering light into micro-prisms, so the surface shifts under the gaze as it would under the hand. In Claire Drummond's work, every canvas begins with yellow, and that ground still radiates beneath the cut flowers or the face that emerges from it, like a warmth one hasn't quite left.

David Elliott builds small boxed collages holding dreamlike scenes at hand height, close enough that one approaches by leaning in, as if to enter them. Andréanne Godin draws hands, hair, and faces in dry pigment at the edge of photographic blur, where the texture of the gesture takes precedence over the sharpness of memory. Samuelle Grande sketches from memory at night, lying in bed, on the edge of sleep; those half-dreamed drawings seed paintings that grow slowly afterward.

Tristram Lansdowne's watercolours, panoramic wilderness landscapes, are interrupted by small framed dioramas; a wig suspended mid-air, a row of chocolate-dipped strawberries lining the horizon, intrusions of desire and artifice that reveal how staged and controlled this "pure" nature already is. Laurent Le Bel-Roux layers biomorphic fragments over a taut grid until it warps and blurs beneath them, an interference pattern that leaves the eye uncertain where one form ends and the next begins.

Natia Lemay paints two bodies responding to one another in the dark of a thicket, drawing on autoethnography to show how transgenerational trauma inhabits the body before it inhabits the story. Jérôme Nadeau rubs the analog against the digital, the organic against the cybernetic, two textures of the world that shouldn't touch and yet contaminate one another. Simon Petepiece carves, in plaster and steel, a window-like opening; a fragment of architecture, a frame opening onto how we literally construct the space we inhabit. Devon Pryce paints figures caught in moments of quiet intimacy: two people exchanging what feels like a secret, or a body captured in the intimacy of an everyday gesture.

Carl Trahan engraves text into graphite and rubber until the words wear down into illegible overlap, as if language had a skin that could be rubbed raw. Finally, Justin Weiler paints ink onto layered panes of glass, turning domestic thresholds: blinds, curtains, windows into screens where light, not form, becomes the subject.