

april april

Une Petite Cantate

Alix Van Der Donckt-Ferrand

July 12 – August 23, 2025

april april is pleased to present *Une Petite Cantate*, an exhibition by Montréal-based artist Alix Van Der Donckt-Ferrand. This marks the artist's first solo exhibition in the United States.

Alix Van Der Donckt-Ferrand makes drawings and sculptures that circuit notions of desire, embellishment, strength, and aspiration. *Une Petite Cantate* is a world of images and materials at nature's threshold—the ambiguous space between real and hyperreal, as in GMOs, mortality, femininity, gym bros. The artist embraces the inherent and strangely spiritual contradictions of origin, and meditates on its fundamentals across cultures: maize, maple, ass muscles.

The exhibition comprises seven drawings, a music box, and a mobile. Enhanced performance is sort of the main subject... but the strategy of “hiding elements” as an experience of the invisible apprises some real honesty. It is likewise a strategy of layering meaning as an exercise of narrative power. A couple weightlifting at the gym, as in *Leg day - or - La Fragilité de la Vie* (2025) holds as much truth as *Wahta'* and *Chêne* (both 2023), modest depictions of sacred trees collaged from a faux-finish product catalogue. Across the gallery, in *Liaisons* (2025), a couple makes love behind a trunk at an imagined maple farm. A kaleidoscopic cob gives birth to the world in *m u n d o d e c o l o r e s* (2025). Sitting atop six slender, brightly hued legs, a woven cane box chimes the melody to Barbara's 1965 “Une petite cantate” — a song of mourning, unfurling like smoke. The artist situates gravity within humble material cohabitations—wood, fur, ribbons—and proposes an expressionism equally mumbled and exaggerated. One must, as she says, allow the “most nameable and unnameable things to brush shoulders.”

A network of disparate forms become common symbols among the works on view, wherein cerulean ribbon loops rhyme with sugar shack sap tubing; a sunshower of kernels rain down alongside pompoms of felted dog hair and punched notes on a music roll. This collapsed perspective freshly unites aesthetics of Inuit schools of drawing with Leon Golub and Louise Bourgeois. Van Der Donckt-Ferrand wields the trope of “everything is connected” against the question of authenticity. You could say she is scoring a laugh track at the nexus of cultural disorientation and disenchantment. Affinity is the vibe, the personal is universal, etcetera.

Alix Van Der Donckt-Ferrand (b. 1995, Montréal, Canada) lives and works in Montréal. She has been included in solo and group exhibitions at Independent, New York; Chris Andrews, Montreal; Bridget Donahue, New York; Chozick Family Art Gallery, New York; ermitage, Montreal; Morgan Lehman Gallery, New York; Poundmaker Historical Museum, Saskatchewan; The Loon, Toronto; and Antonini Museum, Nasca, Peru. In September 2025, the artist will present an exhibition with Juan Pablo Hernández Gutiérrez at Unit 17, Vancouver. Ferrand's work can be found in the public collection of the Royal Bank of Canada.