

Alexis Gros-Louis and Michael Eddy
I Was First
January 15th - February 21st 2026

Galerie Nicolas Robert is pleased to present *I Was First*, a collaborative exhibition by artists Alexis Gros-Louis and Michael Eddy, who inhabit the space as one might share land: not necessarily in search of harmony, but by embracing divergence, friction, and productive misunderstanding. The project takes shape through what unfolds between the works—their proximities, tensions, and partial responses—and, quietly, brings into play what exhibitions often render invisible: regimes of property, narratives of authorship, economies of circulation, and thresholds of responsibility. A critical sensibility runs through the exhibition, shaped by inherited topographies and imaginaries; surfaces that bear traces, forms that are passed on as they transform.

Directly on the floor — then moved onto the wall — the terracotta becomes a point of departure for thinking about measurement and trace. A modular, repeatable unit, it slides from architecture into image, making perceptible the logics of grid, ordering, and the rendering of territory legible. Yet this same material also subtly evokes the fragments of pottery scattered around the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence: traces of use, presence, and movement. Between relic and abstraction, it becomes a critical surface, a site of friction between material memory and contemporary systems.

Building on this idea of surface — as a site of inscription, pressure, and reading — another material takes over. Steel is worked like a skin: a plane on which marks of tension, anxiety, and self-surveillance are imprinted. The folds and reliefs that emerge acquire an almost cartographic quality, as if the body itself becomes a landscape traversed by systems of control and normalization, and by the social, economic, and political constraints that sustain them. The work as a whole thus proposes a reading of the visible as a deposit: what is transmitted is never intact, but recomposed, displaced, and reconfigured by the very conditions of its circulation.

Alexis Gros-Louis is a multidisciplinary artist from Wendake. He received an MFA from NSCAD University in 2020 and a BFA with a major in photography from Concordia University in 2017. His work has been shown at Centre d'artistes Ahkwayaonhkeh (Québec), Galerie de l'Université de Montréal, Galerie B-312 (Montréal), Manif d'art 11 (Québec), Musée huron-wendat (Québec), Fonderie Darling (Montréal), VU, centre de diffusion et de production de la photographie (Québec), Biennale d'art contemporain autochtone (Montréal), and the Art souterrain festival (Montréal). Gros-Louis explores the paradox of contemporary Indigenous life and multiple voids in historical records, archival memories, and material culture. He explores themes such as identity, Indigenous subjects, dominant culture, systems of categorization, obsolescence, and fundamental questions about art, art practice, and art-making. His work has been acquired by Collection Méduse and the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal.

Michael Eddy was born in New York in 1981 and grew up in Nova Scotia. He holds an MFA from the Staedelschule Frankfurt (Germany) and a BFA (interdisciplinary) from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD University) in Halifax. An artist and writer, his work has been exhibited internationally. His writing has appeared in many catalogues and magazines, including C mag, Esse arts+opinions, and Peripheral Review. He has participated in numerous artist residencies in Canada, Italy, China, and Japan. From 2019 to 2023, he was an artist-in-residence at the Montreal studios of Fonderie Darling. He has worked in a trio with Knowles Eddy Knowles (since 2004) and co-organized the HomeShop space and collaboration in Beijing (2010–2013). In 2026, he is publishing an artist's book, *Ciclismo*, with the publishing house Le Laps, as well as his first novel, *Koh-i-Noor*, with the publishing house BookHug.