



*It Wasn't Love*

Calla McInnes

January 31–March 14, 2026

Calla McInnes presents a series of four *Reclining Figures* and two works on paper.

The exhibition takes its title from a 1992 Sadie Benning video work. The video is shot in black and white on a pixelvision toy camera, re-enacting a love story cast in Hollywood stereotypes. “It wasn't love, but it was something...” For Benning, this something is lust, violence, guilt, fantasy, and joy, channeled through role-playing.

Here this *something* exists in the space between rendering and erasure. The subject undergoes several transformations through being painted, ranging from careful attention, to effacement, to abstraction, to the point of annihilation.

*Reclining Figure IV* shows the subject in a more staged position. Indeed, the painting references Tintoretto's chalk study *Reclining Male Figure*, while also calling to mind Tischbein's portrait of Goethe or Spitzweg's *Poor Poet*. Through these art historical postures, the subject is stripped of individuality, becoming less lover than painting itself, aware of being seen.

– Charlotte Berg

Calla McInnes (b. 1998) is an artist living and working in Montréal. They hold a BFA from The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art (2020), and are currently an MFA candidate at Bard College, Annadale-on-Hudson, New York. Recent exhibitions include Chris Andrews, Montréal (2023, 2025), Shower, Seoul (2024), and Gated, New York (2022).