

Gern en Regalia
105 Henry St 5 Basement, New York

Sophie présente *Mentana\Bélanger\Sainte-Alexandre*

With works by Betty Goodwin (1923-2008), Alexa Hawksworth (1994), and Irene F. Whittome (1942).

Strolling through Montreal streets, in and out of its buildings, peeking through windows, dishes left on the table, reconfigured studios, home addresses that read like dates. As summer begins and temperatures shift, I catch myself time-jumping, trying to make sense of whatever turmoil.

After exchanging ideas for this show during a studio visit together, Alexa Hawksworth found herself walking on Bélanger, where she stumbled upon the 2025 door. Something amusing about an address that reads like a year. In *2025 Bélanger* (2026), the door is the literal portal that it is, vivid and turbulent, as if something had split between one moment and the next.

Maybe if you'd get in, you'd end up in Betty Goodwin's *Mentana Street Project* (1979). For two months, Goodwin refashioned an empty ground-floor apartment in a building owned by her then gallerist, Roger Bellemare, in Montreal, treating the space itself as a found object. In its vacant rooms, she stripped wallpaper and applied gesso, cut the walls while meticulously tracing their surfaces. Revisiting Goodwin's earlier print works, *Me and a Still Life* and *Nature morte II* (both 1963), with Mentana in mind, the still life subjects already seem to haunt the vacated rooms Goodwin had not yet made. This ghost-like quality, encompassed in found objects, finds its way into her early 1970s work, where a new phase of figuration began, and soft ground etching allowed her to embed found objects alongside the traces they leave behind. The imprint became a haunting vessel, as in *Chemise VI* (1971). *AaaAa4aaa...*

In 1980, Irene F. Whittome cleared her Saint Alexandre Street studio, repainting its brick walls and columns white. Over nearly two years, she painted a succession of minimal forms around the motif of the cross, on the wall facing the arched windows. Each transformation was systematically photographed, and those photographs became the work itself: *Room 901* (1980–1982). *P.S. 1-2...*

CcccCcccc... Throughout Alexa's oil paintings, letters and numbers float and slip across generous compositions, loosening from meaning as they repeat, thinning into pattern. It's a logic borrowed from printmaking and découpage, creating resonance with Goodwin's Rauschenberg-esque etching *Empreintes Main bleue* (1969). In *Cells* (2025), Alexa's characters are caught in the process of reorganizing grid fragments, treating time and space as malleable, numbers floating loosely through the scene. Visually, the grid recalls Whittome's *L'aveugle regarde partout no. 1* (1974), a series of glass cases often filled with discarded objects and prints. A persistent motif across that work is the eye: to be exact, the left eye of the *Portrait of a Young Girl* by Flemish painter Petrus Christus (circa 1450), photographed by Whittome in 1964, and then reproduced again and again throughout different pieces, transforming the gaze into a referential and time-jumping pattern. The eye motif resurfaces in Alexa's *The Look* (2025), and again in Goodwin's *Me and a Still Life* (1963). A repeated threshold. Something that was already looking before you arrived.