sophie présente

Mentana\Bélanger\Saint-Alexandre

Betty Goodwin
Alexa Hawksworth
Irene F. Whittome

June 25-August 30, 2026
Gern en Regalia
105 Henry St 5 Basement, New York

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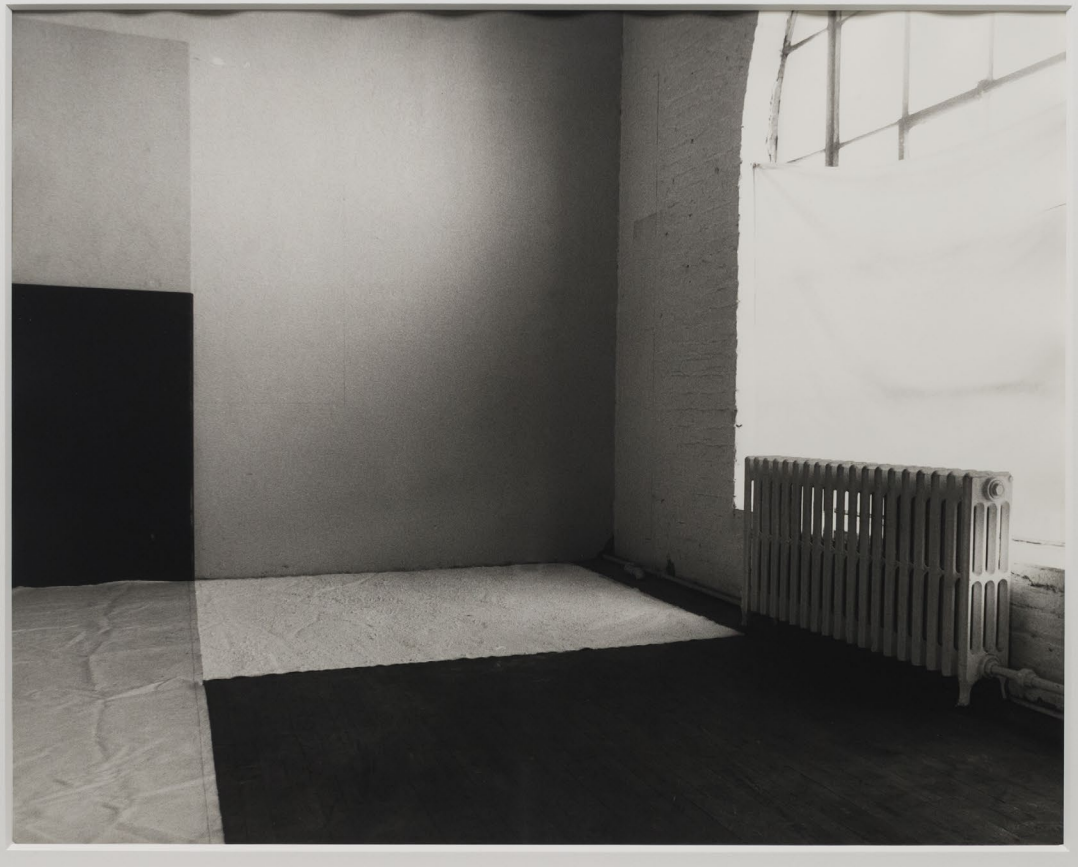


Sophie présente
Mentana\Bélanger\Sainte-Alexandre

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 wh4tever turm0il.

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…*

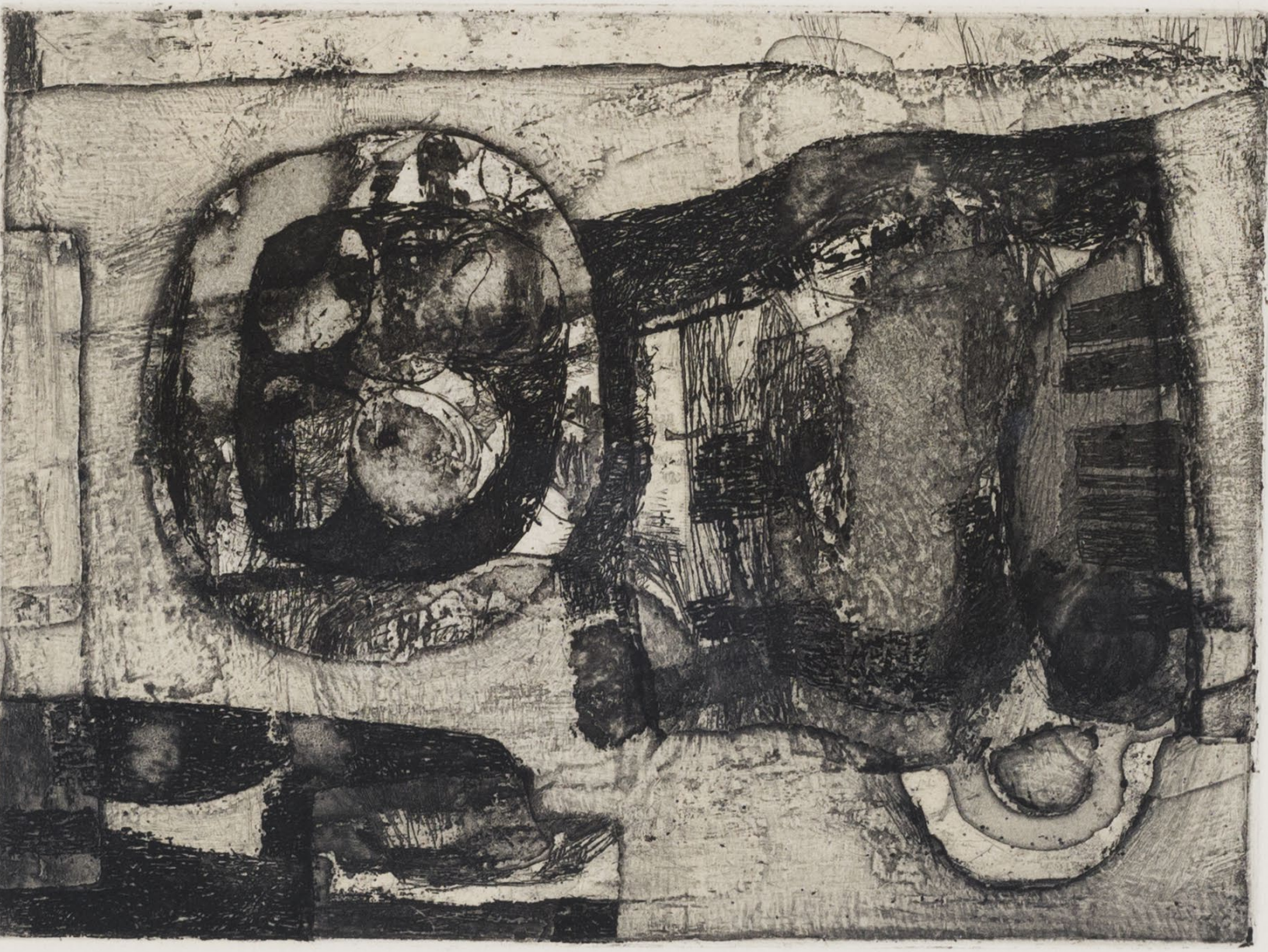
In 1980, Irene F. Whittome cleared her Saint Alexandre Street studio, repainting its brick walls and columns white. Over nearly two years, she painted a succession of minimal forms around the motif of the cross, on the wall facing the arched windows. Each transformation was systematically photographed, 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.

2025

BETTY GOODWIN
Me and a Still Life, 1963
Edition 15/25
Print on paper
47 x 43 cm (18,5 × 17 po)

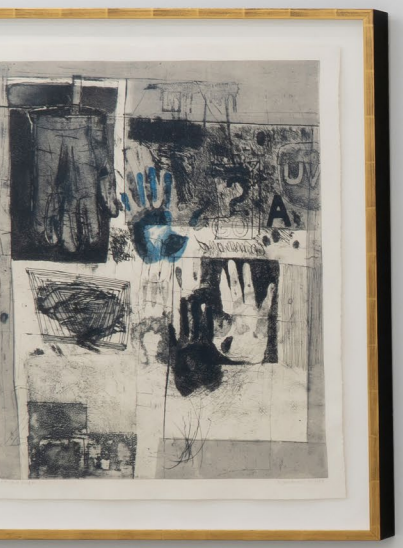
BETTY GOODWIN
Nature morte II, 1963
Edition Proof
Print on paper
38 × 33 cm (15 × 13 inches)



BETTY GOODWIN
Chemise VI, 1971
Edition 7/10
Etching and soft ground on paper
80×60 cm (31,5×23.75 inches)

In the late 1960s, Goodwin became attracted to the soft-ground method of etching, a process in which objects are put directly through a press and imprinted into a soft medium on the plate, then etched and printed, rendering beautifully the texture and form of ordinary objects.

In 1972, Chemise IV won an Arts Council of Great Britain prize at the Third British International Print Biennale, held in Bradford. One juror, the British critic Edward Lucie-Smith, wrote, “It is only occasionally that extreme technical refinement seemed actually to serve as a springboard to something new. A conspicuous example was the print by… the Canadian artist [Betty Goodwin]. Her image of a shirt, which had apparently taken its start by making a direct image on the plate of the object itself, has haunting human presence.”



BETTY GOODWIN
Empreintes-Main bleue, 1969
Edition 5th state proof
Etching and soft ground on paper
30 × 20 inches

In late 1960's, Goodwin and her husband acquired a large press. She spent extended periods there and devoted herself to printmaking at a time when the medium was going through a renaissance internationally, like renowned American artists such as Robert Rauschenberg (1925–2008), and Jasper Johns (b.1930) had been using printmaking techniques to introduce consumer items and popular press imagery into their work.

GO!

BIO

Betty Goodwin (1923–2008, Montreal, Canada) was an important member of Montreal's artistic community. She used drawing, sculpture, and printmaking to represent the fragility of life in a complex and uncertain world. Attracted by the materiality of the objects and places she found, Goodwin made their history and innate characteristics visible. Themes of loss, mourning, transition, and the difficulty of communication permeate her work. Her art evolved in series and shows a great affinity with that of Joseph Beuys and Bruce Nauman, two artists whom Goodwin greatly admired. The subject matter of her work evokes ideas related to the memory of the body and where the body has been, as well as the passage of time. Some of her best-known works are a series of prints done in the early 1970s. With these, Goodwin used copper plates to take impressions of vests, gloves and tarpaulins, creating innovative etchings that look almost like X-rays or ghostly imprints of the objects.

A renowned Canadian artist, Betty Goodwin, won several awards and honourable acknowledgements. In 1995, she was chosen to represent Canada in the Venice Biennial. Notable awards included the Lynch-Stauton Award of Distinction in 1983, the Banff Centre National Award for Visual Arts in 1984, the Prix Paul-Émile Borduas in 1986, a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship in 1988 and the Gershon Iskowitz Prize in 1995. Goodwin was the first recipient of the Harold Town Prize for Drawing in 1998, and in 2003, she received the Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts. She also received honorary doctorates from various Canadian universities.

2025

ALEXA HAWKSWORTH
2025 Bélanger, 2026
Oil and paper on panel
30 x 40 inches

2025

12
9
3
9

ALEXA HAWKSWORTH
Cells, 2025
Oil and paper on canvas
48 x 60 inches

ALEXA HAWKSWORTH
The Look, 2025
Oil and paper on canvas
20x16 inches

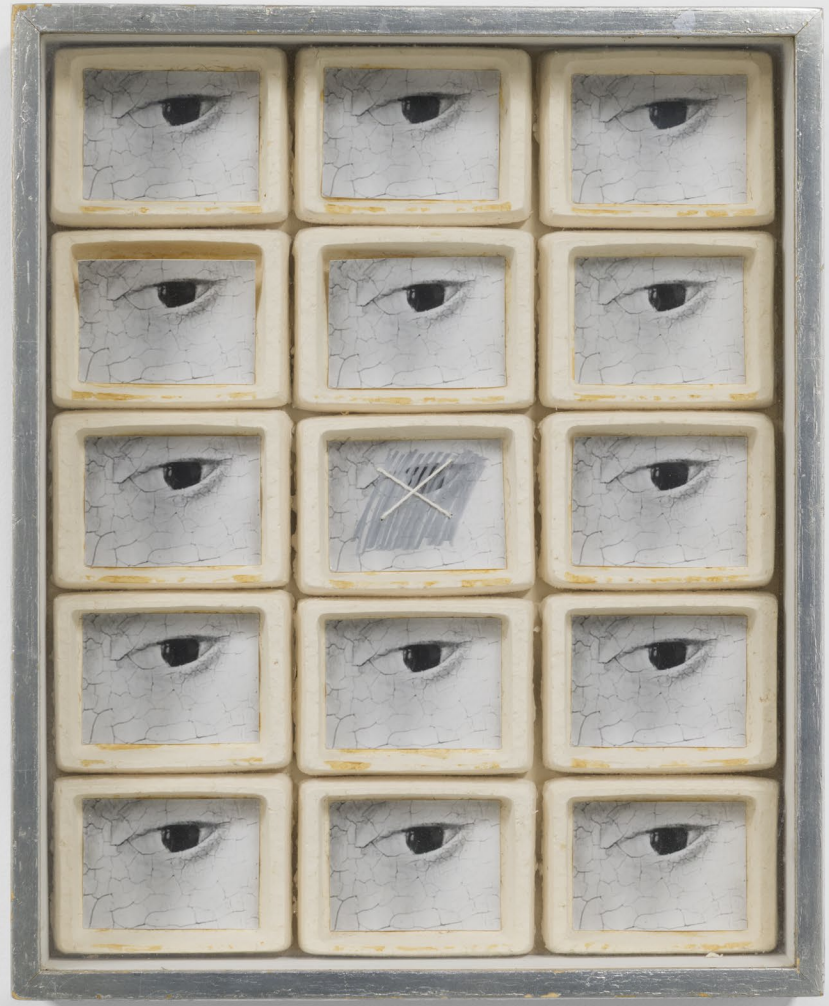
BIO

Alexa Hawksworth (b. 1994, Hamilton, Canada) is a painter and illustrator based in Montreal, Canada. Hawksworth populates her oil paintings and graphite drawings with both fantastical and realistic characters unique in their exaggerated gestures and expressions: grimacing teeth, elastic limbs, and unhinged cackles show a dizzying range of physical and psychological states. Her scenes are often imbued with an innovative sense of movement and time, as bodies and objects are propelled across the canvas or captured by the whims of a powerful environmental force. Together, her work shows an imagined, off-kilter world in which desire and emotion burst from the body and collide with the physical realm with maximum, high-velocity impact. Drawing from theatre, performance, and film sources, Hawksworth's distinct illustrative style combines meticulous rendering with bold painterly gestures, set to an electrifying colour palette.

She received her BFA from Concordia University in 2020. She has presented solo exhibitions at Bradley Ertaskiran (Montreal) and Theta (New York), with notable two-person and group exhibitions staged at Public Gallery (London), Harkawik (Los Angeles), Franz Kaka (Toronto), Afternoon Projects (Vancouver), Sibling Gallery (Toronto), and Projet Casa (Montreal).

IRENE F. WHITTOME
L'aveugle regarde partout no. 1, 1974
Curiosity Cabinet made of photos, string, cardboard
16,25 × 13,5 inches

As early as 1969, Whittome began sifting through discards and waste in search of objects that could be reused as formal or referential echoes. She meticulously assembled her findings in a first series of "boxes" the encasing in glass boxes, through the use of repetition, accumulation, and quotation, would henceforth govern the aims of her work. Certain motifs or themes assert themselves, the most compelling being that of the eye, specifically, the left eye from Petrus Christus's Portrait of a Young Girl (circa 1450), photographed by the artist in 1964 and subsequently reproduced many times.



IRENE F. WHITTOME
P.S.1-2, 1979
Encaustic and photography on paper
8,75 × 10,5 inches

IRENE F. WHITTOME
Room 901, No. 18, 1980-1982
Silver print on paper
16 x 20 inches

In 1980, Whittome cleared her Saint-Alexandre Street studio, repainting its walls and columns white as a painter primes a canvas. Over nearly two years, she worked around the motif of the cross, building and dismantling it through a succession of minimal forms, from a black square on white through grey-ground variations to a final black cross. Each transformation was systematically photographed, and the resulting series, *Room 901*, remains the only trace of this project.

BIO

Irene F. Whittome (b. 1942, Vancouver, Canada)'s artistic career spans close to fifty years. The artist took up residence in Montreal in 1968 where, alongside her creative activities, she pursued a career as a professor in Fine Arts at Concordia University until 2007. The recurrent themes that emerge in her work are collection, exhibition, the museum, duration, time and traces. Over the years she has produced a considerable body of work using a great variety of techniques such as printmaking, photography, painting, drawing, sculpture and installation.

Her work has been widely exhibited in Canada and abroad, including, among others, her solo exhibitions at the CIAC – Centre international d'art contemporain de Montréal (1995), at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal (1997), at the Canadian Centre for Architecture (1998), the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (2000) as well as at the Art Gallery of Bishop's University (known today as the Foreman Art Gallery) (2004). Irene F. Whittome has received numerous awards for her artistic excellence: the Victor Martyn Lynch-Staunton Award awarded by the Canada Council for the Arts (1991), the Gershon Iskowitz Prize, Toronto (1992), the Prix Paul-Émile Borduas awarded by the Government of Quebec (1997), and the Governor General's Awards in Visual and Media Arts (2002). In 2005, she was made an Officer of the Order of Canada. Her works are included in the collections of Canada's most important museums. Since 2005, she has been represented by the Galerie Simon Blais in Montreal.