

PRESS RELEASE

Mais où est l'âme ?

Connor Marie Stankard & Winnie Mo Rielly

September 17 - October 15, 2026

Galerie Hussenot presents *Mais où est l'âme ?*, an exhibition of works by Connor Marie Stankard and Winnie Mo Rielly.

In “Morale du joujou,” published in *Le Monde littéraire* in April 1853, Baudelaire watches a child shake, scratch, and finally force open a toy in search of the soul she believes it contains; she finds nothing, only the first stirring of a grief she has no words for yet. He calls the impulse *une première tendance métaphysique* — a first metaphysical stirring. Some children, he adds, are seized by *une colère superstitieuse* against “ces menus objets qui imitent l'humanité,”¹ and break the toy the instant it reaches their hands — as though a thing that resembles a person could not be left intact.

Stankard makes figures that are neither young nor old, and not quite human. Having been received as a painter of “girls,” she has pushed her figures instead toward an otherness — the recent belly paintings were the turn — where the body appears as a half-failing machine of desire, seductive and repulsive at once, drawing the viewer in and pushing them back. The figures begin as freehand sketches, and the paintings are developed from those drawings, slowly and by hand, until each is given a proper name. Nothing is assembled and nothing is copied: a drawn face answers to no one, resembling a person without being anyone's likeness. What interests her is how little it takes — a small gesture, a trick — to make someone love an object: how cheaply, and how completely, a soul can be conferred on a thing. More recent works extend the procedure past the figure: split apples, enervated livestock, isolated limbs, laid out and catalogued like the contents of a vivarium. The paintings shown here were made during a residency in the south of France; this is the artist's first exhibition in France.

Rielly begins at the skin. She photographs the trace of her own body in motion and fixes the resulting images across frames and armatures, after the manner of a tanner working a hide, so that presence arrives only in fragments — clues left about a body that has already left the room. A second group of works begins with garments found in charity shops: unpicked, laid open and stretched, they cease to be clothing and become skins — a membrane a body has already worn and left its shape in. Rather than impose a form from without, Rielly enters the one before her: she takes a skin somebody else has inhabited, mounts it, and comes to inhabit it in turn. A metaphysical taxidermist, she does not model a body so much as move into one.

The history of art has largely told the story of such things from the maker's side — the man who shapes an ideal body from without and waits for it to breathe. It runs from Pygmalion — through Rodin's late marble of the myth, where the sculptor, given Rodin's own likeness and his name inscribed beside it, sits below his creation and looks up, no longer commanding but adoring, as Galatea rises and comes into herself — to the Surrealists and their dolls and mannequins: Bellmer's jointed *Poupée*, the shop-window figures dressed by the men of 1938. Yet it was among the same circles that the reversal began — with the women who had been cast as the doll and picked up the tools instead. This exhibition takes up that turn. It moves the attention from the hand that molds a figure from without to the figure that comes to define itself from within its own membrane — the surface no longer a thing done to a body, but the place a self is held and worked out from inside. Stankard and Rielly do not answer the child's question. They alter it: not where the soul is, but whose.

Connor Marie Stankard (b. 1992, Princeton, New Jersey) lives and works in New York.

Winnie Mo Rielly (b. 1993, London) lives and works in Paris.

¹ “a superstitious anger against these small objects that imitate humanity.” Charles Baudelaire, “Morale du joujou,” *Le Monde littéraire*, April 1853.

The artists

Connor Marie Stankard (b. 1992 in New Jersey) lives and works in New York, NY. She received her BFA from Pace University in 2015 and her MFA from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2021. The works presented at Galerie Hussenot were produced during a residency in the south of France. Recent solo exhibitions include *Love Apple*, Night Gallery, Los Angeles (2024); *Ava, Chloe, Blair, Nicole*, Lubov, New York (2022); *Cloaca Palace*, The Anderson, Richmond, Virginia (2021); *A Mosquito's View*, FAB Gallery, Richmond, Virginia (2020); and *Stirring in the Mantle*, Motel, Brooklyn (2016). Her work has been included in group exhibitions at Tara Downs, King's Leap, Kimberly Klark, Tuesday, Allen & Eldridge, Page NYC, Nahmad Contemporary and Nino Mier. She was presented by Lubov at Independent, New York (2023).

Winnie Mo Rielly (b. 1993 in London, UK) is based in Paris, France.

The intimacy inherent in Winnie Mo Rielly's practice lies at the heart of her multidisciplinary work. Through figurative representation, she places the body — in states of both display and self-exploration — at the forefront. Her works interweave a mapping of documented bodily movements with diverse perceptions of space.

Winnie Mo Rielly will present her first institutional solo exhibition at the Maison Européenne de la Photographie (MEP) in Paris in June–July 2026. The artist is a recent recipient of the Île-de-France Region's FoRTE contemporary art prize and the Adagp Connexion France grant.

Her upcoming exhibitions include a duo show at Galerie Hussenot (September–October, Paris), a group exhibition at Maison Hantée (October, Paris), Paris+ par Art Basel (October, Paris), and a show at sissi Club (December–January, Marseille).

Her work has recently been exhibited at Galerie Hussenot (Paris), Alkinois (Athens), and Miart (Milan), among other group exhibitions at venues such as Frac – Les Réserves, Essais, Château La Coste, Théâtre National de Chaillot, Galerie Sans-Titre, Magasins Généraux, La Gaya Scienza, Galerie Balice Hertling, Les Rencontres d'Arles, Fondation Fiminco, Camden Art Centre (UK), Théâtre des Expositions at Beaux-Arts de Paris, and Bagnoler.

Her works are held in the collections of FRAC Île-de-France, Maison Dior, Société Générale, and Maison Chaumet.