

Vertigineuses

Shahrzad Changalvaee

Mélinda Fourn

Naomi Lulendo

Attandi Trawalley

Nelly Zagury

01.12.2023 - 09.03.2024

Selebe Yoon, Dakar

Curated by Jennifer Houdrouge & Clara Darrason







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As part of the 12th edition of Partcours, Selebe Yoon is pleased to present « Vertigineuses » a group exhibition co-curated by Jennifer Houdrouge and Clara Darrason, with artists Shahrzad Changalvaee, Melinda Fourn, Naomi Lulendo, Attandi Trawalley and Nelly Zagury.

Altitude and the temptation of the monumental arouses a vertigo that the possibility of falling cannot curb. « Vertigineuses » is impregnated with magic realism, each artist drawing as much on artisanal skills and popular imagery as on tales from collective narratives, or personal stories from intersecting geographies. Selebe Yoon morphs into a suspended garden into which the five artists trace, dig, let ripen and grow works that exist at the intersection of the intimate, the everyday, the domestic, but also the supernatural, the dreamlike and the erotic.

A synthetic hair creature erupts from Selebe Yoon's ground floor staircase and rises several meters into the air. **Attandi Trawalley** crocheted artificial capillarity evokes intimate gestures, mourning and renewal at a monumental scale. Summoning childhood memories and coming of age, she weaves those life milestones with patience and imbues her creation with self-care.

As in the opera of her dreams, **Nelly Zagury** deploys paintings of reborn female bodies and anthropomorphic feline figures in flows of buoyant colors and a glittering palette. She also presents a large-scale functioning fountain made of painted metal, with oviform water jets - an ode to the matrix and the sovereignty of the creative act.

Shahrzad Changalvaee, artist and activist for equality and Iranian women's liberation, unfurls a site-specific installation, "Everything Is Crystal Clear" a saline landscape from which emerge scattered found images interweaving histories, memories and traumas. Employing locally sourced salt and sand as her primary material, she constructs encompassing environments of abstract landscapes and dispersions. The acidic and corrosive crystals of salt, often traded by women in the region, animate wounded skins, raised fists, fingers with various injunctions, entwined hands—gestures that either make, control or liberate.





Melinda Fourn built a large-scale metal and ceramic sculpture in the shape of a satala - a teapot-shaped kettle often made of plastic, common in several West African countries. Magnifying the object' size, the artist emancipates the satala from its functionalities and unleashes an unbridled domesticity through an unexpected sensory behavior and its jeweled ornamentation. From Senegal to Ghana to Burkina Faso, she questions the social and religious symbolism of everyday tools and the new practical uses that develop over time.

Naomi Lulendo has created a set of totemic sculptures in metal, ceramic, concrete and baskestry, evocative of the figure of the Potomitan. This term is a Creole expression referring both to women embodying the pillar of a family structure - but also refers to the central column of a voodoo temple standing as an intermediary between the material and spiritual worlds. Whether a column or a body, the potomitan as architecture and personification also represents, for the artist, a tribute to the maternal figure.

In « Vertigineuses », the artists unfold voluptuous forms, dizzying handmade landscapes revealing the paths they have traveled to shape their own histories, based on hereditary identities and narratives, as well as territories they convoke through distance, memory, and travel. For the first time, Each of them reveals in Selebe Yoon works that transpose their dreams and visions to their true scale. Contemporary oracles, their singing is not prophetic, but audible beyond the confines of the intimate, quenched, legitimate and in praise of sisterhood.

About the curators:

Co-directors of The Chimney (2015-2020), a contemporary art gallery in Brooklyn, New York, Jennifer Houdrouge and Clara Darrason have developed a program focused primarily on in- situ installation commissions working to revitalize former industrial spaces. Over a five-year period, they worked with over 70 artists on 31 exhibitions and three performance and video festivals.



Shahrzad Changalvaee

In "Everything is Crystal Clear" by Iranian artist in exile Shahrzad Changalvaee, an encompassing environment is partially silted up. Streams of salt cover the ground - a trail allowing visitors to navigate between the crystalline, shimmering expanses. Images punctuate the salt landscape - mostly cropped photographs of hands, call up the context in which they perform or the body to which they belong to.

The dispersed limbs formed in group stand out like desert thorn bushes, generating a body language whose interpretation is guided by ornaments, objects, or backgrounds - a microphone, a ring, a weapon, uniforms or interiors, an alleyway, a fire. Changalvaee does not impose reading grids, and calls on our sense of observation to detect in interlaced fingers the various markers of submission, injunction, revolt, victory or intimacy. The title of the installation is taken from a spray painted graffiti on a wall in Iran, during the recent Woman Life Freedom uprisings, and as such feminine and sisterhood is present though locks of hair, holding hands, singing – further challenging the power position of ideological solidity, ordering and oppressing.

Through choosing, cropping, grouping, and juxtaposition, Changalvaee especially questions the intention of images and their impact in the space and the reception of the audience. In her practice, archiving relies both on the research and use of manuscript and historical sources, stories, memories, creations as well as the collection of photographs taken from remote events and circulating on dissident social networks or the official media of authoritarian governments. This binary distinction is itself challenged through the prism of migration, exile and the place offered to the foreign body in a society. The hands across the space can be read as those of invisible souls, the salt acting as a point of departure and stranding. Water is the vector of passage from one state / State to another. Changalvaee uses it sparingly, in certain photographs - wells, pipes, bowls - as well as in metal containers.

In time, everything comes clear - one sign may conceal another: an unveiled lock of hair is an affront to an ideology; silently folded hands are accomplices of the oppressors. Dozens of phantom hands stand like seaweed in murky water, beneath our feet and on a bed of fake diamonds. And yet, salt allows to defy gravity, to remain in suspension, and to stay afloat here is to resist.





Shahrzad Changalvaee

BIOGRAPHY



Shahrzad Changalvaee (born in 1983, Iran) is an artist and activist.

She received a B.A. in Graphic Design from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Tehran University (2006) and her M.F.A. in Sculpture from Yale University (2015). Since 2023, she has been a lecturer at The Cooper Union and RISD. Changalvaee is co-founder and co-director of From: Iran , an artist-led and feminist platform depicting sociopolitical landscape of Iran, fighting for radical change.

Changalvaee's practice responds to sculpture in a vast field of mediums, including installation, video, photography, text, performance as well as activism.

Her works are context-questioning to subjects of many immigrant artists or fluid individuals, subjects such as local and global, information and anecdotes, displacement and adjustment, Interest and urge, privilege and progress. Through summoning, truncating, recalling and tokening, she works in a variety of time-based mediums in search

of doubtful appearances of liberty, control and evil.

Changalvaee's works have been shown in a number of shows in the United States., Middle East and Europe, including her solo installations « In Absentia, in Effigie » at The Chimney, New York (2019) and solo presentation at NADA Foreland with Golestani Gallery, Catskills, New York (2023).

Shahrzad's work has been featured in several solo and group exhibition including, « A feast of friends », Golestani Gallery, Düsseldorf, Germany (2022); "The Understandables Always Arrive From Far Away" (2018) at Soho2O, Brooklyn; "You Cannot The Same River Twice" (2016) at O Gal-lery, Tehran, Iran; "Ksi, Ein and An, A love Story" (2015), VSC Gallery, SVA (School of Visual Arts), New York, USA; "Future Remnants of a Missing Word" (2016), Meyohas Gallery, New York, USA.

She lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.



Melinda Fourn

In Melinda Fourn's "I'll regain my radiance, my candor of yore", a metal sculpture in the shape of a large teapot is hoisted from the ground by a marine rope, overhanging a bed of coal. Made of a wide handle and a voluptuous spout, this domestic object initially made to be touched, is now unattainable, disproportionate, and even hostile.

On the floor, weavings are assembled on jute sacks that once carried merchandise. Like prayer rugs or offerings at an altar, they are adorned by the artist with pearls, bronze and brass coins cast by her hands, pendants found in local markets, and Adinkra symbols which originated in the Ashanti kingdom - in present-day Ghana - now used as decorative elements in popular culture. Those are selected by Fourn for the proverbs they carry: Gye Nyame (Supremacy of God), Nyama Dua (Tree of God), Nyame Biribi Wo Soro (God is in the heavens), Adobe Santann (All seeing eye). Fourn has also added poems engraved on brass plates to these amulets.

While the main sculpture evokes the plastic satala of Senegal, others in their original size have been molded in ceramic and take on the shape of those found in Ghana, drawing up a stylistic cartography of this vessel. Damaged during their shipping from Accra to Dakar, Fourn embraces the consequences of the travel on the works and repairs some of them using ink and henna.

The artist's journey between Senegal, Ghana and Burkina Faso, where she perfects her skills in craft techniques threatened by industrial production and imported products, is a pilgrimage of observation. She translates into new materials everyday utensils imbued by society of both function and meaning. The satala is as much the vessel containing purifying water for ablutions as the one used for intimate cleansing. Between homage to tradition and emancipation, she invests this floating space in which objects exist between the material and transcendental worlds, the outside and the inside, the individual and the collective.





Melinda Fourn

BIOGRAPHY



Melinda Fourn (b. 1995, France) is a multidisciplinary artist of Franco-Beninese origin.

Drawing on West African artisanal skills in jewelry, metal, ceramics and weaving, her sculptures and multimedia installations question the social and religious symbolism of everyday tools. She graduated from the Beaux-Arts de Paris in 2021 and completed an exchange program at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi, Ghana (2020). She participated in several group exhibitions: "The Fire of Origins", Biso Biennale, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (2023); "Diversi-T", Kosmokey, La Cité

Fertile, Pantin, FR (2023); "Intention", Azz-Art, Paris FR (2022); "Pièce, Habitation, Abri..." Musée Delacroix, Paris, FR (2022); "Restitution" at the Institut Français, Saint Louis, SN (2022); "100% l'Expo", La Vilette, France (2022), among others. She has benefited from several residencies, including at Selebe Yoon, Dakar (2023) and Villa Saint-Louis Ndar (2022), ArtMéssiamé in Lomé, Togo (2021), Green Patch Ceramics, La Borne, France (2021) and Casa Lü, Ttlaplan, Mexico (2019).

She lives and works between Paris (France), Kumasi (Ghana) and Dakar (Senegal).



Naomi Lulendo

Like a forest populated by totemic silhouettes or vertebrate figures, Naomi Lulendo's "Potomitan" installation leads the public between columns made of metal, ceramic, basketry and concrete modules beneath a canopy of dried palm tree branches.

In the Caribbean, potomitan refers to the supporting column of the voodoo temple, but also to the matrifocal family structure centered around the nurturing and protective mother. In addition to the post-colonial ramifications of this archetype and its current reconsideration, the artist is interested in the personification of a sacred-spiritual architectural element, its infiltration into popular language and the shift towards an embodied figure.

The sculptures, a metaphor for the female figure, reveal a body-architecture filled with fragility and resistance: a sutured metal surface resembling an armor, frayed tights looks like flayed skin, while braided plant fibers have a restoring quality. The flower is present here but almost imperceptible: it can be lightly tamed in relief or imprinted. The motif also evokes for the artist the persistent memory of her mother. The pantyhose, a pericorporeal element, envelops the sculptures like a body, revealing the anthropomorphic aspect of the work.

For the artist, the question remains: how do mixed identities negotiate with image, and more specifically with skin and its color? In "Faites vos Je, Fleurs Bleues", she tackles the historically-charged question of the black model and its visual representation through a playful prism - a jigsaw puzzle. Set against a floral background, these self-portraits feature the artist's undulating, distorted body, which is randomly segmented and troubles the clarity of her image. Printed on wooden puzzle pieces, one of them is missing, as if the "being-image" (l'être-image) remains forever incomplete, and identity, a constant becoming.





Naomi Lulendo



Naomi Lulendo (b.1994, France) is a French-Guadeloupean-Congolese artist based in Dakar, Senegal. With a multicultural background, the artist traveled between the Caraïbes and France throughout her childhood. From photography, ceramics, installation and video, she uses the concept of "misappropriation" of words, meanings, objects and identity in her work. Naomi Lulendo holds an MFA degree from the Beaux-Arts School of Paris (2018). Throughout her education, Pascale Marthine Tayou became her mentor. She had two solo exhibitions: "Bleu Miroir" at Agences Trames in Dakar (2021); "Faites vos Je" at the Beaux-Arts, Paris (2018).

Her work was included in several group exhibitions: « Dérives en péninsule » at l'Atlas, Paris, France (2023); "D'ailleurs je viens d'ici" curated by Sandrine Honliasso and Ariane Leblanc, at Comédie de Caen, Normandie, France (2021); "On fait des dessins dans la terre" curated by Eva Barois de Caevel, Galerie 31Project, Paris (2021); "L'heure rouge", 14th Dakar Biennale OFF, Galerie Le Manège, Dakar (2018); "Extrangers", Tevere Art Gallery, Rome, Italy (2017); "Explosition", Chapitre 2 at Galleria Continua, les Moulins, France (2016); "Transmissions, Recréation, Répétition" curated

by Sarina Basta at Palais des Beaux-Arts, Paris, France (2015); "Explosition", Galerie l'Amour, Bagnolet, France (2015); "Transition" curated by Anais de Senneville and Aurélie Tiffreau at Galerie L'inattendue, Paris (2015); "Ici au lieu de là-bas, Maison des ensembles, Paris (2014).

Naomi Lulendo also did several public performances: "Archi(s)pell" at the Le Frac Reims, in France as part of the FAR AWAY Festival (2023); at Bétonsalon, Centre d'art et de recherche, Paris, France (2020); Galerie Allen (2019); Raw Material Company, Dakar, Senegal (2018).

In 2021 she was among the artists selected by Zeitz MOCAA (South Africa) to join "Unfinished Camp", an ongoing international network of artists and nine art institutions on six continents, conceived and directed by Hans Ulrich Obrist and András Szánto. She was also a fellow at the Raw Academie for the fifth session, directed by artist Otobong Nkanga; and at Agence Trames, Dakar (2021).

She lives and works in Dakar, Senegal.



© Attandi Trawalley, Hands-off, 2023, Selebe Yoon, Dakar

Attandi Trawalley

In "Hands-Off", dozens of black vines twirl down the staircase. They spring from the railing, spilling out into the spiral. Each is made of synthetic hair braided by the artist using a crochet technique with a large wooden needle. The beaded braids are grouped by alliance, in battle line to present a united front in service of the self.

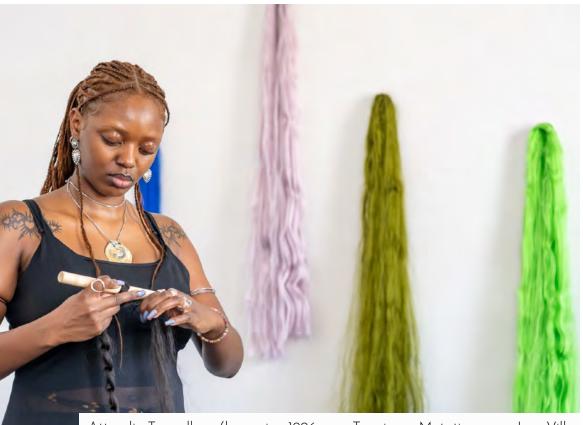
For Attandi Trawalley, weaving is a ritual rooted in the hours spent in the hands of the women of her family, followed by the inevitable coming of age and takeover of this part of her identity. Care is at the heart of this transmission process that occurs from one generation to the next, as is the time spent changing hairstyle that operates a simultaneous shedding and building of oneself. Using artificial fibers and dissociating capillarity from the body, the artist uses its power of seduction to let hair regain its freedom. Like ropes or chains emerging from multiple windows, braids escape normative frameworks. Running away becomes the saving act, an anticipated departure meticulously crocheted in solitude and intimacy.

A thicker braid with earthy, copper and silver colors descends from the top of the rotunda. The surrounding black ones resemble a chorus of women, sisters, friends or muses who guiding its bright yellow blaze. A weaver, the artist transforms the fabric into a spear that, from the roots to the heavens, offers infinite possibilities of crossings and metamorphosis.



Attandi Trawalley

BIOGRAPHY



Attandi Trawalley (born in 1996, Pretoria, South Africa) is a multidisciplinary South African artist.

A graduate of ENSA de la Villa Arson, her practice includes installation, performance, sculpture, and publishing. She is interested in the practices of care, the reappropriation of self, the notions of transmission and everyday gestures through an exploration of black female subjectivities and fragmented family stories.

Her first solo exhibition «Care as a Color » was presented in 2023 at the Consulat Voltaire, Paris, France.

Her work was included in several group exhibitions, including:

«Terminus Mutations », La Villa Arson, Nice, France (2022) ;

« Postcorps », le Centre de Création Contemporaine Olivier Debré, Tours, France (2022); « Gestuelle émotive: vestige de soi», Le génie de la Bastille Gallery, Paris, France (2021); Centre Wallonie, Bruxelles, Belgique (2021); LABO DÉMO FERMÉ 24/24 7/7 Paris, France (2021); Straight Lick - exposition digitale (2020).

Her work will be featured in the group exhibition « 100% » at La Villette, Paris, France in 2024.

Trawalley lives and works in Paris, France.



Nelly Zagury

Nelly Zagury's "Matrices" is akin to entering an opera house. It is a total experience, housing not only the stage, but also the chorus and all the complex machinery of protagonists, costumes and choreographies behind the scene. The clay-colored cement of the exhibition room grounds the body of work in a cosmogony summoning the primordial myths of the Mediterranean basin, which under the artist's prism revolves around the matrix - the female uterus guarantor of life.

Two horizontal paintings face one another - each featuring a woman's body awakening or coming back to life. The ethereal forms emerge from within in a solitary impulse, and unfold in arabesques, volutes and waves of energy in a bold acrylic palette that combines citric yellow, satin pink and ultramarine violet with golden skins. Zagury models the singular strength of these creatures by bringing together plural mythological figures such as the voodoo mermaid Mami Wata or the funerary Egyptian deity Isis. The legacy of the tempting figurehead is transmuted into a supranatural body-vessel that puts up a show under her own rules. Flesh shines like an ornamental armor built with patience and care to finally break away from the receptacle of external desires and become instead a vector of emancipation.

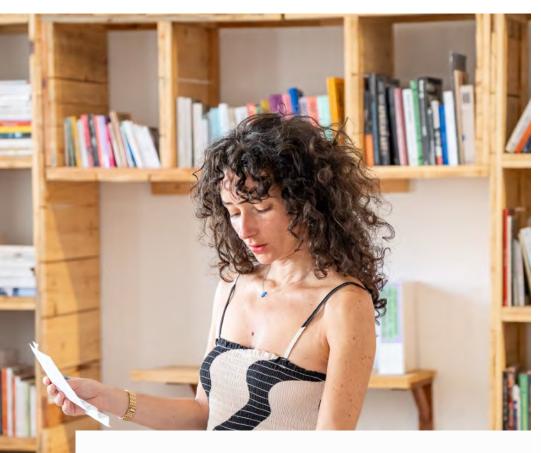
This reappropriation of the body materializes as a fountain - oviform metal trunks overhang a resin basin in the shape of a Botticellian shell. The sculpture echoes the painting Fleur de Papyrus - they are both inspired by the iconography of the union of the Two Lands (Sema-Taouy) in ancient Egypt, symbolized by the white lily and papyrus surrounding a human trachea.

The final act of this joyous erotic hymn is a monumental painting that unfolds from the wall and expands onto steps in apparent levitation. The horizon line shifts through the flying-carpet staircase, and offers a shifting perspective on a flamboyant aurora bordered by four symmetrical profiles of winged cats. The lapis lazuli and gilded felines stand for an allegory of fertility giving way to creative pleasure. Between their wild and protective paws, the platform is to be climbed upon for an oration of uninhibited self-love, mirroring that of a salutary universalism.





Nelly Zagury



Nelly Zagury (born in 1987 in Paris) is a French artist.

Born into a family with multiple Mediterranean cultures - Moroccan, French and Greek - she shares in her work an experience of femininity that transcends the exotic and orientalist imaginary. In a quest for re-enchantment, her paintings and sculptures feature mystical, powerful heroines.

Nelly Zagury studied at HEAR (Haute Ecole des Arts du Rhin) in Strasbourg and the HEAD (Haute Ecole d'art et de design) in Geneva. After working in Paris for a haute couture house and designing jewelry for brands such as Chanel and Boucheron, she moved to New York to design costumes for American artist Matthew Barney's film opera « River of Fundament ». She is the cofounder of the 3D printed jewelry brand Holy Faya (2014-2018) with the support of LVMH and artists such as Rashaad Newsome, Demi Lovato and FKA Twigs. In 2018, Zagury moved to Los Angeles where she worked with the artist Simphiwe Ndzube (Stevenson Gallery Cape Town, Nicodim gallery Los Angeles, Museo Kaluz Mexico) and developed Songs Of My Fantasy, a phantasmagorical opera in two acts in the form of a collection of poems, paintings and sculptures.

Her work were exhibited in major institutions included: MAD Museum, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, France ; le Palais Royal (Ministry of Culture and Communication), Paris,

France ; le Musée Historique, Strasbourg, France ; le Musée de l'oeuvre Notre-Dame, Strasbourg, France.

Solo exhibitions of Zagury's work include: «Sisters Of The Sea », Align Gallery, Los Angeles (2019); «Songs Of My Fantasy», Brewery Art Complex, Los Angeles (2019); «Holy Faya: The Black Crook Grand Premiere», The Chimney, New York (2016); «Sunset Split», 22 rue mulllet, Paris (2013).

Her work was included in numerous group exhibitions, including: «In Her Element», Mash Gallery, Los Angeles (2023); « The Erotic Impulse In The Ever Becoming Universe », Mash Gallery, Los Angeles (2022); « Every Woman Biennal », Superchief Gallery NFT, New York (2021); « Holding Space », Big Pictures Los Angeles (2019); «I've always imagined that paradise would be a kind of library», Blake and Vargas, Berlin (2019); The Chimney, New York (2019); «The Crew II», Matthew Barney Studio, New York (2014); «La Peau de l'Ours» au Musée zoologique, Strasbourg, 2011.

Zagury was a resident at Selebe Yoon, Dakar, Senegal (2023); Massa Stories, Agadir, Morocco (2022); Le Wonder, Paris, France (2022).

She lives and works in Paris, France.

Jennifer Houdrouge & Clara Darrason

BIOGRAPHIES



Jennifer Houdrouge (b. 1993, Nice, France) is a French-Lebanese-Senegalese, gallery owner, director and curator. She founded Selebe Yoon in December 2020 and has been directing the gallery since.

She graduated from King's College London (2014) and holds a Masters in Art History and Archaeology from the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, and a Masters degree in contemporary art from Sotheby's Institute of Art, New York.

In New York, she worked at Gladstone Gallery and then assisted the curator Karole Vail on the Solomon R. Guggenheim's exhibition of Alberto Giacometti.

In 2015, she founded and co-directed The Chimney (2015-2020), an art gallery in Brooklyn, NY where she developed a program focusing mainly on insitu installation commissions to revitalize and repurpose non-traditional, historical or industrial buildings. She worked over five years with more than 70 artists, curated 31 exhibitions, and three festivals (performances & videos).

In 2020, she opened Selebe Yoon - a contemporary art gallery and artist residency in Dakar, Senegal, in an historical building from 1952 in the city center of Dakar in Senegal. Across the 1000m2 venue, she organises large-scale exhibitions, welcomes artists and curators for research residencies throughout the year and develops a public program with series of conversations and performances.

She lives and works in Dakar, Senegal.



curator. Darrason graduated with a MA in Economy & Finance from the Lille Institute of Political Studies, France & a BA in Politics, Philosophy and Economics from The University of Kent (Canterbury, UK). She holds a MS in Management of Cultural Goods & Activities from ESCP Europe Business School (Paris, FR) & The University of Ca' Foscari (Venice, IT). From 2012 to 2014, she organized contemporary art fairs in Paris, as well as curatorial projects with a cultural engineering agency La Société Anonyme. In 2014, she moved to New York City, and completed a MA in Contemporary Art at Sotheby's Institute of Art. In 2015, she founded and co-directed The Chimney (2015-2020), an art gallery in Brooklyn, NY where she developed a program focusing mainly on in-situ installation commissions to revitalize and repurpose non-traditional, historical or industrial buildings. She worked over five years with more than 70 artists, curated 31 exhibitions, and three festivals (performances & videos). Darrason held the position of Gallery Manager at Almine Rech gallery NY (2016-2022) and Global Manager of Operations for Almine Rech galleries in France, Belgium, UK, USA, China, Monaco (2022-2023). She recently curated the exhibition "Règnes" by Anne-Charlotte Finel at Jousse Gallery in Paris (2023). Her writings include: "Au commencement" for Anne-Charlotte Finel as part of Mondes Nouveaux (French ministry of Culture, Forteresse de Salses 2023); "Passagers", LVMH prize for contemporary art (2022); «To find the feeling of infinity », in Eyes as Big as Plates by Riitta Ikonen et Karoline Hjorth (2021); "A tall action is not a height", Autumn Ahn (2019) ; "2020" Juliette Dumas & Sara Mejia Kriendler (2018).

She lives and works in Paris, France.



Opening Hours

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