

# *In a Certain Light*

Anna Christen, Simon Pellegrini

24.04–13.06.2026

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Anna Christen (\*1999 in Zurich, CH) lives and works in Vienna, AT. She received her BA in Fine Arts from the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK) in 2024 and is currently pursuing further studies at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna in the Art and Space/Object class. She previously worked as an assistant in set design. Her work has been presented, among others, at CAN Centre d'art Neuchâtel (Neuchâtel, 2025); Hotel Tiger (Zurich, 2025).

Simon Pellegrini (\*1997 in Bergamo, IT) lives and works in Zurich, CH. He received his MA in Visual Arts from the École cantonale d'art de Lausanne (ECAL) in 2023, following a BA in Painting and Visual Arts from the Accademia di Belle Arti G. Carrara in Bergamo in 2021. His work has been presented, among others, at toto (Milan, 2026); Cripta747 (Turin, 2025); La Placette (Lausanne, 2024); Kunstmuseum Appenzell (Appenzell, 2024); Luogo\_e (Bergamo, 2024); Prometeo Gallery (Milan, 2022); Palazzo Monti (Brescia, 2020).

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marytwo

+41 79 959 47 07  
office@marytwo.one  
www.marytwo.one

marytwo  
Mariahilfgasse 2a  
6004 Lucerne

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Two wooden lilies stand upright on a tilted wooden surface, the lower throwing a long, angled shadow that wraps around the sculpture's side. This is *Shelf Life* (2026), the first of Anna Christen's two new sculptures, and it compresses several spatial fictions into one another: the domestic interior, the museum display, the boutique window, the collection. The shimmering wallpaper is by Harald Glöckler, the German designer whose brand of glamour has long operated between couture aspiration and home-shopping channel kitsch. Christen uses it as material illusion: a surface whose period and provenance are deliberately hard to locate, so that the question of when and for whom this interior exists is never quite settled. On another side, rendered in rye straw marquetry, is a drawing by Lewis Nockalls Cottingham from 1842, made for Snelston Hall in the UK: a room imagined in order to be refurnished, rather than a room as lived. The wooden lilies are ghosts of the Brendel botanical teaching models, nineteenth-century pedagogical objects that have since migrated into the secondary luxury market as decor, their use as teaching instruments quietly swapped out for their beauty.

Behind it, *Collector Swap* (2026) assembles what could be a piece of furniture with a woven back, a hand-sprayed striped panel reminiscent of Missoni or Hermès, and a low pale board carrying three trade cards depicting collars, an envelope and boxes. A printed advertising format popular from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century, trade cards were collected, swapped and displayed in scrapbook albums, their aesthetic appeal gradually outlasting their commercial function. A wooden trophy sits hidden in the corner. The archive numbers embedded across the work mimic the authority of classification signage without a system behind them. What she stages is less a set of objects than the conditions under which objects become legible as valuable, tasteful, historical or collectible. Veneers, rye straw, laminates and sprayed stripes are consistently in the business of imitating other materials, and the fact that she makes everything herself, visibly by hand, keeps this imitation at a productive distance from the slick finish of the design industries it cites. Christen's practice sits on the threshold between attraction and its opposite, and between categories that usually stay separate: design and sculpture, architecture and art, ornament and object. She is drawn to the moment at which a thing has not yet decided which of these it is. The tone is close to that of a forensic interior designer, attentive to which surface says intimacy and which says institution, which stripe signals a museum and which a hotel, and to what happens when those signals are placed into contact without a settled hierarchy.

At the rear of the space, Simon Pellegrini's two-channel video work *Candy* (2026) is beamed onto opposite faces of a freestanding wall. On one side, a painted apple sits on the pencilled head of a figure; its bitten core has become a black cavity holding two small cartoon eyes, surrounded by fruit flies. For roughly eight minutes, the artist's own voice speaks for the apple in a loose, unpolished monologue. This character opens its speech by imagining the best possible scenario, the "crème de la crème", hoping to be on a tart with jam before turning to a slower account of its own decay.

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Between these poles it narrates its own slow collapse from fruit to brown stain. This is a register that owes something to animation's anthropomorphic logic, the Disney grammar in which a teapot can grieve and a clock worries about time, but routed through a more recent sensibility in which affect attaches to leftovers and the slightly shameful objects of everyday consumption. Where the classical Disney object performs enchantment in the service of a human plot, Pellegrini's apple is given no one to rescue and no story to resolve. It is alone with its appetites, its class resentments (the friends who end up between the hands of the master, boiled in red wine) and its quiet rehearsals of its own ending. The animation logic is kept, but its climax has been removed, and what remains is closer to a self-confession than a scene.

On the other side of the wall, discovered only after the snoring that leaks around its edges pulls you there, a small figure in a red jumper and blue blanket sleeps across the keys of a vast grand piano in a darkened concert hall that glitters with rotating lights. The soundtrack carries only the breath of this sleeping body. The image operates on a scale logic, in which a small drawing is enlarged until it belongs to a different world entirely. The person and the piano have slipped that threshold and now sit within a visual language closer to the cinematic tableau than to any realist image. Narrative and cinematic structures run through Pellegrini's wider practice; he works out of a writing habit in which words, with their built-in vagueness, become the starting point for sculptures, drawings and audio pieces. Reality and fiction are allowed to blend, and the characters and environments that result carry themes of misfortune and self-reflection. Back to back on a single wall, the two videos function like a coin with two faces: one mind, two thoughts, each holding the other in place. The two soundtracks stitch the space together so that a visitor standing in front of either image is always also in the acoustic shadow of the other.

If Christen works on the surfaces through which objects are classified and assigned value, Pellegrini works on forms of projection and narration through which objects are given a script. Both artists ask, in different ways, how things are staged, through what apparatus, under what lighting, and with what kind of voice. In this sense, the title *In a Certain Light* names more than an atmosphere. It points to perception as contingent. Materials shift between decoration and display, objects between prop and subject. The three multi-sided works make this literal, requiring the viewer to move back and forth as their faces slip between different registers. What emerges is an exhibition about how things are staged and animated, and about how meaning itself changes depending on the light in which something is seen.

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marytwo

+41 79 959 47 07  
office@marytwo.one  
www.marytwo.one

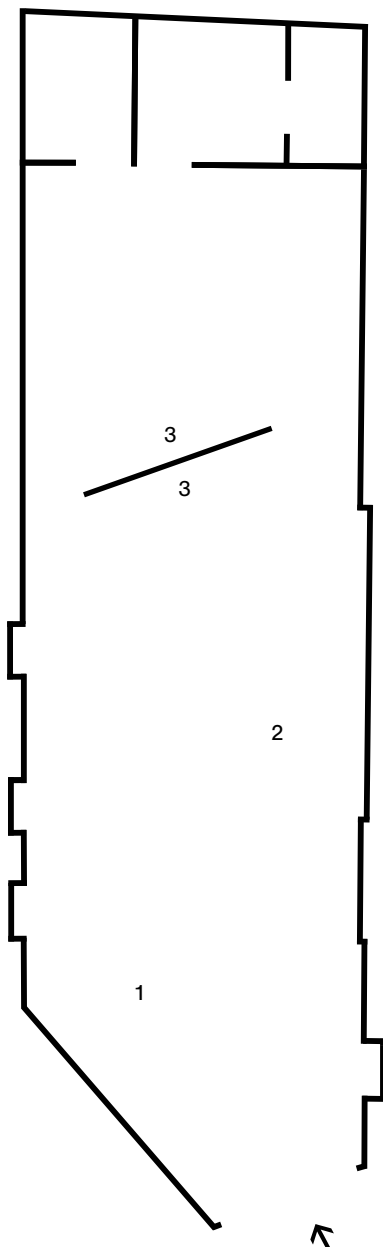
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- 1 Anna Christen  
*Shelf Life*, 2026  
Wood, wallpaper, straw, varnish, paper, adhesive film, found object  
110 × 118 × 120 cm
  
- 2 Anna Christen  
*Collector Swap*, 2026  
Wood, fabric, straw, varnish, adhesive film, found object  
139 × 100 × 160 cm
  
- 3 Simon Pellegrini  
*Candy*, 2026  
Two channel video installation  
1.414:1 (colour, sound), 08:00'