

# MARJORIE HELLYER

WANDERINGS: 2024 UNDERGRADUATE FINE ARTS THESIS EXHIBITION

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DEPS ARTIST PROFILE SERIES

# WANDERINGS:

## 2024 UNDERGRADUATE FINE ARTS THESIS EXHIBITION

Glass Curtain Gallery May 10–June 7, 2024

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*Wanderings: 2024 Undergraduate Fine Arts Thesis Exhibition* features the works of eight BFA candidates in Columbia's Fine Arts program. The exhibition, which includes paintings, drawings, sculpture, prints, video, mixed media, and installation works, represents the culmination of four years of development of a cohesive body of work for each artist while earning their degrees.

**Participating artists:** Paul Bonokollie, Bai Bautista-Buckingham, Karington Cox, Marjorie Hellyer, Robyn Leah, Finch Naradowski, Kai Offett, and Bibiana Saucedo

*Wanderings: 2024 Undergraduate Fine Arts Thesis Exhibition* is presented in conjunction with the Department of Exhibitions, Performance, and Student Spaces (DEPS) and the Art | Design Department, and Joan Giroux, Professor at Columbia College Chicago.

# MARJORIE HELLYER

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**Marjorie Hellyer** blends illustrative visuals and somber tones into a mixture of liveliness and vulnerability, developing into a colorful realm within drawing, painting, sculpture, and printmaking. Throughout her practice, Hellyer has developed a variety of personas and creatures who transform with each medium. Looking for inspiration from her life and experiences, these characters navigate strange environments with hints of reality, and encounter feelings of detachment, isolation, and confusion stemming from Hellyer's daily anxieties. Visualized as an exaggerated means of coping, and with a gentle composition, the subjects are fixed in a contrast between vibrancy and unease. Rooted in a passion for bold colors, intricate details, and imaginative configurations, Hellyer's work maintains a playful approach toward intimate expressions.

**Marjorie Hellyer** is an interdisciplinary artist currently living in Chicago, Illinois, and raised in the Rocky Mountains between Colorado and Wyoming. Her practice has adapted within these rural and city environments, focusing on simplified, yet bold, interpretations of individuals and surroundings. Hellyer has participated in numerous group exhibitions, and is currently expanding her imagery throughout different media, positioning and elevating small figures in quirky environments.





*Delicate Slump*, 2023, watercolor, clay, dry and oil pastel, and acrylic paint on wood panel, 24" x 24"





*FoolsDoll*, 2023, silkscreen on wood and acrylic paint, with clay, artificial turf, and mouse trap,  
24" x 12" x 10"



*FoolsDoll* (Detail), 2023, silkscreen on wood and acrylic paint, with clay, artificial turf, and mouse trap,  
24" x 12" x 10"





*FoolsDoll* (Detail), 2023, silkscreen on wood and acrylic paint, with clay, artificial turf, and mouse trap,  
24" x 12" x 10"





*Even When I'm Alone, I'll Still Brush My Hair, 2024, acrylic on canvas, 18" x 18"*





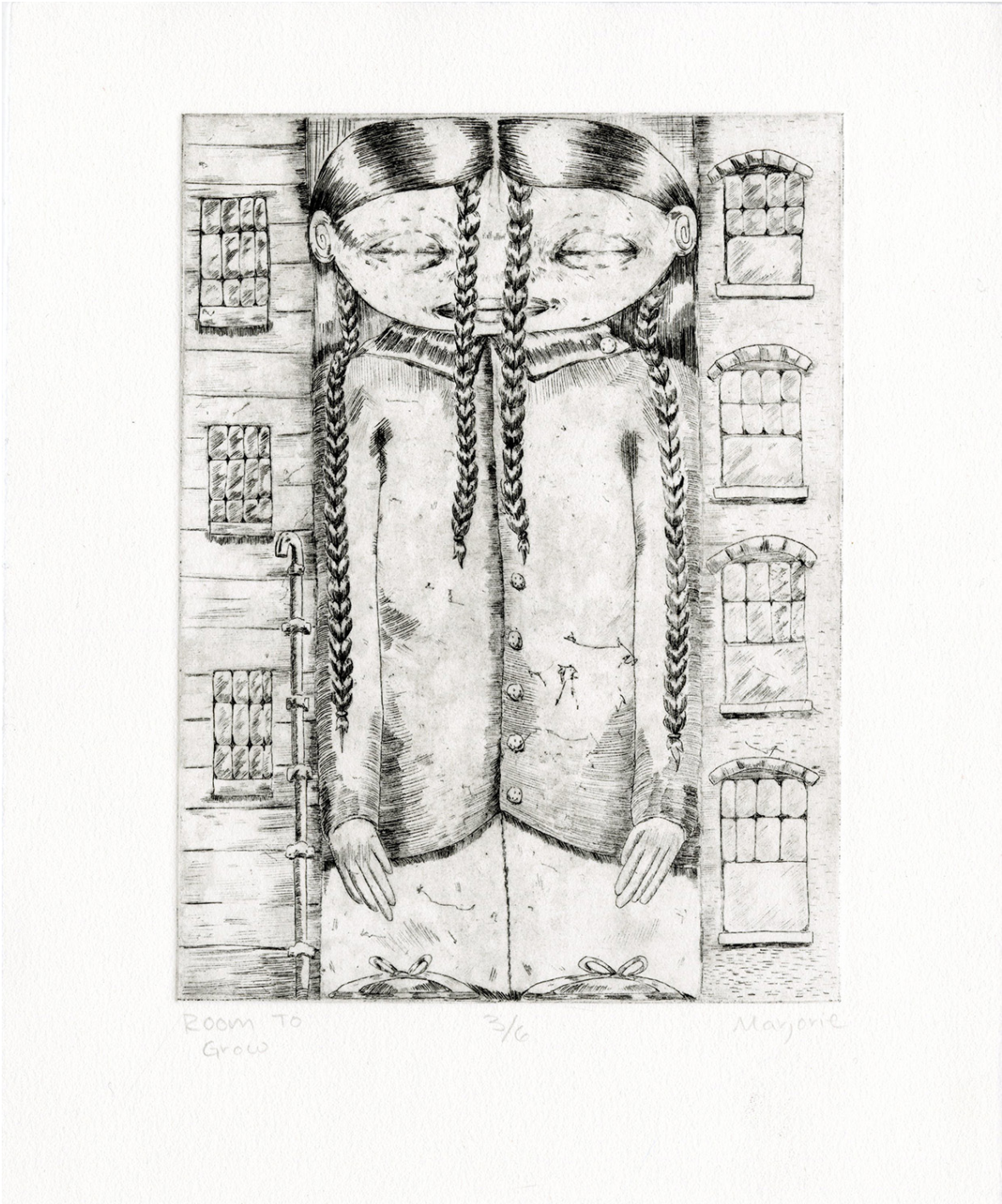
Together, 2024, pencil, pen, and marker on paper, 8" x 8"





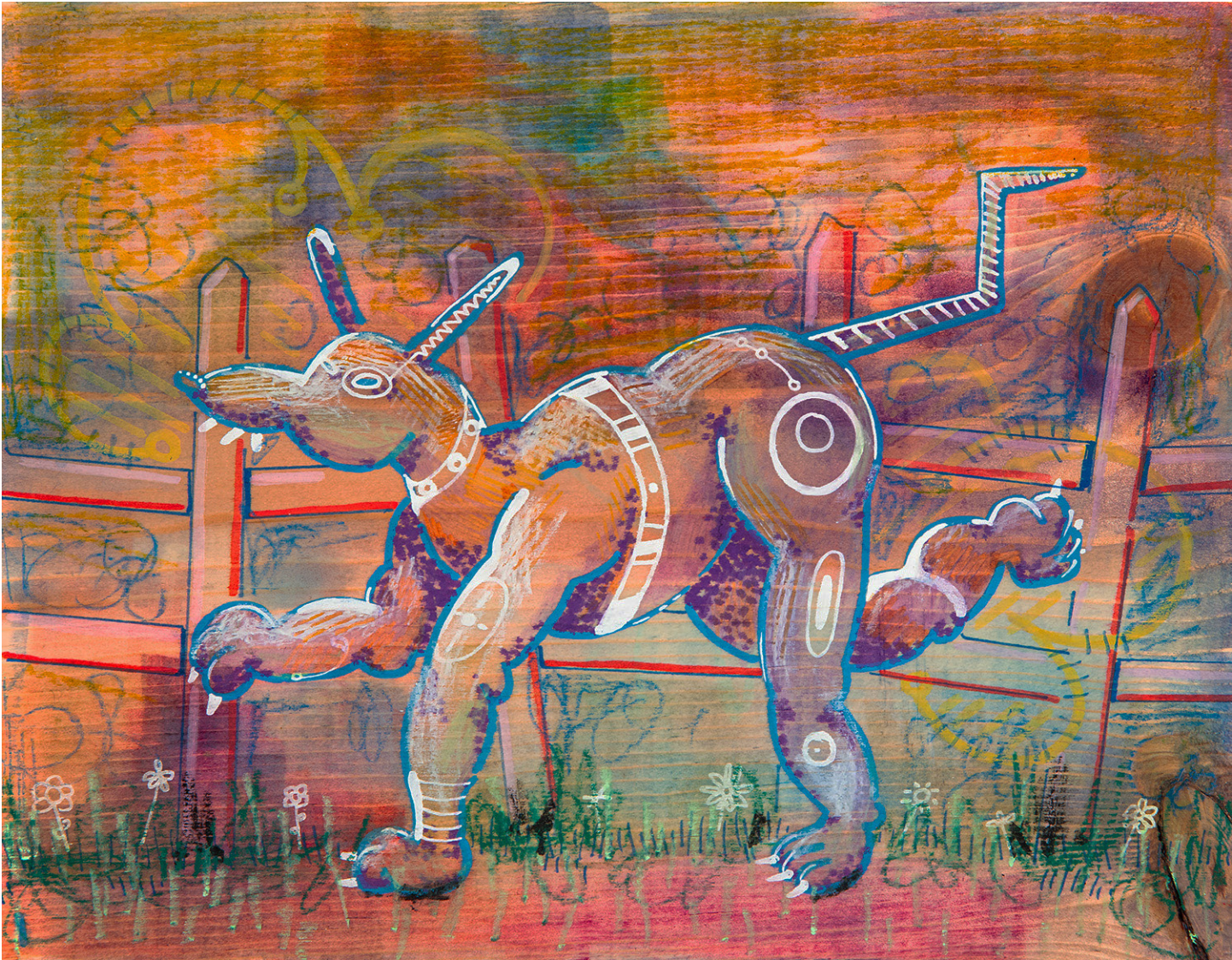
*Secret Meeting*, 2023, acrylic on canvas, 20" x 24"





Room To Grow, 2022, copper plate etching on paper, 9" x 11"





*Roam*, 2023, watercolor, paint pen, and oil pastel on wood, 6" x 8.5"





*Slump*, 2022, silkscreen on paper, 11" x 14"

# INTERVIEW WITH MARJORIE HELLYER

Conducted by Rachel Manlubatan

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**Rachel Manlubatan:** How has moving to Chicago after being raised in Colorado and Wyoming impacted your creative voice? What elements of your art have changed as you've grown up, and what elements remain the same?

**Marjorie Hellyer:** The blend of rural and urban environments has created a need for calm and chaos within my practice. Growing up in the mountains I craved the disorder and mayhem of the city. As a result, my compositions were harsh and busy. Now, having lived in Chicago for three years and ready to return to nature, my style has evolved into more organic, simple, and vibrant imagery. Within each setting, my work has served as a reaction and point of grounding to understand my needs and connection to place.

**RM:** How does the theme of your artwork benefit from being expressed in many different modes, from painting to sculpture to drawing?

**MH:** Creating in different media allows a level of spontaneity in composition and ideas that is sometimes difficult to maintain in my simplified style. Each mode of creating challenges me to transform my typically flat imagery into new depths and introduces an unexpected variety. The themes and figures can evolve to have different attitudes, presence, and energy with these experiments.

**RM:** What do you incorporate into your planning process to ensure a harmonious mix of somber tones and colorful visuals? How does mixing these two contrasting ideas build a foundation for intimate interpretations of everyday life within your work?

**MH:** My color choices are a process of bringing attention to somber scenes. In the moment, am actively seeking vibrancy that will engulf my timid figures and give them a bold appearance. Working in this style emotionally and visually

refreshes intimate ideas, and channels them into a place for comfortable reflection.

**RM:** How do you use your own experiences and common feelings, such as detachment and isolation, to inform the creation of your characters? When did you first start experimenting with making different creatures, and what outside media inspires your overall aesthetic?

**MH:** My characters provide a safe outlet in which to project difficult feelings. They embody negative ideas but present them in a fixed moment of calm. Each figure is a product of experiencing, interpreting, and reflecting upon different emotions. I began creating this way consistently two years ago, although developing characters has been in my practice since childhood. I have always been inspired by comic illustrations, film, and music which influence both my visual and contextual choices.





## THE DEPS ARTIST PROFILE SERIES

The DEPS Artist Profile Series presented by Columbia College Chicago's Department of Exhibitions, Performance and Student Spaces (DEPS), is a virtual publication on select artists involved with the DEPS Galleries and the Columbia College Chicago community. Our goal with this series is to connect artist and viewer on a deeper level, and to highlight the amazing works and thoughts of our featured artists through interviews, artist biographies, and catalogs of work. Art has always been a way to connect with others, no matter where one may physically be. We hope by presenting the creativity and insights of the people involved in the DEPS Artist Profile Series that viewers may have one more way to stay in touch with and support the arts community. The DEPS Artist Profile Series and graphic design is managed by DEPS Exhibitions Assistant Rachel Manlubatan. This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.

**Learn more at:** [colum.edu/deps](http://colum.edu/deps)

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**Glass Curtain Gallery:** 1104 S Wabash Ave, First Floor, Chicago, IL 60605

**Gallery Hours:** Monday–Friday 9 a.m.–5 p.m.