Nearly a year ago I made an exhibition in Brussels that took its title, *Banana Tourist*, from a story by the Belgian author Georges Simenon. The story is about a young man named Donadieu who travels to Tahiti in the hopes of living off the the land. Upon arrival, he realizes that other Belgian and French colonialists have brought parts of the modern world to these remote islands and that escaping from society as he knew it was nearly impossible. The Tahitian people have termed travelers like Donadieu as "banana tourists." Most often these travelers fail to survive off the land and return to Europe months later, exhausted and weak. Donadieu spirals into mental turmoil on the island and the book ends tragically with the characters suicide.

A few months after the exhibition I found out that the famous vegetarian fashion designer Stella McCartney had made blouses and dresses for her spring summer 2014 collection that very closely resembled the floral textile paintings I had made for this show. Both in pattern and color. Today, I received an email from my Belgian gallerist where the exhibition was staged with the subject heading "Kids fashion." The body of the email read "Meanwhile in Antwerp…" There was a picture attached to the email that he took in a small children's clothing store in Antwerp. In the photo there are two children's shirts. On the right, a floral tank top resembling the daisy pattern from my paintings that was made by Stella McCartney. And on the left, another shirt that was made by a local Belgian company called Morley. It has a smiley face with a banana for a mouth with the text "Banana Tourist" printed on it.

- March 16, 2015

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BANANA TOURIST