

# The approach

Magali Reus

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Preview: 16<sup>th</sup> September  
17<sup>th</sup> September – 16<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Kerbside construction waste skips are transfigured as domestic fruit bowls in Magali Reus' photographic series '*Landings*'. Pertly animated fruit and sliced cabbage slivers graze among heaped rubble, plaster dust, exhausted paint tubs, scraps of peeled wallpaper and splintered floorboards. Not some chance apparition of a discarded lunchtime kebab, this vegetal script, between semantic meaning and ornament, spells out the months of the Gregorian calendar.

These photographic prints are mounted onto steel panels bearing cropped and desaturated images of one of Reus' childhood paintings, depicting a self portrait of the artist in arcadia. Sculptural powder-coated trays, accessorised with physical tags of the construction skip – welded hooks and tabs, custom swatches of ripped tarpaulin, wire and electric cable – enclose these idylls. On the frames' outside surfaces, welded debossed script indicates elliptical abbreviations of months, seasons and crop air mileage.

Tape measures, like calendars, index scales. Atop a low rectangular plinth in the gallery's centre tape measures are quizzical, proud or reclining like some art historical nude. Freed of universal legends, their skins, covered in a partly legible numerical display, conjure up an elastic sliding scale, counting, accumulating and moving forward, as their lengths trail propulsively and rhythmically. These flexing tape-measure bodies, constructed in welded and heat-forged steel, mingle with produce sacks and distressed flower cartons in a series of three sculptural assemblages titled '*What Grows*'.

Carved hunks of sand, the produce sacks' skins delineate graphics of food-like substances such as milk substitute, cheese powder and artificial sweetener. Like '*Landings*', these sacks know numbers – dates of social significance, expiration dates, dinner dates, and speculative codes of approved food additives.

The alchemical materials of these edible food-like substances, like sand, are elemental building blocks that might be synthesised to construct things greater than the sum of their parts. Sand into glass; powder into cheese. Sand as a construction material is formed into many shapes through elemental processes; edibles destined for consumption anticipate similar transformations: they, in turn, articulate the architecture of the domestic, the meal and, finally, the body.

A synthesised slice of nature is relayed in the larger-than-life flatlay of domestic flowers atop powder-coated aluminium boxes that mimic distressed cardboard. Daffodil, tulip and magnolia, deconstructed components of another still life, eagerly await assembly.

In the Annexe Room, the antique Victorian breadboard meets the industrial hose reel. Hand-carved in wood, scaled to the size of a dining table, this homespun object might, possibly, host a convivial group of reoriented diners. If the loaf is a staple of the global diet, it might also, in the gestures of sharing, carving, slicing, or dividing constitute an ur-choreography of sculptural gestures. Where

## The approach

the rebellious tape measures eschew standards, the spooling hose, custom weaved, is a rotary relief, a spiraling vortex. Follow the vortex: at the end, a limp rooster's head hangs. As the rooster signals the dawn of a new day, so the hose plugs into a pressurised and precious resource. Water is the elemental binding agent by which bread rises and thus each day begins again.

– Jonathan P. Watts

**Magali Reus** (1981, The Hague) lives and works in London. **Recent solo exhibitions include:** *A Sentence in Soil* at the Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas; *And Orchard* at François Ghebaly, Los Angeles; *Shadow Tonics* at Galerie Fons Welters, Amsterdam (all 2022); *As mist, description*, South London Gallery, London (2018); *Hot Cottons*, Bergen Kunsthall, Bergen (2017); *Night Plants*, Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, St. Gallen (2017); *Mustard*, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2016); *Quarters*, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin (2016); *Spring for a Ground*, SculptureCenter, New York; *Particle of Inch*, The Hepworth Wakefield, Wakefield; *Halted Paves*, Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster (all 2015). **Forthcoming exhibitions include:** *On Like Scenery* at Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, Deurle; Centre d'art contemporain, Synagogue de Delme and Museum Kurhaus Kleve.

Magali Reus was shortlisted for the Hepworth Prize for Sculpture in 2018 and in 2015 was awarded The Prix de Rome.

Reus' works are included in the collections of Tate, Stedelijk Museum, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Rubell Family Collection, Arts Council Collection, Kunstmuseum Winterthur, CCS Bard/Hassel Collection, Lafayette Anticipation – Fonds de Famillee Moulin, Frac Grand Large – Hauts-de-France, Kunstmuseum St Gallen, and Centraal Museum Utrecht.

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