

# The approach

Magali Reus

17<sup>th</sup> January – 16<sup>th</sup> February 2014  
Preview – Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January, 6-9 pm

Magali Reus' installation presents a kind of dirty realism, with sculptures deriving from ideas of compartmentalised privacy often experienced in bathrooms and kitchens. Motifs of filling and emptying, stuffing and purging, Reus' sculptures allude to fridges, toilet seats and cooking pots. Although her most frequented aesthetic is clean, bold and precise, it is one that has been inverted and revitalized via the more amoral vices and excesses of consumerism. Using steel, rubbers and foam, surfaces reserved for functional counters are here perverted: patterned with stains, soaked with caricature rotten puddles and comically violated by domestic hangover objects (burnt pizzas, rusted cookware and plastic placemats are squashed inside and between sculptures) the works are cast in a strange poise as mournful yet sheltering volumes. As temporary zones of exchange or activity, the fridges (and pans) could be described as "cheapskate architecture", collages of slick and sleazy with their sexualised handle protrusions, filthy interiors yet bizarrely opulent claddings. Piled and open-ended, the fridge-like sculptures function as screens: closing off, opening up, forming translucencies, windows and backdrops for more narrative suggestions of social taboo, of sexual or economic transaction, and domestic escapade. What these skewed rectangle forms and differently scaled pans aspire to is a framing of residual moments— a bracketing, a holding in parenthesis, a way of quoting the real world via more hand-touched object hood.

As rhythmic shells, these smaller elements – hand-hammered steel pots, folded aluminium trays, laser-cut shapes approximating toilet seats – act as appendages, some within the fridges and others arranged nearby. Like television sets populating living rooms across the globe, these inscrutable grouped vessels are infinitely deep and shallow at one and the same time. Fabricated from folded/riveted steel plate their formal language could be linked with the callousness of Brutalist architecture, but with their organically spewing interiors these works are bound up more with the body and its immediate extensions. From the family-freezer, to the more diminutive and sexy mini-bar, the fridge vessels are linked with competing ideas of civic monumentality and domestic self-restraint. They could be loosely bracketed as sculpture-as-receptacle: discarded and ruinous, the pieces in Reus' installation are preserved by a fetishist instinct, not active but rather condensed and congealed. The fridges are a contradiction of the readymade and the specifically constructed sculpture: their details imitate the freedoms of hedonistic lifestyles or the urban home simulating the city, but their rigorous floor-grounded installation transforms the degraded cast-off into a highly formal and newly significant object.

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Magali Reus, (b. 1981, Den Haag, The Netherlands), works in London. Reus will be included in the *Assembly: A survey of recent artists film and video in Britain 2008-2013* at Tate Britain and has forthcoming group exhibitions at Kestnergesellschaft, Hannover, Germany; Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, Switzerland; David Roberts Art Foundation, London and De Hallen, Haarlem, The Netherlands. Forthcoming solo shows for 2014 include Freymond Guth Fine Arts, Zurich, Switzerland and Circuit, Lausanne, Switzerland. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Highly Liquid*, Galerie Fons Welters, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; *Out of Empty*, Albert Baronian, Brussels, Belgium (both 2013); *ON*, The Approach, London, UK (2012); *Background*, IBID Projects, London, UK (2010) and *La Salle de bains* (2009), Lyon. Recent group exhibitions include: *Rijksakademie Open*, Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam; *Silent Hardware*, David Dale Gallery, Glasgow, Scotland; *Comrades of Time*, Cell Project Space, London; *Shadows of a Doubt*, Tallinn Art Hall, Estonia; *SLIP*, The Approach, London; *Notes (on declassing)*, curated by Vincent Honoré, Galerie Opdahl, Stavanger, Norway; and *Heavy duty, silent haze, racing hearts*, Freymond Guth Fine Arts, Zurich, Switzerland (all 2013).

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