

HAUSER & WIRTH

Press Release

Monika Sosnowska

Hauser & Wirth Los Angeles, North B gallery
1 July – 17 September 2017
Opening reception: Saturday 1 July, 6 – 9 pm



Los Angeles... Beginning 1 July 2017, Hauser & Wirth Los Angeles is pleased to present 'Monika Sosnowska,' the first Los Angeles solo exhibition for the noted Polish artist. The exhibition features a new body of work that responds to characteristic elements of existing 1960s Polish architecture in sculptural installations that reflect and riff upon history and personal experience. Wrought from industrial materials and objects, Sosnowska's works 'sample' various architectural details that she idiosyncratically warps in order to immerse viewers in environments that are both uncannily familiar and disconcertingly surreal.

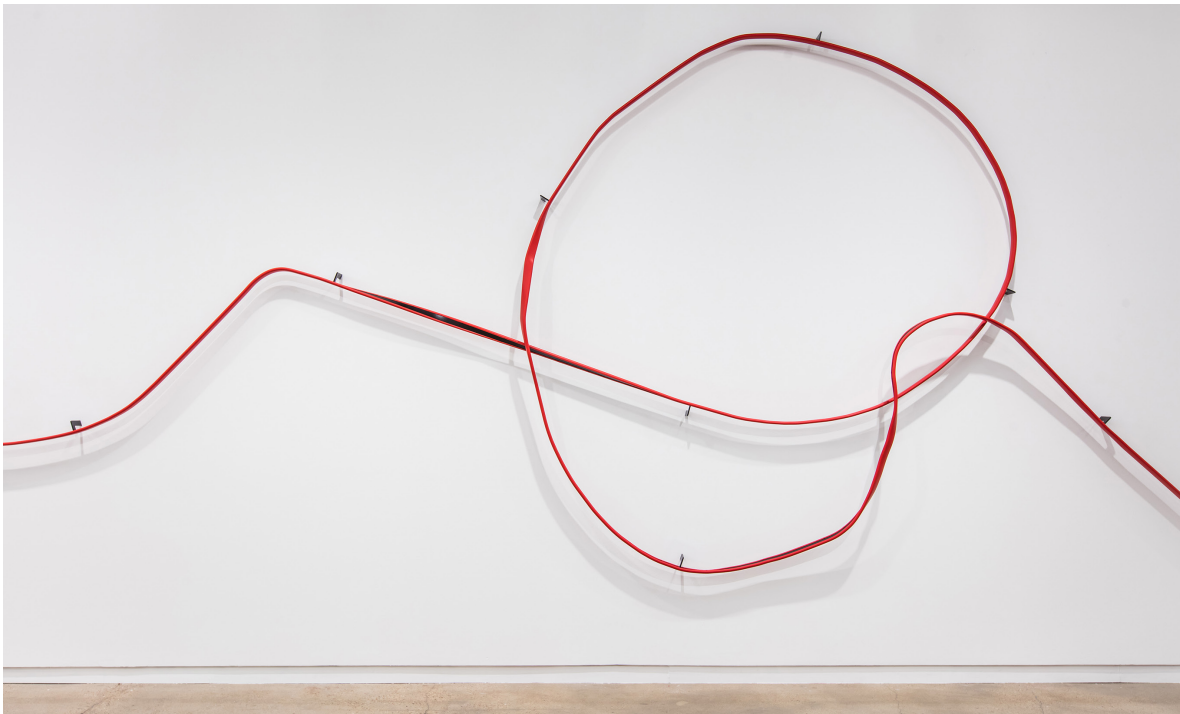
This tension in Sosnowska's work stems from the ways in which she deftly draws from an artistic and architectural vocabulary from Poland's socialist past – a time more recent than it seems. Sosnowska's distinctive interpretations of geography, governance, and architecture breathe new life into the larger context of postmodern sculpture, and follow a continuum of sculptural breakthroughs marked by Louise Bourgeois's monolithic spiders, Tony Smith's spatial matrices, and Robert Morris's large-scale modular units.

On view through 17 September, the exhibition at Hauser & Wirth is comprised of six major sculptural works previously presented in Sosnowska's critically admired museum solo exhibition, 'Habitat,' which inaugurated The Contemporary Austin's expansion in 2016.

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About the Exhibition

Focusing on the effects of Modernism across Europe and in her hometown of Warsaw, Poland Sosnowska has devoted much of her career to recording the political and architectural landscape that evolved in the aftermath of the destruction of WWII. Her sculptures and installation suggest a refusal to forget the recent past, capturing the sense of rapid transformation that Sosnowska witnesses as political power shifted from Communist to Neo-Liberal governance in Poland. Modern architecture and urban planning of the 1960s stimulated the promise of Utopia in war-ravaged cities, and Warsaw in particular hosted burgeoning Communist 'Eastmodern' redevelopment in the mid-twentieth century. Public spaces were created and new, ordered architecture appeared. But in the late 1980s, as the artist was coming of age, this architectural growth came to a halt with the rise of a new capitalist regime. Public spaces disappeared, buildings were destroyed, and the resulting trauma to Polish society at large etched itself upon Sosnowska's sensibility. A sense of society's arrested development and reversal seem to shape her sculptures. While her pulled and hammered monoliths at first appear to adhere to the fundamental rules of architecture and functionality (a staircase here, a doorknob or handrail there), closer inspection confounds. Sosnowska manipulates viewers' perceptions by using recognizable industrial materials and forms in dysfunctional applications, materializing moments when, she explains, 'architectural space begins to take on the characteristics of mental space.'



The six sculptures on view at Hauser & Wirth simultaneously reinforce and question our haptic perceptions of human-made space. Painted steel beams thrust from a seemingly uprooted concrete base in 'Untitled' (2015), a plantlike structure imploring to grow beyond its physical limitations. 'Handrail' (2016), the artist's re-interpretation of a 1970s plastic-covered steel banister, curves and loops like a wall drawing, its functionality rendered moot. 'Façade' (2016) recalls a mass-produced building exterior in Warsaw, here collapsed into a forbidding tangle. Splayed horizontally across the gallery floor, 'Stairs' (2016) evokes a once-useful domestic apparatus transformed into a charged symbol. The artist redefines structural roof supports in 'Frieze' (2015), a concrete slab punctured by downward-bending metal slats, while the concrete-embedded door handles of 'Relief' (2015) comprise a portrait of life arrested worthy of a modern-day Pompeii.

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About the Artist

Born in Ryki, Poland, Monika Sosnowska (b. 1972) studied at the Academy of Fine Arts, Poznań, Poland from 1993 – 1998 and at Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam from 1999 – 2000. Sosnowska first achieved international renown in 2003 with 'The Corridor,' an intervention that formed part of the Arsenal exhibition of the 50th Venice Biennale. Solo exhibitions for Sosnowska have included: 'Monika Sosnowska', The Contemporary Austin, Austin TX (2016); 'Monika Sosnowska', Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis IN (2016); 'Monika Sosnowska. Gate', Ginza Maison Hermès, Tokyo, Japan (2015); 'Monika Sosnowska. Architectonisation', Fundação De Serralves, Porto, Portugal (2015); 'Market', Perez Art Museum, Miami FL (2013); Aspen Art Museum, Aspen CO (2013); 'Regional Modernities', Australian Center for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, Australia (2013); 'The Staircase/Die Treppe, 2010', K21 Ständehaus, Düsseldorf, Germany (2011); Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art, Herzliya, Israel (2010); Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, Vaduz, Liechtenstein (2007); and the Museum of Modern Art, New York NY (2006). In 2007, Sosnowska represented Poland at the 52nd Venice Biennale, where her work garnered critical international attention for the monumental sculpture '1:1' (2007).

Hauser & Wirth first exhibited Sosnowska's work at New York's 69th Street location in 2010 and again at New York's 18th Street location in 2014. In conjunction with the 2014 exhibition, the gallery published 'Monika Sosnowska. Tower,' a publication that features the artist's monumental work, 'Tower.' Between 13 December 2017 and 10 February 2018, Hauser & Wirth London will present a solo exhibition of new work.

'Monika Sosnowska' will be on view at Hauser & Wirth Los Angeles daily from Wednesday – Sunday, 11 am – 6 pm from 1 July through 17 September 2017.

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For additional information please contact:

Andrea Schwan, Andrea Schwan Inc., info@andreaschwan.com
+1 917 371 5023

Press Contacts

Andrea Schwan
info@andreaschwan.com
+1 917 371 5023

Elizabeth Portanova
elizabeth@hauserwirth.com
+1 213 943 1634

Hauser & Wirth Los Angeles

901 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles CA 90013

Gallery hours:
Wednesday – Sunday
11 am – 6 pm

www.hauserwirthlosangeles.com

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Monika Sosnowska
Untitled
2015
Concrete, painted steel
303 x 324 x 400 cm / 119 1/4 x 127 1/2 x 157 1/2 in
© Monika Sosnowska
Courtesy the artist, Hauser & Wirth and Fundacja Galerii Foksal
Photo: Bartosz Górka

Monika Sosnowska
Handrail
2016
Steel and red PVC
25 x 317 x 23 cm / 9 7/8 x 124 3/4 x 9 in
Dimensions variable
Installation view, 'Monika Sosnowska' The Contemporary Austin, 2016
Commissioned by The Contemporary Austin for the exhibition 'Monika Sosnowska', Austin TX, 2016
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Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth
Photo: Brian Fitzsimmons