

Anne de Vries

HEAVY LOAD

13 NOV - 21 NOV 2021

Opening: 12 NOV 2021, 6 - 10 pm

Opening Hours: Thursday - Sunday, 12 - 6 pm

Fragile is pleased to present *HEAVY LOAD* an exhibition by **Anne de Vries**.

Historically, the right to bear arms was hereditary — a sexually-transmitted inheritance from parent to child, like the color of your eyes or the deed to a home. Heraldry developed out of this, a state-regulated economy of signs demonstrating that the bearer, or his ancestor, was legally entitled to wield a weapon.

Like a *mise en abyme*, this visual system involved layers of meaning. Mere possession of a family crest demonstrated a certain social standing, but its specific form also carried weight. For instance, the so-called “king of beasts,” a lion, implied strength, nobility, or courage in the battlefield. But over time, these direct semantic connections weakened, between the animal and its depiction, as well as between a coat of arms and knighthood. Heraldic designs eventually came to signify simply the product of a birthright: generational wealth, which is to say, power.

Sand itself doesn't signify power, but it makes it work. A vast and obscure extractive industry turns shorelines into the glass skyscrapers that compose the skylines of Alpha global cities. Sand is both a major resource within the contemporary global economy and the origins of its symbolic representation. That is, like the relationship between the living lion to its stylized double on a heraldic crest, the shifting reality of sand haunts the visual embodiment of finance capitalism as architectural form.

For *HEAVY LOAD*, an exhibition at **Fragile** in Berlin, Anne De Vries has filled the space with 15 tons of sand. Impressed in its surface are the chopped and screwed traces of corporate logos, neighboring buildings, and the pawprints of a knight cannibalized by its own herald, put on podophilic display.

Text: **Nicholas Korody**

Sand Sculptures in collaboration with **Bouke Atema**