

MAGALI REUS

Full House

11 April – 31 May, 2025

Mai 36 Galerie is delighted to announce its first solo exhibition of the work of London-based, Dutch artist Magali Reus. In “Full House” three recent bodies of sculptural and photographic work – *What Grows* (2022), *Landings* (2022) and *Clementine* (2022/23) – explore ecology and systems of production, teasing out the tensions between constructed nature, high technology and the impact of post-industrial human activity. These works are presented at Mai 36 Galerie alongside an intervention in the gallery space of wall paintings derived from vernacular Swiss Appenzell illustrations.

Reus’ practice often addresses existing common objects and systems, combining industrial and craft materials and processes to create a compelling open-ended symbolism and visual language that is at once oblique and effusive. In *Clementine*, oversized preserve jars protrude from the walls, exposing glossy, resinous contents resembling thick, artificial jams through their clear cast walls. Other examples feature more opaque, stubborn stone-like and chalky skins. The jam jar here is introduced as both a vessel of containment and a register of time. By recalling the slow process of preserving and fermentation, the *Clementine* works point to the tension between organic perishability and the industrial impulse to extend and manipulate natural life cycles.

These sculptural containers’ lids and sides are inscribed with a myriad of personal notations, label-like graphics and domestic graffiti, blurring the boundary between mass-produced goods and individualized rituals of preservation. As repurposed containers, and through their inflated scale, they establish a mode of unconventional portraiture. Newly reinvented by the suggested owner, they reveal potential for an exploration of more personal re-translations and narratives.

In Reus’ work, the physical transformation and display – typically of vessels or receivers of useful action – sets the stage for objects to shed their function and enact a different image of themselves. In her photographic series titled *Landings*, Reus turns to the journey of fruit and the construct of the traditional still-life as a metaphor for contemporary food logistics and environmental shifts. Photographs of individual fruits in extreme close-up, are found amid container-strewn domestic construction debris, framed onto powder coated panels in muted hues of beige and cream. These panels, which incorporate fragments of a childhood drawing by the artist, create a layered meditation on time – juxtaposing a past, idealized vision of nature with the realities of a globalized highly constructed food industry.

As Reus says, “I love the idea that we are able to mirror feeling or tone through material choices. When abstractions such as colour or form merge, they are afforded the magical capacity to communicate content.” Reus’ deft ability to tweak and manipulate frameworks gives her a palette of different resonances of meaning that can surface or be deliberately pushed to the side. Through her meticulous sculptural interventions and photographic juxtapositions, Reus reveals produce as a site of contradiction: nourishing yet industrialized, organic yet sculpted by capital and science, intimate yet globally displaced.

Each frame in the *Landings* series bears on its side a number indicating the distance the fruit has traveled – 9335 km for the blackberry in *Landings* (9335, *Slopes*) – highlighting the immense distances that seasonal produce now routinely traverses. As the climate shifts, the distinction between what is local and what is displaced becomes increasingly blurred, raising questions about what is lost when food is uprooted and reformulated to fit industrial demands.

In *What Grows* (*Cut Stems*) agricultural tools are transformed into sculptural hybrids for measurement and containment. Rigid sacks rendered in sand are etched with protruding graphics and commercial imagery of powdered potato, highlighting the contrast between nourishment and industrial processing and referencing a globalized food economy where organic matter is continuously reduced, substituted, and reformulated, evermore synthetic and alienated from its origin. The tape measure – a symbol of standardization – is rendered in warped, reclining form, stripped of its intended purpose. It no longer serves as an instrument of control and measure but instead takes on a more animated, organic pose, suggesting an alternative, unquantifiable relationship between food, consumption, and the human body.

Magali Reus (b.1981, Den Haag, Netherlands), lives and works in London, UK.

Upcoming and recent solo exhibitions include CAPC Bordeaux, FR; Kunsthalle Wien, AU (both 2027); The Perimeter, London, UK; Kunstverein Freiburg, DE; Museum Beelden Aan Zee, Den Haag, NL (all 2026); Kunstmuseum, Den Haag, NL (2025); 'Our Volumes', Museum Kurhaus Kleve, DE; 'Off Script', Museo del Novecento, Milan, IT; (all 2024); 'Deeper Greens', Kunsthalle Bratislava, SK; 'Le Plat Principal', CAC la Synagogue de Delme, FR; 'On Like Scenery', Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, Deurle, BE (all 2023); 'XII', The Approach, London, UK; 'And Orchard', François Ghebaly, Los Angeles, USA; 'A sentence in soil', Nasher Sculpture Center, Texas, USA; 'Shadow Tonics', Galerie Fons Welters, Amsterdam, NL (all 2022); 'Pale Planets', Nuno Centeno, Porto, PT (2021); 'As mist, description', South London Gallery, UK (2018); 'Hot Cottons', Bergen Kunsthall, Bergen, NO; 'Night Plants', Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, SZ (both 2017); 'Mustard', Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, NL; 'Quarters', Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin, IT (both 2016); 'Spring for a Ground', SculptureCenter, New York, USA; 'Particle of Inch', The Hepworth Wakefield, UK; 'Halted Paves', Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster, DE (all 2015).

Reus has been included in group exhibitions and screenings at Tate Britain, London, UK; Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, UK; CCS Bard Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-on Hudson, USA; Kestnergesellschaft, Hanover, DE; Fridericianum, Kassel, DE; Luma Westbau, Zürich, SZ; Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, AU; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, NL; Kunstmuseum Winterthur, SZ; Kunsthalle Bern, SZ; Museu Nacional de Arte Contemporanea, Lisbon, PT; De Appel, Amsterdam, NL; and the British Art Show 8.

Reus was awarded the 7th edition of the Arnaldo Pomodoro Sculpture Prize, IT in 2024, shortlisted for the Hepworth Prize for Sculpture, UK 2018, and in 2015 was awarded The Prix de Rome.

Her work is included in international collections including Tate Collection, UK; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, NL; Centraal Museum, Utrecht, NL; Kunstmuseum Den Haag, NL; The Hepworth Wakefield, UK; Collection CCS Bard Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-on-Hudson, USA; Kunstmuseum Winterthur, SZ; Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, SZ; Frac Grand Large – Hauts-de- France; Lafayette Anticipation – Fonds de dotation Famille Moulin, Paris, FR; Museum Kurhaus Kleve, DE; LAM Museum, Lisse, NL; Rubell Family Collection, Miami, USA; Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin, IT; Arts Council Collection, UK; Government Art Collection, London, UK; David Roberts Art Foundation, London, UK; The Perimeter, London, UK.