

This spring the South London Gallery presents the first institutional solo exhibition in London by Dutch artist Magali Reus (b.1981).

Titled *As mist, description*, the exhibition comprises an extensive new body of work co-commissioned with Bergen Kunsthall, Norway, and reconfigured for the SLG's main space within a bespoke architectural framework.

Magali Reus creates sculptural forms, often made in series. Her works are subtly suggestive of familiar machines or apparatus whose function and identity remains intentionally ambiguous. At the SLG, a new body of meticulously produced sculptures is presented in spatial chapters and designed to appear in a state of transition – frozen in progress, caught mid-function, or in a state of restoration, ruin or abandonment. Images and their representative materials are seen to move transformed between different chemical states. Visual elements are reproduced, layered and repeated in works that are individually crafted using complex casting, moulding and weaving techniques, pitting the aggressive emptiness of manufacture against the slow diligence of handiwork.

Magali Reus says of her sculptural forms: “Their formwork is engineered, their skins taut with the cold precision of industrial mass production, meaning that each component detail carries the suggestion of importance.”

The exhibition opens with *Crane*, 2017, a large, pastel-coloured desk-like composition. Reminiscent of a façade or hoarding, it suggests a site under construction. Like a reference manual, this work harbours smaller details and material conceits that rhyme on many surfaces across the exhibition. Over-sized, unpopulated and unmoving, *Crane* works like a ship whose anchor ties every subsequent gesture back to its beginning symbols.

Works from *Hwael*, 2017, a series of metal sculptures, are distributed throughout the gallery to reference movement of both body and machine through urban space. *Hwael* employs the visual language of both classical decorative ironwork and ergonomic kit manufacture and incorporates notional weights, balances and straps. The repeated form of a backpack acts as a signifier for the human body as a nomadic creature in transit. The backpack's internal and external faces add flourishes to this formal language, enforcing the importance of distinct character or personifying gestures within the set template.

Reus adds: “The metal sculptures of *Hwael* are distributed throughout the exhibition in the

rhetorical manner of a fragmented whale skeleton, proportionally analogous to the skeletal framework of the public bus.”

Strategically positioned next to each of the gallery’s entrances or passageways, and sharing certain characteristic features with the commonplace fire extinguisher, are works from the series titled *Sentinel*, 2017. These wall-mounted sculptures are composed of metal work with cast, custom woven and embroidered hose-like sections. They are hung alongside shapes that appear to be in a molten or liquid state, suggesting that the heat conventionally associated with these devices was implicit in their making.

*As mist, description* is accompanied by a publication with essays by Laura McLean-Ferris and Quinn Latimer, and an edition specially created by the artist for the SLG.

*(This document was automatically generated by Contemporary Art Library.)*