

GAGOSIAN

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NANCY RUBINS

DIVERSIFOLIA

Opening reception:
Tuesday, February 6, 6–8PM
February 7–April 14, 2018

6-24 Britannia Street
London WC1X 9JD

I am interested in the balance, the engineering and tenuousness of the objects, as well as the dynamic tension and energy. . . . A continuum starts happening with one piece attached to another . . . the way that crystals or cells grow. I'm interested in the bigger picture.

—Nancy Rubins

Gagosian is pleased to present “Diversifolia,” an exhibition of new sculpture and drawings by Nancy Rubins. This is Rubins’s first solo exhibition in London.

Rubins transforms found objects and industrial refuse into expertly orchestrated abstractions that are fluid and rhizomatic in nature. Achieving this expressive fluidity at such a large scale requires precise engineering; in her recent work, she has employed a structural property called “tensegrity,” wherein individual parts are arranged in balanced compression and secured with tensile cables. Clusters of like objects—airplane parts, boats, carousel creatures, and more—seem to explode into space in all directions, propelled by their aggregated momentum.

In the scientific names of plants, “diversifolia” indicates a single species possessed with a considerable variety of leaf. Rubins’s sculptures, though devoid of leaves per se, are bouquet-like arrangements comprised of a wide range of animal forms—giraffes, storks, tortoises, crocodiles, wolves, and hogs—cast in iron, bronze, brass, and aluminum. Though easily recognizable for their intended use in garden decor or signage, Rubins treats the sculptures as purely formal, abstracted components: limbs and tails flower-like Baroque arabesques in *Hog de la Ivy* (2016–17); tortoise shells create a cloud-like foundation from which rectangular bases and silvered hogs emerge; and the sharp antlers in *Agrifolia Major* (2017) give way to the animated curls of crocodile tails. Rubins also responds to the imperfections of the sculptural elements, their conspicuous seams and erratic welding influencing aesthetic and structural decisions such as where to place the drilled holes that allow the cables to zigzag through and bind the cantilevered components within the sculpture.

Reversing the scale relationship between sculpture and viewer, a selection of smaller maquettes cast in bronze and aluminum allow Rubins’s calculated compositional decisions to be observed all at once, impossible when circumnavigating the towering assemblages. From the sprawling sculptures to the large-scale graphite drawings—burnished swathes of paper undulating from the walls—Rubins suggests an endless continuum between the chaos and coolness of modernism and the élan vital of the organic.

Nancy Rubins was born in Naples, Texas; raised in Tullahoma, Tennessee; and currently lives and works in Topanga Canyon, California. Collections include Le Consortium, Dijon, France; FRAC Bourgogne, France; Österreichischer Skulpturenpark, Graz, Austria; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego; Linda Pace Foundation, San Antonio, TX; Knoxville Museum of Art, TN; and Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. Institutional exhibitions include “Airplane Parts and Building, A Large Growth for San Diego,” Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego (1994); “Projects 49: Nancy Rubins,” Museum of Modern Art, New York (1995); Aspen Art Museum, CO (1997); Miami Art Museum (1999); FRAC Bourgogne, France (2005); “MOMA and Airplane Parts,” SculptureCenter, New York (2006); “Big Pleasure Point,” Public Art Fund, Lincoln Center, New York (2006); and “Drawing, Sculpture, Studies,” Weatherspoon Art Museum, University of North Carolina, Greensboro (2014). Rubins’s large-scale sculptures are on permanent display at leading institutions including the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; Université Paris Diderot; and University of Texas, Austin; and her recent sculpture *Table and Airplane Parts* (2015–17), owned by Le Consortium, Dijon, France, is installed permanently at Gare de Leuglay, France. In 2013, Rubins received the Distinguished Women in the Arts Award from the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

In spring 2018, *Monochrome II*, a permanent outdoor sculpture, will be installed at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AK.

Image: Nancy Rubins, *Crocodylius Philodendrus*, 2016–17 (detail), cast iron, brass, bronze, aluminum, stainless steel armature, and stainless steel wire cable, 170 1/2 × 216 × 192 1/2 inches (433.1 × 548.6 × 489 cm) © Nancy Rubins. Photo by Brian Guido.

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