

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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Nancy Rubins' Cluster of Playground Critters

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*Captured 5/7/2014. Nancy Rubins, Our Friend Fluid Metal (detail), 2014. Aluminum and stainless steel
204 x 500 x 281 inches © Nancy Rubins. Courtesy of the artist and Gagosian Gallery. Photography by Erich Koyama*

Nancy Rubins' huge installations are often paradoxical. Created from synthetic materials, the large cluster sculptures imitate nature, hovering above like giant metal nebulas. Gargantuan in size and incredibly detailed, the artist's latest series "Our Friend Fluid Metal" (currently at Gagosian's 21st Street location in New York) features assemblages made out of recycled metals—mainly discarded objects from playgrounds. Childhood objects like life-sized horses, ducks, swans, and other animals, take on new meaning when bundled together and suspended in air. They fail to evoke feelings of nostalgia, but rather loneliness and wastefulness.

Rubins said that originally, when she was collecting these playground playthings, she was unsure of how she could incorporate them in her art because these objects seemed "irreversible." Then she began to envision the objects without their function, as simply lines and squiggles, and the idea of the "fluid metal" emerged.

Her appropriation of these objects parallels how aluminum is melted down and recycled. After tracing the history of these metal objects, she learned that the playground animals were molded from recycled WWII aircrafts.

The gallery describes the sculptures as "rhizomatic" in structure, as the installations resemble mutating cells, though it is more Rubins' process of reusing materials that is rhizomatic, especially when considering the history of the recycled metal.

"Our Friend Fluid Metal" will be on view at Gagosian through September 13.