

## GAGOSIAN GALLERY



### For her latest show at Gagosian, Nancy Rubins Turns to Children's Toys



*Nancy Rubins: "Our Friend Fluid Metal" Installation View Gagosian West 21<sup>st</sup> Street, 2014  
Gagosian Gallery*

When Nancy Rubins stocks her studio, she doesn't head to the art store to pick up paints and other conventional materials. Instead, she goes to thrift shops, junkyards, and even the aircraft boneyards of the Mojave Desert to build at palette all her own.

It was shortly after grad school that Rubins began scouring Goodwill for materials, and discovered that collecting multiple pieces of junk to build a range of color was far cheaper than struggling to afford costly tubes of paint. In the studio, as she bound together dozens of broken television sets, hair dryers, or boats, the sheer abundance of materials became central to her work; her forms soon approached abstract, three-dimensional assemblages.

For her latest exhibition, "Our Friend Fluid Metal," at Gagosian Gallery's 21st Street location in Chelsea, Rubins has turned her focus to cast-aluminum children's toys—namely the bouncing animals that populate playgrounds. Assembled into massive, cantilevered cloud-like forms weighing up to 20,000 pounds each, the works are contradictions in material and lightness—like the show's title work, *Our Friend Fluid Metal* (2014), which seems to float in midair thanks to some clever engineering. "I'm always trying to draw the abstraction from things, like these springy doodads, which are sort of Pop-ish or camp," Rubins has said of the work. "I'm trying to squeeze that Pop Art quality out of them, and make them into this other form."

In fact, the "fluid metal" of the title refers to the very transitory nature of the material that makes up the series—discarded aluminum. Cheaper to recycle than produce, the figures she salvaged

from the trash were surely on their way to being transformed into something else, before she swooped them up and elevated them into the world of art.

For all the importance material plays in the show, one piece stands out in its simplicity. In an exhibition filled with cacophonous mishmashes of color and shape, the monochrome *Drawing* (2005)—rag paper covered in a thick layer of monochrome graphite—is bent to fill a corner of the gallery, echoing the molten shapes of the sculptures around it.