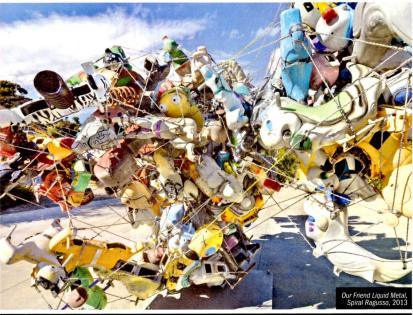
Art

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Q&A: Nancy Rubins

The artist transforms childhood-related items into sculptures about the transient nature of materials. By **Howard Halle**

Appliances, mobile homes, aircraft fuselages and engines, canoes and water heaters-these are some of the materials Nancy Rubins has used to create her sculptures over more than 30 years, pieces whose ambition of scale and suspension into gravity-defying forms never fail to impress. She's rifled through sources from Goodwill to aircraft boneyards in the Mojave Desert to find her "palette," which, for her latest project, consists of recycled playground equipment, part of a new series titled "Our Friend Fluid Metal." Rubins recently spoke to Time Out New York from her studio and home in Los Angeles to expound upon aluminum and to explain that her work is unexplainable.

Your latest piece is made out of scores of these spring-mounted playground rides for kids in the shape of animals and toys, but

what does the "fluid metal" in your title refer to? They're made of aluminum, which is cheaper to recycle than to it is to mine, and when I bought them, they were probably an inch away from being melted down to be made into something

made into something else.
And it started making me think
about this aluminum and how I was
finding it in this fluid state, between
what it was and what it could be in
the future.

When you use water heaters or airplane parts for a piece, are they meant to evoke metaphorical associations? Not at all. I'm always trying to draw the abstraction from things, like these springy doodads, which are sort of Popish or camp; I'm trying to squeeze that Pop Art quality out of them.

the items that you do?
I'm making something I want to
see, that pleases my eye. I look for
materials that are really poignant,
that are compelling to me. And if I

So why do you choose

could tell you why they were compelling to me, I wouldn't be a visual artist—I'd be a poet.

"Our Friend Fluid Metal" opens Thu 17 at Gagosian Gallery (see Chelsea).

UP IN THE AIRRubins often defies gravity



MATTRESSES AND CAKES, 1993
This sculpture is made of the titular elements: The mattresses come from the Salvation Army, and the baked goods are replaced whenever the piece is installed in a new location.



WAS: BUILDING AND AIRPLANE PARTS, SAN DIEGO, 1991–NOW: AIRPLANE AND BUILDING, GRAZ, 2003

Rubins found the materials here at a Mojave Desert aircraft boneyard.



MONOCHROME FOR PARIS, 2012

Rubins also used canoes for a piece for LincloIn Center, and has said she doesn't like being in boats.