



Maiken Bent: Fixtures

Exhibition period August 12 – September 24, 2022

For her solo exhibition "Fixtures" in Gas9Gallery, Maiken Bent (b.1980) has created new sculptures that are both poetic, complex, and provocatively raw. Works that invite our gaze and imagination to travel back and forth from hard to soft and from figure to abstraction.

In Maiken Bent's established artistic practice, readymades, crafts, and objects found at the hardware store meet and come together in an investigation of aesthetics and materials. Steel racks and stitching in colorful leather are anchored and controlled by straps, tools, chains, and padlocks, creating monumental sculptural bodies. The works are all named after the exhibition's title "Fixtures" (#1-#9), and are connected and fixed to the walls via heavy chains, as if Bent was afraid the sculptures would be stolen - or perhaps run away.

The work Fixtures #5 (2022), an almost two meters high steel rack is standing with wondering gesturing arms in multiple directions, and leather feet sewen by waxed threads, have turned its gaze towards the ceiling, sending messages out and up towards higher air layer. In contrast, the work Fixtures #3 (2022) stands with its wide and robust body attached to the floor, ready to grab and carry – but what does it expect to receive and by whom? The same question of whether the sculptures exist solely for us or for themselves comes to mind when looking at the work Fixtures #1 (2022), where a steel rack covered in silver and yellowish leather carries three blue ceramic balls. Is it a mother who cares for her offspring? A vending machine for enlarged gummi balls? Or captured unknown alien life?

Our wondering thoughts about the life and agency of objects that the exhibition brings about provide the opportunity for deep reflections on mankind's place in the world. Bent thereby points to the contemporary interest in challenging hierarchies and dominance regarding our relationship with nature, animals, and objects. In "Fixtures" new relationships arise, as each handsoven-stitch not only binds the fashion industry's leather remnants to the sculptures but also chains our bodies together with the artworks - yet another insistence on human's close connection to the outside world.

Maiken Bent views aesthetic value and animism in highly unusual materials; carabines, fixtures, leather, and sailing equipment. She turns ideals on their head and places the objectively beautiful in a straitjacket and in turn celebrates the missed potential.

Maiken Bent (b. 1980) has an MFA from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Copenhagen, 2006. She has exhibited nationally at Louisiana, ARoS, KUNSTEN Museum for Contemporary Art, Gl. Holtegaard, and Den Frie Udstillingsbygning. Internationally, she has exhibited in Kunsthall Oslo, Yves Klein Archives, Paris, and KW Institute of Contemporary Art, Berlin. Her works are included in collections at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, ARoS, KUNSTEN Museum of Modern Art, Sorø Art Museum, SKMU Sørlandet Art Museum, Statens Kunstfond, and Ny Carlsbergfondet.