

CRITICS' PICKS

All Cities
Aspen
Baltimore
Düsseldorf
Edinburgh
English Harbour
Lisbon
Mumbai
New York
Oslo
Paris
Penrhyndeudraeth
Portland
Rome
Stockholm
Vienna
Williamstown



View of "Magali Reus: Le plat principal" (The Main Course), 2023. Photo: Annik Wetter.

DELME

Magali ReusCENTRE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN
LA SYNAGOGUE DE DELME

33 rue Poincaré

March 11–June 4, 2023

Magali Reus's latest exhibition, "*Le plat principal*" (The Main Course), serves up three interconnected

bodies of work that transform

common objects through varied methods of hybridization to produce what the artist calls *choses irréelles*, or "unreal things." Take, for example, *Candlesticks (Fluorescent Fereni)*, 2022, one of five stately green streetlamps on the ground floor of the exhibition. In lieu of a lantern, the top of the post is adorned with curlicues of aluminum wire spelling out the word "fluorescent," while the shaft bears hand-carved markings that allude to plant growth patterns. An opening in the work's base reveals an enlarged ear of corn standing on a white-and-yellow gingham-patterned plate with a measuring ruler embedded within its kernels. The work speaks of selective breeding and genetic crop modification for consumer preference.

Reus orients the viewer to the art center's history and rural location to expand on themes relevant to her practice. The Delme-born horticulturist and hybrid-flower breeder Victor Lemoine makes an appearance, albeit metaphorically, as do color schemes foregrounded by the artist Daniel Buren, who exhibited at the center in 1997. Here, Reus has painted a prototypical Vichy check in blue and yellow—a nod to Buren—inside the synagogue's archways. This pattern makes yet another appearance in a series titled "Clementine," which employs stereotypically French Bonne Maman jam jars, branded with the familiar gingham.

A flair for the perverse runs throughout "*Le plat principal*," ultimately asking what is authentic in the rural and what is potentially modified for human gain. In the series "Landings," Reus photographed cabbage, peaches, grapes, cherries, and strawberries wedged among scrap in construction sites. The *mise-en-scène* of fresh produce juxtaposed with dust and debris spells out the tensions between nature and artifice as we experience it today.

—*Jennifer Teets*