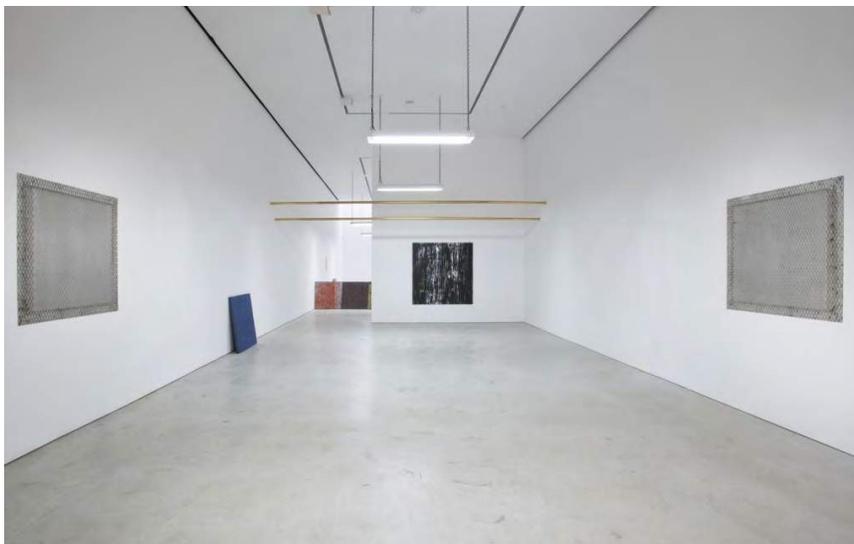


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Meeting Parallels in Parallelograms: Davina Semo's "Ruder Forms Survive"
February 5, 2014



Davina Semo's exhibition "Ruder Forms Survive," currently on view at **Marlborough Chelsea**, features artwork created from materials like chains, concrete slabs, glass, and various metal. Though Semo's sculptures are created from media normally considered industrial or cold, they can evoke feminine, soft qualities and conjure strong emotional responses. Drawing the audience in with seductive and poetic titles, Semo's art compels the viewer to take in each piece, and reflect on its dynamic layers.

The titles of her work are compact poems providing another dimension and completing each piece. As Semo works in her studio, she keeps a document with various written tidbits to continually provoke thought, providing ideas for titles. After finishing a work, she normally takes a photo and spends more time understanding and digesting the piece until she finds a suitable title.

"The whole artwork is not complete until this process ends and the title and work become interchangeable," said the artist. Yet, "generally speaking, I want the work to speak for itself. I don't intend for people to walk around and look at artworks while consulting the titles." Semo's work allows for each composition to be perceived and interpreted through two lenses—with and without knowing the title.

The first displayed work in the show is a silicone bronze diamond inset in the wall; the shape repeats itself throughout her works along with other forms of a parallelogram. Semo explained her intrigue with the shape, "The diamond interests me perhaps more symbolically, in that it represents a void, or a completely empty space. The shape itself leads me to a more psychological or inward thinking space. I want to create a space where thought is generated, but not in a way where the sculptures are 'trying to tell your something.'"

Mirrors etched with a crisscross geometric design hang on the wall, reflecting her steel chain works hanging across the room. The etching suggests fencing, and incites the viewer to question whether she or her reflection is fenced in, or if there is a fence between the two. Semo's careful attention to the arrangement of her exhibition provide yet another layer to interpreting her work not only on an individual level, but also holistically. Semo strikes a balance in her work, even making steel chains seem romantic. Each piece has a powerful dialogue, encouraging the user to participate.