

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Albertz Benda Presents
Rainer Fetting: Taxis, Monsters and the Good Old Sea

On view September 7 – October 7, 2017
515 West 26th Street, New York, NY

Opening Reception:
September 7, 6pm – 8pm



Rainer Fetting, *Desmond Cadogan electrified* (2014).
Acrylic on canvas. 51 x 55 inches (130 x 140 cm)



Rainer Fetting, *Drag (Ilko)* (2016). Acrylic on canvas. 47 1/4 x 63
inches (120 x 160 cm)

New York, NY, May 17, 2017 - Albertz Benda is pleased to present a career-spanning survey of paintings of German painter Rainer Fetting, his first solo show in New York in over three decades. *Rainer Fetting: Taxis, Monsters and the Good Old Sea* is presented on two floors spanning the last thirty years, divided into distinct themes comprising portraiture, punk and rock music, horror-clown paintings, seascapes and vintage scenes of New York.

As Fetting explains, “the diverse subject matter in this show is central to my endeavor to progress the medium of painting. My inspiration and challenge as a painter is to draw from what I have seen and liked most in art history, ranging from Diego Velasquez to Andy Warhol, and many in between– all of whom initiated the spark in me to create my own work.”

Fetting has often painted the same sitters – friends and colleagues. Similarly, he returns to seascapes and landscapes that hold personal significance, such as his hometown of Wilhelmshaven or the island of Sylt. Despite his familiarity with these subjects, Fetting employs their depictions as vessels to reflect on his own personal experience or to provide subtle commentary on social and political issues. The exhibition on the main floor features Fetting’s more recent work. In these portraits, Fetting eschews the traditional rectangular canvas, painting on multiple panels to echo the composition of the figures.

Fetting’s pictures of musicians reflect the major role music has played in his life, and he seeks to translate the emotive power of his musical idols and the energy of musical improvisation onto his canvases. Another recurring theme throughout the years is an engagement with current events. Displayed in what the artist refers to as the ‘Horror Room’ are a new series of clown paintings that have been conceived as a reaction to a

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polarizing political climate and increasingly frantic news cycle.

Downstairs, the project space features a survey of paintings related to New York, where he lived from 1983 to 1994. Fetting has identified emblematic subjects such as the piers on the Hudson River, yellow cabs, and models posing in NYPD uniforms. He recalls, "New York was very run down those days...different from anything civilized like it is now, and I tried to express a certain melancholy and loneliness, which maybe was also part of how I felt then."

On the occasion of Rainer Fetting: *Taxis, Monsters and the Good Old Sea* a hardcover publication will be produced by DISTANZ Publishers (ISBN 978-3-95476-199-9).

This exhibition is presented in collaboration with A3 Berlin.

About Rainer Fetting

Born December 31, 1949 in Wilhelmshaven, Germany, Rainer Fetting studied at the Academy of the Arts in Berlin. Together with Helmut Middendorf, Salomé, and Bernd Zimmer, Fetting founded a gallery and performance space at Moritzplatz that became an epicenter of the Berlin's musical and visual counterculture in the 1970s. Fetting has participated in numerous influential exhibitions, including *a new spirit in painting* at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, (1981), *Zeitgeist* at the Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin, (1982), *Von hier aus – Zwei Monate deutsche Kunst in Düsseldorf* at Messehallen Düsseldorf (1984), *An International Survey of Recent Painting and Sculpture* at the MoMA, New York, (1988), *Refigured Painting – The German Image 1960–1988* at the Guggenheim Museum, New York, (1989) and *Portrait Now* at the National Portrait Gallery, London, (1993). Recent highlights are *Painting Forever! Keilrahmen* at the KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2013) and permanent exhibition *Sammlung Marx at Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart*, Berlin, Germany (2016). In 2011, the museum Berlinische Galerie honored the artist with an extensive solo exhibition. His work is included in the collections of the Nationalgalerie, Berlin; Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris; the Hamburger Bahnhof, Museum for Contemporary Art, Berlin; and The Frederick R. Weisman Art Foundation, Los Angeles among many others.

About Albertz Benda

Albertz Benda opened in fall 2015 and is devoted to a contemporary visual arts program focusing on rediscoveries as well as new introductions — from seminal figures in their field whose work warrants further exploration to debut presentations of artists that are new to New York.

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