

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RAFAEL BARON: POSE
NOVEMBER 17 – DECEMBER 22, 2022
ALBERTZ BENDA, NY



(Left) *Laura*, 2022. Acrylic on canvas. 95 1/2 x 83 3/4 inches | 242.5 x 212.5 cm.
(Right) *Trio Ternura*, 2022. Acrylic on canvas. 95 1/2 x 83 3/4 inches | 242.5 x 212.5 cm.

NEW YORK, NY: Opening November 17th, albertz benda is delighted to present *Pose*, the first New York solo exhibition of work by Brazilian artist Rafael Baron. With this exhibition, Baron will present a new body of large-scale paintings alongside smaller, gouache on paper pieces capturing portraits of people that he comes across on a day-to-day basis in his hometown of Nova Iguaçu, Brazil.

Portraits of housewives, service workers, and day laborers occupy Baron’s canvases, posed intentionally and dressed in vibrant textiles and patterned garments. The artist’s dynamic compositions celebrate his subjects with thick swatches of paint, energetic linework and lively color.

Baron’s practice is distinguished by dualities between figuration and abstraction, color and form, dynamism and stillness. Despite the artist’s varying subjects, his portraits are unified by a singular visual identity characterized by his energetic compositions, a paradoxical simplification and exaggeration of his subjects’ features, and a flattening of receding space.

Through these works, the artist elevates working class citizens through references to classical portraiture. His subjects are depicted proudly, with an atmosphere of regality and elegance befitting a royal portrait. These works endow Baron’s figures with power, the lower social status of his subjects is subverted as they stand tall and proudly take up space.

In *Laura*, 2022, a woman with short blonde hair dominates the composition. Her stern, yet ambiguous expression is elevated by her stance. Sitting stiffly upon a patterned chair, she dons sophisticated attire –

a multi-colored turtleneck and long black skirt. She folds her elbows on her knees as her hands hold a lit cigarette, it's smoke billowing on the canvas. Baron does not aim to portray realism in his works, rather he captures the essence of his subjects and depicts their personalities through abstracted figurations.

ABOUT RAFAEL BARON

Rafael Baron (B. 1986, Nova Iguaçu, Brazil) sees art as a powerful communication tool that can contribute to a harmonious social experience. His brightly colored portraits of diverse individuals propose an open dialogue on tolerance and diversity. He was recently included in "Wish you were here," a curatorial project by Danny First at The Cabin, Los Angeles. Baron was awarded in the 2019/2020 "Garimpo" contest promoted by Dasartes magazine, an accolade aimed at Brazilian emerging artists who have never had an individual exhibition at an art institution. His works belong to private collections in Brazil and abroad and are included in the collection of Museo de Arte de Río, Brazil, as well as Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM) in Miami, FL.

ABOUT ALBERTZ BENDA

Founded in 2015, albertz benda is a contemporary art gallery with an international program exploring material and textility as well as cultural and social dialogues. Our Chelsea space is host to rotating exhibitions with an emphasis on solo presentations of emerging artists, new research into historic figures, and thematic group exhibitions. In 2021, the gallery expanded to a second location in Los Angeles. Featuring an evolving identity separate from our New York program, the LA space is realized within the context of a domestic setting, advancing new connections between visual arts, craft, and design.

Follow albertz benda on Instagram via [@albertzbenda](#)

albertz benda:

Kate Moger

e: kmoger@albertzbenda.com

t: +1 (212) 244-2579

Press & Media Inquiries:

Lindsay DeSantis

e: lindsay@lindsaydesantis.com