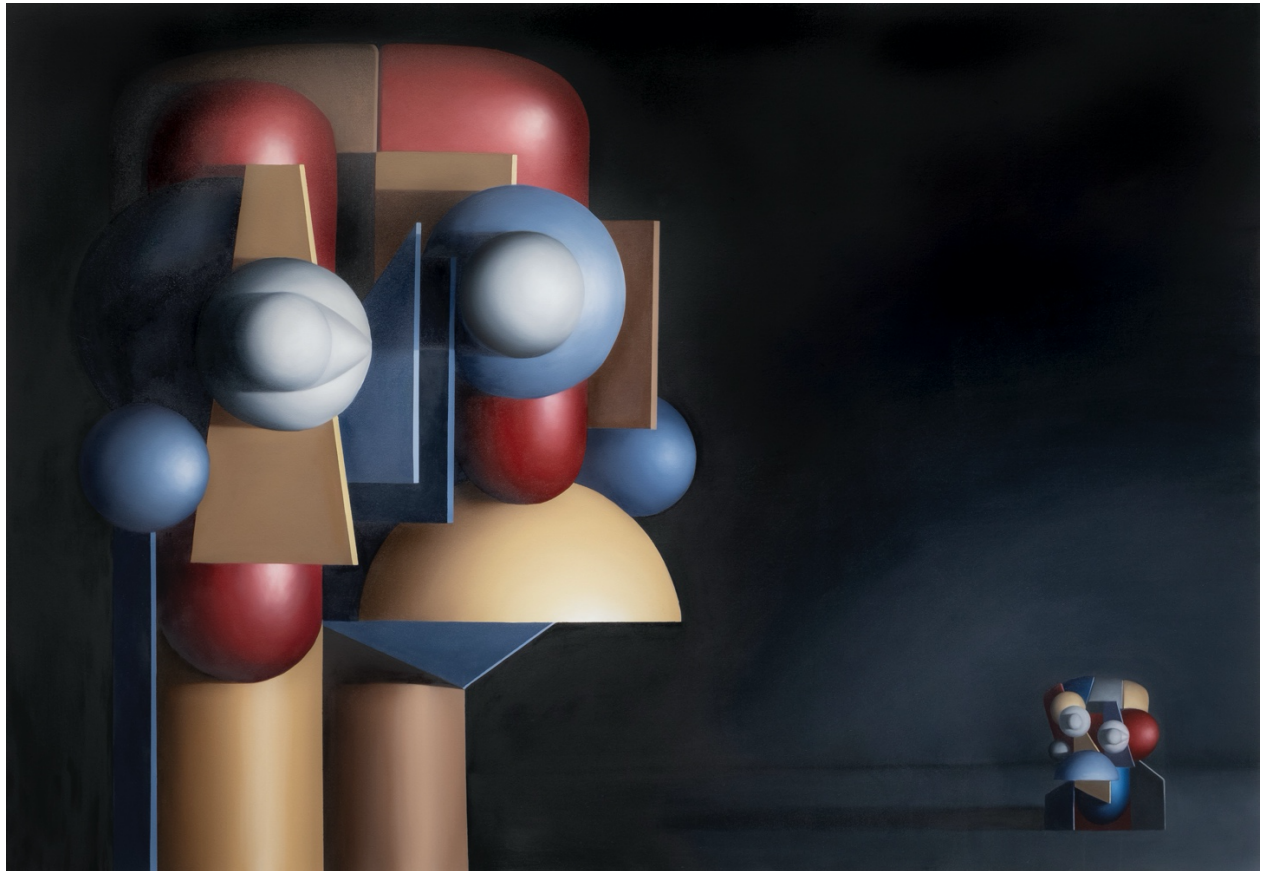


**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DEVON DEJARDIN: *GIANTS***

June 30 – August 5, 2022

albertz benda, New York



*Giants are not what we think they are, 2022. Oil on Canvas.  
84 x 120 inches | 213.4 x 330 cm*

Much of what we consider valuable in our world arises out of lopsided conflicts, because the act of facing overwhelming odds produces greatness and beauty...We consistently get these kinds of conflicts wrong. We misread them. We misinterpret them.

Malcom Gladwell, *David and Goliath*  
(Little Brown and Company, 2013)

**NEW YORK, NY-** albertz benda is thrilled to present Devon DeJardin: *Giants*, the artist's first solo show in New York, on view from June 30 to August 5, 2022. In *Giants*, DeJardin constructs a narrative from abstract forms that draws on the literary tradition of spiritual allegory to interrogate and revitalize familiar myths.

Inspired by his longtime study of spiritual traditions from around the world, DeJardin refers to his voluminous geometric subjects as “Guardians”: non-theological figures of guidance and protection. In previous works, DeJardin’s Guardians were solitary figures, in dialogue only with the viewer. In *Giants*, DeJardin introduces a new dynamic between the Guardians, placing them in conversation with each other to elicit themes of introspection, growth, and resilience.

In *Giants are not what we think they are, 2022*, an imposing Guardian towers over its smaller twin, referencing David and Goliath. Appearing in various forms in religious and spiritual

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traditions around the world, the David and Goliath story is often misinterpreted as an unlikely champion defeating a seemingly undefeatable adversary. In fact, Goliath is thought by scholars to have been crippled by acromegaly, a rare disorder that can cause vision impairments among other physical afflictions. Lacking coordination and weighed down by heavy armor, Goliath is much weaker than he appears and is easily defeated by the clear aim of David's slingshot. DeJardin brings this narrative full circle in *Confrontation*, 2022, in which two Guardians appear equal in size—a seemingly insurmountable challenge transforms into a much less intimidating foe.

DeJardin's latest body of work not only interrogates narrative complexity, but also expands his artistic vocabulary. Ranging from intimate portraits to large-scale tableaux, the exhibition culminates with a monumental bronze sculpture — the first that the artist has created at this scale. The evolution of his sculptural practice is reflected in his treatment of the paint on canvas. These new works feature an unparalleled depth of forms, rendered with a precision that at times belies the presence of an artist's hand.

## **ABOUT DEVON DEJARDIN**

Devon DeJardin (b. 1993) is a self-taught, multimedia artist from Portland, Oregon currently working out of Los Angeles, California. In his adolescent years DeJardin suffered from severe depression and anxiety, finding refuge in painting. DeJardin uses art — and art history — to understand the world and his place in it. With a background studying spiritual traditions from around the world, and an appreciation for the emotional, muscular abstraction of Picasso, Nevelson, Duchamp, Krasner, DeJardin's paintings, drawings, and sculpture reference the body, forces of nature, and the application of philosophy to lived experience. With a sense of geometry that is both architectural and organic, and a refined palette that highlights the life of the mind, DeJardin muses on strength, fragility, control, and surrender. DeJardin's work, for now, focuses on guardians – on entities and forces that protect us, guide us, and challenge us to grow. But often, our real life 'guardians' come in forms we don't recognize: challenges that force us to learn new skills, losses that teach us emotional resilience, crises that show us our inner strength.

## **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.

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