

**Reinhard Pods: a Sort of Homecoming—Paintings 1979-2022****Fergus McCaffrey, New York**

March 2nd – April 22nd, 2023

Fergus McCaffrey Gallery is proud to present the New York debut of German painter Reinhard Pods (b. 1951, Berlin) an exhibition of twelve large scale paintings created between 1979 and 2022.

*"In its initial form, a lot of the 1960s stuff was innovative and exciting... Soon you had endless solos that went nowhere. By 1973, I knew that what was needed was some pure, stripped down, no bullshit rock 'n' roll." Tommy Ramone*

Ramone's words encapsulate a generational rejection of the romantic idealism and technical mastery of stadium rock in the mid-1970s and capture the emerging spirit of Post-punk and New wave music that placed emphasis on expression rather than technical perfection, and artistic impact rather than skill. In Berlin and New York—concurrent with the emergence of this scene—an ideological and stylistic swing was also occurring in painting characterized by bright, intense colors and quick, broad brushstrokes in opposition to the then dominant avant-garde movements of minimal art and conceptual art.



At the epicenter of this cultural shift was Reinhard Pods. Following his studies at the fabled Academy of Fine Arts in Berlin between 1971 – 1977, Pods received a DAAD scholarship that allowed him to spend 12 months in New York between 1977-78. While in the U.S. Pods embraced everything the then gritty city had to offer. He lived in a loft on Elizabeth Street in Little Italy, made paintings, visited galleries, and hung-out at CBGB's and Max's Kansas City, seeing the Ramones, Blondie, and Talking Heads. Returning to Germany in 1978 he settled on the border of Neukölln and Kreuzberg, where Neue Deutsche Welle (New German Wave) converged around the SO36 music club and

performance space, along with alternate spaces like Galerie am Moritzplatz and gallery 1/61, which Pods co-founded with a group of likeminded artist friends.

The paintings selected for the exhibition reflect the energy and urbanity of Pods' visit to New York as well as his formative years in Berlin. *Jetzt (Now)*, 1979 is a rhombus shaped canvas aggressively and rapidly painted in acrylic with a house painter's brush in tones of gray, white, and pink; supplemented ironically with a cigarette butt and studio detritus, with the word *Jetzt* appearing almost quasi-assertively amidst the abstract strokes and painterly drips.



Pods' painted words would scream and snarl more clearly from 1980 onward, when the finger-painted incisions in grey and yellow in *Mist*, 1980-2014; and the blunt spray-painted tags in *je t'aime malen*, 1981 and *Untitled*, 1983 float amidst and above the romantic remains of old-school push-pull loops and zigzag strokes in an energetic palette of pinks, yellows, and blues. He delved further into his mash-up of high and low culture, appropriating and adding stenciled brushstrokes to his abstractions and texts in 1982, alongside Polaroid photographs of the everyday and torn and over-painted reproductions of classical paintings in *Untitled*, 1986.



More recent paintings including *Licht Jain*, 1991, and *Untitled (Willkürlich)*, 2001, exhibit an assuredness and confidence and in the last decade. Pods has continued to refine and advance his own aesthetic language, bringing in more figurative references and playing with words; squeezing paint directly from the tube onto spare conceived canvases that present an astonishing freshness and vitality, such as his *Untitled* paintings of 2022.

Reinhard Pods has exhibited extensively in Europe since the mid-1970s. He withdrew from the public eye in the mid-1990s, returning recently for acclaimed exhibitions at Galerie Michael Haas in Berlin and Zürich in 2018 and 2012. Pods has been the recipient of numerous scholarships and awards including Villa Romana Prize (1980) the Villa Massimo Prize (1988) the Will Grohmann Prize (1994) and the Fred Thieler Prize of the Berlinische Galerie, Berlin (1996).

*Reinhard Pods: a Sort of Homecoming—Paintings 1979-2022* opens at Fergus McCaffrey, New York on Thursday, March 1st between 6.00 and 8.00 PM. For further details and images please contact: [info@fergusmccaffrey.com](mailto:info@fergusmccaffrey.com).

### About Fergus McCaffrey

Founded in 2006, Fergus McCaffrey is internationally recognized for its groundbreaking role in promoting the work of postwar Japanese artists such as Sadamasa Motonaga, Kazuo Shiraga and Jiro Takamatsu. The gallery also exhibits the work of emerging and seminal Western artists including Anna Conway, Marcia Hafif, Birgit Jürgenssen, Richard Nonas, Sigmar Polke and Carol Rama. In keeping with the gallery's commitment to Japanese art and culture, McCaffrey opened its Tokyo outpost in March 2018. Fergus McCaffrey has locations in New York, St. Barth, and Tokyo.

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Images: 1. Reinhard Pods, *Scheiss Mist Kack Malerei*, 1980-2014, Oil and pastel chalk on canvas, 65 x 57 1/8 inches (165 x 145 cm), © Reinhard Pods, Berlin; 2. Reinhard Pods, *Untitled*, 1983, Oil and spray on canvas, 78 7/8 x 86 3/4 inches (200.3 x 220.5 cm), © Reinhard Pods, Berlin; 3. Reinhard Pods, *Untitled*, 1987, Oil on canvas, 78 3/4 x 118 1/8 inches (200 x 300 cm) © Reinhard Pods, Berlin. 4. Reinhard Pods, *Podstern*, 2022, Oil on canvas, 66 7/8 x 51 1/8 inches (170 x 130 cm), © Reinhard Pods, Berlin.