

Reena Spaulings Fine Art
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MATIAS FALDBAKKEN

Why New French Art Is Lousy

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I saw a recent photo of my favorite Norwegian writer sitting on his living room sofa. He is in his 70s and looks a bit blown. There is a charcoal drawing on the wall behind him, or a grisaille, showing a maritime scene with a boat, a bird, a mermaid and a two-faced pipe smoker.

The space between this drawing and the author's writing practice is strange. His writing is concrete and squeaky, often describing an all-thumbs protagonist getting (socially, politically) weird in his contemporary habitat. The bizarre world of the drawing is a very different story.

I tried to imagine the writer's literary opus as a caption for this drawing, like an infinite headline or the longest meme. This solved nothing, but sort of made sense. There is always the possibility of sticking a piece of text onto an unrelated image and letting them wring it out.

M.F.

This is Matias Faldbakken's first show in Los Angeles and his third show with Reena Spaulings Fine Art.

Faldbakken was born in Denmark and lives and works as an artist and writer in Oslo, Norway. Faldbakken studied at the National Academy of Fine Arts in Bergen and the Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main. In 2005, he represented Norway in the Nordic Pavillion at the Venice Biennale. Faldbakken participated in Documenta 13 (2012) in Kassel and in the 11th Gwangju Biennale (2016), South Korea. Recent one-person institutional exhibitions include Le Consortium, Dijon; WIELS, Brussels; The Power Station, Dallas; Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel; Neuer Aachener Kunstverein, Aachen; Kunsthalle St. Gallen, St. Gallen; IKON Gallery, Birmingham; and The National Museum of Art, Design and Architecture, Oslo. Faldbakken will have upcoming solo exhibitions at the Astrup Fearnley Museum, Oslo, Norway, Standard (Oslo), and Simon Lee, Hong Kong.

Faldbakken's new novel, *The Hills*, will be published by Oktober Forlag in September. His *Scandinavian Misanthropy* trilogy (*The Cocka Hola Company* (2001), *Macht und Rebel* (2002), *Unfun* (2008)) has been translated into numerous languages and adapted to the theater.