

MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN

Rainer Ganahl

April 25 – May 12, 2017

Rainer Ganahl is inspired by the linguistic tools that the 45th president of the United States employs to communicate and rule. Donald Trump's terms, the artist contends, become symptomatic of his policies and the values he stands for (or doesn't). 'A big beautiful wall', 'extreme vetting', a Muslim ban, 'bad hombres', 'a nasty woman', 'so-called judge', fake news, alternative facts and other phrases have been backed up by executive orders, legislation and twitter spin that disrupt and divide communities.

For this exhibition, thirteen examples of Trump's phraseology have been printed with a script invented in 1930 by Rudolph Koch, who adhered to Nazi ideology. For this series Ganahl added his own term, "TRUMPUTIN," reminiscent not only of the charlatan advisor Rasputin who contributed to the fall of Czarist Russia through salaciousness and mysticism, but also of the 1970s-disco song "Rasputin" ("lover of the Russian queen") by Boney M., which is befitting of the chauvinist, sexist realities of our new president.

The artist took Trump's main slogan, "Make America Great Again," literally and created local American work with an order of castings. With his very limited budget he had three leftover industrial objects once used in the former booming but now defunct casting industry cast as art objects and labeled "Make America Great Again."

With a photomontage the artist also featured a big, beautiful wall made of the bricks from a former Pabst beer factory that closed in Milwaukee to resettle elsewhere. Coincidentally, the Mexican consultant is adjacent to the gallery, separated only by a parking lot. The artist's request for payment from them to fund the construction of the wall sample--a quote of just over \$2,500--is presented as well.

The Austrian-born artist who became a so-called "naturalized" citizen nearly two decades ago is a bad speller but proud to help "Make Amerika Great Again."