

# DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

**James Kennedy**

thought forms

October 5 — 28, 2017

Dolby Chadwick Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of new work by the artist James Kennedy, opening October 5, 2017. These paintings utilize an original vocabulary that Kennedy has been exploring in related bodies of work over the past ten years. Here, a series of geometric planes intersect and overlap, forming deep strata of paint that shift as if tectonic plates. This is not a volatile geometry, but it also isn't fixed: the artist has constructed rigorous networks of forms and pathways to channel energy that would otherwise surge with abandon, unresolved and unstable.

Compared to earlier works, these paintings exhibit a greater degree of connectivity. Here, there is no aperture, no space for shapes to fall through. Rather, the forms have been tightly knitted with nearly mathematical precision to create completely saturated surfaces. Kennedy's experimentations with new and suggestive qualities of line and shape, as well as incised markings, result in paintings that speak to the outside world without ever fully representing it. Passing hints of buildings, bodies, machines, and beyond, emerge before being slyly swallowed up as the viewer's eye is jostled about.

The artist describes his art as "thought forms"—unpremeditated projects that map a stream-of-consciousness mode of thinking. As he works, he responds to what a given painting offers up, negotiating relationships between the formal elements, arranging gestures, lines, shapes, and color. He realizes a painting's unique directive by employing a number of techniques, including by building up layers of dilutions onto his choice of base: eucalyptus masonite. This color-over-color glazework forms the heart of the paintings. "When you look at Turner's paintings, you don't see yellow, you see cadmium yellow over gray, red over black, green over blue." The wild, playful center of *Convergence* (2017) is emblematic of this approach, which lightens the concentrated mass of movement through the build-up of wispy white gestures, which assume a ghostly quality thanks to their transparency.

In addition to white, which Kennedy uses to create the framing structures for his large-scale works, the paintings are dominated by blues, greens, browns, and mauves—all of which are mixed with gray to create tonal variations. His smaller works use a black framing, which, unlike the white, serves to create a more intimate, less expansive effect. Kennedy notes that only certain colors work with this vocabulary, which purposefully excludes primary, bold hues except when used as an accent. "I'm not working any differently than someone who's trying to find color value in a sketch of a model," he explains. "Values determine which gestures come back to front. . . . I spend more time on the nuances of the back of the painting than I do on the front." In doing so, Kennedy lays a foundation for smart, complex works in which kinetic energy is built up before being diffused and channeled across the composition as part of his mission to create balance.

James Kennedy was born in County Down, Northern Ireland, and earned degrees from the Royal Scottish Academy in Edinburgh and the Rhode Academy of Design in Brighton. In addition to exhibiting extensively across the United States, Kennedy is the recipient of the James Bridie Gold Medal, presented by the RSA, and a residency through the Golden Foundation. This will be his second exhibition at the Dolby Chadwick Gallery.

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## James Kennedy

b. 1962, County Down, Northern Ireland

### Education

- 1987 BA, Royal Scottish Academy  
1990 BA, Rhodec Academy of Design

### Selected Exhibitions

- 2017 *thought forms*, Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA  
*syn.tac.tic*, CALLAN Contemporary, New Orleans, LA
- 2016 *Shape - Shifting*, John Hartell Gallery, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY
- 2015 *C O N T I N U U M*, Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA  
*sub•struc•tures*, CALLAN Contemporary, New Orleans, LA  
*Made in Paint*, Golden Foundation for the Arts, New Berlin, NY  
*Small Works 2*, Jeffrey Leder Gallery, New York, NY
- 2014 *Morphosis*, Mindy Solomon Gallery, Miami, FL
- 2013 *Systems*, CALLAN Contemporary, New Orleans, LA  
*A Fine Line*, Flinn Gallery, Greenwich CT  
*International Painting II*, Jeffrey Leder Gallery, New York, NY  
*Spatial Variations*, 1stdibs 200 Lex, New York, NY  
*Material Matters*, Southampton Cultural Center, Southampton, NY  
*Retro Fresh*, Galerie Werner, Pittsburgh, PA
- 2012 *Balance*, Jeffrey Leder Gallery, New York, NY  
*Constructions + Compositions*, Mindy Solomon Gallery, Miami, FL  
Melissa Morgan Fine Art, Palm Springs, CA
- 2011 Anne Loucks Gallery Chicago, IL
- 2010 Brooklyn Artist Gym, Brooklyn, NY  
*In the Mix*, Galerie Werner, Pittsburgh, PA
- 2009 *Juan Bejar/James Kennedy*, Sarah Nightingale Gallery, Water Mill, NY  
*Nathan Joseph/James Kennedy*, Surface Library Gallery, Long Island City, NY
- 2008 *Juried Summer Show*, Peter Marcelle Contemporary, Bridgehampton, NY  
*Revisiting Abstraction*, Surface Library Gallery, Long Island City, NY  
*Spring Invitational*, Eric Ernst, NY
- 2007 Galerie Werner Pittsburgh, PA  
Arlene Bujese Gallery, East Hampton, NY

### Awards

- 2014 Golden Foundation for the Arts Residency  
James Bridie Gold Medal  
Best in Show, Abstract Landscape, Brooklyn Artist Gym