

DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

James Kennedy

C O N T I N U U M

July 9–August 29, 2015

Dolby Chadwick Gallery is pleased to announce “C O N T I N U U M,” an exhibition of new work by New York–based artist James Kennedy. Kennedy’s abstract paintings feature intricate, completely knitted surfaces that rely structurally on a buoyant tension of line, form, texture, and tonality. Working on eucalyptus masonite, which Kennedy describes as “drinking up the medium beautifully,” the artist builds up his signature layers of dilution, taping off areas before adding further layers of dilution and creating incisions that produce not only texture but dynamic lines for the eye to follow. “I have to solve an equation in my compositions,” Kennedy explains, “it’s very much about the line. As I work, I connect—from one line to another and from one gesture to another. Everything can change with just one incision.”

In each work, Kennedy leaves an aperture of space in which to allow “the momentum of the painting to fall through.” This momentum is generated by the coursing lines and the constant negotiation between foreground and background—between the grounding substructure and those ancillary structures that are raised from there. But color, too, plays an equally critical role. *SEQUENTIAL* (2014) is exemplary of many of Kennedy’s paintings in its emphasis on shades of gray—from warm to cool, deep to light, muddy to crystalline. The subtle variations between the hues are heightened when isolated from the rest of the color spectrum, save for accents of brown—here produced by the masonite itself—or, in a painting like *CONSTRUCTIVE VARIANT* (2014), blue. These accents galvanize a painting’s rhythm through their punctuating presence.

Despite the precision of his works, which contributes to their measured and harmonious gestalt, Kennedy’s process is unpremeditated; he does not create preliminary drawings, nor does he make use of referential material. Such artistic automatism calls to mind the methods of the Surrealists or those “action painters” among the Abstract Expressionists, yet, visually, Kennedy’s paintings feel more closely aligned with the modulating style of Post-Impressionists such as Paul Cézanne, which the Cubists and Futurists further exaggerated. While Kennedy does not attempt to break down reality into its component parts in the same way these artists did, he nonetheless plays with these elements, moving them around and finding a balance and dynamism that satisfies the eye. In this way, it is possible to “see” bits of reality where they might not exist: a landscape, a bridge, a building, a blueprint, even the visual equivalent of music.

James Kennedy was born in County Down, Northern Ireland, and earned degrees from the Royal Scottish Academy, Edinburgh, Scotland, and Rhode Academy of Design, Brighton, England. His work has been exhibited across the United States and acquired by Saatchi + Saatchi and the St. Regis Hotel, among other prestigious collections. This will be his first 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

- 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
- 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