

Todd Kelly | MY OWN PERSONAL REBUS

January 31 - March 9, 2013

Opening Reception: Thursday January 31, 6 - 8 pm

Artist Talk: Saturday February 16, 1 pm

ASYA
GEISBERG
GALLERY



After Van Aelst 1, 2012, Untitled Abstract Painting 6, 2012, Grid Painting 1, 2012. All oil on canvas, 24" x 18".

Asya Geisberg Gallery is pleased to present “My Own Personal Rebus”, an exhibition of paintings by Todd Kelly. Kelly seduces the viewer with a smorgasbord of mark-making: evenly dotted lines, messy splotches, layers of stripes and plaids, spray-painted folds, knifed scrapes, and watery swathes of thin paint. Kelly plays the role of the postmodern puppeteer, interested in the audience’s role in untangling and creating the meaning of a work. His combination of techniques and varieties of abstraction posits an intriguing mystery. Why are such heterogeneous works in one room, made by one artist? What should be the “reading” of the room – left to right, diagonally through the room, one or two at a time, or a simultaneous aggregate? Does one work complete the next? Does each distinctive type of painting flow into or fight against its opponent?

Kelly deploys wry strategies of abstraction, extrapolates from a still life, or earnestly copies an old master. He allows the paintings to occur in the studio according to whim and maintains an open and fluid unraveling of conscious choice. The tension of creation, of meaning delivered by its maker versus meaning conjured and rearranged by its viewer, is the crux of Kelly’s concerns. The result is an essentially post-structuralist approach to constructing meaning, wherein the viewer’s journey has power over the creator’s intent.

As the artist explains, “‘My Own Personal Rebus’ is a puzzle. There is no definitive solution to this puzzle. My randomly created pieces sit next to each other, grow familiar and become inexplicably linked. It is a mind game; I want to find a connection, I want there to be magic, I want it so desperately and then it begins to actually happen. I am forced to question whether I am chancing upon a great new truth or forcing it into being.”

*Originally from Michigan, **Todd Kelly** lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. Kelly studied architecture before taking up painting. He earned an MFA at the School of Visual Arts and a B.A. at Anderson University, IN. Kelly lived in London from 2003 to 2006, where he worked at the National Portrait Gallery, and where his work was featured in numerous exhibitions. He has since been included in exhibitions in Ireland, New York, and New Mexico. His work was featured in an Artforum Critic’s Pick, the London Times, the London Paper, and Beard and Brush, among others. This is his second solo exhibition at Asya Geisberg Gallery.*