

# Todd Kelly

## Uncertain Structure

February 22 - March 31, 2018



**Asya Geisberg Gallery** is pleased to present "Uncertain Structure", **Todd Kelly's** fourth exhibition with the gallery. Consisting of three intertwining bodies of work, this exhibition represents a further unfolding of Kelly's overall project: the liberating effect of endless reshuffling of an unknown quantity of possibilities. His past exhibitions featured an organizing theme expressed by disparate presentations, sidestepping the norm of one clear aesthetic modus operandi. "Uncertain Structure" condenses this project into two main elements: dense hand-drawn grid paintings and figurative Jolly Liar paintings, pared down to elegant blue figures on unpainted linen. Continually shifting from abstraction to figuration, from layered patterns to broad gestural strokes, Kelly's primary interest is the possibility of a given set of particulars being differently arranged and thus differently understood.

Kelly adheres strictly to the mantra that there is no one arrangement, or truth, which can be seen as "correct", and this idea permeates the exhibition. Stylistically echoing Matisse's late cut-outs, the Jolly Liar is a cartoonish character that acts as a mischievous storyteller, and a metaphor for the slipperiness of meaning. These paintings create an alternate universe that seems at once logical and fanciful in its abrogation of narrative – a shape may simultaneously suggest a sword, phallus, or paring knife. Meanwhile, the grid paintings formally depict the simultaneous development and interaction of differing systems. With wavering hand-drawn lines filled in from random starting points with pre-mixed colors, they are full of imperfection and a sense of "almost" order – like hand-woven textiles, or Sigmar Polke's purposefully "wrong" printing-inspired works. Each colored area becomes a molecule to rearrange, disseminating in response to its edge's constraint. Images bloom outward in a hypnotic kaleidoscopic rhythm, and irregularities cause the lattice to shift and break apart. Each painting clings to its individuality and refuses to cohere, as seeming symmetry dissolves into polygonal irregularity.

Finally, Kelly introduces a new medium: ceramic sculpture inspired by shapes serendipitously discovered while making the grid paintings. The artist sees them as barely balanced prototypes for possible structures, and they remain unglazed and unpainted as an eternal uncertainty. Kelly's process is a joyous precipice of constant potential energy, and an inverse of Sisyphean despair.

*Originally from Michigan, Todd Kelly lives and works in New York. He began his career in architecture, an influence that still resonates in his work. Kelly earned an MFA at the School of Visual Arts, NY and a B.A. at Anderson University, IN. Recent exhibitions include Transmitter Gallery, Brooklyn; LVL3, Chicago; Tiger Strikes Asteroid, Philadelphia; and the New Bedford Art Museum, MA; and he has been included in exhibitions in London, UK; Galway, Ireland; New York, NY; Spokane, WA; Minneapolis, MN; Albuquerque, NM; and Madison, WI. His work has been featured as an Artforum Critic's Pick, and reviewed in the London Times, the London Paper, Art F City, LVL3, Bmore Art, The New Criterion, Gorky's Granddaughter, and Beard and Brush, among others.*



*Orange/Blue Grid #3, 2018  
Oil on canvas, 40" x 30"*



*Jolly Liar Star Gazer, 2017  
Oil and acrylic gel on linen, 30" x 30"*