

DRAWING ROOM, NORTHEAST & NORTHWEST GALLERIES

John Kilduff *The Joy of Multitasking*



DRAWING ROOM

1. *Let's Paint TV*, Time-Warner Public-access television, Los Angeles, selected episodes, 28 minutes each

NORTHWEST GALLERY

- 2. *El Matador State Park*, 2015 Oil on canvas. 22 x 28"
- 3. *Bicycle Painting No. 10*, 2011 Oil on canvas. 18 x 24"
- 4. *Bicycle Painting No. 9*, 2011 Oil on canvas. 18 x 24"
- 5. *Bicycle Painting No. 11*, 2011 Oil on canvas. 18 x 24"
- 6. *Malibu State Park*, 2016 Oil on canvas. 12 x 16"
- 7. *Paradise Cove*, 2016 Oil on canvas. 12 x 16"
- 8. *Fuck You Palms*, 2017 Oil on canvas. 12 x 16"
- 9. *I am a Calm, Loving, Peaceful Human Being*, 2013 Oil on Canvas. 12 x 16"
- 10. *Fuck You Palms*, 2017 Oil on Canvas. 12 x 16"

NORTHEAST GALLERY

11. *Dream drawings*, 2016 Marker on paper. 8 ½ x 14", 12 x 19"

12. *Fast food paintings*, 2012 Oil on cardboard. Approx 8 x 10"

13. *I am toast*, 2016 Oil on canvas. 16 x 12"

14. *Stud muffin*, 2016 Oil on canvas. 16 x 12"

15. *Play it by Ear*, 2015 Oil on canvas. 20 x 16"

16. *Painting Yourself into a Corner*, 2014 Oil on Canvas. 10 x 8"

17. *Putting One's Foot in One's Mouth*, 2016 Oil on canvas. 16 x 12"

18. *Hot Dog*, 2016 Oil on canvas. 16 x 12"

19. *A Zebra Can't Change its Stripes*, 2016 Oil on canvas. 16 x 12"

20. *Get Back up on Your High Horse*, 2016 Oil on Canvas. 20x16"

John Kilduff was born in Oakland, CA in 1965. He received his BFA at Otis Art Institute of Parsons School of Design in Los Angeles in 1987 and an MFA from UCLA in 2008. He has had solo exhibitions at Julius Caesar Gallery in Chicago; Steven Wolf Gallery in San Francisco; Blackstone Gallery in Los Angeles; and a survey *Paint Before you Think* at the Nan Rae Gallery at Woodbury University in Burbank, CA. in 2016. He has performed at LACE and the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles; the High Zero Festival in Baltimore, MD; Issue Project Room in Brooklyn, NY; and the Horse Bazaar in Melbourne,

Curator's Essay

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18 February—28 May 2017

A man wearing a paint-splattered Brooks Brothers suit jogs on a treadmill, furiously painting while, improbably, blending healthy juice drinks, and fielding live phone calls. Thus with *Let's Paint TV* John Kilduff made his mark, but the televised phenomenon is just an element in a one-of-a-kind “practice.” Incorporating performance, figurative painting, action art, social interrelationships, vaudevillian physical comedy, cooking, chess, and Ping-pong, the remarkable zone the artist inhabits is truly unique and comes close to defying analysis.

The Joy of Multitasking features a piquant selection from Kilduff's protean painting output as well as continuous screenings of the internet show. Now in its sixteenth year, each episode of the show prompts the delighted and incredulous question: What exactly is going on? Deliriously baffling and infectious, this is the artist at his most antic. Beyond the comedy lies a deeper significance revealed in the paintings and drawings. The paintings are the production of a trained practitioner compelled to make art and constantly find new ways to challenge himself, inventing restrictions on a quest to make painting fun and “not boring,” Kilduff's words.

Entering the Northwest Gallery, the viewer encounters gestural, impasto abstractions made while pedaling and balancing on a bicycle; they take plein-air painting to the extreme, while bringing up formal associations with the Impressionist movement and Leon Kossoff. They are pleasant but also a bit savage. Coming from the honest desire to make paintings people might like and want to buy, they recall the *People's Choice* series by the Russian art duo Komar and Melamid. Based on surveys conducted by professional polling companies the artist-team created the “most wanted” and “least wanted” paintings of various countries. In their skewered and likeable way, these are Kilduff's “most wanted.”

On the opposite wall are two scenes of iconic Beverly Hills palm tree with “Fuck You” impishly sky written in cursive in the middle; these flank a painting of the same sunny vista with the contradictory claim, “I am calm, loving, peaceful human being.” The ingratiating blue sky and fronds counteracted by one of the most popular English obscenities are a masterstroke of comic juxtaposition.

The Northeast Gallery gathers selections from three separate series, mixing a remarkable jocularity with explorations of the subconscious and the lower depths of the id. In the *Idiom* paintings, innocuous sayings such as “Play it by ear,” “Foot in the mouth,” and “I'm Toast” are rendered figuratively in oil with sparse monochromatic backgrounds. Mischievously exposing the strangeness of our daily speech, they reveal our obsession with the body as well as food and animals. *The Fast Food Paintings* of hamburgers, sodas, and fries—embodiments of the American on-the-run diet—continue to examine the murky depths of primal necessity, even to the point that one makes direct reference to Gustave Courbet's *The Origin of the World*.

The psychological underpinnings of these deceptively lighthearted works are augmented by an array of drawings based on *Let's Paint TV* viewers' descriptions of their dreams. Here things get decidedly Freudian. Kilduff renders repressed desires, suppressed thoughts, and oral fixations at high speed with enough verve to humorously, unexpectedly, and candidly plumb innocent or unsavory corners of the human psyche. Absurd and disturbing, they are at times nightmarish, at times benign and droll.

As a whole, the paintings and drawings that emerge from and compliment the TV show are funny, earnest, and intellectually stimulating. It is evidence of a determined and unconventional incursion into the generative act.