

DAN LEVENSON
SKZ Forms and Color Studies

January, 27 - February 24, 2018

Praz-Delavallade is pleased to announce the first exhibition in Paris by Los Angeles-based artist Dan Levenson.

At first sight Dan Levenson's studio isn't exactly what you'd expect.

Some tired-looking old furniture marked by the passing of time stands proudly in the middle of the studio, whereas the artist's canvasses are sensibly stored away in a multitude of boxes piled one on top of the other. It looks like the paintings are trying desperately to escape, without ever quite succeeding. Some that seem to have the artist's favour have won the right to be present and are spread across a table that's just as old and worn as the rest of the furniture. The confusion really arises when we discover the paintings. Are we in the studio of a follower of Bauhaus, a constructivist artist, or rather a fellow traveller of the Abstraction-Création group? In fact, Dan Levenson is a young artist from New York who has recently settled in Los Angeles, someone who seems perfectly serene and in tune with his times. I saw in Dan a connection with a Tim Burton-like character. Levenson asserts his right to mystify, however a predominant sense of mischief outweighs his vanity. There is a joyous and a poetical Dadaist vibe to his work that leaves room for a form of poetry, a picturesque narrative that lends its secret energy to the story he is telling, deeply marking it with strength and life. Profoundly rooted in an overall conceptual theme, Dan Levenson's paintings are in touch with the traditions of historical art and fantasy. According to the artist: "My work deals with a completely fictional narrative about a community of Swiss artists in a generic modern-day past. The story's protagonists are the various institutions that surround the artists, whereas the latter's individual identities remain unknown. These institutions include an art school, an art gallery, a manufacturer of art and office supplies, a publishing company, a philanthropic tobacco manufacturer and a state-like entity, the Swiss Standards Organization." Levenson takes on every role: the painter paints, the sculptor sculpts, the installation artist installs and the designer designs. A plural form of art, a pluralism that is the consequence of Dan Levenson's aesthetic approach that he sums up with his trademark ingenuity and irreverence: "I avoid any claims of authenticity, the fragmented story is told through a wide variety of media, which represent the material remnants of a forgotten culture. The paintings are central to the project."

Born in New-York, NY, US, Dan Levenson currently lives and works in Los Angeles. In 1997, he obtained his M.F.A from the Royal College of Art, London. His work has been exhibited at White Columns, New York, NY; LAXART, Los Angeles, CA; Vox Populi, Philadelphia, PA; PARTICIPANT INC, New York, NY; EFA Gallery, New York, NY; Peloton, Sydney, Australia; and OfficeOps, Brooklyn, NY.