

KATSU: DRONE

November 3 – December 15, 2018

Opening reception: Saturday, November 3rd, 6 – 8 pm

LOS ANGELES, CA – Diane Rosenstein Gallery is pleased to announce *DRONE*, a solo exhibition of paintings by the new media conceptual artist KATSU. The show will present a suite of new monumental *Dot* paintings alongside the artists' ongoing series of *Smiles*, *Drone Flowers*, and *Portraits*. KATSU will also present *UNTITLED*, an autonomous painting video. This is KATSU's first exhibition with the gallery.

Artists' use of cutting-edge technology, particularly digital, has had an expansive impact on contemporary art. The influential Swiss sculptor Roman Signer used drones since 2016 for his series of "Action Sculpture" installations. Last summer, Signer painted the ceiling of the Villa Maraini in Rome using a drone equipped with a shaving brush and cobalt blue paint. New York-based artist Wade Guyton notably paints through the tools of digital technology (such as large format printers) and emphasizes the semi-autonomous role of the machine and the beautiful accidents produced through this method of creation.

KATSU's drone paintings are the 21st Century's Action Paintings, residing at an intersection of gesture and loss of control. His paintings are created in a symbiotic gestural application of atomized enamel paint sprayed by a remotely controlled customized quadcopter drone onto an acrylic coated canvas. The drone is a semi-autonomous collaborator. Drones are voyeurs and recorders, used to exploit access and proximity as image-gathering devices. In KATSU's practice, the drone's purpose is subverted; it is an image creator.

This exhibition will include traditional subject matter, such as portraits and flowers, as well as a new suite of monumental abstract *Dot* paintings. The trio of seven by eleven foot *Dots* are impressionistic in their diffuse use of color and form. KATSU often paints the human face and archetypal expressions as a timeless way to transfer data between artist and viewer. The yellow and black *Smile* paintings are captivating and exciting – the opposite of the pervasive android emoticons that have inserted themselves into the vocabulary of our daily digital diaries. These 'smiley faces' are strangely human, within a drunken "Pop" aesthetic.

KATSU's drone paintings fool the viewer about the distance of technology. The drones mimic human behavior and push art making in a conscious way through code. Yet, these paintings have a childlike aesthetic – almost as if the artist were handling spray paint for the first time.

KATSU (USA, b. 1982) is a new media artist, a pioneer of drone painting and drone graffiti. His practice spans the realms of conceptual art, digital media, public art and interventions. His visual and digital projects question notions of reality, fiction, and 'graffiti' by integrating concepts of vandalism with commercialism and technology. KATSU began experimenting with art and technology as a Research Fellow with the Free Art and Technology Lab (F.A.T. Lab), a collective of creative technologists and hacker artists (2007-2015). His work has been shown in two solo exhibitions at The Hole, New York (2014 & 2018), and was recently included in *Beyond The Streets*, curated by Roger Gastman in Los Angeles, CA (2018). He created *Dronescape Summer 2015* for Coney Art Walls, curated by Joseph J. Sitt and Jeffrey Deitch, and was included in *Born in the Streets – Graffiti* at the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris, France (2009-10). KATSU collaborated with photographer Ari Marcopolous on *Anonymous* (2018) and *6-23 '13 – N6 Street – Brooklyn* (2014), limited editions for Dashwood Books, NY. He earned his BFA in Integrated Design from Parsons School of Design, NY (2005). The artist works between Brooklyn, NY and San Francisco, CA.