

STEVE DiBENEDETTO

Toasted with Everything

March 22 - April 22, 2018

Opening Reception: Thursday, March 22, 6-8pm



Tresspasser, 2017, oil on canvas, 36 x 24"

Toasted with Everything will be Steve DiBenedetto's third solo exhibition at Derek Eller Gallery and for this occasion he has summoned a collection of vibrant mutants on canvas. Guided by a genuine belief in some alchemical ethos that paint can and should catalyze true transmutation, DiBenedetto paints with unique confidence. Through what he describes as "procedural painting", a form of generative art, these compositions are arrived at through deep disassociation, or "letting the paint decide". This state combined with DiBenedetto's practiced and battle-tested hand, allow for new and undiscovered forms to slink out of the primordial ooze of oil and pigment.

Over the course of DiBenedetto's career he's established and tooled an iconic lexicon. Helicopters, Ferris wheels and octopuses played prominent roles in his canon. In this newest group of paintings DiBenedetto has delved deeper into the etymology, forging his standard language for pre-historic guttural expression. Viewing these paintings is to engage in a free-associative translation where many words are conjured but none are pronounced. Eyeball! Vegetable! Spaceship! A Mayan monument constructed of trash bags full of spaghetti! These elusively pre-linguistic forms mesmerize and engage the viewer. Each painting has

a monolithically sculptural quality and while the imagery meanders, everything is concretely held together as morphological figuration by seemingly cubist sub-structures.

But long time fans can rest assured, it's still Steve being Steve. As always he's engaged in strenuous combat with the canvas. Every imaginable application of paint both reductive and additive is thrown at it, testing the limitations and elasticity of the material. Paintings here range from small to colossal in scale, but each is tackled with the same unwavering veracity. The collapse of counter culture's utopian promise remains at the forefront and while psychedelia still reverberates, the paranoid, post-hippy citations have assertively made way for the flame-flicked visions of a shaman's campfire.

Steve DiBenedetto (b. 1958) has exhibited extensively including solo outings at Cherry and Martin (Los Angeles, CA), the Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art (Ridgefield, CT), Half Gallery (New York, NY) and David Nolan (New York, NY), and was recently included in *CHHUNKS* at The National Exemplar (New York, NY). He has been included in museum exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art (New York, NY), MoMA PS1 (Long Island City, NY), Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris, France), Neues Museum (Nurnberg, Germany), Kunstverein Museum Schloss Morsbroich (Leverkusen, Germany), MAMCO (Geneva, Switzerland) and others. His work is included in public collections such as The Morgan Library & Museum (New York, NY), Museum of Fine Arts (Boston, MA), Museum of Modern Art (New York, NY), and Whitney Museum of American Art (New York, NY). DiBenedetto lives and works in New York.