

Art and Cake  
January 30, 2019

David Lloyd, *365 – A Year of Drawing*  
Klowden Mann Gallery  
January 5 – February 9, 2019

by Jody Zellen



Setting the goal of creating an artwork a day for a year can seem like a revelation at first, a chance to experiment, to change direction. It can also be thought of as a meditation and a way to disassociate from the other aspects of one's practice. Many artists engage with this activity — Pam Posey makes a drawing a day in a specific sized notebook and stamps each drawing with the date of its creation. In 2017, Annetta Kapon created a daily collage following a specific set of rules. Beginning in 1987, Karl Baden has photographed his face each day using identical parameters and film. Since 2004, I too, have created daily drawings, always using the same pen and paper. This activity is integrated into my daily routine and has become a ritual I respect, look forward to and occasionally dread each morning.

*365: A Year of Drawing* celebrates David Lloyd's year-long project. Each day in 2018, starting on January 1 and ending on December 31, Lloyd made a work on paper. Some of Lloyd's drawings are in color, others in black and white. The artworks range in size and complexity. There is no single subject or approach, although most are non-objective abstractions. In many ways, the mixed media works on paper are stream of consciousness musings made without risk. Knowing from the outset that there will be 365 works included in the project suggests it is about the cumulative body of work. The goal was not to create 365 masterpieces, but to record a process that reflects and informs a greater practice.

Lloyd placed few parameters on this activity other than making time to create a work for the project every day. When he traveled, the drawings got smaller or were made more quickly, but for the most part the work was made on his studio wall each afternoon. The unframed artworks

are hung somewhat chronologically in a salon style on the gallery walls which have been painted a deep gray. Looking from drawing to drawing it becomes clear that Lloyd has a fluidity with gesture and a sophisticated sense of color. While many of the drawings reference the landscape, they are surreal abstractions or fantasies, rather than realistic renderings. A few are black and white line drawings more akin to cartoonish doodles than refined representations. Some of the works incorporate collage which is seamlessly integrated into the overall composition. Lloyd juxtaposes thick and thin lines, opaque and transparent shapes. He is as comfortable filling the page from edge to edge as he is leaving large areas of negative space.

*Untitled (May 14)*, is a quasi figurative drawing whose center is a bloodshot eye. The Picasso-esque head is comical and ominous simultaneously. *Untitled (May 28)*, is a child-like cartoon, a surreal line drawing in an illustrative rather than painterly style. A red sun inscribed with a face occupies the upper left corner of the artwork shining down on the weird creature below. *Untitled, (December 21)* is a small but impactful work. Measuring just 8.3 x 7 inches, it depicts an ocean landscape. In the foreground, Lloyd paints water filled with floating pink rectangles. At the horizon, land meets sea. Here, Lloyd places an array of drooping palm trees. The yellow-tinged sky is layered with a wash of blue abutting transparent irregularly shaped blue-green clouds. Centered in the composition is a large opaque geometric form comprised of linked yellow / green rhombuses and ovals connected by an arched rectangle. Is this object from outer-space? What is it and why is it hovering above the water. In many pieces, Lloyd poses but does not answer questions. He allows the works to develop quickly and organically, reflecting the moment and what is on his mind and in his imagination without the pressure of having it link to anything else necessarily.

As time went on, it seems as though the works became freer and looser; however, it is impossible to track a narrative trajectory. As soon as a pattern appears, Lloyd shifts gears and delivers a surprise. What is remarkable about the exhibition is seeing all the works together. They fill the gallery walls with disparate rectangles of color and shape and while it is a bombardment of imagery, they do not overwhelm. Lloyd's way of painting and drawing is inviting and never off putting. It is impossible to know whether the completion of drawing number 365 was met with satisfaction, a sigh of relief, disappointment, or all of the above. Nevertheless, Lloyd has discovered a process filled with spontaneity and has created plenty of raw material for use as a point of departure for future works.

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