

**DAN LEVENSON**

*Two Proposals Toward the  
Formation of a New Art School*

*6 August - 10 September, 2022*



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*TWO PROPOSALS TOWARD THE FORMATION OF A NEW ART SCHOOL*

Dan Levenson  
6 August – 10 September, 2022

**Praz-Delavallade** Los Angeles is pleased to present *Two Proposals Toward the Formation of a New Art School* opening August 6 and running through September 10, 2022. The imaginary State Art Academy, Zürich (SKZ), forms the basis of **Dan Levenson's** practice as an artist. Through performance, video, installation, objects and paintings, Levenson expounds on the curriculum and philosophy of an institution that, although never existed, reflects on art institutions both past and present.

The first proposal, "SKZ Kindergarten Maquette," takes the form of a miniature kindergarten classroom, itself an artwork, that is based on live interactive performances Levenson exhibited with children aged 2-9 in 2019 and 2020. The maquette contains miniature scale versions of the components of the live performances: flat-pack modernist children's easels and mannequins wearing painting tunics. The mirrored walls of the classroom maquette suggest infinite expansion. Kindergarteners are gently introduced to the same strict formalist principles which form the basis of the advanced graduate program. An accompanying video documents the live performances.

The second proposal, "Chance Operations," consists of a second miniature classroom and an accompanying board game. The classroom furniture are modernist geometric desks and chairs which come apart and pack flat. Designed for advanced students, each student would be given a board game with dice that have each side painted a different color. With a roll of the dice, the color of both the classroom furniture and the paintings is determined.

The exhibition includes two new paintings by **Dan Levenson** representing student artwork from his imaginary art school. The design of the paintings follows the same principles as both the kindergarten lesson and the advanced graduate classroom, giving the entire exhibition an overall sense of unity.

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His recent work concerns the Kindergarten attached to the imaginary art school. "SKZ Children's Painting Workshop" is an experiment in collaboration with children, presented as installations and performances. The workshop draws inspiration from Friedrich Fröbel's original 1837 concept of the Kindergarten: a garden that promotes natural learning and creative growth. Children are invited into an installation environment with sculptural painting easels, hand-painted painting smocks, and brightly colored banners. Children paint on large abstract silkscreened coloring-book pages.

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Their interactions with the printed composition invite reflection on creativity and freedom.

**Dan Levenson** (b. 1972, New York, NY, lives and works in Los Angeles) is a visual artist working in installation, performance, video, painting, and sculpture. His work addresses issues of subjectivity, education, creativity and freedom and takes the form of artifacts rescued from the ruins of an imaginary art school: the State Art Academy, Zürich (its initials in Swiss-German are SKZ). As a painter, he follows the strict formalist pedagogy of his imaginary school: geometrically dividing metrically sized canvases to create abstract compositions. He expands on the story through performance, installation and video. Levenson has taught performative drawing lessons taken from the school's curriculum at the Hammer Museum, American Jewish University, USC's Roski School of Art, and the Saas-Fee Summer Institute in Berlin, Germany. He has exhibited at The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Vielmetter Los Angeles; Honor Fraser, Los Angeles; Praz-Delavallade, Paris and Los Angeles; de boer Gallery, Los Angeles; PARTICIPANT INC, NYC; LAXART, Los Angeles; White Columns, NYC; and Vox Populi, Philadelphia, PA. He has an upcoming exhibition with James Fuentes. He is the recipient of a Pollock/Krasner grant and Yaddo and MacDowell Fellowships, among other awards.

**Praz-Delavallade** has a longstanding relationship with both American and European artists whose practices span a variety of mediums. The gallery was founded 1995 in Paris with an inaugural exhibition that included work by Paul McCarthy, Mike Kelley, Richard Petitbon, Jim Shaw, and Benjamin Weisman. In 1997, Praz-Delavallade was part of a burgeoning art scene in the 13th arrondissement on the eastern side of Paris, along with Air de Paris, Almine Rech, Art: Concept, Jennifer Flay, and Emmanuel Perrotin. Due to its strong connections with artists in Los Angeles, the gallery was known for bringing an international program to the growing Paris art scene, by featuring artists such as Sam Durant, Jim Isermann, John Miller, Analia Saban, and Marnie Weber, among others. In 2010, the Paris gallery moved to its current location at 5 rue des Haudriettes in the Marais and has continued its support of Los Angeles based artists by exhibiting a new generation that includes Matthew Brandt, Heather Cook, Nathan Mabry, Joe Reihisen, Ry Rocklen, Amanda Ross-Ho, and Brian Wills alongside European artists such as Soufiane Ababri, Philippe Decrauzat, Pierre Ardouvin, Thomas Fougeirol, and Fabien Mérelle. In the fall of 2016, Praz-Delavallade opened a new outpost at 6150 Wilshire Boulevard—on the renowned thoroughfare in Miracle Mile right across from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art—in an effort to create a bridge between the two cities it calls home.

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*Imelda Hildebrand, 2022*  
Oil on linen  
16 1/2 x 11 3/4 in  
41.9 x 29.8 cm

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*Ramona Naef, 2022*  
Oil on linen  
16 1/2 x 11 3/4 in  
41.9 x 29.8 cm

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*Chance Operations, 2022*  
Cardboard, color print, acrylic on wood  
game pieces and die  
17 1/4 x 12 1/2 x 1 3/4 in  
43.8 x 31.8 x 4.4 cm

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**DAN LEVENSON**

Born 1972 in New York, NY, US

Lives and works in Los Angeles, CA, US

**EDUCATION**

1997 MFA Royal College of Art, London, UK

1994 B.A., Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH, US

**SOLO EXHIBITIONS**

2022

*(upcoming) Dan Levenson - James Fuentes Online, NYC*

*Two Proposals Toward the Formation of a New Art School - Praz-Delavallade, Los Angeles, CA*

*SKZ Kindergarten Maquette - ODD ARK at Barely Fair, Chicago, IL*

2018

*SKZ Form and Color Studies, Praz-Delavallade, Paris, FR*

2017

*SKZ Monochrome Diptychs (curated by Rotem Rozental), American Jewish University, Simi Valley, CA*

*Solo Presentation, with Praz-Delavallade, Independent, Brussels, BE*

2015

*SKZ Painting Storage, Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects, Culver City, CA, US*

2011

*SKZ Student Monochrome Workshop, Vox Populi, Philadelphia, PA, US*

2008

*Anonymous Paintings from the Archives of Little Switzerland, USF, Bergen, NO*

2003

*White Room (curated by Lauren Ross), White Columns, New York, NY, US*

**GROUP EXHIBITIONS**

2022

*Double Up - My Pet Ram, Santa Barbara, CA*

2021

*Last Truth of the New - de boer gallery, Los Angeles, CA*

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*Return of the Dragons* - Blossom Market, Los Angeles, CA

2020

*La terre est bleue comme une orange*, Praz-Delavallade, Paris, FR

2019

*Le Magasin*, Praz-Delavallade, Los Angeles, CA, US

*Specific Abstractions* (curated by Matt Stromberg), Charlie James Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, and Mt. San Jacinto College, Walnut, CA US

2018

*I Dream My Painting, Then I Paint My Dream*, Praz-Delavallade, Los Angeles, CA, US

*Conceptual Feedback* (Curated by Emily Gonzalez-Jarrett), Honor Fraser, Los Angeles, CA, US

2017

*Memories Look At Me*, Gallery EM, Seoul, KR

*All the Small Things*, Steve Turner, Los Angeles, CA, US

*Summer of Love* (Curated by Justin Cavin), Wilding Cran Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, US

*I Love L.A.*, Praz-Delavallade, Los Angeles, CA, US

2016

*The Artist's Library* (organized by Warren Neidich), LAXART, Los Angeles, CA, US

2015

*Bloody Red Sun of Fantastic L.A.* (curated by René-Julien Praz), PIASA, Paris, FR

2012

*The Double*, Cabinet, Brooklyn / LAXART, Los Angeles, CA, US

2011

*I Like The Art World And The Art World Likes Me*, EFA Project Space, New York, NY, US

2010

*I Know What You Did Last Summer*, St. Cecilia's Convent, Brooklyn, NY, US

2009

*Nothing Up My Sleeve* (curated by Jonathan Berger), PARTICIPANT INC., New York, NY, US

2008

*Abstract in Appearance*, Jason Rulnick, Inc., NY, US



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**PERFORMANCES**

2020

*SKZ Children's Painting Workshop*, Mast on Fig, Los Angeles, CA

2018

*An Afternoon of Performances at the House of the Book*, American Jewish University, Simi Valley, CA

2017

*Drawing Lessons from the SKZ*, House of the Book, American Jewish University, Simi Valley, CA

*Drawing Lessons from the SKZ*, Saas-Fee Institute of Art, Berlin, DE

*Foundational Principles of the SKZ*, Art Los Angeles Contemporary, Los Angeles, CA, US

2016

*Drawing Lessons from the SKZ*, The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA, US

*Event #1*, The Artists' Library, by Warren Neidich, LAXART, Los Angeles, CA, US

2015

*On Discipline (L.A.)*, 356 Mission, Los Angeles, CA, US

2012

*Social History of the State Art Academy, Zurich*, ISCP - International Studio and Curatorial Program, Brooklyn, NY, US

*The Batterkinden Art Awards*, Triangle Project Space, Brooklyn, NY, US

2008

*Disarmory*, organized by dBfoundation

2007

*The All-Smoking Art Opening - Sponsored by Altria*, New General Catalog, Curated by Trong G. Nguyen, Brooklyn, NY, US

2006

*New Swiss Art*, The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, New York, NY, US

2004

*FrEE MoMA action*, MoMA, New York, NY, US

**TEXTS/PUBLICATIONS**

2013

*Notes From Jessica*, [The Highlights.org](http://The Highlights.org), 2013

*A Rational Distribution of Switzerland*, [Shifter Magazine](http://Shifter Magazine), November, 2013

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2010

*Nothing Up My Sleeve*, Regency Arts Press and PARTICIPANT INC., 2010

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

2022

Marilyn McMahon, "Double Up," Santa Barbara News-Press, July 24, 2022

2019

Lorraine Heitzman, "Upstairs/Downstairs at Charlie James Gallery," *Art and Cake*, July 6, 2019

2018

Stromberg, Matt, *Performances About Learning, Set in a Fictional Classroom*, [Hyperallergic](#), January 22, 2018

2017

*Memories look at me*, [Style Chosun](#), November 1, 2017

Allen, Mark, *Review: Art Los Angeles Contemporary 2017!*, [laartparty.com](#), January 27, 2017

Foreman, Star, *Beautiful People and Artwork on Display at Art Los Angeles Contemporary's Opening Night*, [L.A. Weekly](#), January 27, 2017

Kinsella, Eileen, *Art LA Contemporary Opens With Big Crowds and Edgy Vibe*, [artnet news](#), January 27, 2017

Swenson, Eric Minh, *Art LA Contemporary IS THE West Coast Art Basel*, [Huffington Post](#), January 31, 2017

2016

de Rochebouët, Béatrice, *Après les attentats, Art Brussels résiste grâce à son optimisme*, [Le Figaro](#), April 26, 2016

Martin, Lucy, *The Armory Show Gallery Picks: Day One*, [Elephant](#), March 3, 2016

2015

Capria, Alexandra, *Reviews: National, Dan Levenson*, [ArtNews](#), December 2015, p.91

Kupper, Oliver Maxwell, *Artist Dan Levenson Creates A Fake Swiss Art School In His First Solo Exhibition @ Susanne Vielmetter Gallery In Los Angeles*, [Autre Magazine](#), October, 2015

Goldman, Edward, *September L.A., a Bursting Art Scene*, [Huffington Post](#), 2015

Cohen, Barnett, *Dan Levenson Interview*, [Contemporary Art Review. LA](#), September 2, 2015

Stromberg, Matt, *ArtRx LA*, [Hyperallergic](#), September 1, 2015

Collins, Bianca, *Dan Levenson's SKZ Painting Storage*, [The Art Minion](#), 2015

Drohojowska-Philp, Hunter, *Art Talk*, [KCRW](#), September 10, 2015

Leon S., Fan Z. & Hertling P., *The Best of Armory Week 2015*, [W Magazine](#), March 2015

2013

Sigal, Lisa, *Silhouette*, [The Bottom Line](#), February 2013

2011

Orrson, Emily, *Vox Populi: Dan Levenson, SKZ Student Monochrome Workshop*, [Title Magazine](#), December 2011

Newhall, Edith, *Artist's Subversive Sense of Humor at Vox Populi*, [The Philadelphia Enquirer](#), December 2011

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Chip, Schwartz, *Conceptual Mashup* at Vox, [Knight Blog](#), December 2011

Wetzler, Rachel, *A Populist Attack on the Art World Pulls Punches*, [Hyperallergic.com](#), March 2011

2009

Levy, Michelle, *Virtues of Smoke and Mirrors*, [ArtSlant.com](#), November 2009

Ramani, Donato, *Imaginary Road to Little Switzerland*, [L'Uomo Vogue](#), July 2009

2008

Flannery, Paul, *Expandable and modular - Little Switzerland on a scale of 1 to 1*, January 21st, 2008

Johnson, Paddy, *Form and Enterprise: The Art of Dan Levenson*, [ArtCal Zine](#), January 16, 2008

Johnson, Paddy, *Fia Backström No Copy No Paste*, [Art Fag City](#), January 24, 2008

2007

Wagner, James, *Dan Levenson's "Little Switzerland" at EFA*, [James Wagner.com](#), November 13, 2007

2006

Faure, Guillemette, *La culture hors de prix à New York*, [Le Figaro](#), August 29, 2006

*Shifter: Rules & Representation*, [Shifter Magazine](#), June 1, 2006

2005

Smith, Daniel, *Andrew Jackson, The New Face of Modern Art*, [n+1](#), March 5, 2005

Lubell, Sam, *The \$20 Problem: Opposition still rages against MoMA ticket Prices*, [Architectural Record](#), January 2005

2004

Muchnic, Suzanne, *Parking costs rise at Getty*, [Los Angeles Times](#), November 21, 2004

Bernau, Nikolaus, *Das MoMA tanzt*, [Berliner Zeitung](#), November 20, 2004

Vogel, Carol, *What Is The Value of Priceless Art?*, [NY Times](#), November 18, 2004

Rousselot, Fabrice, *20 dollars l'entrée, de la folie furieuse*, [Libération](#), November 20, 2004

## GRANTS/AWARDS/RESEDECENCIES

2019

MacDowell Fellowship

2017

Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs Cultural Trailblazer

2014

Yaddo Fellowship, Saratoga Springs, NY, US

2011

MacDowell Fellowship, New York, NY, US

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2009

Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, New York, NY, US

2008

Triangle Artists' Workshop, Brooklyn, NY, US

Artist-in Residence, USF, Bergen, NO

2007-2012

Elizabeth Foundation Studio

2007

Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant, New York, NY, US

NYFA Fiscal Sponsorship, New York, NY, US

2000, 2001, 2004, 2014

Yaddo Fellowship, Saratoga Springs, NY, US