



JOHN BOROWICZ **WANG DANG DOODLE**
DEDEE SHATTUCK GALLERY AUGUST 1-28, 2013



What I consider to be my best work inevitably comes at unexpected times and in surprising ways: a slip of the hand in a sketchbook, the meaningless scribble or diversionary exercise, the mistake and that most beautiful state of play. It is in these golden moments, when I lack artfulness or forget that I am an artist, that I become one. The genesis of these paintings came exactly this way. A twisted nest of lines asked me to find a form in it and I just happened to be paying attention.

John Borowicz
July 2013

I would like to thank Dedee Shattuck for her trust in me and for this wonderful opportunity. I must also thank Jordan Ochs for her patience and Isabel Mattia for her charm, intelligence and humor. Without the support and generosity of the following people this work would never have been made: Bubbe, Karina Borowicz, Bill Shattuck, Sarah and Andy Spongberg, and Mark Shub and Judith Monroe.

For my sons Kazimir, Maksym and Tadeusz, you are my joy and my inspiration. And for Wen, my angel. I love you more than my eyes.



cover **The Wayward Au Pair**, 2013,
oil on canvas, 84" x 60"

inside front cover **A Plausible Result Of Sustained Spontaneity**, 2010, graphite on paper, 50" x 38"

inside back cover **Study For The Fall Of The Rebel Angels**, 2013, graphite on paper, 6" x 4"

back cover **The Languid Advance Toward Fullness**, 2009, graphite on paper, 30" x 22"

JOHN BOROWICZ **WANG DANG DOODLE**
DEEDEE SHATTUCK GALLERY AUGUST 1-28, 2013

Dedee Shattuck Gallery proudly presents *Wang Dang Doodle*, paintings and drawings by John Borowicz. Our August exhibition is a celebration of Borowicz's new work, which playfully explores the traditions of portraiture in a surprising absurdist language.

Since graduating University of Massachusetts Dartmouth in 1989, and UMass Amherst in 1991, Borowicz has integrated his meticulous aptitude for classical realism with his fantastic imagination. Alongside Borowicz's exploratory work, he simultaneously creates commissioned portraits and landscapes with a careful sense of detail and form. His focus on the structure, light, and contours of figure and landscape painting inform his departures from realism.

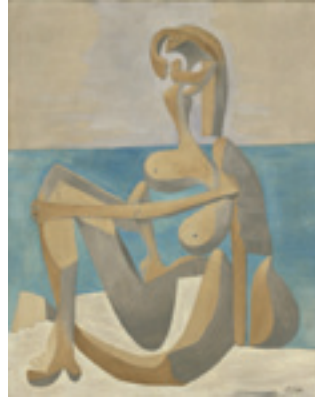
For Borowicz, the birth of his three sons in the past seven years signified a shift in subject matter, attitude, medium and process. A refreshed imagination and sense of humor as well as a playful approach to exploration and discovery, has resulted in a body of work he refers to as "Sprawling Conglomerates". This series features compositions of repeated geometric forms, born out of doodles and automatic drawing exercises, that call forth conceptual issues of landscape through a focus on line, pattern and abstraction.

As seen in such *Sprawling Conglomerate* drawings as *A Plausible Result of Sustained Spontaneity*, Borowicz uses repeated graphic forms that mutate and evolve as he meticulously fills the space of the page. Depth and space, implied through shading and perspective, are in contrast with the shallow blanket of texture created by repeating geometric forms. The result is dynamic and hypnotic imagery which brings to mind images produced by cellular automata and photographs of Brazilian hillside Favelas.

Horror Vacui, or the fear of empty space, is often seen as the antithesis of minimalism. Borowicz, however, greatly admires minimalism, and sees the production of these tightly worked compositions as his own attempt at creating silence. In a sense, his careful filling of space shallows the drawing plane and leaves the viewer with static white noise, which melts into a meditative hum.

As the conglomerates evolved, elements of figure began to emerge from the snowstorm of texture. Feeling the influence of the figure, he explored softening the geometry into pseudo-human forms, knotted and interwoven, in *The Fall of the Rebel Angels*. This image is a graphic, grotesque, humorous, and erotic interpretation of Pieter Bruegel's painting of the same name.

Fall of the Rebel Angels marks a significant transition for Borowicz's work. The painting is the bridge between the landscape inspired *Sprawling Conglomerates*, and the playful figures of *Wang Dang Doodle*. Here, Borowicz teases out elements to suggest figure, reintroduces color, and begins to create homage paintings to some of his favorite masters.



Borowicz picked a challenging first subject to test his new method. In *Seated Bather*, Borowicz interprets a figure Picasso has already digested into a cubist language. Borowicz studied this image, and translated it through an "alternative anatomy" of geometric and organic forms extracted from the *Sprawling Conglomerate* explorations.

The work pays tribute to cubism and surrealism, but also sets itself apart from them. Borowicz utilizes a contemporary palate of silly putty pinks, "digifreaky" greens, lavender, teal and soft gray. The geometry has the solidity of plastic blocks, but a mottled velveteen surface, suggesting a soft fleshiness to the hard-edged forms. This is the first of a series of work which places the figure in empty space, an element notably unused since the distorted family portraits of the early 2000's.

As the language develops, new imagined portraits emerge. Although fantastical, Borowicz sees the portraits as realist images of an imagined reality. Each subject is not a formal exploration of geometry, but a real character emerging from Borowicz's imagination onto the canvas. He experiences them as specific characters with distinct personalities, which he depicts through his emerging stylistic language. The compositions become more abundant with soft organic rounded shapes piled precariously amidst angular objects. He intersperses stylized human anatomy — a pink textured tongue, a bulbous toe, glistening marble eyeballs with carefully rendered irises in hazel and blue. The gestures of form and relationship of color and object create a strong sense of the mannerism and identity of the characters.

The largest and newest work in the series features two figures, ambiguous in gender, seated next to each other in a simple staged environment. Eyes half lidded, and tongues hanging out, they appear calmly formal and at the same time totally goofy. One reaches an amorphous hand over to gently pinch the nipple of the companion, who is holding what appears to be a miniature baby pacifier. The work is a translation of "Gabrielle d'Estrees And One Of Her Sisters," a sixteenth century painting by an unknown artist associated with the Fontainebleau school. The work summons themes of pregnancy, fertility, breastfeeding, and parenting, which recur for Borowicz, especially as they have pervaded his daily family life. Here he explores these themes with a sense of naughty erotic humor.

Borowicz is an undeniable treasure in our Southcoast artist community. For several years he operated a gallery out of his home, nurturing our vibrant local community of artists and art admirers. Borowicz's talent and creativity have continued to keep him in high regard locally, and have brought him into the national spotlight. He regularly shows at Adam Baumgold gallery in New York, and has had his work featured in many notable magazines included Wired, Versus, Time Out New York, New York Home, Tema Celeste, and New American Paintings.

Wang Dang Doodle is an exhibition highlighting the process and evolution of Borowicz's work, which thoughtfully examines references from history, controversial and personal themes, and formal considerations. It also showcases an artist devoted to the craft of painting, who actively engages in a global contemporary art conversation. Borowicz consistently presents work that makes us laugh and blush. It's the kind of work we just can't stop looking at.



Unknown artist, **Gabrielle d'Estrees et une de ses sœurs**, circa 1594, oil on oak panel, 37.8" x 49.2"

JOHN BOROWICZ

WANG DANG DOODLE

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IS HE POLISH, 2002
mixed media on board, 20" x 30"

LUNCHEON ON THE GRASS, 2002
mixed media on board, 20" x 30"

THE FIRST LINE IS THE FIFTH LINE, 2002
mixed media on board, 20" x 20"



EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, 2012
graphite on paper, 6.25" x 4.25"



ONE CONTINUOUS MISTAKE, 2012
graphite on paper, 6" x 4"



THE FALL OF THE REBEL ANGELS, 2013
oil on canvas, 48" x 48"



SKULL 1, 2013
oil on panel, 9" x 7"



SKULL 2, 2013
oil on panel, 9" x 7"



SKULL 3, 2013
oil on panel, 9" x 7"



STILL LIFE WITH SOFT FORMS, 2013
oil on canvas, 12" x 9"



THE TOURIST, 2013
oil on canvas, 40" x 30"



STUDY FOR GABRIELLE D'ESTREES AND ONE OF HER SISTERS (AFTER THE FONTAINEBLEAU SCHOOL), 2013

graphite on paper, 8.5" x 8.5"



SEATED BATHER (AFTER PICASSO), 2013
oil on canvas, 60" x 48"



HAMMING IT UP, 2013
oil on canvas, 84" x 52"



STUDY FOR AUTOMATIC SLIM, 2013
graphite on paper, 11" x 7.5"



AW SHUCKS, 2013
oil on canvas, 16" x 12"

Born in 1968 in New Bedford, John Borowicz studied painting at The Universities of Massachusetts at both Amherst and Dartmouth.

Since 2009 the artist has been represented by Adam Baumgold Gallery in New York, which presented the solo exhibition "Sprawling Conglomerates" in 2010. His work has been included in eight group exhibitions at the gallery. Borowicz has participated in a number of other recent group exhibitions, including "The Question Of Drawing" at The Ogunquit Museum of Art (2011); "Bigger" at The Jamestown Arts Center (2012); "Homegrown" at The New Bedford Art Museum (2008); "Grand Opening" and "Small Works" at Dedee Shattuck Gallery (2011 & 2012).

The artist's work has been included in numerous national and international periodicals including New American Paintings, Tema Celeste, New York Home, Wired UK and Versus. Borowicz lives and works in Dartmouth, Massachusetts.

Represented by Adam Baumgold Gallery, New York

Born: 1968 New Bedford, Massachusetts

Lives and Works in South Dartmouth, Massachusetts

Education

1986 - 1991 University of Massachusetts Amherst

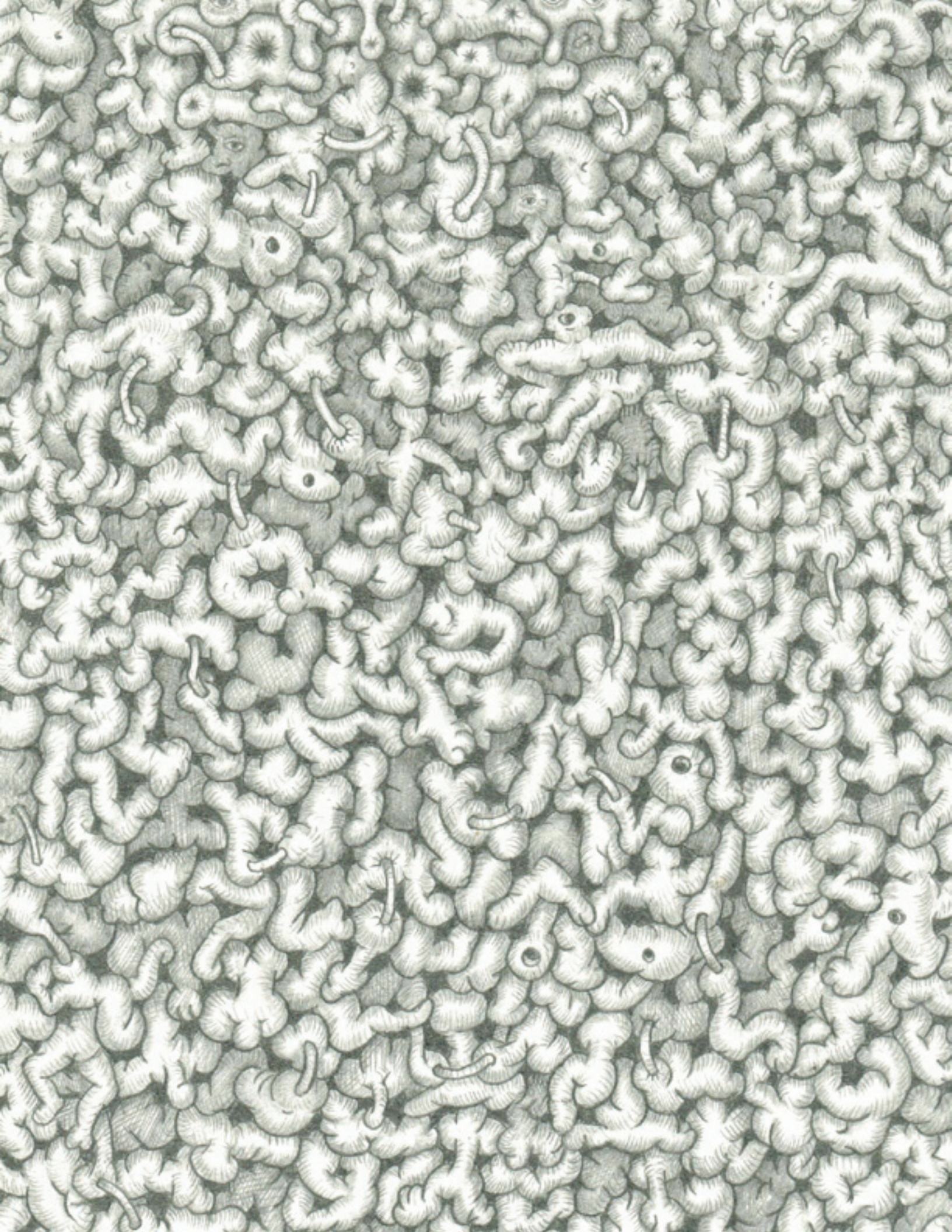
1989 University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

Selected Exhibitions

- 2013 Locations, Group Exhibition, Adam Baumgold Gallery, New York, New York
- 2012 All In Line, Group Exhibition, Adam Baumgold Gallery, New York, New York
Face To Face, Group Exhibition, Adam Baumgold Gallery, New York, New York
Fiction/Nonfiction, Group Exhibition, Adam Baumgold Gallery, New York, New York
Small Works, Group Exhibition, Dedee Shattuck Gallery, Westport, Massachusetts
Bigger, Group Exhibition, Jamestown Arts Center, Jamestown, Rhode Island
- 2011 Drawn, Group Exhibition, Adam Baumgold Gallery, New York, New York
The Question of Drawing, Group Exhibition, Ogunquit Museum of American Art, Ogunquit, Maine
Group Exhibition, Dedee Shattuck Gallery, Westport, Massachusetts
- 2010 Sprawling Conglomerates, One Person Exhibition, Adam Baumgold Gallery, New York, New York
- 2009 Precision, Group Exhibition, Adam Baumgold Gallery, New York, New York
About Face, Group Exhibition, Adam Baumgold Gallery, New York, New York
- 2008 Homegrown, Group exhibition, New Bedford Art Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts
- 2007 Science, Religion, Art: Greater New Bedford Artists Responding to Johann Jacob Scheucher's Physica Sacra, 1731 - 35, Group Exhibition, University Art Gallery, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, New Bedford, Massachusetts
- 2006 Response Exhibition, Group Exhibition, New Bedford Art Museum
- 2002 Gallery Inventory, Adam Baumgold Gallery, New York, New York
Flat File, Pierogi, Brooklyn, New York
- 2001 Faculty Exhibition, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Rhode Island
- 2000 Halloween Group Exhibition, CBGB's, New York, New York

Selected Publications

- 2012 Wired UK
- 2011 Versus Magazine
- 2010 Time Out New York, July 2010
- 2005 New York Home, Volume 1, Issue 1
- 2002 Tema Celeste, Issue 92
- 2000 New American Paintings, Number 26





DEDEE SHATTUCK

GALLERY

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