

Kai Jenrette
Tournament**04.17 - 05.30.2026**

Tournament opens as a situation already underway. The low roll of balls against lacquered wood, the irregular crack of pins, the pause as the machine resets. Something has just happened and will happen again. Duckpin bowling, a regional sport most closely held in Baltimore, Jenrette's hometown, operates here in both premise and spirit. Its conditions are smaller balls and pins, no finger holes, a game of three rolls. No perfect score has been recorded. Following the game's peak in the 1960s, its parts and functioning alleys have since steadily declined. What persists does so through repetition and care, a ritual sustained by those who continue to return to it. A third place where people gather not to win exactly, but to remain in motion together. Celebration and fatigue occupy the same register. Surfaces carry marks of use.

The works in *Tournament* mimic the curious trappings of duckpin bowling, estranged in time, rituals unmoored from context. Drawing and sculpture are treated less as discrete categories than as procedures for becoming. Jenrette's drawings are born from a fixed set of steel templates, arriving each time somewhere else. They imitate the structures of everyday life: the effort to assemble a self, to become legible, to be seen as desirable or acceptable, without ever fully knowing how. In one drawing, a ribbon-like form lifts and folds, dancing within the frame. It reads both as decoration and figure. An undefined accessory to celebration, recognizable in spirit, eluding a fixed clarity. The lines hold the gesture open, the moment is still arriving. The drawings carry a spirit of play inseparable from the conditions that limit them, joy produced through constraint. They persist, adjusting, trying again, holding themselves within their own making. What is at stake is not only form, but the possibility of continuing, of remaining in motion within an imperfect system, and finding something like pleasure there.

text by Paloma Soto

Kai Jenrette (b. 2001, Atlanta, GA; raised in Baltimore, MD) lives and works in New York. He received his BFA from The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art. Recent solo exhibitions include *Fever, Castle*, Los Angeles, CA, *Loose Rap*, Silke Lindner, New York, NY and *Tenacity*, Mammoth Gallery, London, UK. His work has been included in group exhibitions at Hamiltonian Artists, Washington, D.C.; *Derosia*, New York; *Silke Lindner*, New York; *april april*, Pittsburgh; *LVL3*, Chicago; and *Gated*, Ridgewood. He recently completed a residency at the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, and published *I'M PERFECT* with Du-Good Press, Brooklyn. Other past publications include *KENNY + PENNY*, recently acquired by the National Gallery of Art Library.