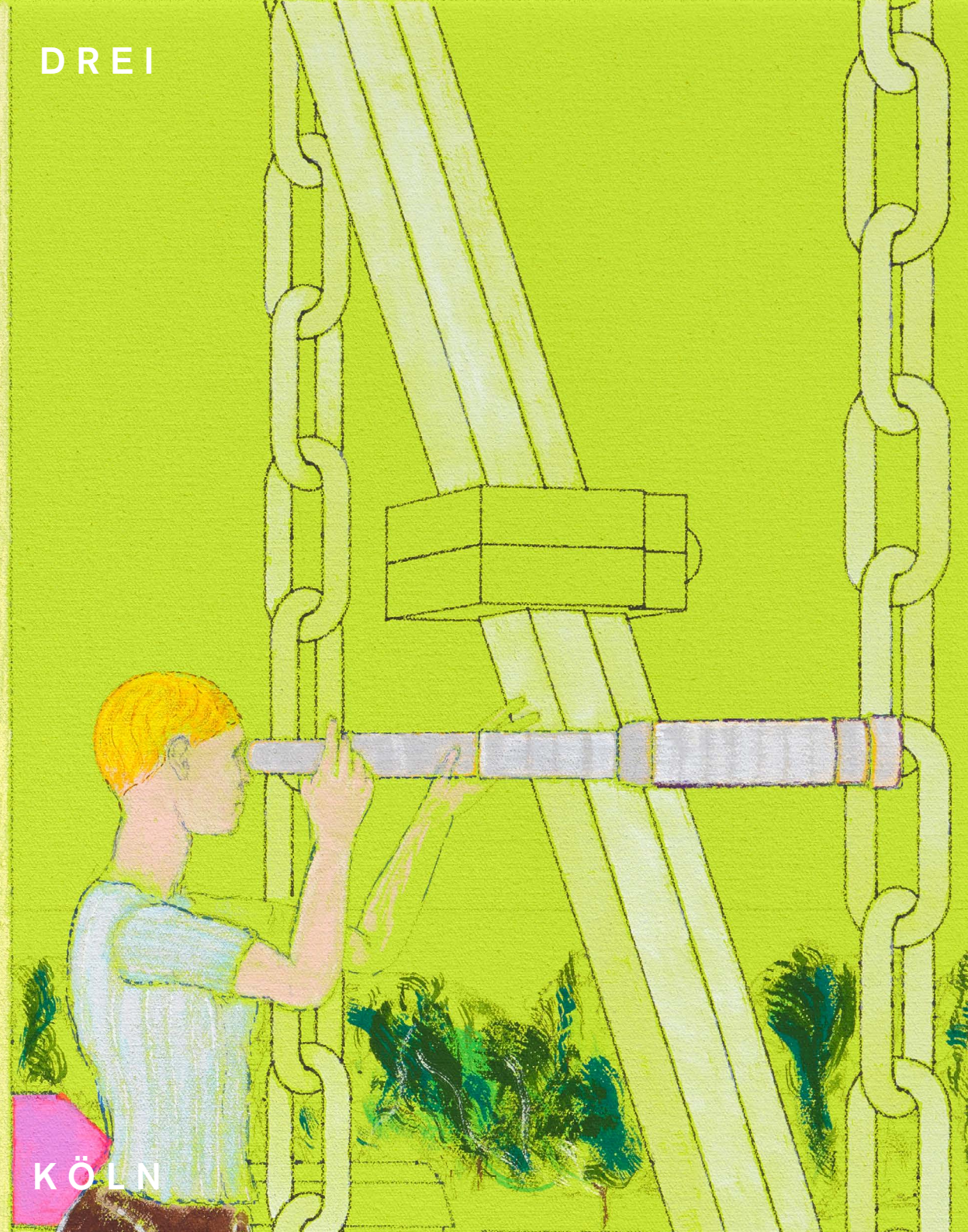




Limping Devil
Will Stovall

April 23 – May 30, 2026

DREI



KÖLN

Limping Devil

Will Stovall

April 23 – May 30, 2026

Will Stovall's first exhibition in Germany is inspired by one of the Ur-texts of modernity: Luis Vélez de Guevara's seventeenth-century fiction of a flight over Madrid during which a devil lifts the roofs of houses to expose the private lives of the capital's residents. Guevara wrote his novel at the same time that Diego Velázquez was painting *Las Meninas*, and it shares with that other great Spanish work of the age of the Scientific Revolution an interest in the seduction of seeing, the limits of what can be seen, and the devices by which we enhance our field of vision. For centuries to come, the motif of the flying devil lifting the roofs had a profound, if increasingly latent, impact on European and American narratives of social observation.

Stovall's paintings, executed in acrylic and watercolor on canvas, return to Guevara's fiction as a way to confront our own continuing fascination with—and anxieties over—surveillance and total visibility. In contrast to Guevara's silence on the mechanics behind the "roofs-off" moment, Stovall focuses on how such an apparatus of surveillance might actually be imagined. This step beyond the novel into the technical realizability of an expanded mode of observation is where painting as a medium—and especially the example of *Las Meninas*'s network of optical appearances—enters with its own particular force. Stovall's paintings reflect on the entanglement of technology and phantasm in the production of total visibility.

– Martin Wagner

Will Stovall (b. 1983, Washington, D.C.) received an MFA in Painting from Bard College and a PhD in German Languages and Literature from Yale University, with a dissertation on the institutional imagination of the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas. He has lectured at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and The Phillips Collection, as well as at Yale University, Princeton University, and George Washington University, where he teaches painting and art theory. Recent solo exhibitions include *Lifeworld Variations* at Château Shatto, Los Angeles (2025), and *Kant Crisis* at Ulrik, New York (2024).

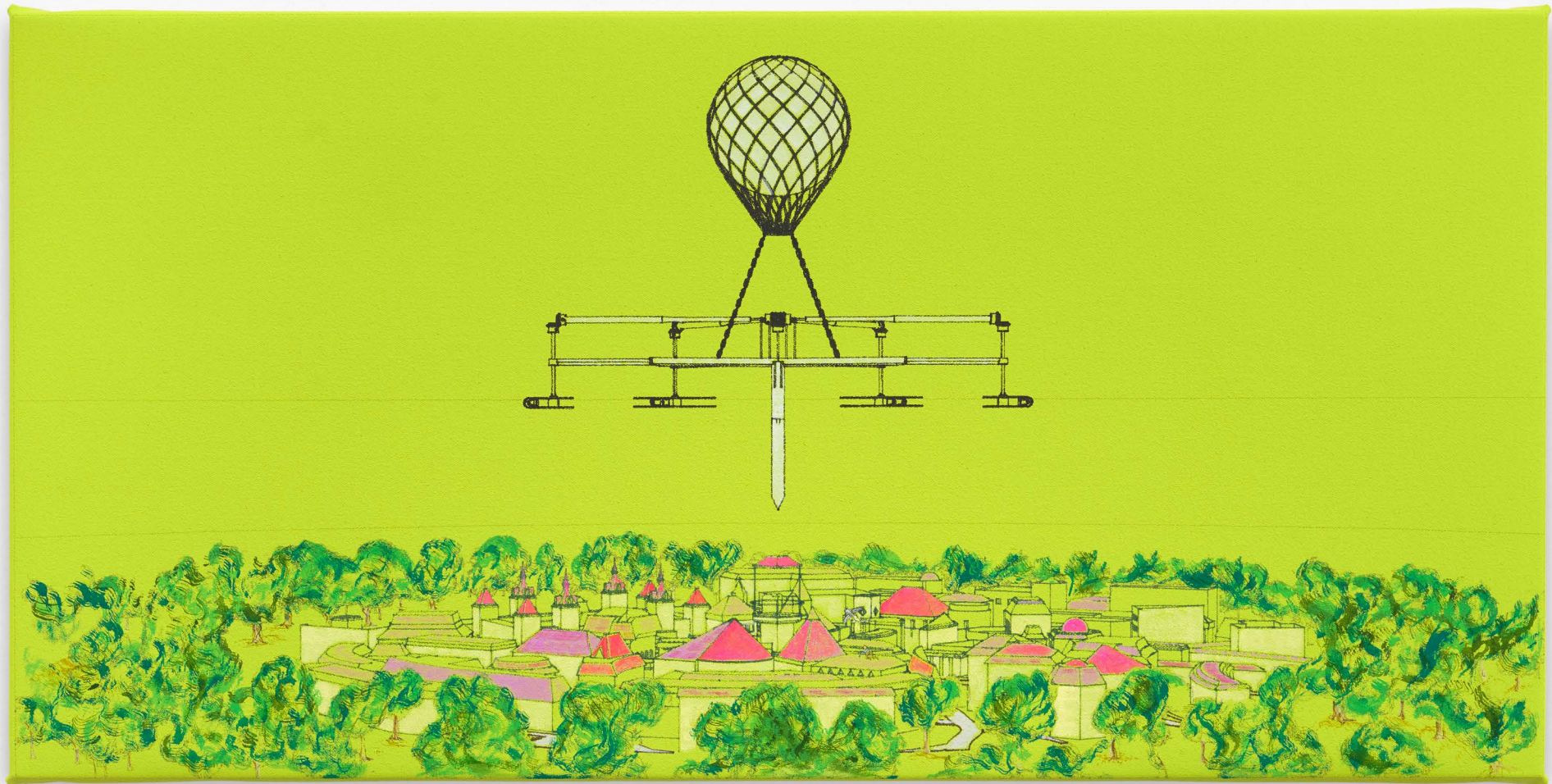
Will Stovalls erste Ausstellung in Deutschland ist inspiriert von einem der Urtexte der Moderne: Luis Vélez de Guevaras Erzählung aus dem 17. Jahrhundert, in der ein Teufel einen Studenten über Madrid fliegen lässt, die Dächer der Häuser anhebt und ihm so die verborgenen Seiten des städtischen Lebens offenlegt. Guevara schrieb seinen Roman zur gleichen Zeit, in der auch Diego Velázquez an *Las Meninas* arbeitete. Beide Werke kreisen um die Verführung des Sehens, die Grenzen des Sichtbaren und die Frage, durch welche Mittel unser Blick erweitert – und zugleich gesteuert – wird. Über Jahrhunderte hinweg wirkte das Motiv des fliegenden Teufels, der die Dächer anhebt, auf europäische und amerikanische Erzählungen sozialer Beobachtung ein – mal deutlich, mal nur noch unterschwellig.

Stovalls Gemälde, ausgeführt in Acryl und Aquarell auf Leinwand, kehren zu Guevaras Fiktion zurück, um unsere anhaltende Faszination für – und die damit einhergehenden Unsicherheiten gegenüber – Überwachung und totaler Sichtbarkeit zu thematisieren. Während Guevara offenlässt, wie die Dächer überhaupt „abgehoben“ werden, richtet Stovall den Blick darauf, wie ein solcher Überwachungsapparat konkret aussehen könnte. Genau an dieser Stelle – zwischen Vorstellung und möglicher technischer Umsetzung – gewinnt die Malerei als Medium eine besondere Bedeutung. Stovalls Gemälde reflektieren die Verflechtung von Technologie und Phantasma bei der Erzeugung totaler Sichtbarkeit.

– Martin Wagner

Will Stovall (geb. 1983, Washington, D.C.) erhielt einen MFA in Malerei vom Bard College und einen PhD in German Languages and Literature von der Yale University, mit einer Dissertation über die institutionelle Imagination des deutschen Philosophen Jürgen Habermas. Er hielt Vorträge im Smithsonian American Art Museum und in der Phillips Collection sowie an der Yale University, der Princeton University und der George Washington University, wo er Malerei und Kunsttheorie lehrt. Zu seinen jüngsten Einzelausstellungen zählen *Lifeworld Variations* im Château Shatto, Los Angeles (2025), und *Kant Crisis* bei Ulrik, New York (2024).





La carne del pastelón de Madrid, 2026
Acrylic and watercolor on canvas
42 × 84 cm / 16 ½ × 33 ¼ in



Sabandijas racionales (Un lindo dormía), 2026
Acrylic and watercolor on canvas
84 × 42 cm / 33 1/8 × 16 1/2 in



Sabandijas racionales (Caballeros aún a la mesa), 2026
Acrylic and watercolor on canvas
84 × 42 cm / 33 1/8 × 16 1/2 in



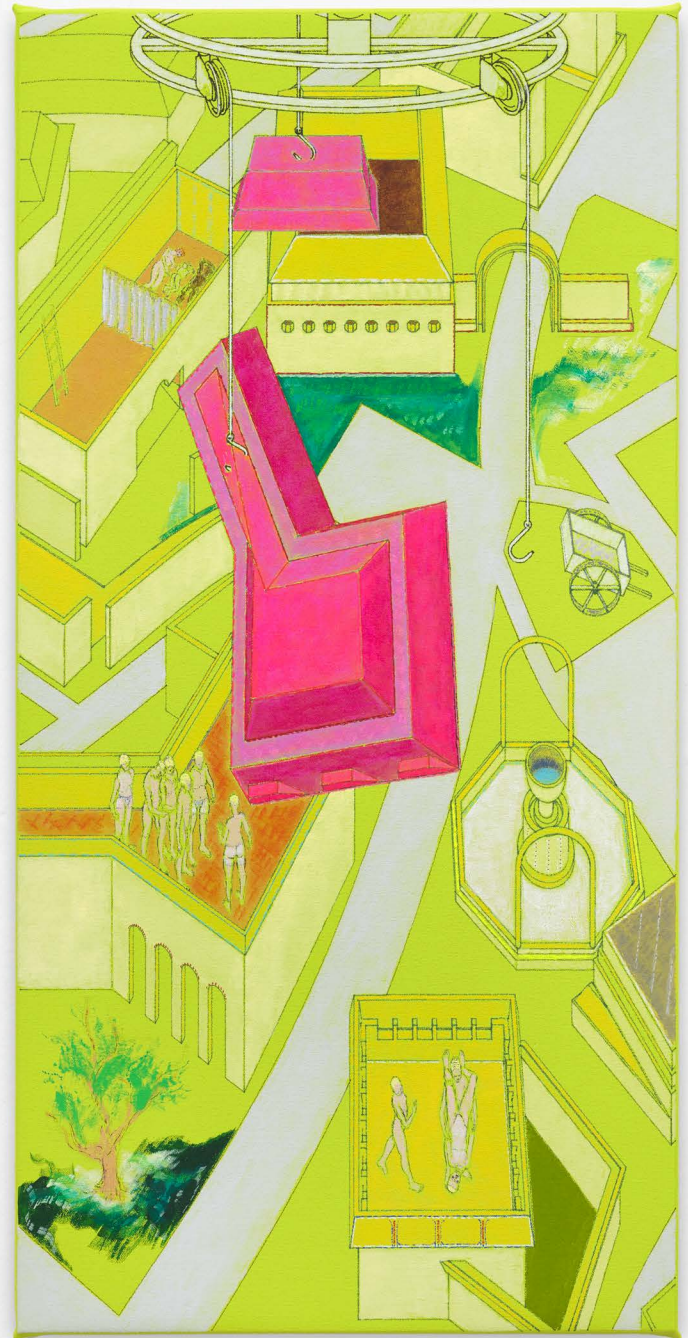




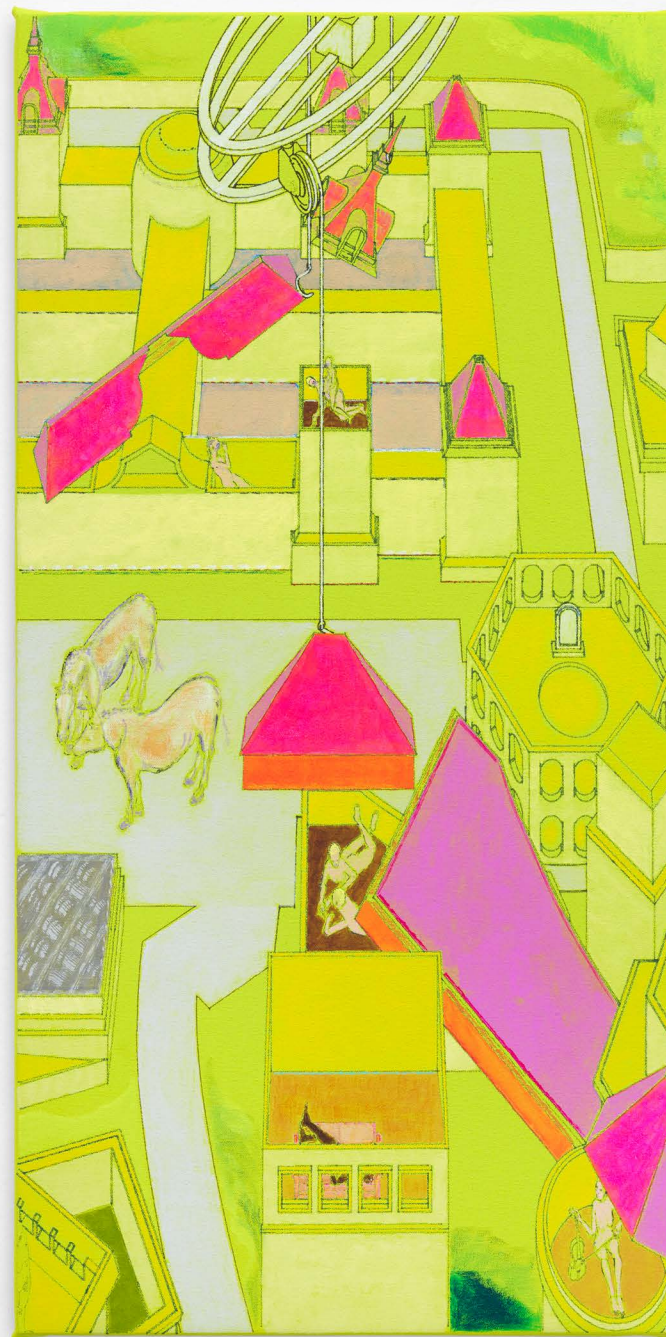
La torre de San Salvador, 2026
Acrylic and watercolor on canvas
42 × 84 cm / 16 ½ × 33 ¼ in



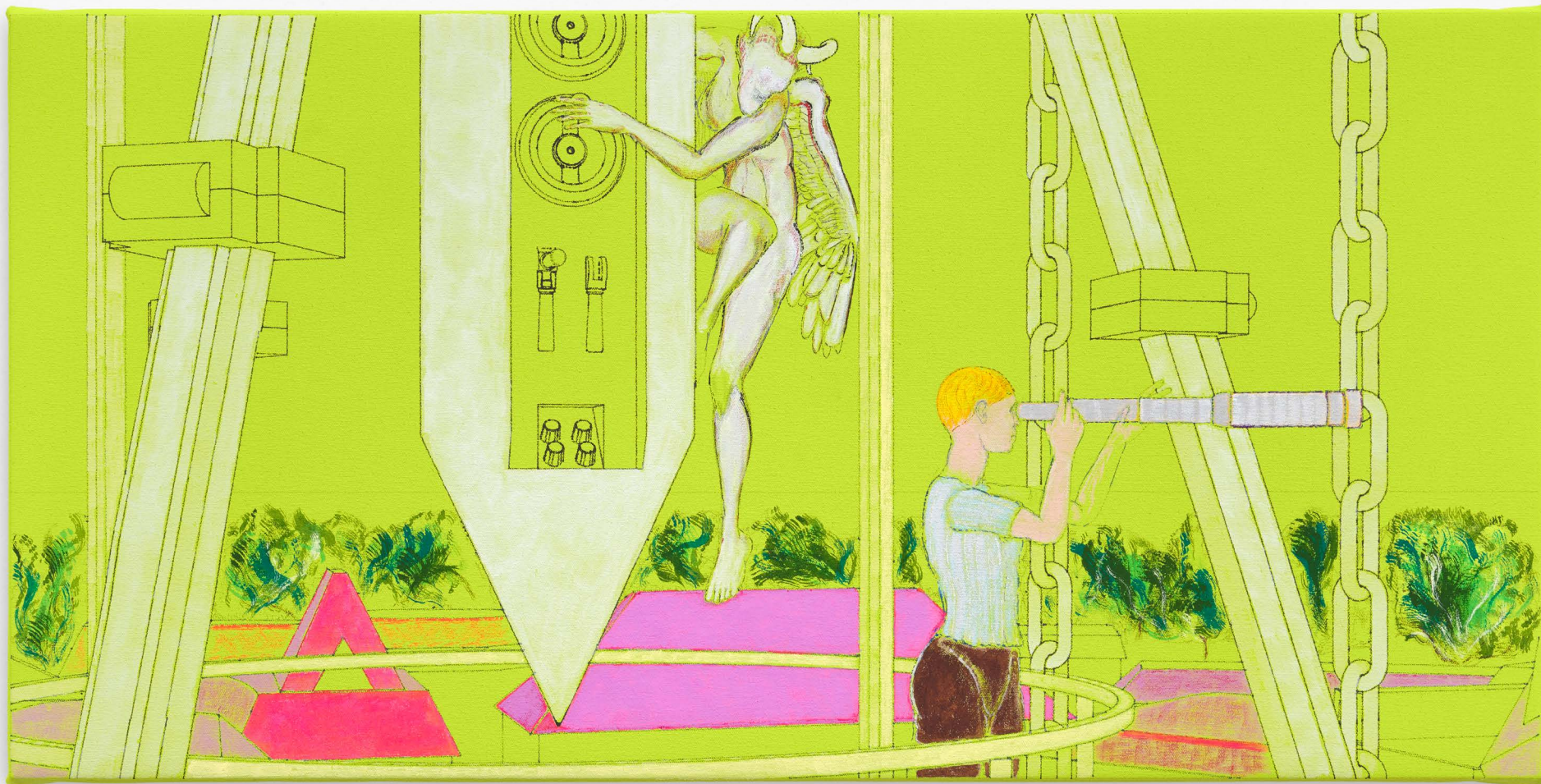
Sabandijas racionales (Señores ladrones), 2026
Acrylic and watercolor on canvas
84 × 42 cm / 33 1/8 × 16 1/2 in



Sabandijas racionales (La casa de los locos), 2026
Acrylic and watercolor on canvas
84 × 42 cm / 33 1/8 × 16 1/2 in







El diablo cujelo, 2026
Acrylic and watercolor on canvas
42 × 84 cm / 16 ½ × 33 ¼ in

DREI

WILL STOVALL

b.1983

Lives and works in Washington D.C.

EDUCATION

M.F.A., Milton Avery School of the Arts, Bard College, Painting, 2025.

Ph.D., Yale University, Germanic Languages and Literatures, May 2018.

Dissertation: "Prospect for a Lifeworld Interface: On the Institutional Imagination of Jürgen Habermas."

Advisor: Rüdiger Campe.

EXHIBITIONS

Solo Exhibitions

2026 *Limping Devil*. Drei, Cologne, GER.

2025 *Lifeworld Diagram*. Château Shatto, Los Angeles, CA.

2024 *Kant Crisis*. Ulrik, New York, NY.

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Books

2022 *Of the Land: The Art and Poetry of Lou Stovall*. Edited and introduced by Will Stovall. Georgetown University Press, 2022.

Illustrations

2021 *Various Revelers*. Oxford German Studies, vol. 50, no. 3, Routledge, 2021.

Cover illustration: detail of an oil on paper painting.

2020 *Marchers*. Seminar: A Journal of Germanic Studies, vol. 56, no. 2, University of Toronto Press, 2020. Cover illustration: detail of an oil on canvas painting.

Silkscreen Prints

2009 *Museum Moment, SP 15/16 and 16/16*. With Sam Gilliam at Workshop, Inc. Published by the Smithsonian Associates.

Exhibition Catalogs

2022 *Lou Stovall: The Museum Workshop*. Phillips Collection, 2022.

CURATORIAL WORK

2022 *Lou Stovall: The Museum Workshop*. The Phillips Collection. Guest Curator.

2022 *Of the Land: Lou Stovall and the Poetry of Seasons*. The Kreeger Museum. Guest Curator.

2021 *What's Going Around: Community Poster Art, 1967 - 1976*. The Columbus Museum and Hemphill Artworks. Guest Curator.

COURSES TAUGHT

2025 *Theory of Art in the Public Realm*. Corcoran School of the Arts Design, George Washington University. Professorial Lecturer.

2024 *Painting: Visual Thinking*. Corcoran School of the Arts & Design, George Washington University. Professorial Lecturer.

2014 *German airy Tales*. Yale College. Teaching Fellow. Visiting Professor Henry Sussman.

2014 *German Language 103*. Yale College. German Language Instructor.

2013 *German Language 101, 102*. Yale College. German Language Instructor.

CONFERENCE PAPERS AND TALKS

2024 *Visiting Artist Talk*. Smithsonian American Art Museum. Docent Programs.

2022 *Curator's Perspective*. Lou Stovall: The Museum Workshop. Phillips Collection.

2014 *Signs, Slogans, Moility*. Conditions of Precarity Conference. Yale University, German Literature.

2012 *Gloss/Glossa: Kenneth Goldsmith's Arcades*. Topologies of Reading Conference. Princeton University, Comparative Literature.

FELLOWSHIPS

2013 Universität Konstanz, Baden-Württemberg Exchange Fellow.

2012 Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Baden-Württemberg Exchange Fellow.

ARTIST ASSISTANTSHIPS

2018 Sam Gilliam, Washington, DC.

2009 Sam Gilliam, Washington, DC.

2003 Nam June Paik, New York, NY.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

2024 Zeiba, Drew. "Will Stovall's Impossible Architectures." Frieze Magazine. Issue 245, September, 2024.

2022 Ables, Kelsey. "This art show knits together two Washingtons — one homey, one grand." Washington Post. 13 September, 2022.

D R E I

Photos: Mareike Tocha

For further information,
please contact:

D R E I
Gertrudenstrasse 24 – 28, 50667 Cologne
gallery@dreikoln.com

K Ö L N