

**Ken Solomon**

***Running to Stand Still***

April 18 - May 25, 2013

Opening reception: April 18th, 6-8pm

Josée Bienvenu Gallery is pleased to present *Running to Stand Still*, an exhibition of new works by Ken Solomon. Amassing unique information in the form of algorithms, iPhones, iPads and computer screens, Solomon's latest work documents a personal pilgrimage, a poignant self-portrait through screens on paper. Instant information is processed into long, slow, self-revealing watercolors.

*Running to Stand Still* – from the eponymous U2 song – is an intimate peek deep inside the ears of the artist by way of Pandora, a popular algorithm-driven application that automatically curates a listener's playlist. The installation is comprised of 100 iPhone size watercolor paintings that unite to form an overarching and uncomfortably close up listen of one man's stalled musical curiosity in the mid 1990's, when his interest in pop music screeches to a halt. In fossilizing 6 hours of greatest-hits music from a bygone century, *Running to Stand Still* tracks the universally moving and self-deprecating journey of a middle-aged white American man transitioning from vibrant, curious youth to midlife. Solomon exudes a childlike sense of playful optimism by curating the top songs of his youth into a mixtape of colors, lines and memories. Unlike Pandora's random design, Solomon revisits his long gone musical passion by linking each song, each delicately painted album cover, through their titles. The last word of one song title is the first word of the next – *Start me Up/Up to No Good/Good Day Sunshine/Shine a Light/Light it up* – until ultimately powering off. *Running to Stand Still* portrays the lifespan of an iPhone from full battery power to empty – an eyewitness as technology dies off in slow, predictable ways – but with the ability to always be recharged and reborn, just like us.

*Looking Down from Above* brings up unanswered questions about death and the afterlife. Sixty individual panels, each the size of an iPad screen, show a bird's-eye view of the colored rectangular container fields in Newark via Google Earth. It translates the literal into the abstract, the banality of cars, industrial equipment, and pavement into the unknown. The work includes discreet private annotations; the time on top of the screen reads 12:22, battery power 43% – the dates of the artist's mother's birthday who passed away 12 years ago. The piece conveys the idea of being watched from up high as a mechanism to cope with grief. The same imagery morphs into a large scale painting in *Google Portrait – mondrian – Page 1*. Newark from above leads to Mondrian's early work, and into his later works. Private annotations through open tabs infiltrate the search. Solomon weaves his work into that of a master he admires and connects with in the way his brain processes mathematic sequences into visual shapes and colors.

*Google Portrait – hard day's night*, a painting of a search window minimizing in a genie effect, and *Lunch Break*, a 30 min walk through DUMBO, a physical folded map, based on a Google Map walk, both examine the rituals of daily life and routine, each day virtually the same, back and forth from the studio, the same song repeated over and over, with subtle shifts that make it unique. Lastly, *My Apps*, is a comprehensive self-portrait through the surrogate DNA of 64 apps.

Born in Washington DC, Ken Solomon lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. Selected exhibitions include: *The Changing Art of Portraiture*, Zimmerli Art Museum, New Brunswick, NJ; *Art<sup>2</sup>*, FLAG Art Foundation, New York, NY; *False Documents and Other Illustrations*, Portland Museum of Art, OR; *Size Does Matter*, Curated by Shaquille O'Neal, FLAG Art Foundation, New York, NY; *WALL ROCKETS: Contemporary Artists and Ed Ruscha*, Curated by Lisa Dennison, FLAG Art Foundation, New York, NY (traveled to the Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY) (2009/2008); Warehouse Gallery, Syracuse University, NY, Point of Contact Gallery, Syracuse University, NY (2009); *New Perspectives in Latin American Art*, Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, NY.

For more information, please contact the gallery at +1.212.206.7990