

STEVE DIBENEDETTO

Uncertainty Takes a Holiday

October 26 - December 9, 2023

DAVID NOLAN GALLERY

24 East 81st Street New York NY 10028 212 925 6190 davidnolangallery.com

David Nolan Gallery is pleased to present Steve DiBenedetto: *Uncertainty Takes a Holiday*, the artist's fourth solo show with the gallery, on view from October 26 through December 9, 2023. The exhibition will include both paintings and works on paper, all created within the last two years.

Possessed by a desire to "maximize" a painting, DiBenedetto continues to find new ways to exploit the possibilities of oil paint through crusty, built-up surfaces and bright, jewel-toned shapes that gleam in the midst of gritty, impastoed muck. Though he can apply paint so thickly it might qualify as bas-relief, the forms themselves are flattened into the background in a way that often feels like massive amounts of time and space have been compressed into a single plane. As always, DiBenedetto is working out his ideas on the canvas, adding and subtracting elements in an iterative process such that even when a work is finished, the agitation of its creation remains visible on the surface.

Throughout his career, DiBenedetto's work has reflected his intellectual interests, from his early investigations into the transmission and erosion of information and the vibrations of technology, to his well-known explorations of states of altered consciousness through the iconography of the octopus, the helicopter and the ferris wheel. Most recently, DiBenedetto's attention has been fixated on theoretical physics: quantum mechanics, the Big Bang, string theory and its idea that our universe exists in eleven dimensions. Suddenly, the 11-tentacled structures in his paintings make sense, the circular whorls at their termini now understood as portals into other realms.

In the painting titled *Uncertainty Takes a Holiday (2022-23)*, a dark form stretches its tentacles, some of which appear to contain eyes at their tips, others that end in circles containing their own little miniature abstractions. DiBenedetto shapes the arms into rounded, embodied forms that reach out from some nebulous, murky space, seeming to glow with the yellow and white light emanating from somewhere behind it – a holy radiance for the scientific age. By contrast, *Higgs Hippy HellHole (2022)* feels relatively flattened: portals fashioned from one or two saturated hue, tentacles crossing each other in the same plane within a golden field that doesn't glow so much as it stuns with its assertiveness.

DiBenedetto executes his finely detailed drawings in colored pencil and a particular type of white ink marker he favors for the way it allows the pencil pigment to "ooze" through, creating a grayish, ghostly shade. Part of what makes them particularly dazzling is the way in which DiBenedetto fuses his theoretical diagrams with contemporary digital technologies, delineating cosmic pathways that resemble computer circuitry or neural networks at a moment when human and artificial knowledge feel uncomfortably indistinguishable. In this sense, the artist has never really abandoned his early enchantments with technological dystopias or the centrifugal motion of the helicopter, for what is the Big Bang if not centrifugal force writ galactically large?



Steve DiBenedetto (b. 1958, Bronx, NY) earned his BFA from Parsons School of Design in 1980. He has received the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award, the Rosenthal Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the Guggenheim Fellowship Award. DiBenedetto has taught at numerous institutions throughout the United States, including Rutgers University, Cooper Union, Columbia University, and The School of Visual Arts.

DiBenedetto's work has been featured in numerous institutional exhibitions all over the world, including the University of SUNY, Albany, NY; Whitney Museum of Art, New York, NY; University of Richmond Museum, Richmond, VA; MoMA PS1, Long Island City, NY; MassArt, Boston, MA; American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, NY; Neuen Museum, Nurnberg, Germany; University of the Arts, Philadelphia, PA; Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, CT; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France; Museum of Contemporary Art, Geneva, Switzerland; FRAC Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Lille, France; and the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, NY, among others. His work is included in numerous museum collections, including The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; and the Whitney Museum, New York, NY, as well as numerous private collections.



Meat Ghost, 2023
oil on linen
28 x 24 1/4 in (71.1 x 61.6 cm)
(SD8863)





Helgoland, 2023
oil on linen
74 x 94 in (188 x 238.8 cm)
(SD8866)





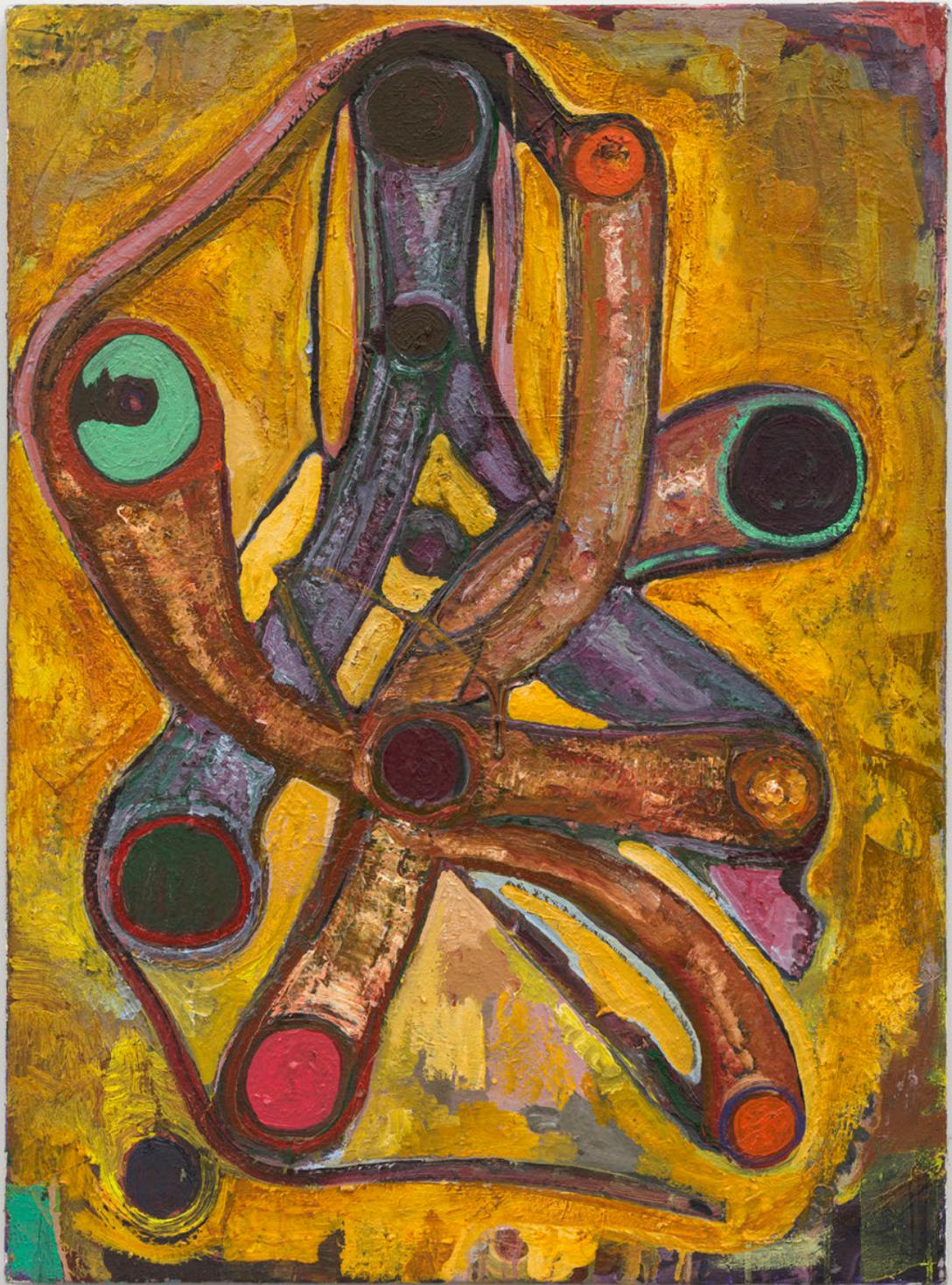
Particle Ashram, 2022-23
oil on linen
30 x 24 in (76.2 x 61 cm)
(SD8829)





Dimensional Daycare, 2023
oil on linen
20 x 16 1/4 in (50.8 x 41.3 cm)
(SD8868)





Higgs Hippy HellHole, 2022
oil on linen
30 x 22 in (76.2 x 55.9 cm)
(SD8830)





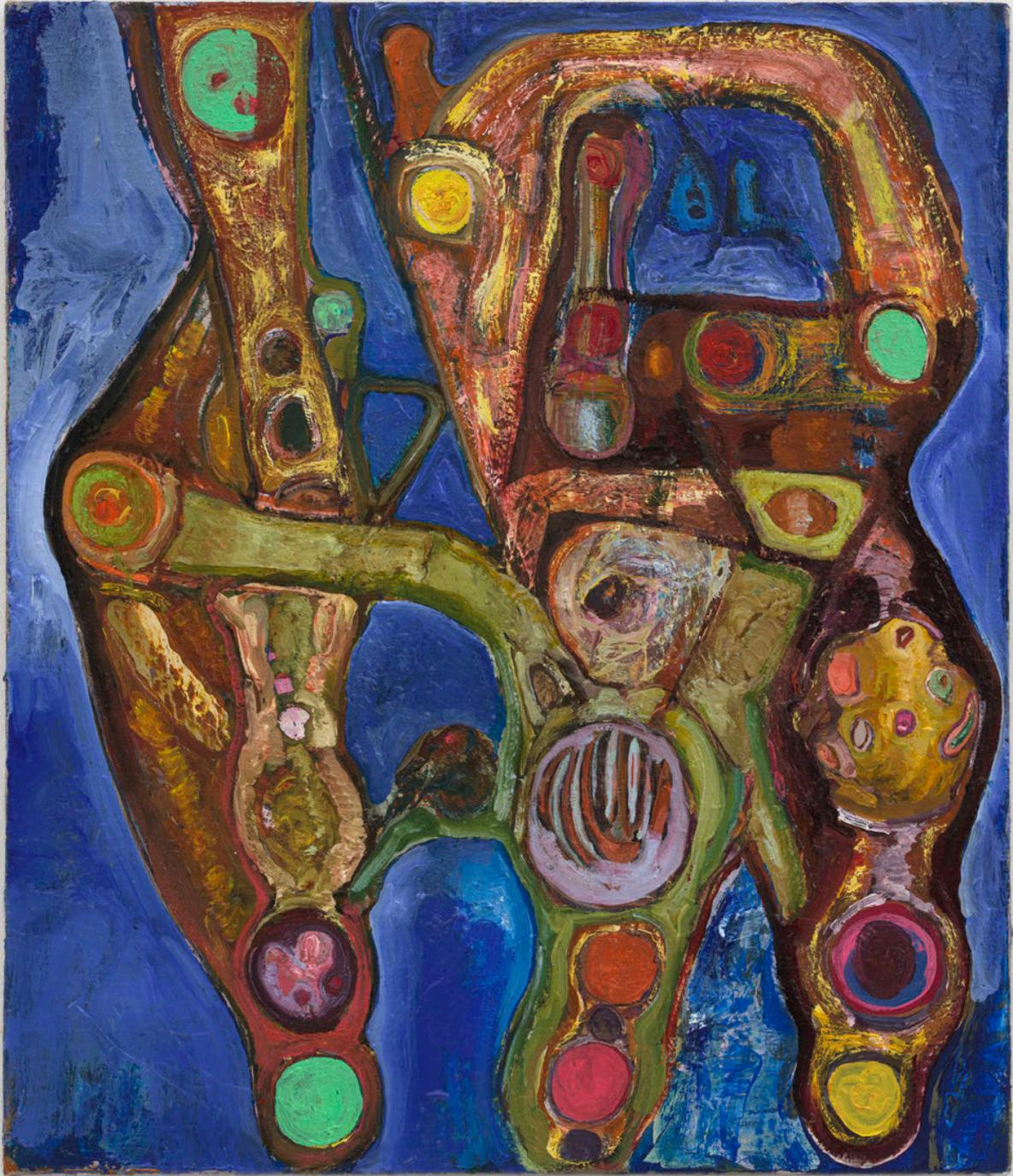
Galactic Lint, 2023
oil on linen
20 x 16 1/4 in (50.8 x 41.3 cm)
(SD8868)





Portrait of God by A.I., 2023
oil on linen
20 x 18 in (50.8 x 45.7 cm)
(SD8876)





Boltzman Brain, 2023
oil on linen
28 x 24 in (71.1 x 61 cm)
(SD8865)





Uncertainty Takes a Holiday, 2022-23
oil on linen
28 x 22 in (71.1 x 55.9 cm)
(SD8848)

An abstract painting featuring a complex composition of dark, swirling colors. The palette is dominated by deep browns, blacks, and greys, interspersed with vibrant accents of yellow, orange, blue, and green. The brushwork is thick and expressive, creating a sense of movement and depth. Several circular and semi-circular forms are scattered throughout, some containing smaller, more detailed elements. The overall effect is one of intense energy and organic complexity.

For further information please contact Michael Lieberman
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