

THE DRAWING ROOM 55 Main Street 2nd floor East Hampton NY 11937 631 324 5016

PRESS RELEASE

August 23 – September 29, 2025

ELISABETH KLEY

Pattern is a Habit

The Drawing Room is pleased to present an exhibition spotlighting New York artist Elisabeth Kley, whose acclaimed practice encompasses ceramics, painting, printmaking and textiles. Introducing selections from her oeuvre of the past decade, the gallery's first show of her work includes clay sculptures and works on paper, as well as functional objects that transcend the boundary of the decorative arts. A reception for the artist will be held from 4 to 6 pm on Saturday, August 23rd.



FW installation with Yellow Floor, 2020, pencil, ink and watercolor on paper, 14 x 17 inches

Kley's distinctive mark-making across varied bodies of work and mediums is immediately recognizable. Imbued with her bold, yet sensuous touch, geometric and botanical motifs are often juxtaposed within a single object. The layered brushwork of glazes and stains that enhances her bisque-fired terracotta vessels and sculpture is occasionally articulated with spontaneous sgraffito techniques. In a similar vein, her use of ink and watercolor on paper embraces the freedom and fluidity of those mediums.

Infused with Kley's appropriation of motifs drawn from her research across the vast history of visual culture, each artwork presents a new surface for the artist's transformation of ornamental traditions. Sources of inspiration range in origin from ancient Asian, Greek, Roman, and Egyptian civilizations to early 20th-century Wiener Werkstätte designs and the costumes created by Léon Bakst for the *Ballets Russes*.



*Lotus with Diagonal, 2021, glazed earthenware
17 1/2 x 15 x 8 1/4 inches*

The exhibition installation begins in the gallery's window, where a black-and-white painting on panel provides a lyrical backdrop for a trio of works: two glazed ceramic forms and a vibrant watercolor.

Kley's layered *mise-en-scène* extends upstairs, where the installation includes a five-tiered fountain, three multi-faceted sculptures, watercolors, painted ceramic tiles, and black-and-white relief prints. The graphic interplay between dark and light shapes riffs on the perception of foreground and background and at times resembles optical puzzles. Viewers are invited into an immersive, staged world of pattern upon pattern, where the tension between ornament and the spare white architectural setting is intricately balanced.

(over)

Elisabeth Kley (b. 1956, New York, NY) earned her BA from Empire State College and later studied at Hunter College. Her ceramics, watercolors, drawings and prints have been widely exhibited over the past twenty-five years. Recent solo exhibitions were presented at the Currier Museum, Manchester, NH (2024) and The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia, PA (2021). A monograph on her work was published by Pre-Echo Press in 2019.

While best known as an artist whose ceramic sculptures, vessels, drawings and site-specific paintings have garnered critical recognition, Kley is also a published art writer whose reviews and features have been published in *ARTnews*, *Art in America* and *Ursula*. Earlier this year, she served as guest curator for White Columns' 15th Annual Exhibition, *Looking Back*.



Large Parasol Flask, 2016, glazed earthenware, 24 x 18 x 7 inches

Gallery hours are Friday through Sunday 11 to 5, and midweek by appointment.

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