

## Barry Katz Artist Statement

My work explores ideas about identity, alienation and belonging, and a sense of outsider status reflected in the work's overall oddness and imperfect, hand-made lumpiness. Operating simultaneously as both painting and sculpture, these pieces could almost be described as non-binary. At the same time, the layered application of color carries the suggestion of something furtive, something hidden beneath the surface, addressing themes of concealment and disclosure. These are all essential elements of what I would identify as a queer sensibility.

Made from plaster over a wire mesh armature, with a textured, polychrome surface comprised of pigment, lime, and acrylic binder, these pieces employ a motif of discrete forms arrayed across a horizontal field, which can be seen in two ways. As a narrative element, it seems to suggest varieties of interpersonal relationships. Viewed through another lens, it bears distinct reference to musical notation, paying homage to a family history that includes generations of musicians.

I sometimes think of these pieces as a kind of visual music. In both the sculptural pieces and in my graphic work, the balancing of shape, color, sequence, and carefully calibrated spatial relationships provides an analog to musical intervals, tone color, rhythm, and the relationships between notes that produce chords, melody, inner voices, and an overarching sense of cohesion.

As well, the color palette of a given work might be thought of as its key signature, providing a context in which deviations from the expected provoke moments of heightened drama.

Invoking elements analogous to those employed in music is, for me, one strategy for making objects that convey meaning through non-objective means. One strategy among many, but with deep roots in my own psyche and sense of self.