

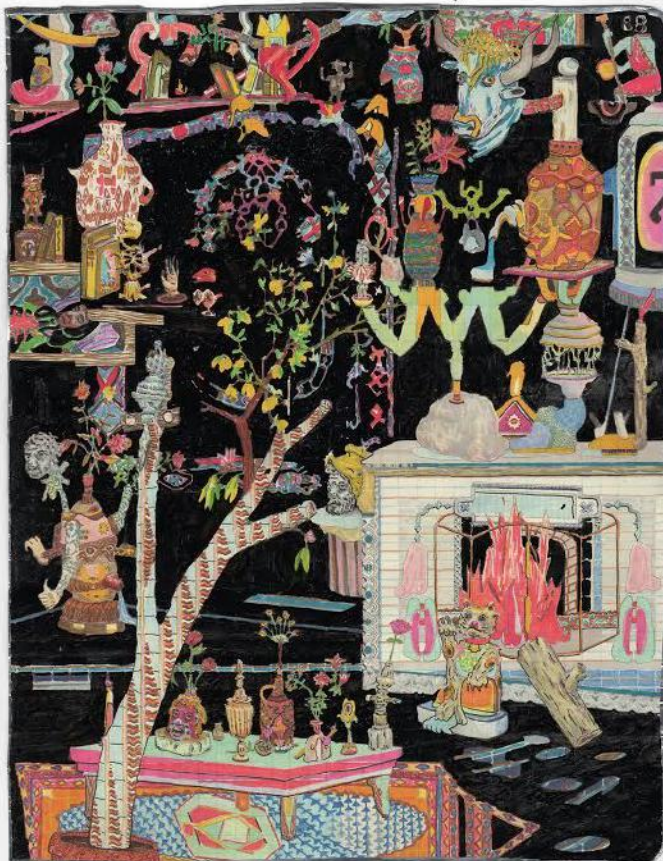
# HAW/CONTEMPORARY - PRESS RELEASE

**Alex Kwares - *Don't Get Up***

**April 29 through June 11, 2016**

**Opening Reception - Friday, April 29, 6 - 9 PM**

What does it mean to divorce the protagonist from the narrative? In his latest body of work, Alex Kwares address this question, arranging a historically ambiguous cast of Hussars, miscreants and dandies in dislocated, overlapping and flattened narrative time. They are suspended as elements in elaborate still lives becoming empty shells with an aftertaste of bookish, boyish heroism. Denied the grand arc of plot, these warriors and fops are rendered mere totems of defused, romantic and somewhat infantile masculinity, inhabiting tableaux of metaphysical slapstick.



To further compress time and place, these tableaux are strewn with neoclassical debris, sweepings from cabinets of antiquity, elaborate textile patterns and unnatural flower arrangements. The elements that should belong to the heroic narrative are dismantled and dipped in folly, while decoration and stagecraft are examined and inflated.

Cultivating the decorative flourish in order to mutate it to the point of abstraction has been a longstanding focus of Kwares's work. He is particularly invested in bending drawing to awkwardly mimic textiles, embroidery and decorative painting, pantomiming a tradition and craft by mimicking embroidered stitch with a dash of pencil or painting on the other side of the paper to overdyed tapestry.

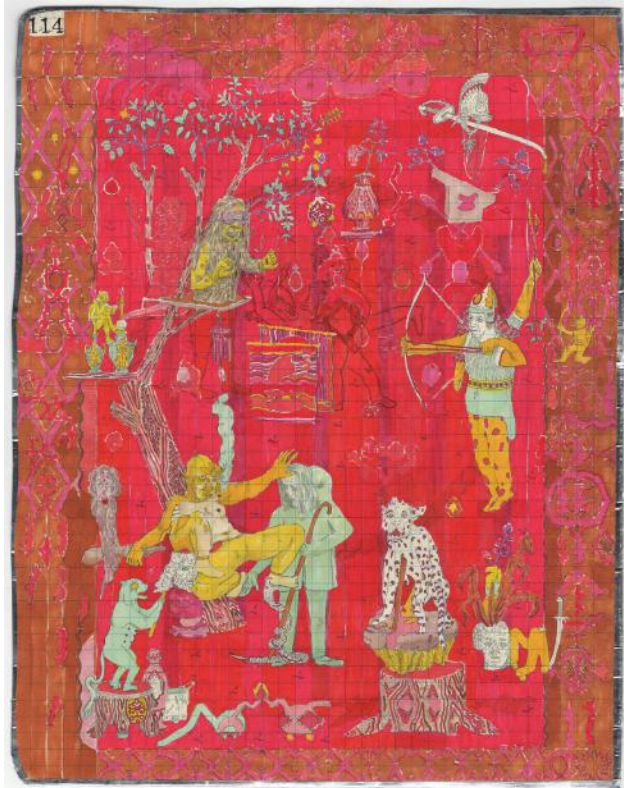
Traditionally, figurative representation of the military and masculinity is anchored in impenetrable, monolithic solidity.

Kwares smashes this and reiterates it into still-lives and patterns. These fragments become the catalyst for a call and response process that mutates and micro-abstracts the source narrative, not unlike the decorative elements that surround them, into a network of sub-narrative gestures linked by art historical references.

Alex Kwares was born in Kiev, Ukraine and has lived in the United States since 1990. Kwares received his BFA from the University of Kansas in Lawrence and his MFA from the University of Texas in Austin. His work has been exhibited at the Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, Museum

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of Contemporary Art of Georgia, Josee Bienvenu Gallery and Mulherin + Pollard in New York, Steven Zevitas Gallery in Boston, Judi Rotenburg in Boston, the Contemporary Art Museum in St. Louis, the Minsk Museum of Modern Art in Belarus, and the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art in North Carolina, among others. His work has been included in several issues of *New American Paintings*. He currently teaches at Pratt Institute, NY and lives in Brooklyn.



Marked by a staggering amount of detail and an impossible amount of lines, Kvares's drawings radiate a quietness and hypnotic power. In this series of works, Kvares uses an old book of graph paper, working grid by tiny grid to make what appear to be intricate maps or blueprints of some magnificent, cosmic creation. There's a system within these beautiful works, which seems adhered to and subsequently ignored; each careful decision can be felt, as well as the hours spent creating them.

**Gallery Hours:** 9-5 Tuesday through Friday,  
12-5 Saturday

## **Press Contact**

Emily Eddins

816.842.5877

[emily@hawcontemporary.com](mailto:emily@hawcontemporary.com)