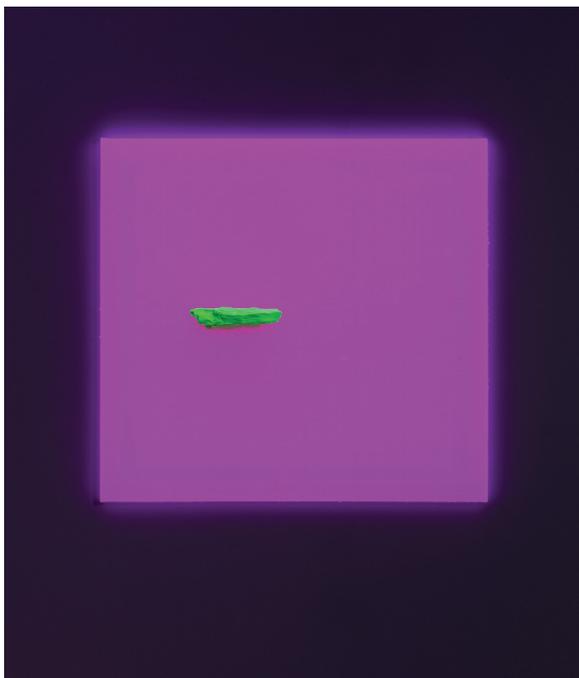


Jacqueline Humphries

June 22, 2019–May 17, 2020



Dia Art Foundation

The Dan Flavin Art Institute

23 Corwith Avenue Bridgehampton New York

www.diaart.org

Jacqueline Humphries

Since 2005 Jacqueline Humphries has explored the effects of ultraviolet (UV) light—commonly referred to as black light—on fluorescent pigments. The black lights utilized by the artist “excite” the fluorescent pigments embedded within the cast objects as they absorb UV radiation. This absorption causes the electrons’ energy to increase, and then a portion of this energy is emitted as visible light as they return to normal levels. Through this technology, Humphries asks viewers to reconsider a medium more associated with psychedelic art and 1960s counter-culture than the avant-garde. In her own words, “Black-light art is a cliché. I liked to think that I could redeem it somehow, make it fresh again. I thought, What happens if I put the whole painting in this machine? What if I just change the entire light conditions of the painting?”¹ Extending beyond her prior bodies of work in black light, the newly created artworks seen here offer a level of articulated detail and physical presence in three-dimensional space beyond that of a painting.

This body of artwork employs a natural vocabulary, although her materials are decidedly industrial. Humphries cast a wide range of objects in epoxy resin mixed with black-light-fluorescing pigments. The resulting works, also saturated with pigments, carry traces of their varied source objects—prior paintings, plywood, found driftwood, and decayed, wooden signage—and sit alongside other objects such as driftwood and seashells that were produced through 3D-printing techniques. While some works are more heavily pigmented and opaque, others glow with an eerie translucence that reveals their underlying support structure and hanging hardware.

Unlike the vast, industrial gallery spaces at Dia:Beacon, Beacon, New York, and Dia:Chelsea, New York City, the Dan Flavin Art Institute, Bridgehampton, New York, is domestically sized and shares architectural characteristics local to eastern Long Island. Humphries, a part-time resident of the northern shore, draws material inspiration for this body of work from the locale. Elements of *Driftwood* and *Sign* (both 2019) originally washed ashore on the beach near Humphries’s home, and while the plywood that was cast did not, it shares a similar vocabulary of material detritus and flotsam.

This exhibition also responds to the legacy of Dan Flavin, who began to work with light in the early 1960s. The Dan Flavin Art Institute is an exhibition space initiated by Flavin with Dia as well as a home for a permanent installation of his

light-based work. Humphries and Flavin share an interest in illumination as central to the artwork, as opposed to seeing light as an external or additional feature. In her words: "I was trying to think of ways to integrate the light source into the painting itself."² This resonance between the two artists' practices is further exemplified in their shared attention to site. Architecture generally, and corners specifically, were a framing device often utilized by Flavin. On the second floor of the Dan Flavin Art Institute, for example, four such works are displayed in corners, including *red out of a corner (to Annina)* (1963). Humphries's *Custom Sheet Yellow* (2019) is similarly installed in the corner of the exhibition space. Saturated with yellow-green fluorescent pigments, the work is thus isolated, allowing it to project a brilliant green aura onto the adjoining walls.

Humphries's aggregation of materials here addresses the ostensible binary between real and digital terrains. All of the works allude to an outside source, a referent that is not physically present in these cloned remains. Some of these referents are digital while others are natural. For *Driftwood*, Humphries juxtaposes 3D-printed driftwood with real cast driftwood found on a nearby beach. In the digitally printed objects, there is a visual glitch—a slight pixelation in the surface of the materials—which serves as a subtle indicator of their computer-programmed origins. Even natural materials, such as the driftwood, are duplicated to undermine their singularity.

Painting (2019), the first executed within this new body of work, is fluorescent pink. Cast from a painting that Humphries originally made in 2016, the repeated pattern of emoticon smiley faces becomes visible in the pink resin on close examination. Affixed to this surface, appearing to hover at the painting's midline, is a fluorescent yellow 3D-printed fragment of driftwood. The two individual components of *Painting* are both heavily pigmented and pulsate with color, but there is a perceptible disjunction between the pixelated quality of the 3D print and the more seamless analogue cast of the painting.

In a sly reference to Dia's typically minimal branding and continuing this line of questioning between the natural and the digital, the found and the made, a number of works are inscribed with the foundation's logo. Humphries's interest in text as image has developed over several preceding bodies of work. For over five years she has engaged with the dominance of digital displays that are now omnipresent in

contemporary culture. Her work seeks to address the question of how technology has changed society by modifying individual communication. Text, language, and characters are often abstracted in her canvases. Most recently, she utilized the American Standard Code for Information Interchange (commonly known as ASCII) as a system to reenvision some of her earlier paintings, transforming brushstrokes and gesture into type and sign. Less commonly in use now that computer memory is more readily available, ASCII was the original digital means of capturing visual language.

Humphries translates the marks and patterns of earlier paintings into ASCII code, which she uses to make large, laser-cut stencils. She then forces several layers of paint through this stenciled code, resulting in a densely built-up surface. She is able to implement different characters and fonts to layer additional meaning and levity within these paintings, as the ASCII coding is ultimately mutable to the artist's desires. While the presence of Dia's graphic logo within her new series is initially surprising, it follows earlier projects in which she inflects digital and textual elements—such as a captcha made of her initials (as in *jH21*), 2018) or a subtle reference to logos and branding (as in *[Q]*, 2016)—with a painterly quality.

Full Sheet Violet and *Full Sheet Green* (both 2019) were etched so that the natural grain of the plywood sheet as well as an additional magnified grain are visible in the cast surfaces. Though the magnified grain looks eerily amiss, the eye struggles to distinguish what is real from what is not. This continuous play between real and representational, digital and analogue, seen throughout the works at the Dan Flavin Art Institute, extends Humphries's exploration of the potential of the artwork beyond the confines of gestural authenticity.

notes

1. Cecily Brown, interview with Jacqueline Humphries, *BOMB*, no. 107 (Spring 2009), pp. 22–31.
2. "Rat Tears: An Interview with Jacqueline Humphries and Tony Oursler," in *Jacqueline Humphries: Black Light Paintings* (New York: Foundation 20 21, 2005), n.p.

Jacqueline Humphries was born in 1960 in New Orleans. In 1985 she received her MFA from the Parsons School of Design in New York City and attended the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program in the city the following year. Recent presentations include 2015 solo exhibitions at Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh and Contemporary Arts Center in New Orleans, and Prospect New Orleans in 2008. Her work was included in the 2014 Whitney Biennial and is in the permanent collections of Carnegie Museum of Art, as well as the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York; Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York; Tate Modern in London; and Whitney Museum of American Art, among others. Humphries lives and works between New York City and Southold, New York.

selected bibliography

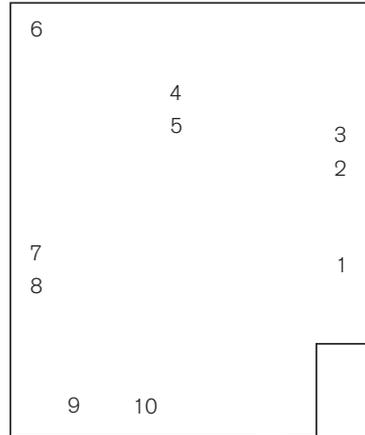
Brown, Cecily. Interview with Jacqueline Humphries. *BOMB*, no. 107 (Spring 2009), pp. 22–31.

Cook, Angus, Suzanne Hudson, and David Joselit, eds. *Jacqueline Humphries*. London: Koenig Books, 2014.

Nye, Tim, ed. *Jacqueline Humphries: Black Light Paintings*. New York: Foundation 20 21, 2005.

checklist and site map

1. **Full Sheet Violet**, 2019
Pigmented epoxy resin
Courtesy the artist and Greene Naftali,
New York
2. **Driftwood**, 2019
Pigmented urethane resin and pigmented
aqua resin; two parts
Courtesy the artist and Greene Naftali,
New York
3. **Full Sheet Green**, 2019
Pigmented urethane resin
Courtesy the artist and Greene Naftali,
New York
4. **Driftwood Brown**, 2019
Pigmented epoxy resin
Courtesy the artist and Greene Naftali,
New York
5. **Billboard**, 2019
Pigmented urethane resin and pine
Courtesy the artist and Greene Naftali,
New York
6. **Custom Sheet Yellow**, 2019
Pigmented epoxy resin
Courtesy the artist and Greene Naftali,
New York
7. **Painting**, 2019
Pigmented urethane resin and pigmented
aqua resin
Courtesy the artist and Greene Naftali,
New York
8. **Custom Sheet Pink**, 2019
Pigmented epoxy resin
Courtesy the artist and Greene Naftali,
New York



9. **Collection**, 2019
Pigmented urethane resin, pigmented
aqua resin, and steel
Courtesy the artist and Greene Naftali,
New York
10. **Sign**, 2019
Pigmented epoxy resin
Courtesy the artist and Greene Naftali,
New York

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