

David Nolan Gallery is pleased to announce *Threshold*, an exhibition of work by Chicago-based artist, Julia Fish (b. 1950, Oregon), on view from March 19 through April 25. For her first exhibition with the gallery – and her first solo show in New York since 2005 – we will present five new paintings (relating to her in-progress series *Threshold*) as well as two earlier paintings and related drawings.

Since the early 1990s, Julia Fish has developed a singular practice based on a sustained engagement with her immediate surroundings. For over 20 years, Fish has produced work that documents and mediates her experience of looking and working in her storefront home on North Hermitage Avenue in Chicago. In this setting, the artist has found an array of motifs and structural forms that are key to the subjects of her work. With precision and detail, Fish transposes the naturally occurring geometries found in tiles, floors and architectural details into exquisitely observed paintings and drawings.

In her series *Threshold* (2009-ongoing), Fish aligns her focus on various thresholds or transitional spaces. Initially appearing as abstract compositions, the paintings and drawings in this series are the result of the artist's formal examination of the passageways between adjacent rooms in her home. Observed in the form of a plan, from an elevated position, these works capture the rich visual information provided by the floor surface and the adjoining doorjambs. In *Threshold, SouthEast — Two [ spectrum : orange with grey ]* and *Threshold, NorthWest — One [ spectrum : violet with grey ]* the irregular “bracket shapes” – silhouettes of the molded posts that secure a door – are characterized as flat color fields that break into the edges of the composition. In keeping with Fish's practice, these works are enlivened by way of their primary and secondary color values, which are derived from the colors of the light spectrum.

This color sequence finds applications elsewhere in Fish's work – as a subtle coded system embedded into the surface of her *Threshold* paintings, and as a structural arrangement that underlies two further paintings, entitled *Threshold — Matrix : fragments [ spectrum with grey ]* and *Threshold — Matrix : harbour [ spectrum : transposed ]*. In these works, schematic drawings of the six thresholds (each defined by a color) are overlaid along a horizontal axis, informing a complex, contingent matrix of color and light.

An interest in light and its optical properties is most evident in a work entitled *Lumine III — NorthWest [ Parhelion ]*. This painting, which belongs to a smaller set of works, began with the artist's observation of a light fixture in her sleeping room. The hexagonal openings of the two glass shades (which are rendered as ghostly forms in *Study for Lumine II*) are articulated along their six

sides with different colors of the light spectrum. These halo-like forms are echoed across the field of the painting, in an effect resembling image flare caused by refracted light in a lens. The “Parhelion” of the title also refers the work to a 17th century painting by Jacob Elbfas, which depicts the fleeting celestial phenomenon of the appearance of multiple suns in the sky.

In the rear gallery, the recent threads in Fish’s practice are contextualized by two *Living Room* paintings (series: 2001-05), which the artist has described in terms of “floating out” over the plan. Rather than concentrating on particular architectural elements of her home, Fish here pulls back to survey the configuration of individual rooms. Conceptually, these paintings catalyze and lay the groundwork for her later “Thresholds” in the way that they map and delineate, through a coded vocabulary of “+”, “-” and “L” shapes, the various sites and entryways of her more recent work. Like her “Threshold” works, these paintings serve as a thoughtful meditation on the nature of occupancy within a domestic environment, exactingly rendered in multiple paint layers.

Fish received her BFA degree at Pacific Northwest College of Art, and her MFA degree at the Maryland Institute, College of Art. She has lived and worked in Chicago since 1985. Her paintings and drawings are included in the permanent collections of the Art Institute of Chicago, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Yale University Art Gallery, The Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago, and Illinois State Museum, Springfield. Her work was the subject of a ten-year survey exhibition, *View*, at The Renaissance Society, University of Chicago in 1996 and more recently was included in 2010, the Whitney Biennial, and *Homebodies*, MCA Chicago in 2013. Her work is currently on view at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, in *Apparitions: Frottages and Rubbings from 1860 to Now*.

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