

JIBADE-KHALIL HUFFMAN

Jibade-Khalil Huffman's (b. 1981, Detroit, MI) recent solo institutional exhibitions include *Brief Emotion*, Frac Bretagne, Rennes, FR; *You Are Here*, Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art, Charleston, SC; and *Now That I Can Dance*, Tufts University Art Gallery, Tufts University, Medford, MA. Huffman's work has also been exhibited at museums and institutions including Wexner Center for the Arts, Ballroom Marfa, The Kitchen, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, MoCA Tucson, Swiss Institute, New York, Portland Institute of Contemporary Art, The Jewish Museum, Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, The Studio Museum in Harlem and the Hammer Museum. Huffman was educated at Bard College (BA), Brown University (MFA, Literary Arts), and USC (MFA, Studio Art), his awards include the Grolier Poetry Prize, the Jerome Foundation Travel Grant and fellowships from Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, the Lighthouse Works, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and the Millay Colony for the Arts. Huffman was a 2015-16 Artist in Residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem. His work is in the permanent collections of Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; Kadist, San Francisco, CA/Paris, FR; Pierce & Hill Harper Arts Foundation, Detroit, MI; Studio Museum in Harlem, Harlem, NY; and Tufts University Art Collection, Medford, MA. Huffman lives and works in Los Angeles, CA where he teaches video and collage at UC Irvine.

Galerie
October 3 2022

Galerie

The FotoFest Biennial in Houston Returns with Riveting 2022 Edition

The citywide photography festival takes over numerous art spaces with works by Dorothea Lange, Toyo Miyatake, Lyle Ashton Harris, and Laura

We expect the nearly impossible of the photograph: It needs to be an impartial witness, documenting what we both could and couldn't see, and it needs to be able to obscure or conceal by crop, or record what never was—a face, airbrushed to be a face that belongs to no one; an imaginary scene dropped in or altered later; a staging to make a statement. A video can reveal—or lie—even more. The artists in “If I Had a Hammer,” the latest iteration of [FotoFest](#), the citywide biennial taking place in art spaces across Houston and curated by Steven Evans, Amy Sadao, and Max Fields, explores the possibilities and motivations of the camera.

Titled after the 1949 song by Pete Seeger and Lee Hayes that would later become an anthem for both communism and civil rights in America, the show is something of a call to arms for everyone to make the most of the tools they already have: “a hammer of justice, a bell of freedom, and a song about love,” as well as a camera. The work on view in “If I had a Hammer” centers around artists using the camera as a means of collecting images and perspectives from which history is determined. Work from new FotoFest exhibitions “African Cosmologies: Redux,” curated by Mark Sealy, and “Ten by Ten: Ten Portfolios from the Meeting Place 2020–21” is also being presented this year after being shut down prematurely due to COVID restrictions in early 2020.

L.A. artist Bruce Yonemoto also uses his camera to set an intention: of broadening self-identification through re-enactment, re-envisioning classical Western images to feature Asian actors. For *North South East West*, he cast Asian models in his version of the 1915 film *Birth of a Nation*, having the men pose for formal portraits in the movie's original costumes. For *Beyond South—Vietnam*, his models embodied 16th-century Caravaggio paintings. Moving image works by Lorraine O'Grady and Jibade-Khalil Huffman offer an almost abstracted perspective in two directions: O'Grady's hypnotic black-and-white film of her hair moving to an ambient soundtrack of crickets and the wind alludes to the sweeping American landscape's lasting ties to forced labor and slavery, while Huffman's turbulent multi-screen film installation with images of pop culture, poetry, and media shows us some of our own nonstop intake, the fractured primary sources of where we derive—and doubt—many of our feelings.



Jibade-Khalil Huffman, still from *Free Jazz*, (2022).
PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE ARTIST, ANAT ABGL, AND MAGENTA PLAINS

Artnet
July 11 2022

artnet

We Asked Leading Video Artists How Best to Enjoy the Medium—and, Yes, It's OK to Leave in the Middle (and to Be Confused)

Nowadays, Fusco has finally noticed "a change of heart in the art market when it comes to video." Institutions—and some collectors—are more willing to acquire, show, and invest in a wider variety of video art.

Biennials have become the unofficial domain of video, often showing the broadest range of work. There were a number of video pieces in the most recent Whitney Biennial, including Fusco's *Your Eyes Will Be an Empty Word* (2021), her 12-minute rumination on Hart Island eas of the Bronx, where New York City buries unidentified dead bodies.

With more curatorial interest in video, even "artists who weren't making video are utilizing it in some way," said interdisciplinary artist Jibade Khalil Huffman. He hopes the medium's growing prominence will help visitors become "less resistant to or less tied to their own feelings [about video work]."

We might know how to look at a Jackson Pollock painting—taking in the whole composition, then zooming in on specific details. But when presented with an equally abstract video, it's tempting to just walk away.

So we've asked artists to provide some tips on how to engage with the different types of video art cropping up. Here are their recommendations.



Installation view of Jibade-Khalil Huffman's show "Tempo" at the Kitchen, New York. Courtesy of the artist and Anat Ebgi.

Don't Think of It as Just Video

Many other artists agreed the entire environment is part of the work. Jibade Khalil Huffman tends to make videos consisting of shorter loops, with a main video channel accompanied by a soundtrack that can be heard throughout the entire space and perhaps even text that one might sit and read. "Viewers can pop in and out [of each part] in the same way that you do with collage or a painting," he said.

In that way, Huffman explained, he doesn't need viewers to experience the whole thing in one go, "in the same way that Kerry James Marshall doesn't need me to go and stand for a minimum of, say, 45 minutes in front of one of his paintings."

Rugs, Carpets, or Benches?

While an artist as successful as Douglas probably has his pick of how to make his audiences comfortable, it's clear that is not always the case with video art presentations. Reading between the lines a bit, an unspoken tip artists would give visitors as a result is: stick with it anyway.

Because even though there may be "more video art around," Huffman said, "that doesn't necessarily mean that the conditions for making it have gotten better."

It's still not consistently financially supported, and a commercial gallery is not an ideal setting for showing the work. Most are "white boxes with cement floors," noted Fusco, which makes them "the worst nightmare for presenting video." On top of that, galleries and museums often have "awful acoustics," she continued.

In the end, artists are trying to figure out how to reach viewers. Ultimately, they want you to surrender "to an aesthetic experience," as Fusco put it, that they know may "not be an easy one."

15 Bytes
February 24 2022



Jibade-Khalil Huffman's Videos Offers Us a Parallax View of Ourselves



Installation view of Jibade-Khalil Huffman's "You are Here" at the Kimball Art Center (photo by Geoff Wichert)

Technical language, used without regard to its actual meaning, has become a mainstay of entertainment. In just one example, the engines of the starship Enterprise were powered by "dilithium crystals." Those words name two real states of matter that have nothing to do with each other, except as a screenwriter's convenience. Such abuses, while entertaining, might lead someone visiting the Kimball Art Center, or reading this review, to discount the name of Jibade-Khalil Huffman's video installation, "Parallax Distance." That would be unfortunate, though, because parallax, a fundamental principle of binocular vision, is the fundamental way we see distance, and provides a key to appreciating the connection the artist wants to make between basic optics and a fundamental fact of life. Through these engaging and stimulating videos, he wants to show how we grasp our social predicament in much the same way as we comprehend all that materially surround us.

Several times during "You Are Here," the ongoing project that climaxes the Huffman's Kimball installation, the camera observes pairs of women. At one point, a woman sitting in her car watches as a second woman drives up, parks, and exits her car. Earlier, or later—there is no chronology—one woman follows another through a park, both followed by the camera, then seen from in front, so both their relative positions and how we see them switch. If I hold my finger up between my eye and something in the distance, I can choose whether to see my finger once, bracketed by two objects, or two fingers surrounding one object. I can't do both at once, but the one I see two of will waver back and forth between opaque and transparent. All this, my brain choosing between two eyes and two theories of what I'm seeing, goes on all the time, mostly without my being aware.

Parallax is most often the difference in perspective between two locations. In a video, of course, we don't see depth directly, any more than we do in a painting. Rather, our brain infers it from what we've learned using parallax and other clues—overlap, relative size, etc.—in the real, three-dimensional world. Curiously, artists work hard to flatten a 3-D world, but we effortlessly restore depth to their 2-D renderings. What poet and visual artist Jibade-Khalil Huffman does is employ one or two visual channels, processing software, and editing to show how much what we know depends on how much we see, and just where we view it from. The thrills of skateboarding may be unknown to a viewer, but a sequence wherein the camera rides behind a young man who speeds down hallways, through walls, into offices, factories, and beyond is one of the most viscerally exciting visual experiences ever created.

This use of a physical principle to clarify a sociological point is risky, of course. Scientists hate it when Newton's First Law of Motion, which is simple, is used to describe the interactions of people, which are mindbogglingly complex. Or when the Uncertainty Principle (again, simple) is used to argue that nothing can be certain—when our lives are full of certainty. Yet analogy is one of the mainstays of human understanding, and ubiquitous in art. Cause-and-effect is just such an analogy, which calls for caution in deciding how to act on what appears to be seen.



Capture of Jibade-Khalil Huffman's "Untitled (Space) 1" (photo by Geoff Wichert)

Now it's possible to describe, if not to explain, the parts of *Parallax Distance* in a way that will show how the component videos work together. The first thing a gallery visitor will experience, even before the visuals, is a distant, cacophonous level of sound. Except for "Untitled (Space) 1," each of the videos has a sound track made up largely of found sounds. The ever-present voices of news media comprise a large part, serving to anchor the visuals in everyday events, even as the noises defy efforts to listen to them or sort them out. It's also worth noting that everything is shown in color, which also helps keep things in the present, rather than the past-tense or timeless feel of black and white.

Most of the videos are projected directly on a wall from above, while a few are displayed on flat screen monitors. The ones on the monitors and most of those on the walls are in landscape mode, while three of those projected on the walls are in a rare, vertical format, which causes the image to form a tall trapezoid, narrow at the top and wider at the bottom.

This is yet another example of parallax: from the high point of view of the projector, the light forms a rectangle, but from the point of view of someone on the floor, it's a quadrilateral with only two parallel sides. These different presentations transcend formal devices to become part of the content. Some visual elements appear in more than one video, while the feeling that results from seeing them arranged in a vertical space—essentially above and below each other—is different from seeing them in a more familiar, side-by-side disposition.

Even though our two eyes seeing different things at once is its more common form, it isn't the only way parallax works. Astronomers can look at space now, and then again in six months, and the movement of Earth half way around the sun will have shifted what they see as if their two eyes were separated not by inches, but by three hundred million kilometers. That distance is useful given the vastness of space. And given the complexity of human behaviors, Huffman makes similar use of several techniques. One is to use two separate monitors, or two adjacent walls, to present similar or contrasting views, taken at different times or from different places, but presented side-by-side for comparison. Overlapping two or more video streams is another way to break up the image in the mind of a viewer. Much of the incidental material that fills these videos is comprised of beautiful, even hypnotic animations, through which glimpses of thematic materials appear, dance about, and disappear.

In the early 20th century, Surrealist artists made films in which disembodied light dances, or sometimes marches, across the screen. Their work, vastly improved, informs these videos. For many in the audience, that visual pleasure will be enough. For others, as in some poetry, there is a narrative element in *Parallax Distance*, which threads its way through those visuals, but does not dominate them. The pleasure there comes in watching multiple events play out, often over or through each other. Trying to follow the story would be a mistake, even as the visuals cannot be watched too closely. As Jibade-Khalil Huffman points out, most stories make us, the audience, into spectators, which is already too often our role in life. Here, he offers us a chance to write the story ourselves, even to experience it as participants. That may be the ultimate parallax: to watch a story we are telling ourselves at the same time, like a dream.



Capture of Jibade-Khalil Huffman's "Untitled (Space) 1" (photo by Geoff Wichert)

Jibade-Khalil Huffman: *Parallax Distance*, Kimball Art Center, Park City, through Mar. 27

College Today
June 22 2021



Halsey Exhibitions Explore Different Points of View

After a year of seeing things two dimensionally, the freedom to step inside an art gallery and immerse yourself in a three-dimensional experience is thrilling. The sounds and colors make the space come alive when the exhibition is tangible, rather than virtual.

The Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art has long excelled at this kind of immersive experience. From Jennifer Wen Ma's Cry Joy Park—Gardens of Dark and Light to Erwin Redl's Rational Exuberance, the Halsey has consistently curated exhibitions that enliven the senses. Two new exhibitions: Dan Estabrook: Wunderkammer and Jibade-Khalil Huffman: You Are Here continue in that vein. The exhibitions opened in May and are on view through July 17, 2021.

According to Halsey director Katie Hirsch, artist Jibade-Khalil Huffman's work *You Are Here* defies definition. Using lights, video, audio, text and print, his installation transforms the dormant halls of the gallery into a dynamic setting, one that is in motion and it feels as if the ground is shifting beneath you. Each visit to take in the exhibit is unique for viewers, who at different times will experience alternate versions of the cinematic, streamed art.



Above: An immersive installation featured in the Halsey Institute exhibit 'You Are Here.'

"Huffman pulls us in, if just for a moment, to focus on the here and now," says Hirsch. "His work compels you to stay, to watch, to listen, to reflect on the space around you and your own roles within it."

The context layered beneath the surface of his work explores the contrasting ways in which people of color see themselves and how they are seen by the media. Trained as a poet, Huffman's process is similar to storytelling and includes writing narratives, hiring performers, shooting video and layering elements of video gaming technology into the final product. But the fascinating part is that the product is never really final. Commissioned by the Halsey, *You Are Here* will travel to other cities and continue to evolve in each new location.

Although *You Are Here* and *Wunderkammer* are separate exhibits, both artists share an interest in altering the viewer's point of view. Huffman uses contemporary elements like video games, while photographer Dan Estabrook uses 19th-century techniques, like salt prints and tintypes, to reimagine images from a 21st-century perspective. Walking from one gallery to the next feels like moving from a church to a disco.

Estabrook's palette is muted. He incorporates images of objects like knives, a skull and a shoe into the photograph to elicit a sense of unknowing for the viewer, a questioning of perspectives between what is a lie and what is the truth.

"Estabrook's work serves as an exploration of how images exist in the physical world, and how artists can manipulate them to make them different than what they represent," says Bryan Granger, director of the exhibitions and public programs at the Halsey. "His use of antique photographic techniques reconnects the medium to the natural world and helps remind us that the plethora of images that bombard us every day are reproductions."

Estabrook says there is a magic in working with antiquated techniques.

"One of the most amazing things about being an artist is you are speaking to yourself from the past to the future almost always," shares Estabrook. "It really is our only language for the irrational. And so much of being alive is irrational. For me, a good photograph elicits a bodily response. If you're going to cross the room and spend time with my artwork, I want to give you something to discover within the piece itself."

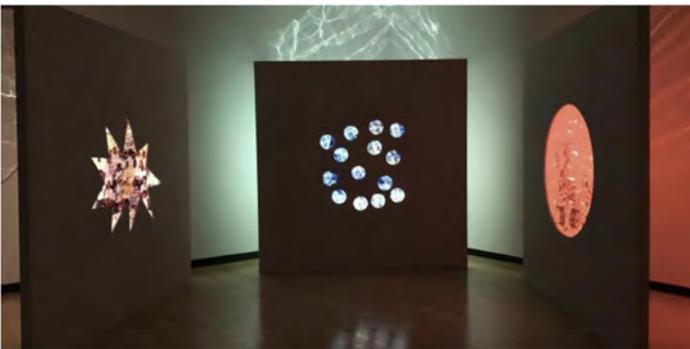
Together, *You Are Here* and *Wunderkammer* will trigger a bodily response, upholding the Halsey's 26 years of high-caliber exhibitions under the direction of Mark Sloan, who retired last year. The exhibitions are reflective of Granger's and Hirsch's expertise and vision for the future of the Halsey.

Charleston Grit
June 21 2021

charlestongrit
Bold. Smart. Local. Now.

Jibade-Khalil Huffman: 'You Are Here'

"Huffman pulls us in, if just for a moment, to focus on the here and now." Hirsch on latest Halsey exhibit.



Jibade-Khalil Huffman's work defies definition. His video work is sculptural. His prints hum with electricity. Cut outs in walls are enlivened with projections. Text is given equal weight as a visual. In this newest iteration, commissioned by the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art and set to expand over a series of forthcoming exhibitions, Huffman's work draws on all senses, utilizing film, print, audio, text, and the ultimate tool: the viewer's own experience.

Trained as a poet and an artist, Huffman's work is the answer to his own ever-evolving stream of internal questions about how culture functions and communicates. Although each new project is approached as its own unit, Huffman's work continually considers how Black Americans are seen and see themselves, and their collective engagement with societal trauma.

Using both original and found footage and imagery to build on shared iconography of popular television shows, video games, and other familiar elements, Huffman's work calls on the viewer to orient themselves with a reliance on our own visual and cultural literacy.

Jibade-Khalil Huffman is the ultimate collector of imagery, layering images familiar and unknown to build new meaning. In this process, he sows fertile ground for the viewer to continue this construction, forming connections between recognizable images and the labyrinth of our own experiences.

In this way, Huffman's work has the ability to morph and reform with each new viewer and each new daily headline. His own artistic process is similarly in constant flux, meticulously creating a foundation of work and providing context for it improvisationally placing projectors and monitors throughout the gallery in unexpected ways.

Huffman constantly considers the viewer when planning for installation. From the first sketch to the final placement, Huffman scrutinizes the viewer's sightlines and paths of movement. For "You Are Here," the layout of the Halsey Institute's South Gallery is transformed, automatically shaking viewers familiar with the gallery into a new spatial awareness.

Huffman's work is not completed when packed for shipment, but only after he is able to experience the gallery space and carefully consider the best context for each piece. Video is cut and reworked after installing monitors to ensure that the environment and narrative fully synthesize. Every facet of the viewer's experience is considered, from the pace of narrative unfolding on the screen to the quality of the video itself, with the tension between the grainy and degraded quality of found footage felt in contrast to the crisp quality of original work. We are all well-versed in these aesthetics, whether we've stopped to consider them or not.

The work in "You Are Here" draws on our experiences of varied forms of embodiment in video games, with the narrative eventually transforming and unfolding off the screen into our space. In a world rocked by the COVID-19 pandemic, our personal and shared realities can seem to always be unstable. It makes sense to question reality using the medium of the present — technology and visual culture colored by our own overlapping memories. Huffman pulls us in, if just for a moment, to focus on the here and now. His work compels you to stay, to watch, to listen, to reflect on the space around you and your own roles within it. **AUTHOR: [KATIE HIRSCH](#)**



Jibade-Khalil Huffman: 'You Are Here' is on view at the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art at the College of Charleston from May 14 - July 17, 2021. The galleries are open to the public 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Monday - Saturday, and until 7:00 p.m. on Thursdays. Admission to the galleries is free.

Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art
May 25 2021



ARTIST TALK | Jibade-Khalil Huffman: You Are Here



Click play button to watch: Jibade-Khalil Huffman discuss his exhibition at Halsey Museum titled *You Are Here* with Halsey Museum director Katie Hirsch

BOMB
June 21 2021

BOMB

Complicating Meaning: Jibade-Khalil Huffman Interviewed by Elisa Linn

Jibade-Khalil Huffman's artwork employs images, audio, and film footage from both current and nostalgic media. His intertwining of visual registers often ignites a personal absurdist cinema of the unconscious that transgresses the distorted and oppressive image paradigms through which Black subjectivity might be understood today. I had the opportunity to work with Huffman on a show in New York City in 2017. Recently, we sat down in front of our screens to talk about his work and what it has been like to live through the pandemic.

—Elisa Linn

Elisa Linn

It's been a while since we last saw each other. Can you tell me a little bit about your recent show at Tufts University Art Galleries, *Now That I Can Dance*, which opened and closed during the pandemic?

Jibade-Khalil Huffman

It was a long process working with a museum versus a commercial gallery; and in particular, following last year's protests after George Floyd's death, artists of color were bombarded with questions. There is an expectation around being a service-built person for this moment. So I just had to say: We need to reconsider how we ask these questions since I have to perform this labor.

EL

This type of labor appears central to many art institutions' solidarity declarations that are in contrast with their unwillingness to address racial and class inequalities in their own organizations.

JKH

These institutions need to go beyond panels and even shows. How can institutions help communities empower themselves? The institution as an educational resource for communities is one start: acting not just as a site for programming to satisfy donors but for organizing actions, talks, and debates in and around that community.

EL

This makes me think of your recent single-channel video installation *The Circle* (2020). It presents itself as a subjective media fiction, triggering a kind of affective vulnerability within a pleasure/violence nexus.



Jibade-Khalil Huffman, *A Void*, 2020, transparency in lightbox with flatscreen monitor, looping video, framed, 28.25 × 46.25 × 5.75 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Magenta Plains.

JKH

It became so much about this idea I don't have the words for. I didn't want it to be the piece about COVID or an explicit reaction toward it. It's about anxiety. I have been dealing with it in previous works, and it's an extension of this interest; but at the same time, it can't not be about this thing we are all experiencing.

EL

You used audio snippets from a speech that actor Leslie Nielsen gives in *Project: Kill*. His voice is burned into the collective memory and inevitably brings to mind the bumbling plainclothes cop Frank Drebin from *The Naked Gun*.

JKH

What was interesting to me is this absurdity of authority of various kinds. Part of Nielsen's genius is that he has this all-American, grandfatherly white-male voice—ninety percent of the time in the service of something to not be taken too seriously.



Installation view of Jibade-Khalil Huffman, *The Circle*, 2020, video, color, sound, twenty-four minutes, thirty-seven seconds. Tufts University Art Galleries. Courtesy of the artist and Anat Ebgi.

EL

In front of *The Circle* at Tufts you installed several chairs in a circular formation. They could be interpreted as a scene waiting to accommodate a panel discussion—the ubiquitous format of art-world discursivity—in which speaking becomes a tool for self-expression, performativity, and to claim your voice.

JKH

Yes, the viewing setup implied a support group AA meeting. It also relates to my thinking and making work about anxiety. I'm interested in that particular performativity.

EL

In the lightbox work *Mirror* (2017), a portrait of the actor and singer Lou Rawls is overlaid with a pierced Plexiglas shield and underlaid with a video collage featuring footage from *Sanford and Sons*. It seems as if subjects were dissolved in your works throughout *Now That I Can Dance*.

JKH

Yes. We ended up installing another piece in the downstairs space at Tufts. It is based around digital cellphone images that show a teenager's birthday party in Texas that got raided by the cops. I cut out the center of these images. When it's mounted, it looks like a smashed window and somewhat cartoon-like since you see the naked fluorescent bulbs that are shining back at you. Here the brutality against the Black body is undercut by an act of resistance to that. To complicate this further I installed the piece with the work of artist ariella tai in a conversation about appropriation and the violence in all of this.

EL

The sensation of something shining back at the viewers and holding up a mirror to them seems to manifest itself in other works, for instance, in your lightbox *Black People Explain "The Facts of Life" to Me* from 2017.

JKH

That piece is also addressing a specific Black authority figure. I'm definitely interested in the back and forth between my own awkward expression as it is materialized in the familiar face of Kim Fields in *The Facts of Life*. The awkward look on her face is my own awkward sense of feeling this pressure to explain, to be a credit to the cause or one that is less complicated, when the complication is for me the most interesting thing.



Jibade-Khalil Huffman, *Figure*, 2019, inkjet print, framed, 41.25 x 31.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Anat Ebgi.

EL

It also brings to mind the hashtag #IfTheyGunnedMeDown, a response to Michael Brown's initial portrayal in mainstream media and a challenge to the assumption that different audiences see the same thing when viewing. For the work *Prism* (2020) you used footage from the TV show *Lassie*, in which the collie attacks different animals and figures. One might see a reciprocal relation between the "Lassie effect"—the idealized bond between the dog and the white boy and the idea that dogs can be real-life heroes to their owners in distress—with K9 dog attacks. These are praised as a reasonable form of nonlethal violence to tame "suspects," who are often unarmed and innocent.

JKH

I'm definitely thinking about police dogs in that piece, of a kind of authority, different from Nielsen but on the same spectrum of whiteness or the representation of authority. Being bound up in a combination of repulsion to this brutality and dependence on it is part of this as well.

Thinking about interiority first and then drawing out this inner turmoil is basically always my starting place. I guess it's a literary impulse or not even an impulse; it's simply how I can't help but frame things. Poetry allows you to not have to exhibit counterarguments but rather stage a different encounter altogether—one that may not or probably doesn't offer the kind of answers or attempts at answers that nonfiction does.



Jibade-Khalil Huffman, *Sculpture for Morgan Parker (A Tattoo of Harriet Tubman's Face With a Tattoo of Your Face on Harriet Tubman's Face on Your Face)*, 2018, transparencies in lightbox, 41.5 x 77.25 x 5.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Anat Ebgi.

EL

In your work, codes from various representational systems interfere with each other and create completely different lines of thought like tangents. What role does montage as a tool of de- and reconstructing language and semiotics play for you?

JKH

That interiority and interest in monologuing is again a poetic impulse. While I do want to write work more in the zone of nonfiction, I've only ever mostly ever dwelled in this space. It's like when Alice Notley insists in her biography that she only has tried to be a poet. But I've always taken that to heart as being "enough" of a reason. I've always maintained that because what I'm asking folks to do is complicated enough as viewers in that the visual games I'm interested in playing, including montage, are mostly dumb jokes that complicate meaning, like, say, gallows humor complicates the meaning of death. So the reconstruction of language is more about reordering plot via the indeterminacy of this particular kind of language.

EL

Rosalind Krauss wrote about Paul Sharits's *Soundstrip/Filmstrip* (1972): "We are . . . at a tangent to the illusion, forcibly aware of the generative pair: projector/projected." Both your film and lightboxes make me think of Sharits's reflections on filmic illusion or Stan Brakhage's interplay between hypnagogic vision and words, the effect of the one upon the other to destabilize the mechanisms of seeing.

JKH

I just love Sharits. "Opening up the visible" is also really apt. It's a much more generous gesture, I think. Complicated can still be generous. Therapy is similarly generous in this way in how it opens things up as opposed to simply reducing visible trauma. Or that's what it can do. Or attempt and fail to do so. But as ever, I'm more interested in the attempt.

[Jibade-Khalil Huffman: You Are Here](#) is on view at the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art in Charleston, South Carolina, until July 17.

Brown Alumni Magazine
January 12 2021

Brown

Alumni Magazine

Not Just “Another Mural” | The fearless work of Jibade-Khalil Huffman '05 MFA



“Jibade-Khalil Huffman: Now That I Can Dance,” 2020. Tufts University Art Galleries, installation view. PHOTO: COURTESY JIBADE-KHALIL HUFFMAN '05 MFA AND ANAT EBG1

For six weeks this summer and into the fall, artist-poet Jibade-Khalil Huffman '05 MFA helped Tucson's Museum of Contemporary Art defy the coronavirus shutdown. Using the shuttered building's glass facade as a canvas, like a giant light box, Huffman's audiovisual work “Action Painting” was visible during the day as well as the evening.

It became a place where people gathered. Huffman was particularly touched by an Instagram post of a twentysomething African American woman and her friend sitting and listening to the piece. “That brings me so much joy,” he recalls. “That’s who I made this for, to have this kind of moment to just listen and think, not be bombarded with more deaths but rather this sense of joy and resistance.”

Huffman talks a lot about joy. The piece features various marching bands and an orchestra tuning up but never starting. Stokely Carmichael and Nina Simone talk about Blackness. An activist explains how to deal with tear gas—practical information. It’s about activism not yet started, but efforts that should be approached with a musical spirit.

Huffman's work defies categorization. He constantly collects material—video clips, images from magazines, text—for his work. When pressed, he will say that his fundamental interest is “as an African American, how we see ourselves and how we’re seen or depicted in the media.” A published poet, he is interested in “forms of text that already exist and undermining or exploding them via poetry.”

Through March, Huffman has an exhibit at Tufts University Art Galleries entitled “Now That I Can Dance.” Though the show consists mainly of prior work, he is adding a piece that is his most explicit statement about police brutality. In a 2015 incident in Texas, a police officer used excessive force at a middle schooler's birthday party. “So I made this collage of news and cellphone photos of the incident with the image smashed in the middle,” Huffman explains, “to reflect the rage of having to look at yet another image of police brutality.”

At this writing, Huffman is preparing for two exhibits. For Magenta Plains, a gallery on New York City's Lower East Side, it's all new work. “Making this has been a way to survive this moment,” Huffman says. For a show at Ohio State's Wexner Center for the Arts, he's expanding on a video about his time in Louisville, Kentucky, working on a public art project. A woman at a community meeting said (not specifically about Huffman's work),

“We don't need another mural.” Huffman loved the quote so much that he made it the title of the video as well as the refrain.

“I'm trying to figure out how much of the current moment I want to put into it,” he says, especially regarding Breonna Taylor's death.

Huffman's Brown MFA in literary arts helped form his fearlessness as an artist, particularly his work with Professor Thalia Field. “So much of my work comes out of things that I first thought about in that course [“The Foreign Home”] when I was 22 in Providence,” he remembers.

“That's probably the most meaningful part of that connection to Brown, the openness to mixing genres.” —James Bernard

MOUSSE
July 4 2020

MOUSSE

That Feeling When: Jibade-Khalil Huffman by Lumi Tan



Jibade-Khalil Huffman, *Zero* (still), 2020
Courtesy: the artist and Anar Elgi, Los Angeles

To situate oneself within Jibade-Khalil Huffman's installations is to recognize what new languages we share. Formally trained in both poetry and visual art, the artist prioritizes our contemporary fluency of montage, sensorial distraction, and the particular lifespan of memes. While his expansive videos, performances, poems, and photographs are densely layered with images, sounds, and text, his intentions do not rely on in-jokes or exclusionary references. Rather, the works speak to the ceaseless endeavor of locating oneself in the sprawling cultural world built around us, a frame of enforced sentiment and constructed humor. Huffman's work exposes the limits of self-identification and representation, instead finding potency in the transitional spaces of his visual, aural, and linguistic materials, where meaning is constantly recalibrated.

Black Twitter in the Hour of Chaos (2018), a spatially and temporally synced nine-channel video installation, comments on our cultural expectations of the revolutionary power of black music and how that impact has been filtered and diluted through its popularity. Unfolding over forty-five minutes (the average length of an LP), Huffman finds a pace where the found footage of explosive emotion from 1980s movies, stand-up routines, and viral videos echoes propulsive, sticky hit singles, backed with the contemplative B-sides of Huffman's filmed footage of a solitary young black man.

A stand-in for the artist himself, he appears as an outsider as social situations merely occur around him, enacted by seemingly well-meaning peers. Huffman is deeply conscious of how this disaffected stand-in becomes a projection—when the actor is illuminated by a car's headlights, it can be read as his being surveilled and policed, or as an art historical nod to Edward Kienholz's installation *Five Car Stud* (1969-1972). But crucially, Huffman never allows us to confine his character into a flattened representation. He magnifies this performance of identity with every screen split or wipe, an editing convention that signals "on to the next one"—just as our culture dictates.

Huffman's recent video *Zero* (2020) extends to an almost feature-length seventy-two minutes, across three monitors. The viewer must struggle to read a first-person text layered atop images dominated by an accumulation of real and fictionalized car crashes, the brutal footage shown mostly in reverse. Huffman's edits never bring us back to an origin point that exists pre-violence, an acknowledgment that we are never innocent; the car window becomes its own integral screen within the filmic frame, implicating the viewer as active participant and helpless witness. In the last twenty minutes of the video, the on-screen text is replaced by Huffman's distorted voice-over.

His calm description of anxiety, substance abuse, and the temporary releases that pop culture offers within that experience is frequently obscured by theme songs, sound effects, and other voices from television. Depression is an acutely unpopular subject in both the art world and in black masculine culture; Huffman's narration is an unflinching, affective portrait of feeling paralyzed, allowing other imaged lives, other hummable emotions, to wash over you.

Huffman's performances, such as *Defending Kanye West* (2018) and its next iteration, *Confessional Poetry* (2019), have also relied on the presence and poetic cadence of his voice alongside videos that speak of the complexities of institutional expectations put upon black artists. An upcoming performance entitled *The Circle* (2020), which will premiere at the Tate Modern and will expand into an installation at Tufts University Art Galleries later on, moves beyond Huffman as an individual voice to the highly specific forms of the focus group, support group, and academic panel—all contexts in which the voice is a vehicle for authenticity and authority.

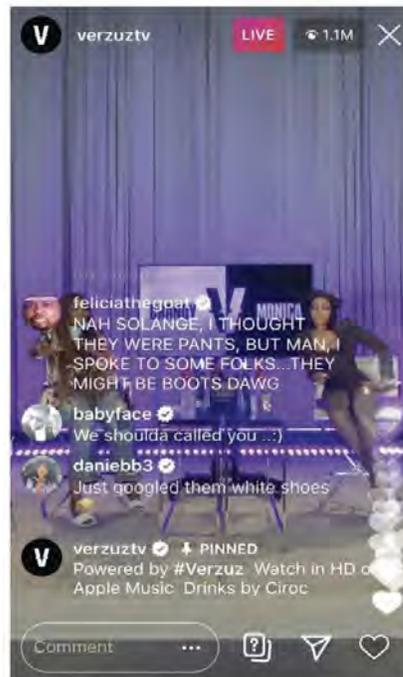
Huffman adeptly uses the language of video to address behavior, such as loops and screens to expose our reactions and our ability to access various traumas; the performers will be literally projected onto as they speak. This material entrapment recalls Huffman's *Sculpture for Morgan Parker* (2018), in which the text "A Tattoo of Harriet Tubman's Face With a Tattoo of Your Face on Harriet Tubman's Face on Your Face" is cut out, split up, and layered within two digitally collaged transparencies in a light box, the recursive text made almost illegible. While legibility is valuable currency in the art world—particularly for artists of color—Huffman refuses to hide the obstructions, the constraints, and the frame. He offers abundant language to demonstrate our capacity to extract meaning and deflect codification within it all.

Artforum
December 2020

ARTFORUM

THE ARTISTS' ARTISTS

TO TAKE STOCK OF THE PAST YEAR, *ARTFORUM* ASKED AN INTERNATIONAL GROUP OF ARTISTS TO SELECT A SINGLE EXHIBITION OR EVENT THAT MOST MEMORABLY CAUGHT THEIR ATTENTION IN 2020.



Screen shot from Verzuz's "Brandy vs. Monica" Instagram Live battle, August 31, 2020.

JIBADE-KHALIL HUFFMAN

Verzuz Battles, organized by Timbaland and Swizz Beats (Instagram Live) I've only managed to catch two of the Verzuz battles live on Instagram (DJ Premier versus RZA, mired early on in technical difficulties, and Brandy versus Monica, technically flawless and hilarious thanks to Brandy's channeling her TV sitcom character Moesha by reading several poems throughout), but in an era of boring and exhausting online events, they were, for me, one of the few things perfectly scaled to and appropriate for the task. Legendary rappers and singers playing their hits back and forth at any other time might have been an excruciating exercise in humoring stardom, but here, out of necessity, our collective lineup of friendly rivalries could play out, in real time, in a mostly generous manner. We could drink, sing along, chime in, watch performers' peers chime in, and for once find one of the promises of technology, its vow to connect us, kept.

Frieze
December 2020

FRIEZE

Jibade-Khalil Huffman Thinks a Picture Speaks a Thousand Words

Diverging from filmic poetry, at Magenta Plains, New York, the artist presents a new body of work without his usual smattering of textual imagery.



The 20th-century film scholar P. Adams Sitney noted, in an introduction to the second edition of his landmark volume *Visionary Film: The American Avant-Garde 1943–1978* (1979), that moving pictures made and distributed outside of commercial film production were once called ‘film poems’. The term seems appropriate to describe Jibade-Khalil Huffman’s artistic practice, given the several books of poetry he’s published over the past dozen years and his penchant for incorporating text into his films. Both his arresting 2018 installation at The Kitchen in New York (*Tempo*) and a recent presentation of his incredible feature-length video *ZERO* (2020) at the Swiss Institute contiguously employed subtitles, music and omniscient voice-overs to expand upon a surfeit of oblique commercial and DIY imagery from the digital sphere.

Writing is fully inextricable from contemporary art and part of Huffman’s brilliance lies in collating drifts of digital media and blasting through their banality with targeted shots from his own literature. It was disappointing, then, to find he had abandoned this approach for *Total Running Time*, his first solo exhibition at Magenta Plains: an installation of video projections, photographic light boxes and photo collages. Pieces such as *Untitled (Explosion)* (all works 2020) are undeniably visually appealing: abstract patterns projected onto an inkjet print already exploding with markings and images further rebound on a facing wall in a beautiful display of light and colour. But the piece’s appeal is muted for viewers who have seen Huffman’s odd, shattering phrasings scroll across similar surfaces in earlier works.

In one such moment from *ZERO*, for instance, footage of cars flipping on a highway segues into swirling diagrams while the subtitles lament all that fentanyl-laced cocaine going around: ‘which is a shame for a number of reasons not the least of which is because cocaine is a nectar in the pattern of my anxiety’. A calmly verbose, even humdrum tone paired with totally grandiose or otherwise unprovable claims is a recurring tactic in Huffman’s practice.



Jibade-Khalil Huffman, *Untitled (Explosion)*, 2020, inkjet on transparencies, looping video.

By comparison, the works in *Total Running Time* appear more at ease in their situation. In *A Void*, a flatscreen television and lightbox composite displays a looped video in which neon rings spiral outwards from the work’s central image of a cluster of schema and action figures, while audio clips feature a muffled debate about whether the moon is a planet or a star. The narratives in Huffman’s work often occupy the realm of shaggy-dog stories: building on and on until it becomes clear that the tale is meant not to cohere but to gracefully unravel. That ever-circling momentum is absent from the works in *Total Running Time*, however: what of the splitting of the difference between the planets and the stars? The question is left hanging.

Downstairs sits *Where There’s Smoke*: a large-scale, three-channel video installation projected onto transparent inkjet prints that offers quietly engaging shimmering and shifting patterns. Here, the artist appears to be exploring the essential nature of cinema, or what filmmaker Jack Smith defined in *Film Culture* (Winter 1962–63) as ‘the primitive allure of movies [as] a thing of light and shadows’. The result, however, resembles something closer to the ambient viewing experience of a psychedelic light show or a television left switched-on in the background. I’ll await Huffman’s next turn.



Jibade-Khalil Huffman, *A Void*, 2020, transparency in lightbox with flatscreen monitor, looping video.

Elephant
December 4 2020

ELEPHANT

These Are the Essential Artists You Need to Watch

To usher out a year filled with fresh reckonings of time-old systems, these artists visualise the kind of future we could look forward to in 2021.



Jibade-Khalil Huffman, Left: Untitled (Explosion), Right: When There's Smoke. 2020. Inkjet on transparencies, video installation

Jibade-Khalil Huffman's New York solo exhibition *Total Running Time* at Magenta Plains comprises a site-specific installation of video projections, photographic light boxes and photo collages printed on translucent layers to suggest ideas around memory and language, and how these specifically play out in terms of race and visibility. As the title suggests, the piece is also about duration and the idea of "athletic prowess": images of Venus and Serena Williams suggest the disproportionate scrutiny placed on Black bodies. According to the gallery, "For Huffman, the futility of a temporal artwork's completeness and the unspoken expectations of performance—of self, race, and image—relate directly to the day-to-day performance of life as an artist." As with much of Huffman's work, the piece draws on the intersection of writing, poetry, found media and everyday speech; as well as using a diverse array of subject matter including TV guides, abstracted maps, television stills, diagrams, staircases, annotations, cartoons, advertisements and more. The show runs until 16 December.

Spike
December 2020

SPIKE

Big DAATA

At most art fairs in physical space, moving image works suffer. Either due to the lack of attention for longer pieces more than a few minutes in length, or because the traditional spaces provide less-than-ideal conditions under which to sit down and soak in the atmosphere that artists work hard to create. Necessity is still the mother of invention, and so the DAATA art fair – an online platform developed in 2015 with the express idea of giving films, videos, and moving image works a more suitable place for viewing – arrives just in time. Twelve galleries are featured as a part of the fair, which runs from 1–20 December. Other galleries are also participating online, though they are not "officially" part of the fair. For the fair works, contributions vary in tempo, length, formal approaches, and everything else that is suitable for viewing. The featured videos run the gambit from short, digital, formalist experiments to longer documentary and appropriated footage works and even an opera. The wide range of techniques is complemented by an equally diverse assortment of themes. If you can make it through all of the videos (we have lots of time at home, so no excuses!), your mind will be forever altered, jostled, and open to investigations long in the making.



Jibade-Khalil Huffman, *The Circle*, 2020, video, sound, colour.

The Lower East Side gallery Magenta Plains presents the most startling and captivating videos of the bunch with three works by the US artist Jibade-Khalil Huffman. They are all long, but every shot counts, and there's barely a moment to breathe before the next hammer drops. Huffman uses the video console as a poignant and powerful mixing board, slowing down audio clips, replaying auto accidents in reverse, and putting it all to a curated soundtrack whose range is wider than our brief attention spans, from Stevie Wonder to Autechre to the comedy of Dave Chapelle. The circle motif, especially present in the eponymously titled, *The Circle* (2020), the newest work of the group, cuts through found footage and live scenes, connecting the otherwise unique videos like a record label stamped onto a spinning disc, revolving, able to move backwards and forwards, signalling the potential for endless remixing.

Huffman's is a musical sensibility, and at the risk of fetishizing origins, it seems possibly to be a nod to the city of Detroit, where Huffman was born. It's called motor city by some, where the former hub of the industrial manufacture of the cars we witness colliding is also the birthplace of techno and DJ culture as we know it. Rather than merely illustrating the infuriating divisiveness and browbeating nature of contemporary media, Huffman puts himself at the console, re-performing the very onslaught of image wars and their dead end languages of representation.

EV Grieve
November 2020

EV Grieve

Gallery Watch: Total Running Time by Jibade-Khalil Huffman

Having stumbled across Magenta Plains awaiting the results of the election, my mood was tense and suspended. I was cynical and in urgent need of a distraction, but entering this gallery gave me so much more than that. I was elated by what I saw the second I walked into the almost disguised gallery space on Allen Street (refer to the top photo to avoid missing it entirely).

The atmosphere was moody and engrossing. Neons, vocal soundscapes and jolted light flashings from unconventionally hung projectors filled the two-storied gallery space.

Total Running Time presents a multifaceted insight into the practice of inter-disciplinary artist Jibade-Khalil Huffman, a successful writer and poet working with text and imagery to re-imagine and challenge semiotic hierarchies. His object making involves the re-contextualization of text presented through densely layered video pieces, light work, moving imagery and digital stills.

The exhibition includes photographic lightboxes and digital photo-collages printed onto transparencies that are manipulated and scrutinized by looped video projections. Layering visuals for Huffman intentionally speaks to conversations and language pertinent to race and visibility.

Upon looking at a projected transparency work, you'll find yourself becoming confused about what is printed and what is projected while being completely mesmerized by the piece and its much larger light leak onto the back wall. The prints are saturated with color and cartoon graphics, making for an almost psychedelic and explosive experience.

Huffman's work confronts serious subject matter while colliding loose and dated graphics together such as paint-by-number motifs, classic television stills, advertisements from the 1960s and iconography from various American comic books.

His work embraces contemporary interests such as the degradation of digital media while also saluting recognizable imagery to draw his viewers in. Because of the ephemeral nature of Huffman's work, I suggest Total Running Time be a show you visit more than once.

Whether his pieces juxtapose illustrations with video or projections with digital prints, his work looks and feels different with every photographic iteration, video capture and sensory interaction. —Clare Gemima



ABC Tucson News
October 02 2020



MOCA Tucson displays 'Action Painting' for community to view outdoors



Photo by: Museum of Contemporary Art

TUCSON, Ariz. — The Museum of Contemporary Art Tucson isn't letting visitors in right now, but you can see the latest piece of artwork without having to step inside.

It's called '*Action Painting*' and is a multi-layer collage that takes up the front window of the downtown museum.

The artist, Jibade-Khalil Huffman uses vinyl, audio and video to show layers of themes like of violence, racism, police brutality and protest.

The museum says the artist has been working on this piece for about a year.

Interim Director Laura Coplin said "We thought it was really important on top of the digital programming that we were doing to have something physical and in person because you know we are humans we need to be in the world we need to experience art work directly with our senses so this was a really nice way of allowing people to have a direct experience with art work but still making sure everybody is safe."

Visitors can view the piece through September 27.

For more information about MOCA Tucson, [click here](#).

Arizona Daily Star
September 14 2020



Artist taps into racial injustice, powerful imagery for MOCA Tucson exhibit



Installation, dubbed "Action Painting," created by artist and writer Jibade-Khalil Huffman, explores the different layers of violence and disenfranchisement leading up to this year's mass protests. It also celebrates Black joy — "another kind of resistance" — says the artist. Above, exhibition director Wylwyn Reyes poses a semi-transparent collage square on a window.
Decca Sasetti / Arizona Daily Star

The Museum of Contemporary Art Tucson's first exhibition since closing its doors in March stretches across six large windows the length of the north side of the building.

The installation, dubbed "Action Painting," created by artist and writer Jibade-Khalil Huffman, is laid out in three parts — as a vinyl collage, as multichannel video projections and composite sound work, according to the museum.

Huffman's art explores the different layers of violence and disenfranchisement leading up to this year's mass protests against police violence and white supremacy culture.

"This is one moment in time, and I think collectively people are resisting oppression and these unjust systems, police brutality in particular, against Black Americans," said Laura Copelin, interim director and curator at MOCA. "It feels really important to be able to think about that through art, which often opens up conversations about really difficult topics."

The collage is made up of bright colors displaying marching bands, topographical lines and morphing, musical forms that can be seen during the daytime.

At night, the museum becomes a light box that screens a multichannel video of toppling statues and bright spotlights that change colors every few seconds.

A 20-minute sound work, playing on a loop, reflects both trauma and celebration of the times, according to MOCA.

"I wanted the piece to be very colorful and light, and thinking about the uniforms of those bands, and just the sunshine they are playing in," Huffman said of the exhibition. "That, contrasted with the other images in the video of statues being toppled, has a different kind of light, one that is typically during the day, bright, daytime sunny; or it is at night where you have this bright, harsh spotlight."

Huffman, who has been working on this piece of artwork since last fall, noted the work "is so big already, and even if you take this in as a series of sensations, light, color and sound, it is never a thing you are weighed down by. I didn't want it to visually weigh you down."

Though the artwork represents the violence that is happening in the U.S. today, Huffman's main focus is celebrating Black joy.

"I think art has a place within this (time) but it is something else," Huffman said. "A response of joy is not one of ignoring what's happening. It's another kind of resistance."

Huffman lives in North Carolina, but his gallery is based in Los Angeles. He creates videos, photos and installations and does this mainly through making light boxes and using projections.

Copelin has worked with Huffman in the past and knew Huffman could adapt his work to a large-scale public installation in a short time, while also having a timeless piece of art.

Having the exhibition outside, the community can view the artwork at all hours of the day.

"What's really interesting is that people who are biking by, or driving by will slow down and get out of their car sometimes, or get off their bike and come up to the installations and listen and look at it," Copelin said. "It is probably getting a lot more traffic just by virtue of being on the street and being accessible at all hours and to everyone. And it's free."

Artillery
March 3 2020

artillery

The first work one sees upon entering Jibade-Khalil Huffman's solo exhibition at Anat Ebgi is a monochromatic print of the ocean—the hazy sky fading endlessly into the sea like a Rothko color field painting. The print offers a moment of reprieve, the calm before the storm, before thrusting forward into the multi-sensory explosion of colors and forms in *You Don't Have to Say You Love Me*.

The common threads through Huffman's work are unflinching sincerity, vulnerability and a slight sense of cynical humor. The prints and videos read like visual poetry of someone's diary—messy and complicated, abstract yet cohesive. Huffman is an artist whose work is actively saying something and is most clearly commenting on the black experience in the United States. There's a sense of urgency and chaos, with the video works displaying scenes of explosions, car accidents, the daily mishaps of modern life. Murphy's rule seems to hover over the snapshots of reality that Huffman offers—everything that could go wrong will, and it seems, already has.

Pop culture and modernity reign in Huffman's world, with many works featuring an anthology of images from modern and post-modern life—with Lichtenstein-esque renderings commingling with newspaper cutouts of phrases like "murder weapon", "Detroit", and nods to jazz. In *Map* (2019) and *Future* (2019), inkjet prints are layered on transparent plastic. The two works appear both old and new, the 1970's aesthetics coalescing with modern themes, creating a sort of vintage futurism and perhaps offering a nod (or more) to Afrofuturism. The two video works in the exhibition, *The Price of the Ticket* (2020) and *Zero* (2020), are a cacophony of sounds and images, at times projected through an abstracted limited view. The videos are, in many senses, uncomfortable, with grating sounds and quick-cut edits that often showcase the chaos and dystopia of city life. Huffman offers what appears to be a behind-the-scenes view of a variety of things, from explosions to traffic to car crashes to fire trucks going off to battle. I found myself wondering how Huffman was able to acquire the video snapshots—it seems that he was often in the right place at the right time. The videos captured the daily life of regular people, faces that are often absent within art spaces. Without psychologizing the artist too much, the videos do offer a view of the world that is at the very least, troubled, and the influence of the internet is not lost on the viewer.

Huffman's exhibition doesn't follow a linear storyline, the works instead forming a larger collage and visual poetry of big concepts like modernity, the black experience, and nostalgia. The artist kindly offers a solution to the hectic noise with *Untitled (Florida Sign)* (2019) and *Untitled (The Sea)* (2019), two snapshots of nature that have an air of peace and tranquility. The interconnected duality of these two works with the rest of the exhibition creates a larger sense of Yin and Yang—a balancing act that complements the chaos without negating it. —*Leanna Robinson*



Jibade-Khalil Huffman, *Map*, 2019, courtesy Anat Ebgi Gallery



Jibade-Khalil Huffman, *Untitled (Florida Sign)*, 2019, courtesy Anat Ebgi Gallery

Frieze
February 17 2020

FRIEZE

In Pictures: Frieze Los Angeles 2020



Jibade Khalil-Huffman for Frieze Projects with Anat Ebgi, Frieze Los Angeles 2020. Photo by Casey Kelbaugh. Courtesy of Casey Kelbaugh/Frieze.

The Hollywood Reporter
February 13 2020

THE **Hollywood** *REPORTER*

The Return of L.A.'s Frieze Art Fair to the Paramount Lot: “It’s Like Being in Miami”

With Frieze Los Angeles (plus two other art fairs) descending on Hollywood from Feb. 13-16, the industry’s art collector crowd will be out in force.



Jibade-Khalil Huffman’s May Day billboard with Grace Jones will be shown on the backlot this year.

Flaunt
January 2020

FLAUNT

JIBADE-KHALIL HUFFMAN | IF IDENTITY'S KALEIDOSCOPIC, LET'S LOOP IT

Artist Jibade-Khalil Huffman is in his studio in Philadelphia. He answers my call in a cool collected voice—almost soothing. Huffman is busy finishing up one of his video and vinyl works for *You Don't Have To Say You Love Me*, his upcoming solo exhibition at Anat Ebgi, a gallery straddling the border of West Adams and Culver City. At his essence, Huffman is a collector of digital and tangible objects, giving birth to different representation of collage in video, photography, and installation. "Obsessive collecting impulse," is how he describes the condition, where wall vinyls, lightboxes, and films are subjected to a cacophony of stories intertwined and always clashing. For Huffman, when images are stacked upon one another, they become recontextualized, and when text is put in front of an image, new meaning is found. In Huffman's work, it's not only the layering which matters, but also how these images re-represent notions of the Black male body experience. Whether in popular film, or current social media consciousness, Huffman deploys these collected images that constantly change. He creates experiences of Black love for women in his life, whether in his family or media at large. In 2019, at Frieze LA's debut edition, Huffman imbued a sense of honor and brotherhood—almost holy trinity-like—in his piece, "Confessional Poetry," a text and music-based performance centered around hip hop, masculinity, and Black Ego. Such are the notions present when seeing his works, particularly his newer ones.

The past two years have been major stepping stones in Huffman's career, with two major shows at The Kitchen in New York and at Ballroom Marfa in Texas—both incredible institutions known for their extensive programming of POC performance artists and thinkers; earlier this year, artist Lex Brown performed her one-woman show, *Focacciatown*, at The Kitchen during her exhibition, *Animal Static* (in a lot of ways, Brown and Huffman deal with similar approaches to subject matter in production and experiential installation); at Ballroom Marfa in 2017, Rafa Esparza's *Tierra. Sangre. Oro.* explored adobe brick-building as a process-centered site for personal, cultural, ecological, and political investigation. Esparza's bricks became building-blocks to create walls displaying works by other Latinx artists.

Like the above artists, Huffman transforms spaces into his own. In "Tempo," Huffman's piece at The Kitchen, a dark room is filled with meticulously placed screens with lightboxes of neon abstractions and glowsticks in the midst of being cracked open to reveal said light. On one side, a five-channel screen is flashing bright red, while across the room, an image of a young black man is ruminating in a space filled with purple and pink hues. The piece examines our affinity for Black music and our expectations for its potential as a tool of resistance. At Ballroom Marfa, Huffman's exhibition, *The Way You Make Me Feel* (2019), hosts a series of projections and outdoor installations. In "First Person Shooter," he calls into question the labor of consciousness and the anxious ennui of the Internet age. One of his seminal works, 2017's "Mother and Child," is a digital collage of a mother looking down at her son, printed in earthy tones, with a layer reminiscent of washing a car with a dirty towel, yet adorned with brightly-colored dots that encompass the whole image. The piece is reflective of the bond with his mother and perhaps an inference into the absence of his father. "My mother worked in HR for a big part of her professional life," reminisces Huffman. "But she always wanted to pursue fashion design. My father wasn't a part of my life."

"I am the only artist in my family," Huffman says. Hailing from the west side of Detroit, at a young age, he moved to Clearwater, Florida, where he discovered poetry. "I started writing poems in a more serious way in middle school, and then got into video and photography through writing," he shares. "Everything I do comes out of writing." This talent allowed him to study at Pinellas County Center for the Arts at Gibbs High School, an arts magnet school for the creative. His godfather, Henry, a reflexologist and poet, was a major influence on his life. So, too, was Levar Burton, most notable for his roles in the *Reading Rainbow* and *Roots*. "I'd probably still love reading as much as I do without *Reading Rainbow*, but probably not," he jokes.

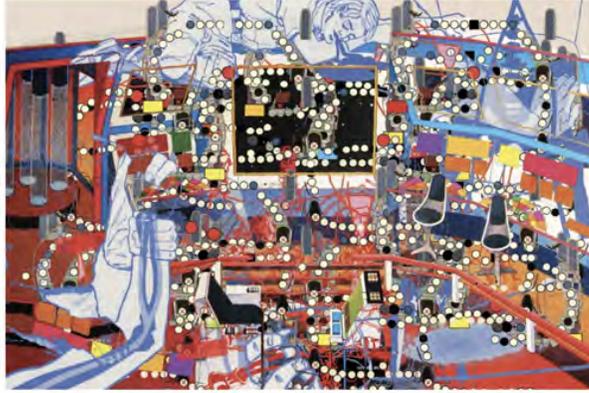
In addition, Florida can be interpreted as a major influence in the palette of Huffman's image-making. In his Flaunt artist cover, Huffman snaps a haunting image at night; a backyard wooden fence oozing with foliage top and bottom, the camera's flash creating shadow puppets. "Thought I made that image pretty recently while in residence in northern Florida," he says, "I actually went to high school in central Florida, and have this really weird connection to it as home, but also as this place I absolutely hated in high school," Huffman confides. "That image kind of really distills that feeling for me." A place filled with eternal beauty and magic, but also a place associated with deep trauma and political instability. Does it contain the duality of light and darkness? Is it a safe place for someone like you or me? Or is it an ethereal plane we could only see in our dreams? A vision of our current instability in the nation? What is beyond that fence?



JIBADE-KHALIL HUFFMAN "FIGURE" 2019. INKJET PRINT 40.5 X 31 IN.



JIBADE-KHALIL HUFFMAN "UNTITLED (HAMMER)" 2019. INKJET PRINT 41.5 X 30 IN.



JIBADE-KHALIL HUFFMAN "FUTURE" 2019. INKJET ON TRANSPARENCY, 22.5 X 34.5 IN.

Huffman's early introduction to writing drove him to study at Bard College's Writing Department, receiving a BFA in 2003. "I think there was this kind of strict division between writing and other interests, which I really didn't know what to do with until I found an outlet in the weird space of film and video at Bard," he states. "Though I switched fully to photography pretty soon after this, it still really instilled this other sense of what was possible thanks to seeing stuff like Michael Snow and Stan Brakhage." Immediately after graduating, he pursued an MFA in Literary Art at Brown, a two-year stint in Austin, and then decided it was time for New York City. There, he developed a relationship with the poetry scene and spent time focusing on his visual practice, producing his first book, *19 Names for Our Band*. Soon after, Huffman shifted from more hybrid performance/projection work and got into the Workspace residency with the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC), and things really started to change. In 2013, as his 30th approached, Huffman applied and was accepted into the Roski School of Art MFA program at USC.

Curious about the future, I ask of the differences in his processes from the past to today. "For most of my early twenties I was just writing poems, but then visited Marfa during this really rough period when I was living in Austin, and something just clicked when seeing a Roni Horn," he says, referring to the visual artist and writer's long-term loaned install at the Chinati Foundation. "I started making these projection pieces with slides because I didn't have access to a studio," Huffman states. "You could put an entire sequence, or several sequences in a small box and fill an entire room. From that point up until now, I've worked mostly by moving from project to project and figuring out the best form (video, lightbox, essay) in the research stage and working from there." Huffman's work is heavily stacked, perpetually pressing up against the viewer, allowing us access to his thoughts, and creating an immersive experience layered in his consciousness—a state of reflection. Throughout our call, I can tell that he is slowly but surely figuring out the next steps for the upcoming show at Anat Ebgi, which opens January 11th, mesmerized by the array of possibilities. Huffman later sends me one of his videos that I absorb obsessively.

This new piece, *Patient B*—a two-channel video—displays snippets of World Star Hip Hop with vehicles crashing, and are then intertwined with violent scenes from major motion pictures. What connects these seemingly disparate ideas is that the videos, along with bizarre audio, are all in reverse. "I wanted to focus on the idea of violence," clarifies Huffman. "I'm working from clips of car crashes and different World Star/street violence movies. It's all in reverse—unfolding, unhappening," he says. Like "Tempo" at The Kitchen, *You Don't Have To Say You Love Me* will encapsulate the entirety of Anat Ebgi's space, transporting us into his thoughts. Huffman has always approached art through a poetic lens; his images are formulated and constructed out of that language. "I'm going to tell my children that this was anxiety," the text in *Patient B* reads. Juxtaposed with a tree catching on fire by way of powerlines, "No More Parties in LA" by Kanye West plays on—another example of an artist who uses collage, aurally, to get his idea across.

A consistent theme in Huffman's works is the intense feelings of double-exposures, reminiscent of video artist Nam June Paik's work, but subtle in tone like the paintings of Mark Rothko. There's a psychedelic component to engaging with Huffman's pieces; color transcends darkness in these spaces, with bright shades of red and portraiture almost suspended in mid-air. Black children are on top of signs, on top of trees, in shades of green, blue, aqua, and marron. Through this technique, a kind of code-switching is set into place, reactionary to the present-day struggle of the Black experience. Still, there is always playful admiration for women. Huffman's sculpture, "May Day," from Ballroom Marfa's *The Way You Make Me Feel*, shows Grace Jones in great strength hoisting a businessman as if he were about to meet his end. Like a piece by Dadaist Hannah Höch, there is a collision and montage of ephemera, pop culture, and stillness, bleeding with the realities of the quotidian. Huffman's everyday.

Through text, there is a purification of language—so much can be done with so little, and the same goes for collage. "Collage means this other kind of distillation similar to making poems," remarks Huffman. "For me, the juxtaposition and reframing are the same or very similar to the paring down of language in poetry. Instead of the desert standing in for emptiness, you can have a sequence in a collage video of reframed footage as a stand-in for some other condition." The way we see images and process information is abstracted in our minds—to experience a feeling within a constructed space and go the same as a narrative play-by-play. Huffman is not obscuring us from his truth, but bringing us closer and closer to interpretations of Black love, whether downcast and/or moody. With Huffman's winning formula of pigment, sound, and vision, there is still so much apparent hope. —*Marcel Alcalá*

The Daily Press
December 19, 2019

The Daily Free Press

Visiting artist Jibade-Khalil Huffman inspires students with mixed media

A karaoke machine visually representing the concept of breath in poetry, shattered light boxes containing hidden words behind the broken exterior and collages repurposing an archived '70s hairstyle advertisement into a representation of the artist himself. In a presentation of his constant pursuit of ideas and projects, artist Jibade-Khalil Huffman opened the doors to his creative world Tuesday at Boston University's School of Visual Arts.

Huffman took on the title of 'Visiting Artist' at this week's Tuesday Night MFA Lecture Series, presenting his creations via projector.

The lecture was part of an annual series where visiting artists help expand the conversation surrounding art. David Snyder, a professor of art and sculpture in the College of Fine Arts, helped select Huffman as a speaker with broadening artistic discussion in mind.

"I think that [Huffman's] work is really challenging but like measure for measure its as challenging as it is rewarding, and it really is loads of both," Snyder said.

Snyder said he believes artists nowadays tend to feel a pressure to condense the story of their work into clean, logical arguments to fit the market-driven model of today's art world. For this very reason, he said he finds Huffman's rejection of that notion is inspiring.

"It's really rare and unusual to encounter someone who is really looking at the constructs that define the areas of separation between genres of creative practices and challenging them," Snyder said.

Throughout his career, Huffman has written three poetry books, participated in the 2015-2016 Artist in Residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem and received awards, including the Grolier Poetry Prize and the Jerome Foundation Travel Grant.

As an artist, Huffman does not adhere to any specific label when describing his craft. In his lecture he described his artistic process as being divided into three zones: poetry, photography and hybrid projects and projections.

This mixed style grew out of Huffman's desire to create art in spite of having limited resources as he worked through graduate school, according to Huffman. He began to incorporate a wide variety of artistic practices into his projects which allowed for him to move fluidly between them, Huffman said.

Gregory Williams, an associate professor of contemporary art at BU, said Huffman's focus on "overwhelming" displays of materials forces his audience to confront their preconceived expectations about what art, society and the world should be like.

"The College of Fine Arts has really made a concerted effort to give the students, through visiting speakers, a very wide range of approaches to what the studio needs to look like," Williams said.

Bridget Bailey, a first-year graduate student studying painting in CFA, said listening to Huffman's artistic process was "rejuvenating." She also said she was impressed with Huffman's background as a writer and his career shift to a visual artist.

"[His artwork] gives you energy because a lot of times [artists] are working in a way that is totally different than you've been working but there are common threads," Bailey said.

In terms of what non-art professionals can gain from Huffman's work, according to Snyder, Huffman is not simply critiquing boundaries in the art field but the boundaries everyone encounters every day.

"He is pointing directly at the subtle tyranny of one's expectations both in art and in a broader sense, socially, politically," Snyder said.

Huffman said after his lecture he is continuously "engaged and inspired" by his studio visits because of the conversations they promote about art as a whole. In his eyes, he said, students have a valuable opportunity in academic settings to think deeply.

In some ways, according to Huffman, they are never more free.

For Snyder, the Tuesday Night MFA Lecture Series is somewhat underappreciated in regards to the sheer talent it brings onto campus.

"I would describe it as a hidden gem," Snyder said. "In terms of the range and vibrancy of voices that materialize as part of this series, I would say that it is consistently unmatched within the city." By Lily Kepner



The Museum of Fine Art's installation highlighting mixed media artist Jibade-Khalil Huffman. The exhibition is part of the museum's Tuesday Night Lecture series, hosted by Boston University painting and sculpting graduate programs.

Glasstire
March 22 2019

Glasstire
{Texas visual art}

The Way You Make Me Feel: Jibade-Khalil Huffman at Ballroom Marfa



Jibade-Khalil Huffman at Ballroom Marfa

Last Friday, a 28-year-old Australian man, an "edgelord" or "shitposter" who lived in the extremely fetid online swamps of 4chan and deep reddit, strapped a GoPro camera to his head and gunned down 50 people at two different mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, only stopping to go back to his car and reload. His GoPro video was streamed live to Facebook and quickly archived to racist and nihilist websites, where pitiless bigots commented with things like: "watched 8 times already." The shooter left behind a "manifesto" that was chock full of inscrutable "jokes" and meta references — the only apparent sincerity an inflamed fascistic white nationalism.

A troubling number of responses to this tragedy range from outright foaming glee (check the comments sections on Breitbart, the National Review, or the American Conservative) to a wretched equivocation by a hideous Australian politician named Fraser Anning (who was egged in the head by a brave and insouciant little ripper), to the gross hedging by the once-moderate gay cultural critic Bruce Bawer, and Texas' own Louis Gohmert. "The motivations are understandable..." this line of reasoning goes. There is an ambient feeling, like the ion charge before a thunderstorm, that actualizes itself more acutely now and again. We live in a self-made hell, or at least some iteration of it, where human limitation is sometimes spectacularly illustrated by human response to "advancement."

Steven Pinker and Bill Gates love to point out that the global life expectancy is longer, but the spoils of innovation and advancement are shared by a tiny fraction of a percent of the population who live like god emperors outside of morality or consequence. The internet had the potential to be the greatest democratizing and egalitarian force in history, but instead is often a particularly virulent conduit spreading paranoia, disinformation, and bigotry. The eschatologica crisis of climate change can only be solved by an unprecedented global cooperation; instead, seems, we are receding into hard-bit ethno-nationalism.

It's important to dream of a better world, but it seems so very far away. And thus (at least for me), art becomes more essential as a solace. There are two primary modes for art to currently feel vital — to either process this fresh hell, or to transcend it — to provide a kind of social contract for witnessing, or a crack in the prison wall for an escape. Some forms of satire — of say, the broad, jokey sort branded by Jeff Koons — seems not just irrelevant but basically impossible. Satire is very difficult when we live in a world where the president stands grinning behind a mountain of fast food, as if an Adbusters cover came to life.

Jibade-Khalil Huffman's solo show, *The Way You Make Me Feel*, on view at Ballroom Marfa through the end of this weekend, slides between process and transcendence like a lever on a mixing board. The central piece in the show is the short film grimly and relevantly titled *First Person Shooter*. Like Ryan Trecartin's works, Huffman's *First Person Shooter* approximates a youtube tutorial aesthetic (briefly) before quickly fluttering into a hyper-associative, symbolic mania. Utilizing a kind of *Grand Theft Auto*/*The Sims* animated design style, Huffman creates an unsettling, dissociative rhythm — Coke cans explode, pills flood the screen, cop cars e-brake in to arrest non-white people. In one particularly memorable sequence, the animation becomes a first-person shooter frame; you're firing a sawed-off shotgun during a steady rain of fedoras.

Text flashes: "When people say this cocaine this war is everything they mean that it provides A convenient spectacle as well as the chance for unrelated advancements." Throughout the film's live-action parts, people "wake up" from the animated reverie. Are they coming to or slipping back in? It's a parabola ad infinitum. *First Person Shooter* captures this bleak fugue state: there are samples from popular songs, Chappelle's Show, movies like *Juice* — these drift in and out around the seemingly self-generated animations. This is the future for sure — more chaotic and disorienting than any science fiction could imagine, yet depressingly ancient in its orders and prejudices. Watching *First Person Shooter*, like Thor Johnson's *Machine-Gun Nose*, isn't exactly enjoyable, but it does unlock something, like a code, or the playing cards used to activate Lawrence Harvey in *The Manchurian Candidate*.

Huffman's installation in Ballroom's courtyard provides a fantastic counterpoint to the deeply cerebral and dispiriting process of *First Person Shooter*. A large light box uses sunlight to illuminate a film still of Grace Jones hoisting Roger Moore above her head in the mid '80s Bond movie *A View To A Kill*. The image of an absolutely righteous black legend lifting the helpless and most colonial of Bonds, lit by the rays of the sun, is elementally inspiring. Grace Jones is one of those rare people who seem to walk without fear, wide awake in her own dream.

The cultural detritus collected in *First Person Shooter* creates an all-encompassing morass that's reflected in other interior kaleidoscopic works by Huffman in this show. Huffman expresses how culture works as a trap, a panopticon that spirals like the Borges idea of the library of Babel — its speakers blaring the propaganda of control. But there are flickers and stills in this jet stream—like the image of Grace Jones—that can become almost a religious icon to fix on, to keep the faith. -Neil Fauers

Through March 24, 2019 at Ballroom Marfa

The Rampage
March 13 2019



The Way You Make Me Feel: Jibade-Khalil Huffman at Ballroom Marfa

Philadelphia based artist, Jibade-Khalil Huffman partnered with Fresno City College to bring his installation "Human for Scale" to the Art Space Gallery from March 4, 2019 until April 11, 2019.

As you enter the gallery, the distinct artwork can be observed in motion, as it is projected onto every wall, portraying what is seemingly general text. But upon closer look and observation, the art tells a story unlike any of the other contemporary art that has been exhibited thus far.

"I guess the best place to start is with the idea of wall text. If you think about the last time you went to a museum or gallery there's usually some writing like a text panel on the wall that will kind of give you information about what you are looking at," Elena Harvey Collins, the gallery curator, said.

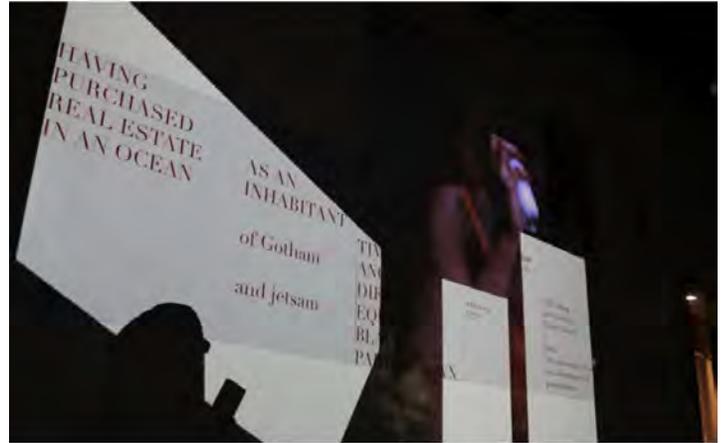


Photo by: Ben Hensley

"And what he's done with this exhibition is take that idea and kind of play with it so we don't really have a kind of explanation of what's going on. Instead, you have in the place of that this poem which is in these kind of fragments that kind of travel around the room," Collins said.

Script containing thought provoking text such as, "An Ampersand, a trampled and sanded down Tasmania a tailwind on the surface a sure fire didactic," can be observed and interpreted by art enthusiasts.

Huffman, who was a 2015-16 artist-in-residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem has won multiple awards and has an MFA from Brown University in Literary Arts and an MFA in visual arts from the University of Southern California, according to Collins.

Huffman was able to incorporate FCC's students into his video works as actors. Students are observed in scenes that jump from one perspective to the next quickly, with a soundtrack sampled in part from the 1977 movie "A Piece of the Action" starring Sidney Poitier, Bill Cosby, James Earl Jones, and Sheryl Lee Ralph.

"Sheryl Lee Ralph is railing against what she describes as boogie black folk basically, and them kind of judging her and looking down on her," Collins said. Ralph takes on class and colorism as well, Collins said.

"He is interested in the kind of gap between images and words. So in a lot of his work he'll pair text with film; with (stationary) images and moving images of some kind and when you do that your brain kind of starts to fill in the space," Collins said. The images don't correspond with the text or the audio, she said.

"For me when I look at this I just get lots of kind of different ideas resonating and some things which kind of are sort of disturbing or strange or some things which are really beautiful and kind of flow together," said Collins.

"In other pieces he's looked at our [White] culture's relationship to blackness and black cultural production and what it means to consume that," Collins said. "And I don't think that's as big of a theme in this show but that's certainly like a thing about his work and that's kind of what is coming through in some of his sound on this video."

Huffman will be back March 29 to do a performance in the gallery. —*Tamika Rey*

ARTnews
January 9, 2019

ARTnews

15 Los Angeles Artists to Watch

Jibade-Khalil Huffman's twitchy videos rely on a range of appropriated source material, from DVDs of movies like *The Breakfast Club* to stock photography to clips culled from the website WorldstarHipHop. "I'm interested in the overload of screens" and in portrayals of objectified blackness in media, said Huffman, who splits his time between L.A. and Brooklyn.

Also a poet, he sometimes incorporates text that nods obliquely at his subject matter. ("White people explain John Baldessari to me," reads one of his photo-based works.) "It's this process of letting what I'm finding footage-wise inform what I'm writing and vice versa," he said. A new video is based on Grace Jones's performance in a James Bond film and focuses on "performing identity through music." —*Maximiliano Durón*



Jibade-Khalil Huffman, *First Person Shooter*, 2017.

The New York Times
November 18 2018

The New York Times

What to See in New York Art Galleries This Week

Jibade-Khalil Huffman started off as a poet and he uses images in his video installations as a sort of grammar, composing phrases, sentences and paragraphs with found or filmed footage. Rather than being watched as a single video or viewed on one or two screens, “Black Twitter in the Age of Chaos,” the 45-minute work that dominates Mr. Huffman’s show, “Tempo,” at the Kitchen, is dispersed over nine screens mounted on the wall or placed on the gallery floor. Sampled, spliced or composed sound comes at you from above rather than from any one source.

This sense of disruption and disorientation suits the overriding subject here, which relates to black bodies and their historic — and continued — vulnerability in the United States. Richard Pryor, in a sampled snippet, talks about a shooting; young black actors enact silent vignettes in cars and on the streets of Los Angeles; the 1970s sitcom actress Esther Rolle performs an anguished solo in a kitchen, wearing a maid’s uniform (a repeated role for which she was best known). Little actual violence occurs in “Black Twitter in the Age of Chaos,” but when a young black man who seems to be a doppelgänger or alter ego of the artist stands on a darkened street with police lights flashing ... you get the idea.

Elsewhere there is music and joy and ownership. “Black Music Is American Music” says a T-shirt worn by def.sound, one of the musicians who composed the audio for the piece, filmed in a Los Angeles studio. Images of the singer Taylor Swift and a rap commercial for the cereal Fruity Pebbles, as well as various memes, attest to both the popularity and appropriation of black culture and its appearance in unlikely contexts. “Tempo” gently and somewhat abstractly points out the struggle and oppression that have driven and accompanied black music, comedy and performance, even prompting them to flourish, but at a heavy cost.
MARTHA SCHWENDENER



Installation view of “Jibade-Khalil Huffman: Tempo” at the Kitchen

Burnaway
February 20 2018

BURNAWAY

REVIEWS: Beyond Language: Jibade-Khalil Huffman at Crisp- Ellert Art Museum



Jibade-Khalil Huffman, "Sculpture for Migos," 2017, mixed media.

Artist-poet Jibade-Khalil Huffman explores identity and the complex narratives of life in his exhibition currently on view at Flagler College's Crisp-Ellert Art Museum in St. Augustine, Florida. "A Tondo for Rajon Rondo" features video, photography, and sculpture in provocative and confrontational multimedia and 2-D work. "The title refers to Rajon Rondo, the NBA point guard for the New Orleans Pelicans and the idea of making a tribute to him into a tribute to 'difficult' blackness," says Huffman of Rondo, who is known for his incendiary comments off the court as much as his undeniable skills in the game.

The main gallery features a series of large-scale archival inkjet photographs and "paintings." The latter being a series of archival inkjet prints on transparencies and canvas that are layered and stretched onto traditional stretcher bars.

A black-and-white portrait of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. seems to split open to reveal fragments of color and faces peering out at the viewer. In another piece, three washes of purple, yellow, and aquamarine float in a vortex of leaves. Across the room, a large photo offers a disquieting view of a night garden, where shadows seem to prowl along a fence line. Separately these pieces have a certain rambling impact; collectively they create a totally subjective story, with the feeling that this narrative could easily change on a return visit.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is the site-specific sculptural installation *Sculpture for Migos*, which combines video, lighting, projections, audio, and objects to great effect. Within *Migos*, the shifting interrelationships between seemingly disparate sources—such as sitcoms, animated cartoons, and abstract light effects—create a singular atmosphere that can feel overwhelming at times. Scenes from the 1970s sitcom *Good Times* play beside video clips of people on a dance floor, which play beside a black screen flecked with dots of multicolored lights. In a brief video segment, Houston Rockets player James Harden appears rolling his eyes and then walking away from an on-court sports commentator.

Snippets of dialogue and a driving soundtrack vie for the viewer/listener's attention; the sounds ebb and flow—a hip-hop beat segueing into a dronelike, industrial rhythm. VHS copies of the films *Africa Screams*, *The Best Man*, *Children of a Lesser God*, and *Baby Boy* are set on different staging and pedestals. Venetian blinds and a traction weight bag hang midair; adjacent to these are a jigsaw puzzle and cutout letters. Slowly walking through the confines of the space, these objects, when combined with the synchronized videos onscreen and projected on surfaces, threaded together with the unpredictable soundtrack, leaves the viewer with an experience that can be both jarring and meditative. Any subjective narrative is quickly shattered, agitated, and reformed within Migos' unstoppable, living pulse.

Sculpture for Migos is both highly affecting and in some ways wholly inscrutable: The same high energy of the collective media hitting the viewer at once can also feel overwhelming. Creating a personal narrative is certain when standing in the middle of this multimedia vortex; knowing whether or not this personal storyline is on the same page as Huffman's can feel unclear. Yet his skills at taking current art concepts, particularly in forging a dream-like, synesthesia-triggering piece are indisputable.

"The piece creates a larger, lyrical narrative out of these vignettes. All of the meaning is there, as in every poem," says Huffman, who is the author of three books of poetry and the winner of the 2004 Grolier Poetry Prize. "But this is complicated by the work being a video and not words on a page, and the meaning can be altered by viewers' associations with the visuals. But ultimately it's a poem or poetic sequence, through and through, and I hope people aren't dissuaded to read it as otherwise because of the format."

Huffman's show is part of CEAM's artist-in-residence program, which invites contemporary artists to work in St. Augustine, explains CEAM director Julie Dickover, who also helms the artist-in-residence program. "I was fascinated that Khalil is a published poet," she stated, "but started to realize the things that he couldn't express through language." Dickover admires his multimedia approach to each subject he addresses.

Methodology and inspiration aside, when pressed to describe his work to the uninitiated, Huffman is succinct: "I would describe it as working to achieve the kind of freedom not to have to answer this question — it's about doing the opposite of boiling things down to one sentence. It's about how life is complicated."

A Tondo for Rajon Rondo is on display at the Flagler College's Crisp-Ellert Art Museum, St. Augustine, Florida.



Jibade-Khalil Huffman, "Poems for Every Occasion," 2017, mixed media.

The St. Augustine Record
January 25 2018

THE ST. AUGUSTINE RECORD

Contemporary artist brings multimedia artwork to Crisp-Ellert Art Museum

A New York-based artist with Florida roots, Jibade-Khalil Huffman uses performance, photography and video to tell stories and convey meaning. Drawing on his background in poetry, Huffman plays with timing and pacing in his visual work to tease out suspense, tension, expectation and release.

Educated at Bard College (BA), Brown University (MFA, Literary Arts) and the University of Southern California (MFA, Studio Art), Huffman was a 2015-16 Artist in Residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem. His latest exhibit, "A Tondo for Rajon Rondo," opens tonight at Flagler College's Crisp-Ellert Art Museum and runs through Feb. 22.

Compass caught up with Huffman to chat about living in Florida, expectations in artwork and working with a variety of mediums. Here's part of that conversation.

I read that you grew up in Florida. Tell me about that.

Jibade-Khalil Huffman: I grew up in Detroit, but went to part of middle school and high school in Florida. I lived in Clearwater, but went to an arts high school in St. Pete.

Does your time in Florida influence your artwork today?

JKH: Definitely. The thing I always say is that I hated it so much in high school. Whatever teen angst I had was just compounded by Florida — by the pace, by these weird racial politics and all of these things I couldn't articulate at the time. I remember just thinking, "I cannot wait to get out of here." So I only applied to colleges in the Northeast. But then, right at the beginning of college, I realized how much living in Florida influenced my work and so much of my work is about those experiences; strip malls and suburbia.

I watched a video about your Studio Museum in Harlem Artist-in-Residence and you say, "Anytime you have a narrative, you have expectations and I'm so opposed to expectations." Could you elaborate on that?

JKH: I meant specifically with video, moving image work. There's this expectation that we have from movies and television that you're going to sit down and "a" is going to happen, there's going to be a conflict in "b" and it's going to be resolved in "c." And if you don't get that and you're not prepared to accept this thing as a piece of art that is a time-based painting, then it annoys you.

You work in a variety of mediums including photography, videography, animation, painting, drawing, collage and the written word. Tell me about choosing which medium to use in your different works.

JKH: There are some pieces that I just know from the beginning that it's going to be a photograph, but in most cases it's a bigger, longer process that starts with research and my connection with writing. There's this research process of going on YouTube and diving into different subjects — these Internet deep dives. Basically, it [the medium] just intuitively presents itself, but it starts from this initial openness and understanding of my own limitations.

Tell me about the show, what will be on display and what people can expect from the experience.

JKH: Within the two spaces, there's going to be one room with these new inkjet paintings. I've been recently exploring making these works where I'm projecting video onto them. On a conceptual level, I'm playing around with the idea of having these mini narratives within each painting. And then there's this monumental work that I've been working on for two years; an elaborate inkjet work that's going to be printed on a transparent canvas. The other space is this new video ["Poems For Every Occasion"] that's a single-channel video and next to that, in the same room, will be this new installation sculptural piece. That's what I'm making here [in St. Augustine] on the spot.



Modernpainters
January 2018

modernpainters

12 EMERGING ARTISTS TO WATCH THIS YEAR

The work of the New York-based artist Jibade-Khalil Huffman is often written about in terms that might also describe light: refracted, diffuse, prismatic, glancing, opaque. And aptly so; the artist-poet's output deals in the conditions of visibility. Light is changeable: it gives access and it can take it away. His multimedia work features loose, non-linear admixtures of sampled or ventriloquized image, text and sound. With it, the artist (who has also published three collections of poetry) aims to flatten hierarchies of form as well as those that emerge among his far-flung source materials, by turns pop, esoteric, and vernacular. In the video "Figuration B," 2017, for example, we have a Colt 45 advertisement, "Scarface," Will Farrell tranquilized in "Old School," the basketball player Isiah Thomas strangling his coach in 1989, Jeru the Damaja's song "Invasion" and Dolly Parton's "9 to 5," and a program in which a boy exclaims "Hey, aren't you Frederick Douglass?" All of this is distorted or filtered through hazy pinks and greens, and it dissolves, on occasion, into graphic geometry.

Huffman's installations often emphasize the way video occupies space by projecting onto sculptural elements and altered surfaces. He has described this gesture as summoning Minimalism's attention to the body as it encounters an object in space; but here, the viewer is asked to consider the material consequences of cinema's often-observed politics. Pulling from a range of cinematic tropes — subtitles, tracking and POV shots — he signals that no form is without ideology.

The artist became a permanent fixture of the London cityscape when his outdoor sculpture "Rod" — which recalls lightning — was unveiled in 2015 in Embassy Gardens, a south London riverside development that is close to the future US embassy building.

JIBADE-KHALIL HUFFMAN



Financial Times
December 2017

FINANCIAL TIMES

Political art prominent in Miami

As the 16th edition of Art Basel Miami Beach opens this week, Berlin's Tanya Leighton gallery in the fair's Nova corner seems to have brought a pop-up Hawaiian shirt store. Get closer and the clothes, by Russian-American artist Sanya Kantarovsky in collaboration with fashion designer George McCracken, contain disturbing images — there are angry, wizened men strangling each other — all questioning an era of self-interest, degeneracy and the relentless pursuit of happiness.

It's an apt metaphor for the Miami fair, so long associated with beachside glitz and glamour but now increasingly a platform for highly politicised art. "There's no question that this is a serious fair, it's Art Basel in America, and therefore a place for issues and works that are emerging out of the situation of America at the moment," says Simon Gowing, director at Tanya Leighton.

It's partly circumstantial. Last year's edition was the first major fair held after the election of Donald Trump as US president and proved the "apex" of Art Basel Miami Beach as a political platform, says Noah Horowitz, Art Basel's Americas director. Work made in response in a matter of weeks, such as Rirkrit Tiravanija's bold text and newsprint works with phrases including "The tyranny of common sense has reached its final stage", had their outing in Miami 2016.

Horowitz acknowledges the fair has not always been associated with such messages. "A lot happens outside that lends a party feel," he says, but "the clichés of old are lessening."

This year, Trump's America still pervades the booths and issues of race relations and civil rights look to loom large, hot on the heels of Tate Modern's landmark *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power* exhibition, which travels to the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Arkansas, then New York's Brooklyn Museum. The fair also coincides with the fourth edition of New Orleans's Prospect triennial, which has at its core the jazz phenomenon that grew out of African-American slavery (until February 25).

As with the rediscovery of feminist artists of the 20th century, these re-visited movements chime with today's political and social preoccupations. "It's again not a bright era for African Americans, in the US and the rest of the world," says Edward De Luca, director at DC Moore gallery. New works by Detroit-born Jibade-Khalil Huffman at Anat Ebgi gallery in *Positions* (and in Art Basel's Film sector) are less politically strident but emphatically reference black culture, including music, film and literature. Ebgi says that Huffman's show in her Los Angeles gallery earlier this year was "extremely well received".

A more serious trend now seems to pervade all art fairs as the outside world creeps into the bubble. At the beachside *Untitled* fair this week (December 6-10) are works by Deborah Roberts, who explores black female identity (Fort Gansevoort gallery, \$5,000-\$25,000), while imagined figures explore similar issues in works by Amy Sherald, recently chosen to paint Michelle Obama's official portrait for the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery (Monique Meloche gallery). New works by Barack Obama's portraitist Kehinde Wiley are at Stephen Friedman gallery in Art Basel (\$90,000-\$120,000) (see interview).

Horowitz says, "It's much less about 'art fair art' now. People come to fairs to gain a lens into the trends and at the moment art is generally more politicised." Art Basel's talks programme too has some less likely candidates, including Alexander Alberro, professor of art history at New York's Barnard College (his recent book, *Abstraction in Reverse*, is the basis of a talk on December 7).

However, this fair is of course still primarily a commercial event. "This is a good time of year. People have seen a season of exhibitions, a series of big auctions, taken stock and know what they are looking for," Horowitz says.



Jibade-Khalil Huffman at Art Basel Miami Beach (2017)

The Art Newspaper
December 1 2017

THE ART NEWSPAPER

Race relations in the spotlight at Art Basel in Miami Beach



Jibade-Khalil Huffman at Art Basel Miami (2017)

Spurred on by a new urgency in conversations about race in the US, where white supremacists have collided with Black Lives Matter activists in recent months, interest in work by African-American artists is on the rise. With calls growing for greater support of black artists, combined with buyers looking beyond the Basquiat boom, many US dealers at Art Basel in Miami Beach (7-10 December) are bringing works that illuminate past struggles or respond to the current moment.

The art world is only now waking up to its historic racism and sexism, but there is a “genuine desire” to address these issues, Cherry says. “Collectors, curators and critics are excited to learn about previously overlooked artists, to collect their work and explore the legacy of these artists,” the dealer adds.

Anat Ebgi is another gallery making its debut at Art Basel in Miami Beach with art that addresses hot-button topics. The Los Angeles-based dealer is showing new works by Jibade-Khalil Huffman that focus on the black male figure in art history and US popular culture, including the video mashup *Figuration B* (2017).

So, what place does politics have at an art fair? “Politics are inescapable in every human situation, and we should be alert to them,” Cherry says. “The current moment is certainly a good one in terms of reflecting on issues of race and civil rights. The need never goes away.”

Collector Daily
July 6 2017

COLLECTOR DAILY

Jibade-Khalil Huffman, FIGURATION @Downstairs Projects

JTF (just the facts): Two single-channel color videos with sound, one 23 minutes long and the other 20 minutes long; one photo-based work consisting of layered inkjet prints on clear Mylar, 40x30 inches; and one limited-edition zine containing a poem by the artist. Each video is available in an edition of 3+2AP, the zine is available in an edition of 50, and the photo-based work is unique. The show is open by appointment only.

Comments/Context: Last month, a New York Times article reported on the number of small and midsize galleries that have closed since the beginning of the year, unable to compete in a market increasingly dominated by big-box operations like David Zwirner and Hauser & Wirth; unable to afford the art fair booths that are ever more essential to success; and unable to attract collectors willing to gamble on emerging artists. Some see this as yet another symptom of rising income inequality; some see it as part of a cycle that's repeated itself many times in the New York art world. And some, like artists Ruby Sky Stiler and Daniel Gordon, have taken matters into their own hands.

Since October of last year, Stiler and Gordon have run an exhibition space called Downstairs Projects out of a small basement room in the building that houses their studios, showing the work of friends and peers that they admire. "The creation of the project space came out of our desire to give opportunities to artists, without the concerns of having a commercial gallery space," says Stiler.

An exhibition of work by Los Angeles-based poet and artist Jibade-Khalil Huffman now on view at Downstairs is a felicitous pairing of art and place. In two videos, a photo piece, and a limited-edition zine, words, images, and space work together in ways both disarming and disturbing. Some histories and narratives can only be told through improvisation and assemblage, and Huffman employs both, brilliantly and across all mediums, in the improvised surroundings of Stiler and Gordon's project room.

The lone photo work consists of sheets of transparent plastic, each printed with fragmentary found picture. Layered one over the other, images of a bathroom scale, a sofa, a TV, a boxed set of jazz albums, a corner cabinet, a couple of ceramic figurines, and other accouterments of domestic life come together into a nearly abstract composition. Overlaying the whole are the words: A TATTOO OF HARRIET TUBMAN'S FACE WITH A TATTOO OF YOUR FACE ON HARRIET TUBMAN'S FACE ON YOUR FACE. The meaning of the work is obscure, though there's been recent speculation about whether or not the planned replacement of Andrew Jackson's image with Tubman's on the \$20 bill will ever really happen.

"Sometimes I think I bruise myself/in my sleep/so that I have a head start on them," reads one of the lines in Huffman's long poem "Mantra," in the zine printed for this show. Though his writing and art clearly address the politics of race in America, Huffman resists obviousness at every turn, instead meeting society's takebacks, double standards, and mixed signals with some taking back, doubling, and mixing of his own.

Collector's POV: The works in the show are priced as follows. The two videos First Person Shooter and Figuration (A) are \$4000 and \$3000 respectively, and the inkjet work Rubric (A Tattoo of Harriet Tubman's Face with A Tattoo of Your Face on Harriet Tubman's Face on Your Face) (For Morgan Parker) is \$2500. Huffman's work has little secondary market history, so gallery retail likely remains the best option for those collectors interested in following up. Huffman is represented by Anat Egbi in Los Angeles ([here](#)).



The Art Newspaper
December 1 2017

THE ART NEWSPAPER

Race relations in the spotlight at Art Basel in Miami Beach

JTF (just the facts): Two single-channel color videos with sound, one 23 minutes long and the other 20 minutes long; one photo-based work consisting of layered inkjet prints on clear Mylar, 40×30 inches; and one limited-edition zine containing a poem by the artist. Each video is available in an edition of 3+2AP, the zine is available in an edition of 50, and the photo-based work is unique. The show is open by appointment only.

Comments/Context: Last month, a New York Times article reported on the number of small and midsize galleries that have closed since the beginning of the year, unable to compete in a market increasingly dominated by big-box operations like David Zwirner and Hauser & Wirth; unable to afford the art fair booths that are ever more essential to success; and unable to attract collectors willing to gamble on emerging artists. Some see this as yet another symptom of rising income inequality; some see it as part of a cycle that's repeated itself many times in the New York art world. And some, like artists Ruby Sky Stiler and Daniel Gordon, have taken matters into their own hands.

Since October of last year, Stiler and Gordon have run an exhibition space called Downstairs Projects out of a small basement room in the building that houses their studios, showing the work of friends and peers that they admire. "The creation of the project space came out of our desire to give opportunities to artists, without the concerns of having a commercial gallery space," says Stiler.

An exhibition of work by Los Angeles-based poet and artist Jibade-Khalil Huffman now on view at Downstairs is a felicitous pairing of art and place. In two videos, a photo piece, and a limited-edition zine, words, images, and space work together in ways both disarming and disturbing. Some histories and narratives can only be told through improvisation and assemblage, and Huffman employs both, brilliantly and across all mediums, in the improvised surroundings of Stiler and Gordon's project room.

The lone photo work consists of sheets of transparent plastic, each printed with fragmentary found picture. Layered one over the other, images of a bathroom scale, a sofa, a TV, a boxed set of jazz albums, a corner cabinet, a couple of ceramic figurines, and other accouterments of domestic life come together into a nearly abstract composition. Overlaying the whole are the words: A TATTOO OF HARRIET TUBMAN'S FACE WITH A TATTOO OF YOUR FACE ON HARRIET TUBMAN'S FACE ON YOUR FACE. The meaning of the work is obscure, though there's been recent speculation about whether or not the planned replacement of Andrew Jackson's image with Tubman's on the \$20 bill will ever really happen.



Artillery
June 27 2017

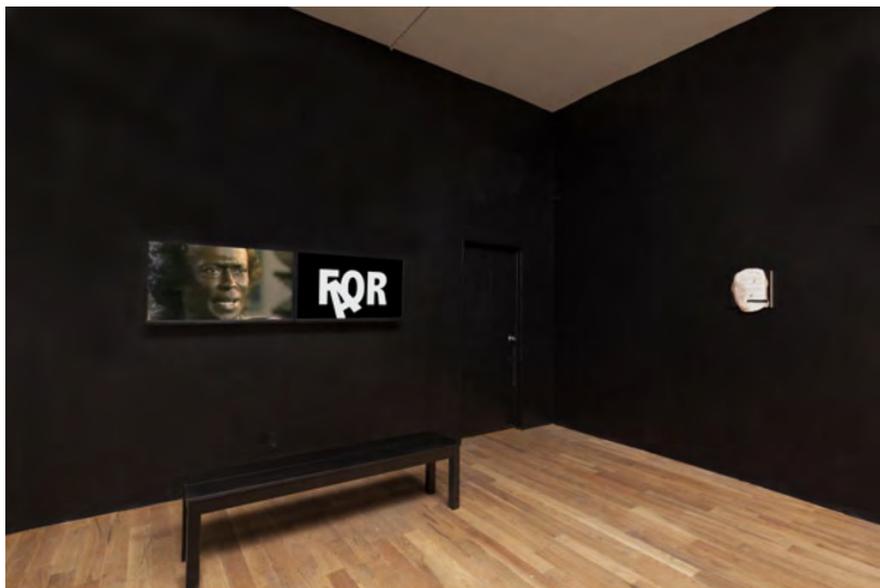
artillery

Now More Than Always

When Hannah Black wrote in her open letter to the Whitney Biennial curators “it is not acceptable for a white person to transmute Black suffering into profit and fun, though the practice has been normalized for a long time,” she did more than bolster a national debate about ownership of black pain, she connected with Denver artist Taylor Balkissoon and her frustration with her work mediated by a white audience. A biracial, queer, female artist, Balkissoon grapples with the commodification of black identity in the exhibition “Now More Than Always.” For one-night only, Balkissoon commandeered and curated the apartment of Adam Gildar, the owner of Gildar Gallery, situated just upstairs from Balkissoon’s group exhibition. The result is a jarring confrontation with the privileged privacy a white male gallerist is afforded against the cultural obligations placed on her.

Jibade-Khalil Huffman’s video artwork, *Duets* includes a clip of Miles Davis from a 1988 interview on 60 Minutes where Davis says he would play if no one listened because he loves music. When people are listening, and buying, the art becomes a dialog even if the artist speaks no words. But sometimes they are not having the same conversation. —*Kealy Boyd*

Photos courtesy Kealey Boyd & Gildar Gallery in Denver, CO



Jibade-Khalil Huffman installation