

HOLLIS TAGGART

**Hollis Taggart to Present New Works by Los Angeles-Based Artist John Knuth
At Its Gallery in Southport**

John Knuth: The Dawn On View May 15 – July 3, 2021

Hollis Taggart is pleased to present *John Knuth: The Dawn* at its Southport location, opening on May 15, 2021. For the exhibition, Los Angeles-based artist John Knuth continues his formal and conceptual exploration and play with unorthodox materials and approaches. *The Dawn* will include new paintings and ostrich egg sculptures created through his signature flyspeck technique as well as new works that feature horseshoe crab shells. Together, the objects in Knuth's forthcoming show capture his vision of rebirth and reawakening as the proliferation of COVID-19 vaccines brings new hope for an emergence from the pandemic. *The Dawn* will remain on view through July 3, 2021 at Hollis Taggart's gallery in Southport, which is housed in an historic building at 330 Pequot Avenue.

"As I was working on this exhibition, I kept returning to notions of renewal and the ways in which it is manifest in nature every day. We can physically see rebirth in nature and equally nature has for human history held the keys to achieving our own different rebirths," said Knuth. "*The Dawn* has provided me with an avenue to explore these ideas anew and to consider the organic materials and organisms with which I work through a new lens born out of this challenging moment. The show is really a celebration—of nature and of new beginnings."

Knuth's practice is grounded in the beauty, mystery, and magnificence of transformation. Leveraging the formal possibilities of common materials like signal flares and emergency blankets and base processes like fly regurgitation, Knuth produces stunning and thought-provoking paintings, installations, and objects. In creating works through unexpected means, he challenges traditional notions of artmaking and collapses the long-held boundaries between high and low art. Likely his most recognizable works are his "fly paintings," which are made by thousands of homegrown houseflies that Knuth feeds a mixture of sugar water and variously colored watercolor paints. The resulting abstract works belie their somewhat profane making, conjuring sensations of beautiful open skies, shimmering expanses of water, and aeriels of metropolises like Los Angeles and New York.

The Dawn will feature a selection of new fly paintings, including large-scale canvases and diptychs, with color palettes that suggest the rising sun and warm glow of a summer day. The works feel particularly inviting as we embark on a new spring with a new sense of hope and relief after a devastating pandemic year. Knuth has also brought his flyspeck technique to bear on three-dimensional objects. In the exhibition, *The Origin of the New World*, which was on view at Hollis Taggart gallery in summer 2019, he created globes through the process. For *The Dawn*, Knuth will make flyspecked ostrich eggs. The eggs, made in a range of bold, bright colors and compelling in their natural organic forms, also allude to new beginnings.

For *The Dawn*, the artist is also working with a new material that has long interested him: the horseshoe crab shell. Horseshoe crabs have become an important part of medical innovation as their bright blue blood contains immune cells that are highly effective at identifying invading toxins. By incorporating the crab shells into his latest paintings, Knuth pays homage to the significance of the crabs to our fight

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against COVID-19 and other diseases. For the works, Knuth covers the shells in gold leaf and mounts them on thickly painted canvases of varying shades of blue, capturing their treasured status. The works further build on Knuth's interest and examination in the power of transformation within art and well beyond, and the ways in which that transcendence can emerge from the most unpredictable of places, moments, objects, and creatures.

“I have known John for many years, and it has been exciting to watch his vision and work evolve over the course of his career. His ability to create beauty, and see the power, in the seemingly mundane is truly singular. I am delighted to have the opportunity to collaborate with John again, and particularly enthusiastic to share his work with the community here in Southport and Connecticut more broadly. John has presented in major cities across the world from Milan to Los Angeles and so it is really a treat to have his show at our Southport location,” said Paul Efstathiou, Director of Contemporary Art at Hollis Taggart.

About John Knuth

John Knuth was born in 1978 in Minneapolis, Minnesota and lives and works in Los Angeles, California. He received an MFA from University of Southern California and a BFA from the University of Minnesota. Knuth's recent solo exhibitions include *Powerplant* at Brand New Gallery, Milan, Italy; *Base Alchemy* at 5 Car Garage, Santa Monica, CA; *Master Plan* at Andrew Rafacz Gallery, Chicago, IL; *Elevated Uncertainty* at Marie Kirkegaard, Copenhagen, Denmark; and *Fading Horizon* at Human Resources, Los Angeles, CA. His works has recently been included in group shows at International Print Center, New York, NY; Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY; MassArt, Boston, MA; Self-Titled, Tilburg, NL; Los Angeles County Museum of Art in Los Angeles, CA; and the Minneapolis Institute of Art.

About Hollis Taggart

Founded in 1979, Hollis Taggart presents significant works of American art, showcasing the trajectory of American art movements from the Hudson River School to American Modernism and the Post-War and Contemporary eras. Its program is characterized by a deep commitment to scholarship and bringing to the fore the work of under-recognized artists. The gallery has sponsored several catalogue raisonné projects, most recently for the American Surrealist artist Kay Sage, and has been instrumental in advancing knowledge of such artists as Alfred Maurer, Arthur B. Carles, and more recently, Theodoros Stamos, Marjorie Strider, and Michael (Corinne) West. In the summer of 2019, the gallery announced the formal expansion of its primary market business and focus on the presentation of contemporary work. It continues to expand its roster of contemporary artists, focusing on emerging and mid-career talents. With more than 40 years of experience, Hollis Taggart is widely recognized by collectors and curators for its leadership, expertise, and openness, on matters of art history, and market trends and opportunities. The gallery's flagship location is in Chelsea, and it also operates a space in Southport, Connecticut.

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