

# GREENE NAFTALI

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## *From Disco to Disco*

Neil Greenberg

Tony Cokes

Rachel Harrison

Richard Hawkins

Jacqueline Humphries

Craig Kalpakjian

Michael Krebber

Sophie von Hellermann

with a DJ mix by Justus Köhncke

February 2 – 27, 2021

Ground Floor

*Disco existed before we were all born and will exist afterwards. It is a ritual—it is a celebration.*

— Grace Jones

The past year's upending of day-to-day existence has put the rhythms and movements of nightlife on pause. International lockdown measures and curfews swept people off the streets and shuttered bars and dance halls. In the absence of these alternative spaces—sites of self-invention and refuge for the city's subcultures—urban life has come to a standstill.

The artists featured in *From Disco to Disco* make works that evoke both euphoria and loss—the hedonism of a carefree night out and the need for escape and catharsis. The exhibition also pays tribute to the history of the gallery's building as the former site of Fun House, the legendary '80s dance club where Madonna got her start. The works are a reminder of the utopian promise that nightlife holds as a space for collective release: of bodies in motion, packed together in ways we no longer take for granted.

*From Disco to Disco* takes its title from a single by Whirlpool Productions that climbed the European charts in 1997. The group's co-founder, the techno musician Justus Köhncke, has produced a DJ mix to accompany the show; and Michael Krebber's contribution is a five-part portrait of Köhncke, a friend and peer from the Cologne art scene of the 1990s. The exhibition centers on an installation that features documentation of *The Disco Project* (1995) by Neil Greenberg, shown here for the first time in a gallery context. An influential Downtown choreographer known for his poignant movement vocabulary and groundbreaking use of text in dance, Greenberg made the work in the shadow of another pandemic, and the AIDS crisis hovers in the background of what can be exuberant, spirited passages. As a reviewer for *TDR* remarked in 1998, *The Disco Project* "pressed grief and joy through a sophisticated camp sensibility, a strategy capable of embracing the contradiction of those experiences without denying either one its distinctness."

Greenberg's projected footage and textual accompaniment are flanked by a selection of black light paintings by Jacqueline Humphries, resin-cast and 3D-printed objects that seem to glow from within. The series, begun in 2005, builds on Humphries's earlier experiments with fluorescent and Day-Glo paint, in a visual nod to New York nightlife of decades past when the art world and the club scene were deeply entwined. A party atmosphere pervades Sophie von Hellermann's post-human *Future Disco* and turns slightly sinister in Craig Kalpakjian's *Damage Control*, suggestive of dreck that litters the dancefloor when the lights come up after last call. The hardhat in Rachel Harrison's © 2004 *Hasbro Inc.* evokes the Macho Man archetype of disco supergroup the Village People, whose music has recently played at both Pride

parades and Trump rallies. Disco's dark side is mined most thoroughly in a small, searing multiple by Tony Cokes: a plaque emblazoned with text that refers to the U.S. military's use of sound (including disco music) as a torture device. And Richard Hawkins's painting *Thebackroom* has the cruisy feel of an illicit encounter, shot through with genuine longing. Taken together, the works in *From Disco to Disco* can only gesture at the complex and highly personal resonances nightlife holds in each of our memories. But their collective presentation channels a sense of bodily freedom, defiance, and joyful abandon, looking ahead to future moves that await us when isolation ends.

The DJ mix can be accessed here: <https://soundcloud.com/greene-naftali/justus-kohncke-from-disco-to-disco-dj-mix>

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### *From Disco to Disco*

February 2nd – February 27th, 2021

Ground Floor



**Michael Krebber**

*justus köhncke and the church drawing, 2002*

Five drawings, pencil and ballpen on paper

Overall dimensions variable



**Craig Kalpakjian**

*Damage Control, 2019*

Lighting truss, surveillance mirror, security camera,

ADJ stage light, monitor, black mirrored ball, detritus

84 x 74 x 42 inches (213.4 x 188 x 106.7 cm)



**Sophie von Hellermann**

*Future Disco, 2018*

Acrylic on canvas

78 3/4 x 74 3/4 inches (200 x 190 cm)



**Neil Greenberg**

*The Disco Project Installation, 2021*

Projected video and text

43:35 minutes, dimensions variable

*The Disco Project, 1995*

Choreography and Text: Neil Greenberg

Performed by: Ellen Barnaby, Christopher Batenhorst, Neil Greenberg, Justine Lynch, Paige Martin

Lighting Design: Michael Stiller

Music: Sylvester, RuPaul, Sharon Redd, Sister Sledge, and Jimmy Somerville & the Communards

Musical Advisor: Zeena Parkins

Costume construction: Suzanne Gallo

Stage Manager: Roderick Murray

Premiere performances at P.S. 122, New York, December 1995

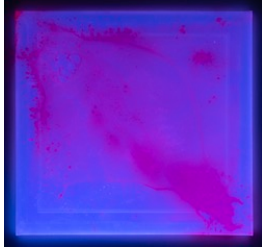
Video Documentation Production:

Jerome Robbins Archive of the Recorded Moving Image

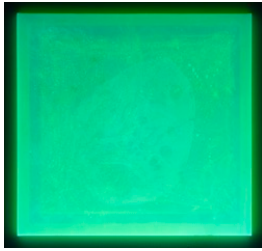
Dance Collection of the New York Public Library

Recorded by Sathya Production Services, Molly McBride, Director

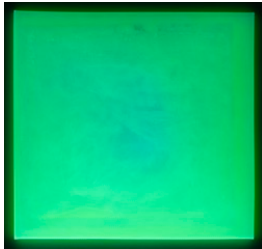
Joyce Theater, New York, January 17, 1997



**Jacqueline Humphries**  
*Untitled, 2019*  
Pigmented epoxy resin  
40 x 38 inches (101.6 x 96.5 cm)



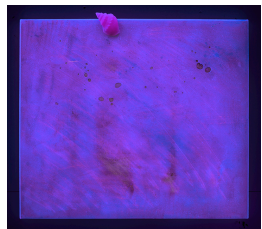
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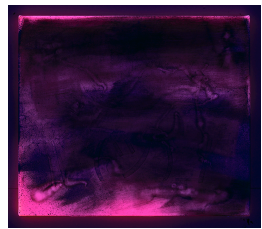
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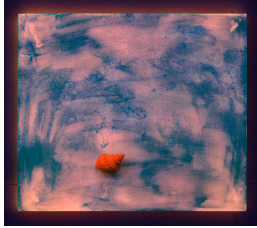
**Jacqueline Humphries**  
*Untitled, 2019*  
Pigmented epoxy resin  
26 x 30 inches (66 x 76.2 cm)



**Jacqueline Humphries**  
*Untitled, 2019*  
Pigmented epoxy resin  
26 x 30 inches (66 x 76.2 cm)



**Jacqueline Humphries**  
*Untitled, 2019*  
Pigmented epoxy resin  
26 x 30 inches (66 x 76.2 cm)



**Jacqueline Humphries**

*Untitled, 2019*

Pigmented epoxy resin

25 7/8 x 29 7/8 x 4 inches (65.7 x 75.9 x 10.2 cm)



**Tony Cokes**

*Disco Isn't Dead: Evil.16 (Torture.Musik), 2019*

Silkscreen print onto 3mm Acrylic, with split batten

8 7/8 x 11 7/8 inches (22.5 x 30 cm)



**Rachel Harrison**

© 2004 Hasbro Inc., 2015

Wood, cement, acrylic, plastic, rope, metal, toy gun, fake sausages, helmet, and wheels

61 x 41 1/4 x 35 1/8 inches (154.9 x 104.8 x 89.2 cm)



**Richard Hawkins**

*Thebackroom, 2009*

Oil on linen

40 x 45 inches (101.6 x 114.3 cm)