CLAUDIA HART
ILLUMINATIONS
April 26 - June 7, 2025

Opening Reception: Saturday, April 26, 5-7 PM

bitforms gallery is pleased to announce *Illuminations,* Claudia Hart's fifth solo exhibition. *Illuminations* presents a diverse body of work that pulls from the artist's vast library of decorative patterns and icons. These symbols incorporate a variety of graphics: the heraldry of failed empires, corporate logos, linguistic pictorial symbols like emoji, mathematical signs, decorative alphabets, and tile patterns culled from world cultures. Hart uses symbols as a basic visual vocabulary to incorporate larger algorithmic patterns that she then animates. The artist's signs and signifiers flicker, sometimes regularly and sometimes randomly, like techniques used by hypnotists to mesmerize and bring viewers into a trance state.

The *Illuminations* feature dynamic video works encased in decorated wooden frames. The frames are fabricated through a hybrid process in which handiwork is combined with photography and a sophisticated computer-controlled printing technique. Each *Illumination* contains a miniature monitor that showcases a looping video work, including both legacy

bitforms gallery

pieces produced between 2002–2019, and recent works from several concurrent series. Together, these animated paintings frame a poetic space: a meditation on the process of history, collapse and regeneration, mortality, and of art as a means of transcendence.

New works are part of three concurrent series: *Memory Theaters*, *Fallen Angels* and *Proxy Angels*. *Memory Theaters* (2023-2025) are a remix of the artist's 40-year archive into a series of new works. At the core of each piece is a motion capture performance where Hart enacts significant and allegorical events from her personal life. The set design features a theatrical animated environment filled with video documentations of actual live events. *Memory Theaters* evoke Grimm's fairy tales in an uncanny mix of experimental art history and personal memoir that bring together the past, present, and imaginary.

Fallen Angels (2024-2025) are fictional beings crafted by the artist as part of a mythology of children from an imaginary lost "Pod" of Archangels who live at the bottom of the ocean. There are seven Archangels in Hart's legend that have all had the misfortune of falling in love with beings who are not angels, but other species. As a result, they have found themselves banished to the ocean depths, but not before fathering the *Fallen Angels,* who are advanced beings with special gifts. *Fallen Angels* naturally spawned a formal variant, *Proxy Angels* (2025) that originated through the artist's experiments with AI text-to-video software.

> "I described myself to the AI as an angel, but still an elderly Jewish woman from NY. I described my clothing and my wings. I described locations - spots where I've lived but are also canonical: symbols of NY, a canonical city, and therefore a representation of collective memories, so good fodder for an AI simulator - the Staten Island Ferry, under the elevated train in Flushing (where I was born), Central Park, Columbia University (where I went to school!). I wrote short, unornamented descriptive texts of them all. The text-to-image AI produced fake photographs - most of which I discarded. But enough have survived. I think of them as a new form of street photography, an outward description of my inner life."

The focal point of Hart's exhibition is *The Days*, a monumental algorithmic work. *The Days* software was designed by Andrew Blanton, in collaboration with Hart.This work also embodies Hart's penchant for pattern - both the decorative and the symbolic. *The Days*, named for the days of the week, consists of real-time animations of seven medicinal wildflowers, all native to the Arab peninsula and used for healing. Each flower is a living algorithmic form that evolves and grows. *The Days* are projected onto an 8-foot tondo constructed in the gallery, and imagined as a portal into another world. The goal of Blanton + Hart was to translate a meditative experience into visual form. Beginning as clearly laid out patterns, the healing flowers ebb and flow, creating organic abstractions that evolve, decay and then come together again. The result is a mesmerizing, living painting unfolding in real time with infinite variations, mutating over the course of twenty-four hours. A new cycle of medicinal flowers restarts each day of the week at midnight, always beginning as a formal floral-patterned wallpaper, but then slowly evolving into a vast landscape filled with organic, flowing flowers, announcing itself every hour on the hour, like a meditative clock made for contemplation. During the course of the exhibition, a new species of flower appears that sparks a new, non-repeating evolution. The process takes 24 hours to unfold, then resets at noon the following day, to feature the next species in the cycle but initiating a new unfolding, related but different, unique but familiar in its pattern of growth, decay and regeneration.

CLAUDIA HART (b. 1955, New York, NY) emerged as part of a generation of '90s intermedia artists examining issues of identity and representation. Since the late '90s when she began working with 3D animation, Hart embraced these same concepts, but now focusing on the impact of computing and simulation technologies. She was an early adopter of virtual imaging, using 3D animation to make media installations and projections, and later as they were invented, other forms of VR, AR, and objects produced by computer-driven production machines. At the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where she is a professor, she developed a pedagogic program based on her practice – Experimental 3D – the first dedicated solely to teaching simulations technologies in an art-school context.

Hart's works are widely exhibited and collected by galleries and museums including the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Metropolitan Museum. Her work has been shown at the New Museum, produced at the Eyebeam Center for Art + Technology, where she was an honorary fellow in 2013-14, at Pioneer Works, NY, where she a technology resident in 2018, and at the Center for New Music and Audio Technology, UC California, Berkeley where she is currently a Fellow.

Founded in 2001, bitforms gallery represents established, mid-career, and emerging artists critically engaged with new technologies. Spanning the rich history of media art through its current developments, the gallery's program offers an incisive perspective on the fields of digital, internet, time-based, and new media art forms. For press inquiries, please contact info@bitforms.art or call (212) 366-6939
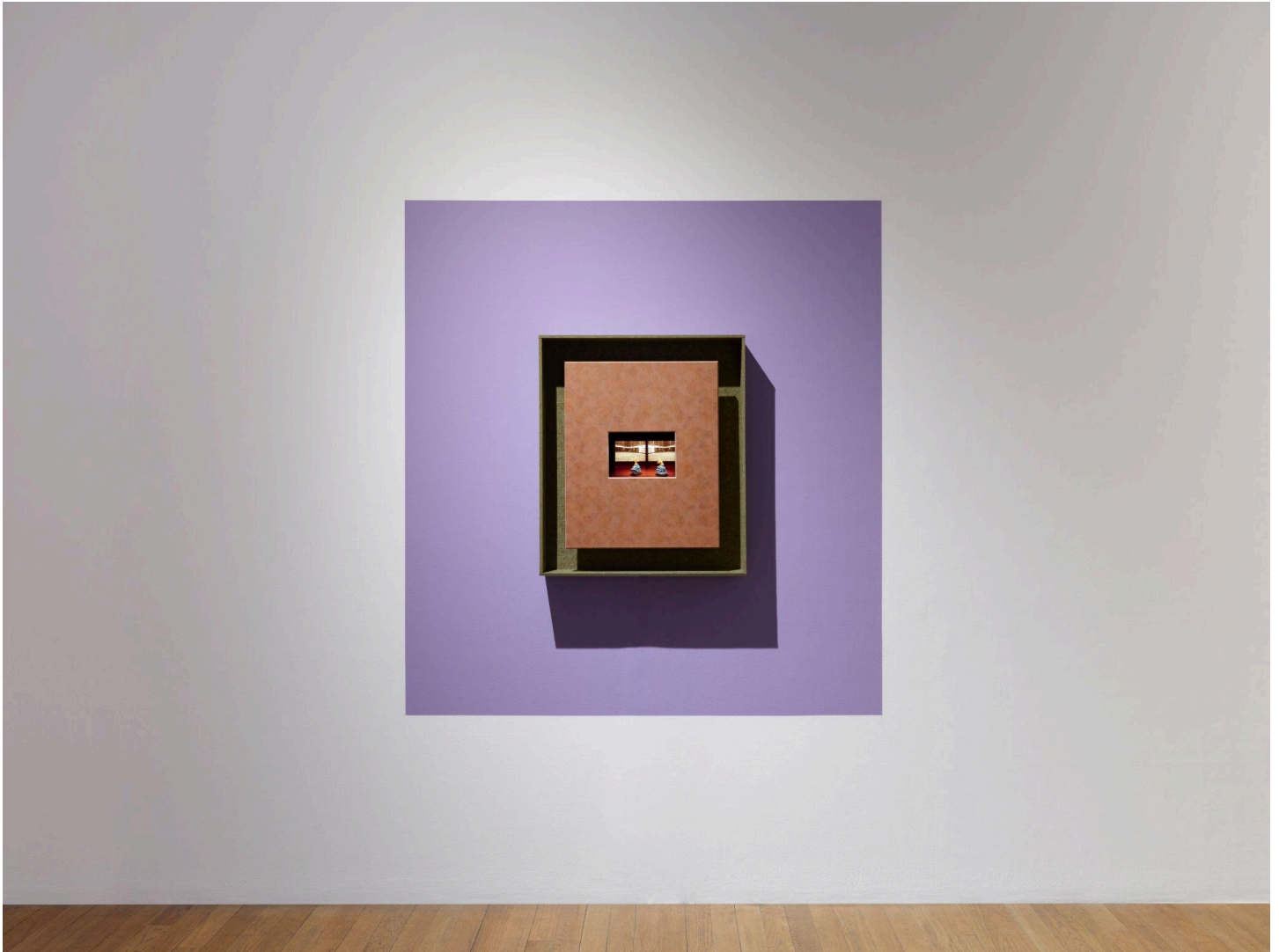
Claudia Hart, Installation view, bitforms gallery, 2025. Photo: Yi Hsuan Lai

Claudia Hart, Installation view, bitforms gallery, 2025. Photo: Yi Hsuan Lai

Claudia Hart, Installation view, bitforms gallery, 2025. Photo: Yi Hsuan Lai

Claudia Hart, Installation view, bitforms gallery, 2025. Photo: Yi Hsuan Lai

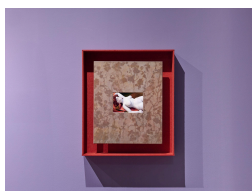Claudia Hart, Installation view, bitforms gallery, 2025. Photo: Yi Hsuan Lai

Claudia Hart, Installation view, bitforms gallery, 2025. Photo: Yi Hsuan Lai

bitforms gallery

Please use the below captions followed by "Courtesy of bitforms gallery, New York. Photo: Yi Hsuan Lai"

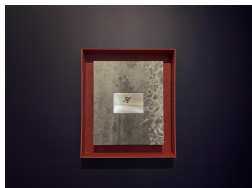**Claudia Hart** $ 20,000
Machina (Illumination), 2002-3/2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin,
acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
19 min 51 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

Claudia Hart $ 20,000
Dream (Illumination), 2008/2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin,
acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
7 min 14 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

Claudia Hart $ 20,000
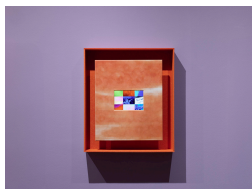*Digital Death (Illumination)*, 2010/2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin,
acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
10 min 32 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

Claudia Hart $ 20,000
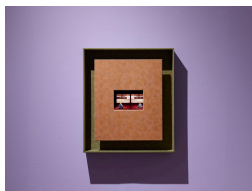*Dark kNight (Illumination)*, 2012/2019/2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin,
acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
16 min 26 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

Claudia Hart $ 20,000
Doll Dance (Illumination), 2014/2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin,
acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
10 min 8 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP
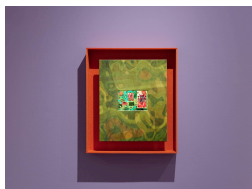
bitforms gallery

Claudia Hart
Memory Theater 2 (Illumination), 2023-2024
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin,
acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
5 min 8 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

$ 20,000

Claudia Hart
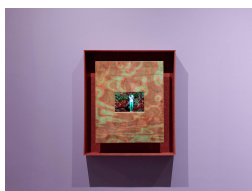*Green Wall (Illumination)*, 2023/2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin,
acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
3 min 30 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

$ 20,000

Claudia Hart
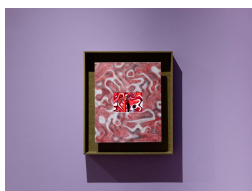*Fallen Angel: Bertile (Illumination)*, 2024-2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin,
acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
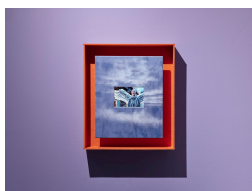7 min 35 sec, loop
Variant Ed 3, 1 AP

$ 20,000

Claudia Hart
Fallen Angel: Phylophia (Illumination), 2024-2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin,
acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
4 min 54 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

$ 20,000

Claudia Hart
Proxy Angel: 1 (Illumination), 2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin,
acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
2 min, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

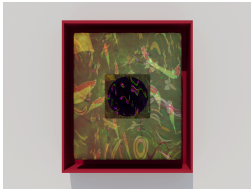$ 20,000

Claudia Hart
The Days (7 Healing Flowers for 7 Days), 2024
Custom software, computer, projector
Dimensions variable
Edition of 3, 1 AP

$ 20,000

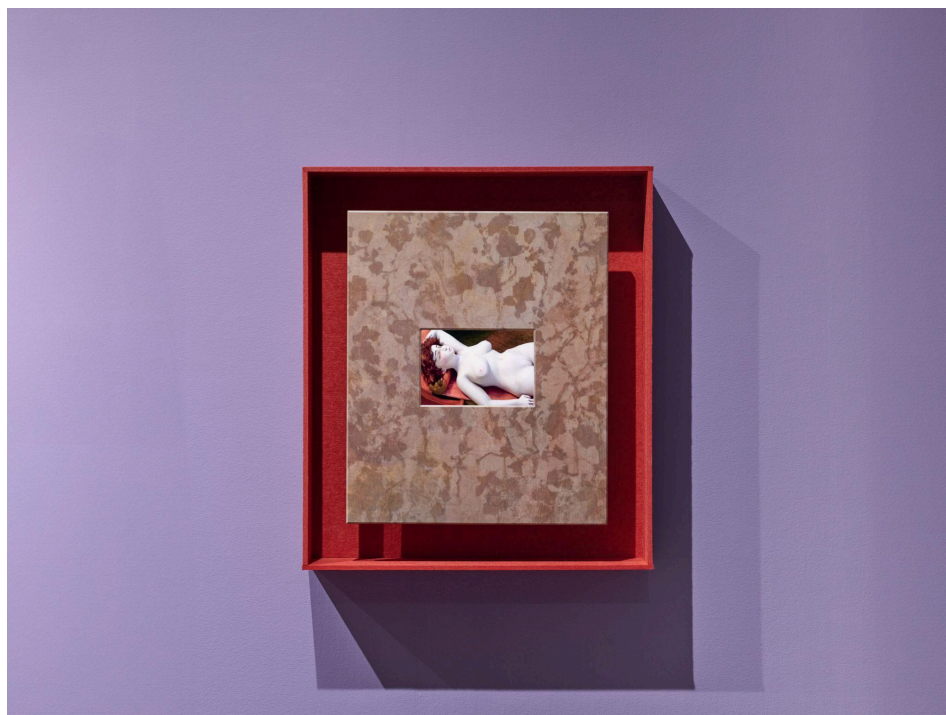# bitforms gallery

Claudia Hart
The Days (Illumination), 2024
Custom software, computer, projector
Dimensions variable
Edition of 3, 1 AP

$ 25,000

Claudia Hart
Machina (Illumination), 2002-3/2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin, acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
19 min 51 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

$ 20,000

Video Documentation: https://vimeo.com/390201900

The Illuminations were designed to frame monitors displaying the artist's experimental 3D animations produced over the past 23 years. Among them are legacy animations produced between 2002 and 2019. *Machina* is a 3D animation portraying the compressed time and space of painting, shows a dreaming character whose slow, drowsy movements articulate all of the minutia of a single moment. When the work was made in 2004, *Machina* implemented the most advanced techniques of virtual reality simulation to represent that which is sensual and organic. Occasionally, *Machina* opens her eyes to gaze at the viewer, allowing the object of our gaze to meet hers. Based loosely on works such as Titian's *Venus* and paintings of Peter Paul Rubens, *Machina* is meant to introduce sensuality into the virtual realm by employing an idea of beauty as defined by a woman. In doing so, *Machina* inverts the language of the character animations familiar from 3D gaming, not just through its visual language but also rejecting the violence and aggressive speed that typifies the genre.

Claudia Hart
Dream (Illumination), 2008/2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin, acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
7 min 14 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

$ 20,000

Video Documentation: https://vimeo.com/1004576620

The *Illuminations* were designed to frame monitors displaying the artist's experimental 3D animations produced over the past 23 years. Among them are legacy animations produced between 2002 and 2019. *Dream* is a fluid environment evoking x-rays and the style of medical imaging as well as biological elements. Semi-abstract, the animation suggests cells, blood vessels and a range of the visceral emissions that come from bodies. *Dream* is also a way of imagining a digital body, on the edge of the abstract or the graphic, yet with the slow time and space of a painting or a dream or a dream of painting. The sound track, by composer Edmund Campion, also functions on an edge between representation and avant-garde composition, integrating sounds emitted by bodies and fluids with classical compositional strategies.

Claudia Hart
Digital Death (Illumination), 2010/2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin, acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
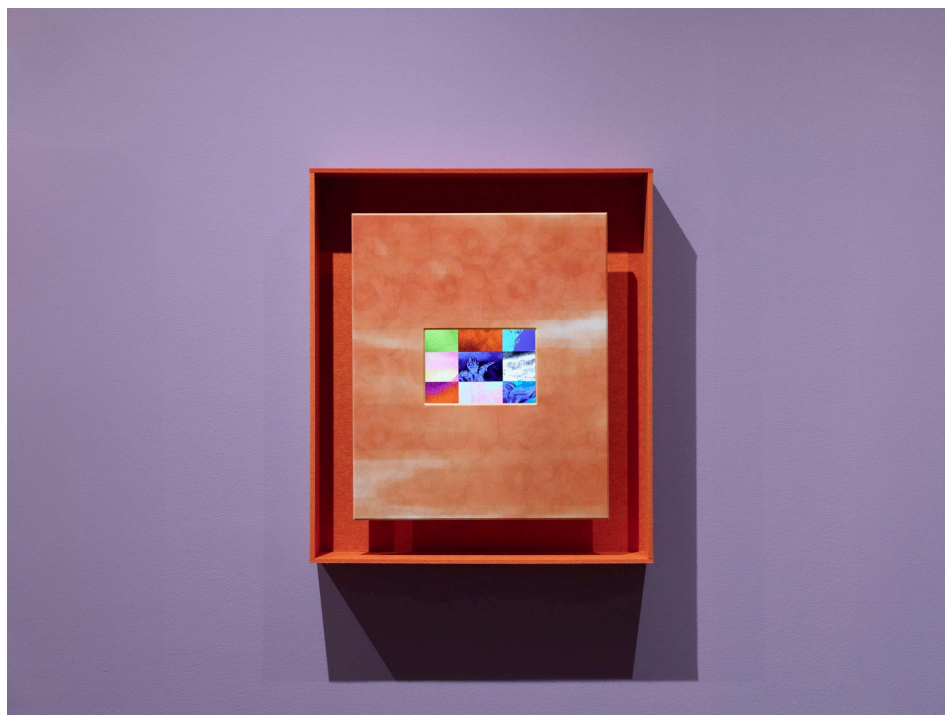30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
10 min 32 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

$ 20,000

Video Documentation: https://vimeo.com/61928275

The *Illuminations* were designed to frame monitors displaying the artist's experimental 3D animations produced over the past 23 years. Among them are legacy animations produced between 2002 and 2019, including *Digital Death*. Hart emerged as part of a generation of '90s media artists questioning identity through the scrim of technology. *Digital Death* is about issues of the body, perception, nature collapsing into technology. Everything is fluid within this state, including gender. Hart considers this cyborgian melange as a liminal spaces that interfaces between the real and unreal in a state of contemplation and transformation.

Claudia Hart
Dark kNight (Illumination), 2012/2019/2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin, acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
16 min 26 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

$ 20,000

Video Documentation: https://vimeo.com/58481448
Installation Video Documentation: https://vimeo.com/1082600555

Hart designed her Illuminations to frame monitors displaying her experimental 3D animations produced over the past 23 years. Among them are legacy animations produced between 2002 and 2019, including the Dark kNight from 2012. At that time, Hart felt it was time to symbolically confront and counter misogyny. In her re-emergence, she chose an avatar who seeks to escape one of her own escapes and break free of the simulated sanctuary world behind the screen. As the title implies, the work is Hart's response to the popular Christopher Nolan blockbuster, "The Dark Knight Rises", a film about escape from imprisonment. Hart was prompted to envision her own restless female avatar trying out various strategies to escape virtuality. In the video we see Hart's Dark kNight hurling herself, feet first, into the screen in an attempt to smash through it.

Claudia Hart
Doll Dance (Illumination), 2014/2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin, acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
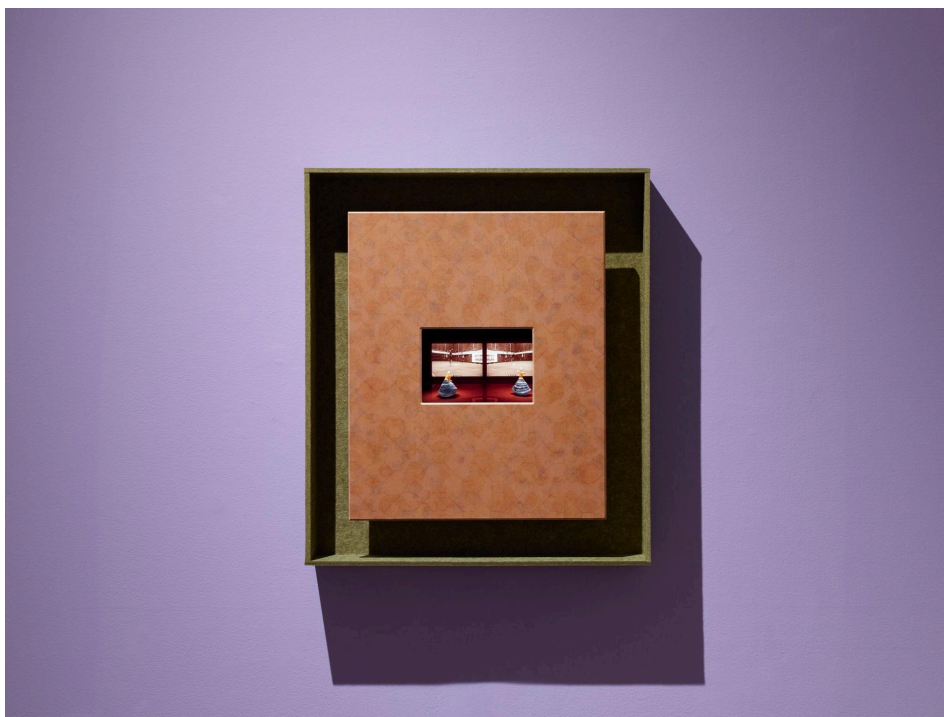10 min 8 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

$ 20,000

Video Documentation: https://vimeo.com/910945562

The Illuminations were designed to frame monitors displaying the artist's experimental 3D animations produced over the past 23 years. Among them are legacy animations produced between 2002 and 2019. *Doll Dance* is part of Hart's reinterpretation of the Lewis Carroll paradigm as a labyrinth. It envisions a mixed reality wonderland modeled after the ancient Roman mythological labyrinth of the Minotaur, an endless maze from which there is no escape. This world is covered with pulsing graphical patterns made from emojis, symbolic computer language, and public signage icons. Conjoined animated patterns throb and pulse hypnotically alongside fantastical flowers in random growth and decay. This environment portrays an aesthetic of fakeness where technology has replaced nature, both sugary sweet and chemically toxic in equal measures.

Claudia Hart
Memory Theater 2 (Illumination), 2023-2024
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin, acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
5 min 8 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

$ 20,000

Video Documentation: https://vimeo.com/1064736482
Installation Video Documentation: https://vimeo.com/1081879468

Memory Theaters are a remix of the artist's 40-year archive into a series of new works. At the core of each piece is a motion capture performance where Hart enacts significant and allegorical events from her personal life. The set design features a theatrical animated environment filled with video documentations of actual live events. *Memory Theaters* evoke Grimm's fairy tales in an uncanny mix of experimental art history and personal memoir that bring together the past, present, and imaginary.

Claudia Hart
Green Wall (Illumination), 2023/2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin, acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
3 min 30 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

$ 20,000

Video Documentation: https://vimeo.com/853973675

The *Illuminations* were designed to frame monitors displaying the artist's experimental 3D animations. *Green Wall* is from the artist's *Ruins* series that revises the canons of modernist painting and the manifestos of failed utopias. Works from this series are meditations on the flow of history, expressed as a cycle of decay and regeneration. *Green Wall* is an antidote to a world in crisis, navigating from a Eurocentric paradigm of fixed photographic capture into a reality of malleable and inherently unstable computer simulations and systemic collapse.
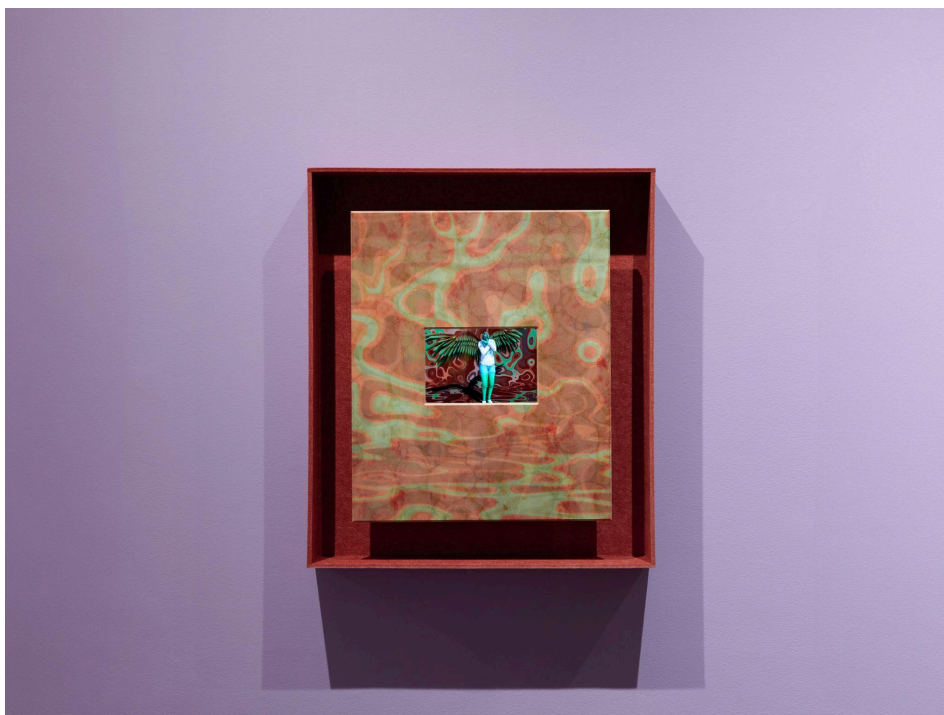
Claudia Hart
Fallen Angel: Bertile (Illumination), 2024-2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin, acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
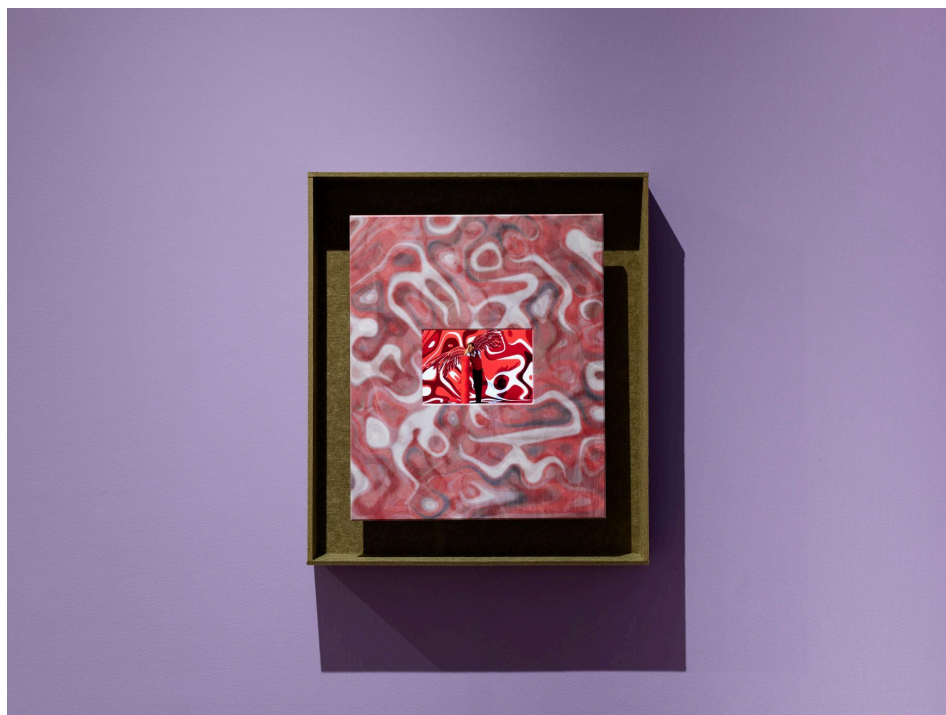7 min 35 sec, loop
Variant Ed 3, 1 AP

$ 20,000

Video Documentation: https://vimeo.com/1064746130

Bertile. Father was Trialia, of the Lost Pod, Mother was a crocodile. Suffers for us.

Fallen Angels are fictional beings crafted by the artist as part of a mythology of children from an imaginary lost "Pod" of Archangels who live at the bottom of the ocean. There are seven Archangels in Hart's legend that have all had the misfortune of falling in love with beings who are not angels, but other species. As a result, they have found themselves banished to the ocean depths, but not before fathering the Fallen Angels, who are advanced beings with special gifts.

Claudia Hart
Fallen Angel: Phylophia (Illumination), 2024-2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin, acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
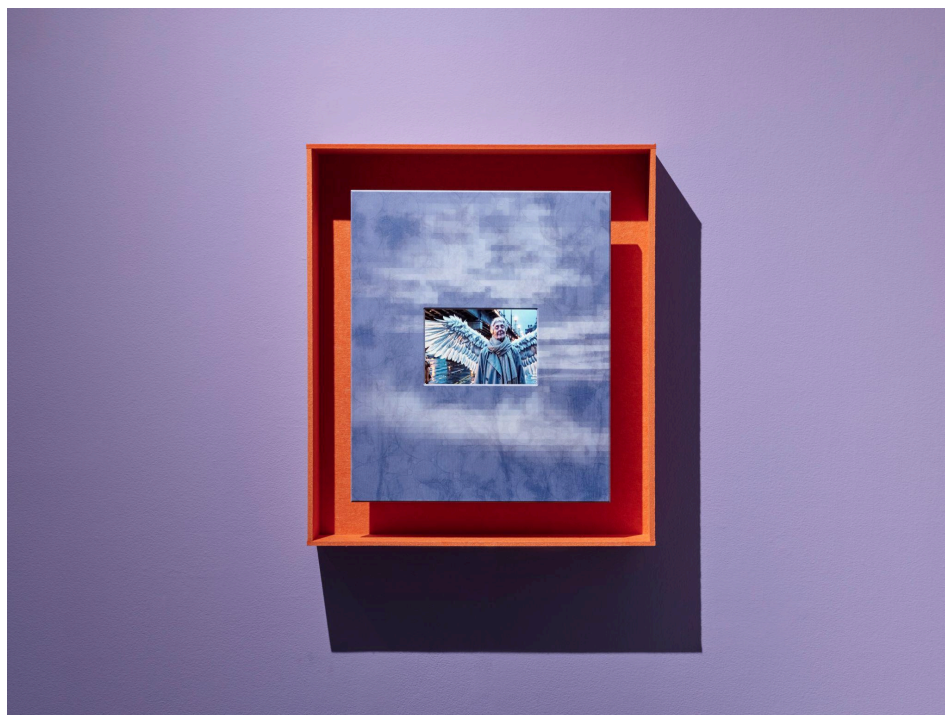4 min 54 sec, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

$ 20,000

Video Documentation: https://vimeo.com/1064742608

Phylophia. Father was Eksienna, of the Lost Pod, Mother was the Moon. The fluid one. Brings on the new age. Paradigm shifter.

Fallen Angels are fictional beings crafted by the artist as part of a mythology of children from an imaginary lost "Pod" of Archangels who live at the bottom of the ocean. There are seven Archangels in Hart's legend that have all had the misfortune of falling in love with beings who are not angels, but other species. As a result, they have found themselves banished to the ocean depths, but not before fathering the Fallen Angels, who are advanced beings with special gifts.

Claudia Hart
Proxy Angel: 1 (Illumination), 2025
Video (color, sound), screen, media player, speaker, pigment suspended in resin, acrylic paint and varnish, ash wood, felt
30.5 x 26.5 x 5 in. / 77.5 x 67.3 x 12.7 cm
2 min, loop
Edition of 3, 1 AP

$ 20,000

Video Documentation: https://vimeo.com/1064729322
Installation Video Documentation: https://vimeo.com/1082614791

Fallen Angels naturally spawned a formal variant, *Proxy Angels* that originated through the artist's experiments with AI text-to-video software. "I described myself to the AI as an angel, but still an elderly Jewish woman from NY. I described my clothing and my wings. I described locations - spots where I've lived but are also canonical: symbols of NY, a canonical city, and therefore a representation of collective memories, so good fodder for an AI simulator - the Staten Island Ferry, under the elevated train in Flushing (where I was born), Central Park, Columbia University (where I went to school!). I wrote short, unornamented descriptive texts of them all. The text-to-image AI produced fake photographs - most of which I discarded. But enough have survived. I think of them as a new form of street photography, an outward description of my inner life."

bitforms gallery

Claudia Hart
The Days (7 Healing Flowers for 7 Days), 2024
Custom software, computer, projector
Dimensions variable
Edition of 3, 1 AP

$ 20,000

Video Documentation: https://vimeo.com/1065099239

The Days is a monumental algorithmic work named for the days of the week. The work consists of real-time animations of seven wildflowers with medicinal properties that are native to the Arab peninsula. Within Hart's software, a flower appears as a clear pattern at the start of each day. As the hours pass, the composition evolves into an organic abstraction of blossom and decay. The result is mesmerizing, a living painting unfolding in real time with infinite variation. Code for *The Days* was written by Andrew Blanton.

The Seven Days of healing flower species are listed below, each linked to a Wikipedia description:

Gaultheria fragrantissima or Fragrant Wintergreen
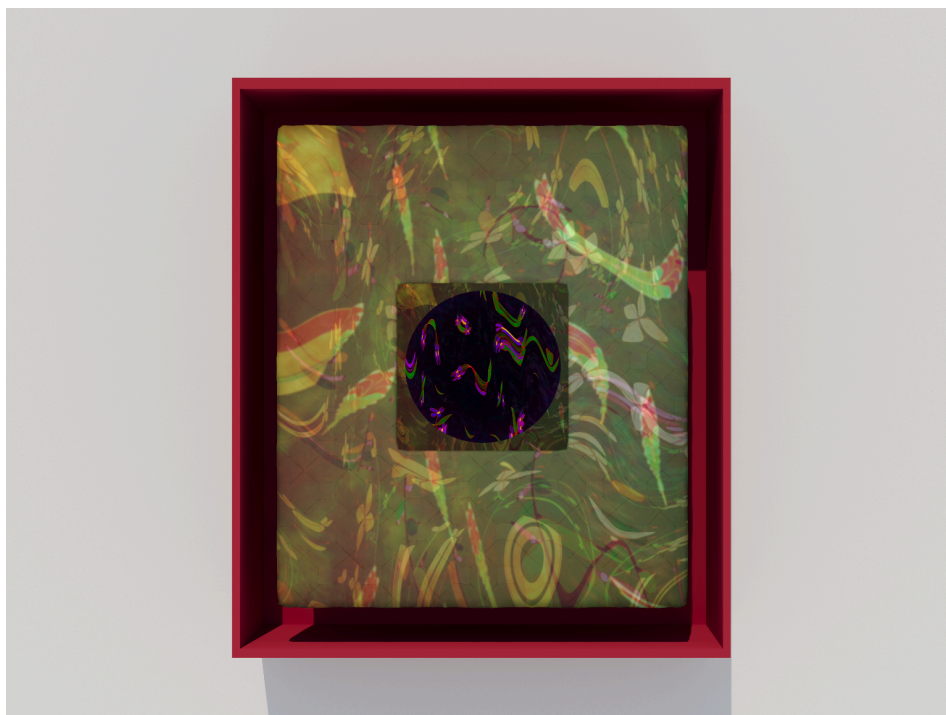Lactuca Serriola or Prickly Lettuce
Cadaba fruticosa or Cadaba
Rubia Tinctorum or Rose Madder
Alkanna Tinctoria or Alkanet
Curcuma longa or Turmeric
Nigella Sativa or Black Cumin

Claudia Hart
The Days (Illumination), 2024
Custom software, computer, projector
Dimensions variable
Edition of 3, 1 AP

$ 25,000

Video Documentation: https://vimeo.com/1082630037

The Days is a monumental algorithmic work named for the days of the week. The work consists of real-time animations of seven wildflowers with medicinal properties that are native to the Arab peninsula. Within Hart's software, a flower appears as a clear pattern at the start of each day. As the hours pass, the composition evolves into an organic abstraction of blossom and decay. The result is mesmerizing, a living painting unfolding in real time with infinite variation. Code for *The Days* was written by Andrew Blanton.

The Seven Days of healing flower species are listed below, each linked to a Wikipedia description:

Gaultheria fragrantissima or Fragrant Wintergreen
Lactuca Serriola or Prickly Lettuce
Cadaba fruticosa or Cadaba
Rubia Tinctorum or Rose Madder
Alkanna Tinctoria or Alkanet
Curcuma longa or Turmeric
Nigella Sativa or Black Cumin