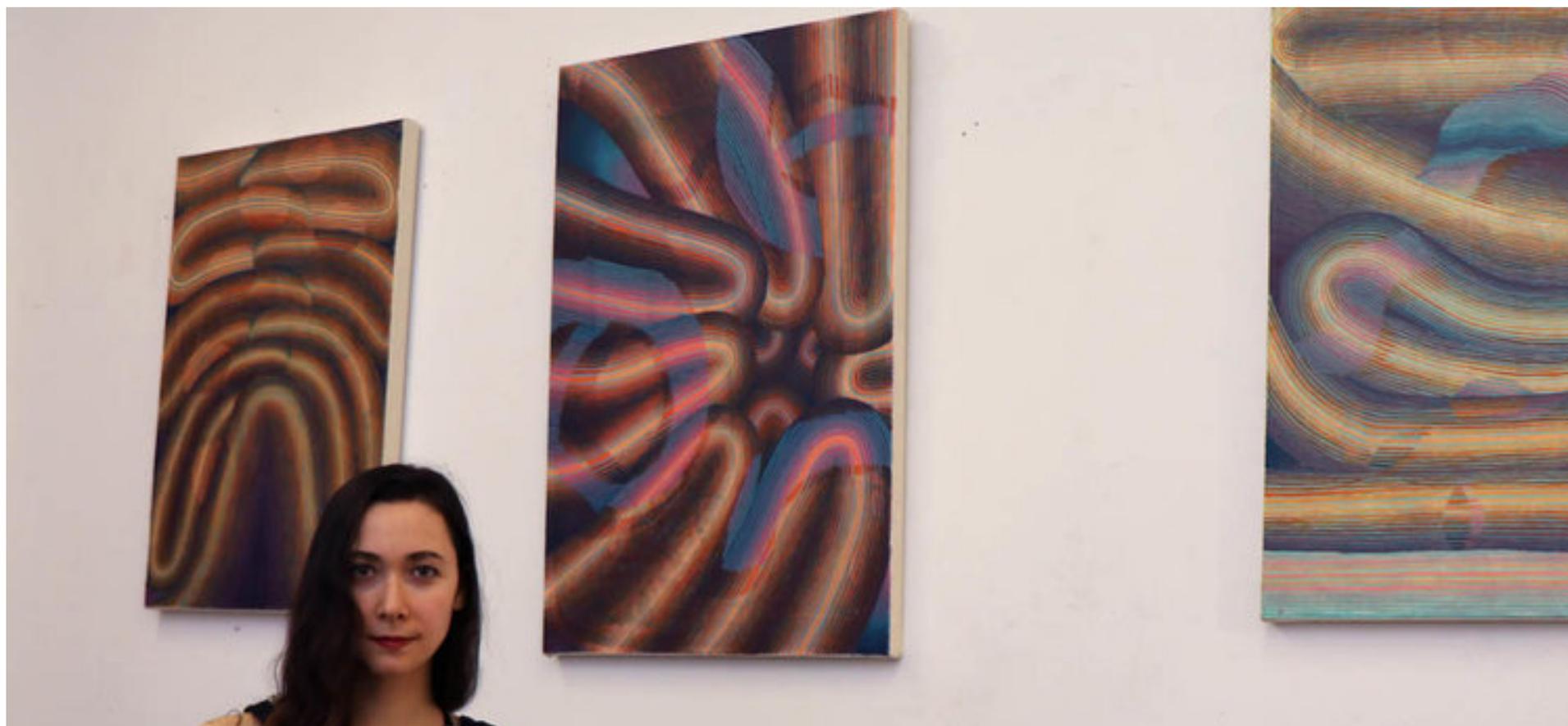




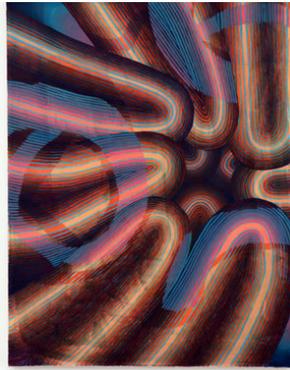
## Theresa Daddezio

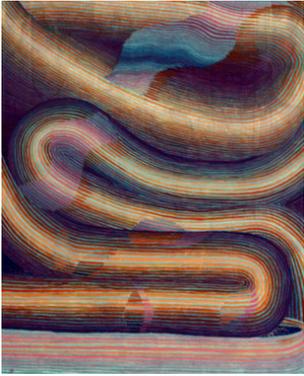
I reflect on the ways that scientific belief structures are entwined with how I traverse my physical surroundings, adjusting to the changing environment and technologies that determine interactions. My paintings reflect this by isolating components of observable reality from my surrounding location and employing certain systems of rendering form, light, and movement to reconstruct a partially organic and partially mechanized image. Territories of production, reproduction, and imagination further link my work to the human/mechanical dichotomy. There is a pleasure inherent in my experience of making an image that emphasizes a slippage of boundaries between concrete observations and the internal, experiential. Each piece is created sequentially, drawing from movements constructed in the preceding painting. This allows me to illustrate to a lack of originating genesis in favor for a body of work that appears to arise out of and be influenced by its own growing and internal logic. The continuous lines drawn within my work serve to express interconnectedness; that everything is both endlessly divisible but also inextricably tied together.





Theresa in her Ridgewood studio.





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## Interview with Theresa Daddezio

Questions by Emily Burns

**Hi Theresa! Can you tell us a bit about your background as an artist? Were there any early experiences or influences that piqued your interest in painting? Did you ever almost pursue a different path, such as physics or biology by chance?**

From a young age, I had an interest in dance and rhythm. I played the drums for sometime and I danced competitively. I never considered painting until I had graduated high school and had taken a workshop on oils. In college at SUNY Purchase, I enrolled for an Anatomy class, assuming it was “Anatomy for Artists.” Of course, yet to my surprise, the class was intended for bio majors. That course along with Early Childhood Psychology deepened my understanding and interest in other fields not directly related to a studio art practice. This knowledge along with my past experiences have become profoundly internalized in the way I approach painting, influencing my sense of pattern and repetition along with a sinuous movement, and the desire to demonstrate the way bodies are able to communicate internally through a series of interconnected structures, channels, and neurotransmitters. These relationships are perhaps not all so apparent, yet are slowly being revealed to me as I grow with my work.

**Can you give us some insight into how you begin a painting? What is your overall process like from the beginning to end?**

I begin a painting after doing a series of color studies and tests. These are usually done outside in daylight and combine my surrounding space with details or fragments of my body in relationship to the light. Once I’ve gotten a relationship of colors that I think would be interesting, I start painting an area of the canvas that I know for certain what I want to appear. From there it my painting becomes relational to the preceding marks.

**Is drawing a part of your practice—whether as preparatory sketches or finished works?**

I've tried to work directly from these toss-off little drawings I do, but that never seems to go very well and the painting winds up feeling too static. I often think the paintings that turn out the best are a compromise between premeditated decisions and improvisation.

**Where do you draw inspiration for color choices and color combinations? Are these planned in advance?**

Color studies in Plein Air and then whatever happens or feels surprising once I get down to the painting.

**How do you prep the surfaces of your paintings—is this an element that's important to you?**

The work included in this publication was prepped using 3–4 coats of gesso on army duct canvas—a really smooth surface that prevents too much build-up of texture. However, I am currently trying to figure out how to work on a rougher surface so that the tooth gives way to more varied mark making.

**Is painting in oil challenging due to the many color variations, details, and subtle striations? What draws you to working with oil?**

I need the extended drying time. Plus the material of oil paint as composed of mineral elements is so alchemical. I think about the myriad histories of transformation of these pigments as an aspect that I directly engage with. That ancestry of possibility is like summoning painting spirits every time I open a tube.

**When did you begin working the way you are now? How are these paintings similar or different from your past work?**

I began working this way less than a year ago. There are definite through lines within my practice that I struggled to escape, but have only recently realized that that rejection on my part was reactionary. I consider drawing a large element in my practice, and the driving force behind these paintings. In the past I was more afraid to allow my work to relate to any suggestive subject matter. Now I feel content to create forms that have a more direct relationship to bodily forms.

**Can you tell us a bit about your current studio? What are the most important components of your studio space? Is there anything you love about your current setup?**

My studio is a small little space of my own. I've been there for seven years on and off. It has one window that faces out into a truck-ridden street. It's not romantic or special in anyway that a visitor may find notable. I like the layers of dust and debris that have collected between the cracks in the hardwood floor and the afternoon light that casts severe angles on my walls.

**How do you maintain focused when working? Is that important to you or can you work in a distracted state?**

I sustain a 70-to-30 ratio of concentration and distraction. 70% is given to my process and 30% to music or podcasts.

**In a recent interview with Joe Brommel for Wassaic Project, you said: "We're not necessarily human as isolated, discrete entities." Can you expand on this? Are you referring to energies and how they mix with each other, whether they be human or otherwise? What begin to develop work related to these themes?**

Yes, I was reading an essay by Lynn Margulis on the bacterial makeup of any “individual” body. A large amount cells that we consist of do not have human DNA, but are different microbial forms. She proposes the question of that having an impact on our psychology. My medium is paint, a mineral derived from the earth. I was curious if

there was a way to capture this connectivity in paint through a gradual process of building up marks until there is a moment transfiguration; that the image both is the *thing*, a referent to bodily structure, and could simultaneously remain the atomized element that consists of the thing—in my case a line, or band of color.

**In the same interview, you mentioned your interest in the edges of things, and how our bodies relate to the technologies in their vicinity. What types of technologies are you referring to? What is your relationship to these technologies?**

Similar to considering our biological make up as not necessarily discrete, but inclusive of sub-ecosystems and microbial beings, one could argue the technologies determine our contemporary physiology. Since modernity society has grappled with the age of the machine. Technological mediators are not separate from us, but very much incorporated in our perception of reality, the ways in which we navigate the world, our synapses have developed, and our interrelationships are all contingent on these interactive structures. It would be too easy to pinpoint one specific technology, say for instance, a computer screen, as that development was in itself made possible over decades of human production within industrial centers that have determined our human relationship to time, space, and labor.

**Can you expand on the “shimmer” of life and the idea of vitalism?**

The idea comes from Austrian Aborigines’ way of understanding time and space an ever-present continuum. I believe I was quoting an essay I was reading by Deborah Bird Rose. My understanding is that the notion speaks to ephemerality, that time and space coalesce to cast perception as a sort of shimmer that blankets one’s experience.

**Some of the imagery in your work have an almost psychedelic aura, or what a vision might look like on mind-altering drugs—is this something you think about at all?**

I am interested in the complexities of the mind but not of any particular drug that may act as a shortcut to understanding.

**You recently graduated with and MFA in painting from Hunter College, congrats! Can you talk a bit about the experience of graduate school in New York City, and the transition into post-graduate life? What’s next for you?**

The transition back feels very natural. I was living and working in the city (NY) before entering into a master’s program. The lessons I learned in the program were far more profound than anything I could have ever anticipated.

**What is a typical day like for you?**

I wake up before dawn, teach, come home, take a little nap, and then hit the studio.

**Who are some of the artists you look at most often?**

Right now I am thinking a lot about Georges Seurat and Eva Hesse

**What is the best exhibition your have seen recently?**

Hilma Af Klint

**Are there any apps, tools, resources, etc. that you find helpful as an artist or person?**

I just downloaded Seesaw—but I think that’s been around for a while, I tend to be late to the game on these things.

**Is there any advice you have received that you remember often?**

Doubt can be fortifying. Break through it.

**What are you reading? What are you listening to? What are you watching?**

Reading: *Since '45* by Katy Siegel. Listening to Podcast on Caliban and the Witch by Silvia Federici, and just binge watched *Alias Grace*.

**What are some of your interests outside of art?**

Cooking, exploring nature, and political advocacy.

**Any news, exhibitions, residencies, etc. coming up in the near future?**

I’m in a show at the New York Studio Center called *Known: Unknown* that is up Oct 29th–December 2nd. I am also prepping for a solo show with Transmitter in Brooklyn for February.

**Thanks so much for taking the time to talk with us!**

Thank you!!

*To find out more about Theresa and her work, check out her **website**.*