



Talking Fashion



COLOR STORY
CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: THE ARTIST; FLEURY'S NEON INSTALLATION AT MIAMI BEACH'S BASS MUSEUM OF ART; A POLAROID FROM 1998.



The Makeup Artist

Sylvie Fleury's new show of maquillage-inspired works defies all expectations.

FOR AS LONG AS SHE'S BEEN MAKING ART, SYLVIE FLEURY has been thinking about makeup.

"There was always this idea about cosmetics and wanting to say something about consumerism," she says. The Swiss artist, whose newest exhibition, "Palette of Shadows," opens on November 2 at Salon 94 Bowery, has spent nearly 30 years saying something about consumerism—and feminism, among other topics—with a boldness and irreverence that's reflected in her installations and mixed-media works: There was cosmetics packaging in the shopping bags that littered a gallery floor in one of her earliest works, and Givenchy nail polish sprayed on the crushed automobiles she presented in the nineties. Even the primer that mechanics use on repaired

automobiles before applying paint reminded her of concealer—so she used it to decorate gallery walls for her shows. When *Self Service* magazine asked her to be its beauty editor, she took product samples to an empty parking lot and smashed them with cars, taking Polaroids of the process and making art from their colorful destruction.

In her new work, though, Fleury, 56, is looking toward a medium that's shockingly traditional: painting shaped canvases that replicate enlarged makeup compacts. "They're

like ready-made paintings, and at the same time palettes," she says. "Cosmetics can be seen as a tool for whatever you want to see, whether that's objectifying a woman or simply as a big consumer thing that's very seductive. I've always been interested in that very contradictory area. But beyond the politics and the fetishism, there is the color and the gesture of the painter and the brush—in a specifically feminine way."

Since the artist can't stay away from the beauty industry's siren songs, one has to wonder: When it comes to maquillage, what's Fleury's personal poison?

"I have the wrong answer," she says—almost, but not quite, apologetically. "I don't wear a lot of makeup." —JOHN ORTVED

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FACE PAINT
FLEURY'S NEW WORK ON VIEW AT SALON 94 BOWERY.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: SYLVIE FLEURY; ROAD TESTS, 1998; POLAROID ARCHIVES; SPECIMENS ON WHEELS, COURTESY OF THE ARTIST; DIEGO SANCHEZ; SYLVIE FLEURY; OMBRES MULTI-EFFECT (NO 1)—BEVERLY HILLS, 2007; ACRYLIC ON BAKED CANVAS, COURTESY OF SALON 94, NEW YORK; PHOTO: DIEGO SANCHEZ; SYLVIE FLEURY; ETERNITY NOW, 2015; NEON INSTALLATION ON BASS MUSEUM OF ART, MIAMI BEACH; COLLECTION OF THE BASS MUSEUM OF ART, MIAMI BEACH; PHOTO: SILVIA ROS.