
Cristea Roberts Gallery

43 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JG
+44 (0)20 7439 1866
info@cristearoberts.com
www.cristearoberts.com

Press Release

Press Contact:
Gemma Colgan
gemma.colgan@cristearoberts.com
+44 (0)20 7439 1866

Michael Craig-Martin: An Anthology Prints and Multiples 1996 – 2024

25 October - 23 November 2024



Quotidian Red: Stiletto, 2024
Laser-etched satin acrylic panel // 50 x 50 cm // Edition of 25

Cristea Roberts Gallery is delighted to announce a solo exhibition by Michael Craig-Martin (b. 1941). *Michael Craig-Martin: An Anthology* is the artist's first exhibition dedicated to almost thirty years of editions, featuring screen, digital and relief prints, lightboxes, laser etched panels and new metal wall reliefs.

Fifty works on show from Craig-Martin's distinctive vocabulary include ordinary household objects, flowers and fruit, reinterpretations of Old Masters and works made in homage to the achievements of some of the twentieth-century's greatest artists, designers and architects.

Michael Craig-Martin: An Anthology marks the publication of the first catalogue raisonné featuring Craig-Martin's entire work in prints and multiples. This exhibition also coincides with the largest and most comprehensive exhibition of Craig-Martin's work ever held in the UK, on show at the Royal Academy of Arts, London.

A group of new metal editions will be unveiled in the exhibition. Cut from sheet metal, the works feature some of Craig-Martin's most distinct motifs, an umbrella, a book and a glass of water. This latter sculptural edition, *Glass*, 2024, revisits and directly relates to the artist's conceptual work of art made in 1973, *An Oak Tree*.

The same ideas that informed Craig-Martin's early work, drive his practice today. *An Oak Tree* consists of a glass of water resting on a shelf. Displayed next to it is a text describing that despite what your eyes tell you, the glass of water is in fact an oak tree. Just as it did in 1973, Craig-Martin's work in 2024 continues to ask what we understand art to be. Unpicking the relationship between a real object and its depiction, Craig-Martin is asking the question, how does two-dimensional imagery work?

Michael Bracewell, writer and cultural commentator, who has written an introductory text for Craig-Martin's new catalogue raisonné, *The Complete Prints and Multiples*, explains "By reducing image-making to its basics – black outline and colour – he steps outside the usual conditions of 'art' to create a visual language that both demonstrates and questions the acts of looking and seeing and the bases of formalism. In doing so, he creates images of extraordinary aesthetic complexity and subjective power."

Craig-Martin's work across all mediums addresses the same themes and idea. However, when creating multiples, the artist works in group or sets. He uses the repetitions and variations of printmaking and editions to intensify his visual language. Each print in *Alphabet*, 2007, a series of 26 screenprints, outlines a familiar object - an umbrella, a glove, a kitchen knife – set against a background of vivid monochrome colour and overlaid with a single letter. In some cases, there appears to be a link between the object and letter and in others the connection is more ambiguous.

Then & Now, 2017, a series of eight letter press prints, traces the shift from analogue processes to digital technologies. New objects are superimposed on old, such as a kindle and a book or a large TV with an ariel and a flatscreen model. *Design and Architecture*, 2016, a series of four diptych screenprints, pays homage to the famous buildings and furniture designed in the early twentieth century by Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, Gerrit Rietveld, and Mies van der Rohe.

In addition to his fascination with modern design and architecture, Craig-Martin has continuously paid homage to some of his favourite artists and artworks, including Leonardo da Vinci, Piero della Francesca, Diego Velázquez, Jasper Johns, Marcel Duchamp and Carl Andre. Craig-Martin reinterprets their imagery and motifs in printed form, often deconstructing an image and rebuilding it in his own distinctive style. The exhibition features Craig-Martin's rendering of Georges Seurat's *Bathers at Asnières*, 1884, of which the artist says, "No painting has meant more to me personally and as an artist." The imagery appears in an early pair of screenprints made by Craig-Martin in 2004 and again in work, presented in four colour ways, in 2022.

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The earliest work in the show is a three-part screenprint, *Japanese Screen*, 1996, based on a mural the artist installed in Japan. A broad strip of blue, scattered with objects such as a TV, a table, a cello and a light bulb, runs across the adjoined sheets of paper. His depiction of objects alongside his use of scale and space, demonstrate the early beginnings of Craig-Martin's pictorial language and visual effects that have come to characterise his prints and multiples, mediums that continue to be vital to his practice.

Cristea Roberts Gallery is the exclusive worldwide representative for Michael Craig-Martin's drawings and original prints.

Michael Craig-Martin lives and works in London.

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Michael Craig-Martin The Complete Prints and Multiples

Introduction by Michael Bracewell
Hardback | 304 pp | 369 illustrations
£60.00

Published by Art/Books in collaboration with Cristea Roberts Gallery. Available from 17 September 2024
artbookspublishing.co.uk
cristearoberts.com/books

Micheal Craig-Martin Royal Academy of Arts, London 21 September – 10 December 2024

This major retrospective will survey Michael Craig-Martin's 60-year career, presenting the largest and most comprehensive exhibition of Craig-Martin's work ever held in the UK.

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About Cristea Roberts Gallery

Cristea Roberts Gallery is a leading international contemporary art gallery with a particular focus on original prints and works on paper. Since its inception, the gallery has commissioned a significant number of editions by a wide range of artists, whilst also representing others for their unique works. The underlying ethos of the gallery has always been artist-led. It was originally founded in 1995 as the Alan Cristea Gallery and changed its name in September 2019 to Cristea Roberts Gallery.

Acknowledged as one of the leading galleries in its field of specialty, the gallery's programme is dedicated to publishing, cataloguing, exhibiting and dealing in original prints and drawings by its roster of over 30 important international artists and Estates. It participates in all the major international art fairs and has a dynamic programme of exhibitions hosted in its bespoke space in Pall Mall, London.

The gallery works closely with international museums on acquisitions and loans, and examples of its editions are held in major public collections around the world including Tate, London, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Visitor information

Tues - Fri 11am - 5.30pm
Sat 11am - 2pm

Closed on Mondays, Sundays and public holidays
Free admission

Travel: Piccadilly or Green Park underground station
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Facebook: Cristea Roberts Gallery
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