

News Release from Milton Keynes Gallery

Fri 24 Sept – Sun 21 Nov 2004

Michael Craig-Martin: Surfacing

An exhibition of new work to mark Milton Keynes Gallery's 5th anniversary including a commission for the building exterior

Supported by Arts & Business SE, The CMK Board, English Partnerships, David Lock Associates and Milton Keynes Theatre & Gallery Company

Private View: Thurs 23 Sept | 16.00-20.00 | All press & media welcome

This September MK G, the region's nationally acclaimed contemporary art gallery, celebrates its 5th anniversary with an exhibition of entirely new work by British artist Michael Craig-Martin (b.1941).

The exhibition is Craig-Martin's largest and most comprehensive in a British public gallery for more than ten years and comprises four distinct strands:

- An exterior commission that transforms MK G into a painted artwork
- Four large-scale paintings based on the work of two of Craig-Martin's favourite historical artists, by Piero della Francesca and Georges Seurat
- A new installation of specially designed wallpaper with eleven paintings
- A group of six recent paintings

The Exterior Commission

Visitors to MK G will find that it has been painted in one of Craig-Martin's 'signature' colours – a striking magenta hue. On the main entrance façade the artist has painted an immense, empty, turquoise drawer – a pictorial reference to both the structure and the function of the gallery. For Craig-Martin the commission conveys a logical yet daring progression from painted canvas, to wall mural, to a 3-D artwork which visitors can literally enter and exit. It is his latest in a series of works (including the Laban Dance Centre and The Fan at Regents Place in London) in which he has sought to integrate art and architecture.

The Exhibition

In the gallery Craig-Martin presents a broad range of new work, all of which is being shown at MK G for the first time. Known for his sweeping, brightly coloured canvases that depict a repertoire of everyday objects, his art is one of maximum economy and impact. Central to his work is the act of drawing and an investigation of line, space and form. His painted objects flicker between foreground and background, between line and image. The everyday objects invariably have a practical use; a drawer to put things in, a chair to be sat on or a shoe awaiting its owner's foot. All suggest a form of imminent human interaction which is forever absent.

In an intriguing new departure however, Craig-Martin shows four works based on two major paintings in Western art history – Piero della Francesca's *The Flagellation* (1452) and Georges Seurat's *The Bathers at Asnières* (1884). For the first time he has used his well-established language of black line drawing and intense colour to address not a familiar object but a familiar image.

A striking new work that takes the form of specially printed black and white wallpaper will be shown as an installation in MK G's Middle Gallery. Craig-Martin has created a filigree of images, that touch each other at every possible point of contact without ever overlapping. Colour is introduced through the placement of eleven smaller panels that map the same motif as the wallpaper, and transform the plane of the wall into a three-dimensional relief.

Exhibition Open

Tue – Sat 10.00-17.00 Sun 11.00-17.00 Closed Mondays

Thursday Late Openings on 30 Sep, 7, 14, 21 & 28 Oct, 4 & 11 Nov.

Milton Keynes Gallery, 900 Midsummer Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes

Tel: 01908 676 900 www.mk-g.org **Admission free**

MK G Exhibition Catalogue

Fully illustrated, 84 pps, with essay by Richard Noble. Special exhibition price £16. £20 after 21 November. Friends of MK G receive a 20% discount.

Other Craig-Martin Projects

Alan Cristea Gallery, London, present an exhibition of new prints by Michael Craig-Martin from 22 Sept – 23 Oct 2004. Contact info@alancristea.com

The Arp Museum, Remagen, Germany, re-opens with work by Craig-Martin, (an alternative version of his wallpaper installation for MK G), 22 Oct – 2 Jan 05. Arp Museum, Bahnhof Rolandseck, Hans-Arp-Allee 1, 53424 Remagen, Germany. Tel: +49 2228 942511 Fax: +49 2228 942521.

Artist Talk

On Mon 18 October Michael Craig-Martin will be 'In Conversation' with Tony Godfrey, author of the catalogue essay for the Alan Cristea Gallery exhibition.

Late Nights & 'Look Who's Talking' series

MK G stays open late until 20.00 on selected Thursday nights, which incorporate the 'Look Who's Talking' series where a variety of speakers offer their personal response to Craig-Martin's work, including British artists Ian Davenport and Simon Patterson.

The Big Draw

On Sat 16 October there will be a day of free drawing activities suitable for all ages, linked to the Craig-Martin exhibition. MK G's 'Big Draw' event is supported by Milton Keynes Adult Continuing Education and Persil.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

Michael Craig-Martin is an established British artist with a significant international reputation. His work features in public and private collections world-wide, including MoMA, New York, and the Tate Gallery London. He taught at Goldsmiths College, London, throughout the 1970s and 1980s, where he was influential on a generation of younger British artists, including Simon Patterson and Ian Davenport, both of whom are included in the Thursday evening 'Look Who's Talking' series during the exhibition. Craig-Martin served as an artist Trustee at the Tate from 1990-1999. He is represented by Gagolian Gallery, London & New York, and his limited edition prints are published by Alan Cristea Gallery, London.

Exhibition Sponsors MK G kindly requests that any articles or listings published or broadcast about the exhibition include an acknowledgement to the exhibition sponsors (listed with the exhibition title). Without their support, totalling £40,000, it would have been impossible to realise this project.

External Commission Special thanks are due to paint manufacturers Lascaux (Zurich) and to their British distributors A.P. Fitzpatrick for their support in realising the commission, and to Andrzej Blonski Architects for project management. ECL Contracts Ltd carried out the exterior works (render adjustments and the magenta painting).

List of Works on Display

All works listed are acrylic on aluminium panel, 2004.

CUBE GALLERY

Four large-scale paintings based on the work of two of Craig-Martin's favourite historical artists - Piero della Francesca and Georges Seurat:

Reconstructing Seurat (orange)*

73 ½ x 110 ¼ in.

Reconstructing Seurat (purple)*

73 ½ x 110 ¼ in.

Reconstructing Piero (pink)

78 ¾ x 113 ¾ in.

Reconstructing Piero (blue)

78 ¾ x 113 ¾ in.

MIDDLE GALLERY

All walls covered with Craig-Martin's black and white wallpaper installation and eleven paintings hung over their matching motifs in the wallpaper:

Fork (wallpaper – violet)

43 x 27 in.

Book (wallpaper – blue)

28 x 34 in.

Shoe (wallpaper – pink)

36 x 22 in.

Scissors (wallpaper – pink)

32 x 33 in.

Globe (wallpaper – acqua)

39 x 26 in.

Bottle (wallpaper – green)

24 x 29 in.

Mobile (wallpaper – acqua)

34 x 22 in.

Chair (wallpaper – violet)

30 x 23 in.

Light Bulb (wallpaper – green)

21 x 30 in.

Bucket (wallpaper – blue)

33 x 24 in.

Glass (wallpaper – orange)

26 x 17 in.

LONG GALLERY

Six new paintings:

Biding time (red)*

95 ½ x 71 ½ in.

Biding time (magenta)*

95 ½ x 71 ½ in.

Wallpaper Painting (blue)*

71 ½ x 95 ½ in.

Wallpaper Painting (purple)*

71 ½ x 95 ½ in.

Untitled (glasses and trainer) *

71 ½ x 47 ½ in.

Untitled (chair and mobile) *

71 ½ x 47 ½ in.

Press Images

Asterisked works are available as press images. All image captions: Title, © The artist. Courtesy the artist and Gagosian Gallery. Please ensure full titles, copyright and owner credits are printed along with any published images. NB: If using a detail or cropping, please add '(detail)' to the title.

Further Information or Interviews

Please contact Katharine Sorensen or Lorna Gemmell on +44(0)1908 558 302 or email k.sorensen@mk-g.org or l.gemmell@mk-g.org

Ends

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