

Press Release

MICHAEL CRAIG-MARTIN

TRANSIENCE

25 November 2015 – 14 February 2016
Serpentine Gallery



This winter, the Serpentine presents an exhibition by Michael Craig-Martin (b. Dublin, 1941), one of the best-known British artists of his generation. This is the first solo show of Craig-Martin's work in a London public institution since 1989 and brings together works from 1981 to 2015, including his era-defining representations of once familiar yet obsolete technology; laptops, games consoles, black-and-white televisions and incandescent lightbulbs that highlight the increasing transience of technological innovation. The exhibition features new wallpaper that has been conceived especially for the exhibition.

From the earliest work in the show, a wall drawing first produced in 1981 (the same year that the first personal computer was made available), to a painting from 2014 that depicts the minimal lines of an iPhone, Craig-Martin's work has recorded the profound impact that electronic technology has had on the way we consume and communicate. The exhibition explores the seismic shift from analogue processes to digital technologies that informed the production and distribution of new kinds of objects in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

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Serpentine Sackler Gallery
West Carriage Drive
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Craig-Martin's early works explored the conceptual possibilities of contemporary art, testing the boundaries between functional and functionless forms. The introduction of digital technology in recent years has resulted in the breakdown of the relationship between form and function, a process that Craig-Martin captures in his depictions of successive inventions, from the battery to the cassette to the laptop.

As Marshall McLuhan wrote in his seminal book *Understanding Media*, which Craig-Martin read shortly after it was first published in 1964, 'technical change alters not only habits of life, but patterns of thought and valuation'. Craig-Martin's work holds up a mirror to these alterations, reminding us that we are as much produced by the objects we invent as they are by us.

Julia Peyton-Jones, Director, and Hans Ulrich-Obrist, Co-Director, said:

"Craig-Martin's acute observations present an extraordinary picture of recent developments in the production, processes, functions and form of the objects that populate our world. His work reveals a search for the ultimate expression of contemporaneity in a way that we all experience – through the items we use every day."

Craig-Martin has participated in a number of Serpentine events and group exhibitions: *Memory Marathon* (2012); *Map Marathon* (2011), *Wall to Wall* (1994), *Here and Now: Twenty-three years of the Serpentine Gallery* (1993); *Objects for the Ideal Home: The Legacy of Pop Art* (1991); *Vessel: Sculpture, Glass, Ceramics* (1987); *Summer Show 5* (1976, as selector) and *Art as Thought Process* (1974). He also produced a new map, linking the Serpentine's two buildings, to celebrate the opening of the Serpentine Sackler Gallery in 2013.

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Press images at serpentinegalleries.org/press

Serpentine Gallery, Kensington Gardens, London W2 3XA

Serpentine Sackler Gallery, West Carriage Drive, Kensington Gardens, London W2 2AR

Image Credit:

Michael Craig-Martin
Xbox control

Notes to Editors

Michael Craig-Martin (b.1941, Dublin, lives and works in London)

Selected solo exhibitions include: *NOW*, Shanghai Himalayas Museum, Shanghai, China (2015); *Michael Craig-Martin at Chatsworth*, Chatsworth House, Derbyshire, UK (2014), *Less Is Still More*, Museum Haus Esters, Krefeld, Germany (2013); *Michael Craig-Martin. New Painting and Sculpture*, Roche Court, Wiltshire, UK (2011), *Signs of Life*, Kunsthaus Bregenz, Germany and *Works 1964–2006*, IMMA, Dublin, Ireland (both 2006); Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany and *fig-2*, ICA, London, UK (both 2000) and *A retrospective 1968–1989*, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, UK (1989).

Selected group exhibitions include: *Summer Exhibition 2015*, (chief coordinator) Royal Academy of Arts, London, UK (2015); *The Indiscipline of Painting*, Tate St Ives, UK (2011); *Forgetting Velázquez: Las Meninas*, Museu Picasso de Barcelona, Spain (2008); *Intelligence, New British Art 2000*, Tate

Britain, London, UK (2000); *Documenta VI*, Kassel, Germany (1977) and *The New Art*, Hayward Gallery, London, UK (1972).

Craig-Martin is represented within public collections, including Tate, London, UK; Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France; and Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain. He was appointed a CBE in 2001 and elected a Royal Academician in 2006.

MICHAEL CRAIG-MARTIN EXHIBITION SUPPORTED BY

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EXHIBITION CIRCLE

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Ian and Mercedes Stoutzker
And those donors who wish to remain anonymous

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM

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EXHIBITION CATALOGUE SUPPORTED BY

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SERPENTINE GALLERIES SUPPORTED BY



Supported using public funding by
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