

Michael Craig-Martin

Signs of Life

June 10 thru August 13, 2006



Kunsthau Bregenz

Press conference: Thursday, June 8, 2006, 11 a.m.

After the press conference at the Kunsthau Bregenz there will be a viewing of the installation in the Johanniterkirche in Feldkirch.

Opening: Friday, June 9, 2006, 8.00 p.m.

Michael Craig-Martin, one of the leading representatives of an art in which American and European traditions intermingle, has used painting, drawing, space, and light to create an overall work of art for his major exhibition at the Kunsthau Bregenz this summer. At his first solo show in Austria, the artist will be presenting new works, large-scale wall drawings, a light project for the KUB Façade, and an installation in the Johanniterkirche in Feldkirch.

Since he first started working as an artist, Michael Craig-Martin (* 1941 in Dublin, lives and works in London) has explored fundamental questions on the nature of art, representation, authorship, and the role of the viewer. The two things the artist considers most important in Renaissance painting and which have also been crucial even in his earliest works are “first, the development of a highly complex pictorialism that combined observation and invention in a seamless interface between artifice and realism. And second, the exceptional degree of direct contact and interaction between the artists and their audience.” (Craig-Martin). His path has led from his early conceptual work to a pictorial language whose overwhelming influence of draughtsmanship, clear readability, and complexity of form as well as content symbolize our world in an ideal way.

In his paintings and site-specific installations, he brings together two fundamental artistic techniques: drawing and painting. “Drawing the Line” was the title of an exhibition conceived by Michael Craig-Martin in 1994 for the Southbank Centre in London. It gathered drawings from all ages, presenting, for example, one of Donald Judd’s typical drawings with the artist’s famous, unspecific, minimalist objects alongside a drawing depicting the corpse of Jesus Christ by the Renaissance painter Mantegna. Both title and content of the exhibition perfectly illustrate Michael Craig-Martin’s notion of a universal pictorial language whose roots lie in a Renaissance-like idealistic rapport with the objects of this world.

Karl-Tizian-Platz
Postfach 371
A-6901 Bregenz

Telefon

(+43-55 74) 4 85 94-0

Fax

(+43-55 74) 4 85 94-8

E-Mail

kub@kunsthau-bregenz.at

Web

www.kunsthau-bregenz.at



Thus, the exhibition “Signs of Life” centers around a general theme: the development of a universal pictorial language of commonplace and art objects, whose immediate and communicative wealth is spawned by the beauty and currency of modern objects. With his large-format paintings and installations that fill entire rooms, Craig-Martin creates a kind of neutral and impersonal concreteness through which the viewer sees the work and not the artist. Michael Craig-Martin, in reference to his approach: “The objects I chose to draw were all commonplace, easily recognisable, man-made, repeatable, and manufactured. I chose them because they seemed to me to constitute a true universal language in the modern world, objects so ubiquitous they had become invisible and without special value. The images I made from them, with their uninflected tape lines and in three quarter perspective attempt to reflect the character of the objects they represent, to act as pictorial ready-mades.”

Several works by Craig-Martin are based on drawings done some 25 years ago, which as a kind of template are now stock motifs for different combinations on canvas and wall surfaces. With the large-format wall drawings, rendered previously in tape, today printed onto various surfaces using computer templates, Michael Craig-Martin creates transparent works, which for this reason do not depend on the imagination of the viewer. The objects are like sculptures – immaterial and without mass – existing solely through their presence, fleeting, but reproducible in any size or scale. In this way, Michael Craig-Martin has transformed the upper floor of the Kunsthaus into a wunderkammer of objects and colours – a floor-to-ceiling, 100-meter-long expanse of countless objects hovering and intertwining in a ballet of the modern world.

What Craig-Martin said about his art ten years ago also holds true for his work series in Bregenz: “The logic of the images alternatively reflects and contradicts the logic of the objects represented. The ordinary turns out not to be so ordinary. In their inconsistent and sometimes fractured perspective, their heightened and artificial colour, their frontal and stylised compositions, their repertoire of universally familiar iconography, and their attempt to address difficult questions in straightforward language, my works are indeed indebted to the example of Giotto and Duchamp and many [...] other artists [...], but also to the speed and versatility of the computer on which they have all been planned.”

The atmosphere that surrounds the audience is lively and conciliatory. As the visitors approach the building, they are welcomed by a neon light object in the shape of a gigantic light bulb. Visible from afar and for the duration of the summer, it will be a pictorial representation of Michael Craig-Martin’s “Signs of Life” and will also symbolize the importance of light as the central idea of



Kunsthhaus Bregenz

the architecture of the Kunsthhaus. Passing five recent computer works, the visitor continues from the ground floor to the first floor, which features a selection of eleven large-format paintings from 1996 to 2004. On the second floor is a work series of twelve paintings created especially for Bregenz in 2005/2006. Finally, on the upper floor, the artist's "ceremonial act" seizes the viewer and draws him/her into the body of the work through its hovering three-dimensionality and the transparency of the objects. This major summer exhibition will be accompanied by an unusually intensive in-situ work in the Johanniterkirche in Feldkirch – a fitting way to round off a look at the work of one of the greatest artists of our time.

KUB Façade

Michael Craig-Martin

Michael Craig-Martin will inscribe the translucent glass skin of the Kunsthhaus Bregenz with two monumental light bulbs, their outline rendered by the elegant contours of colored neon lights. The minimalist images of the diagonally positioned, illuminated light bulbs, one pointing upward, the other pointing downward, covers the entire surfaces of the façades overlooking the lake and Karl-Tizian-Platz. The installation is mounted in the space between the building and the etched glass shingles, so that basically only the path of the curved neon tubes will be visible. Controlled by a multistage, timestaggered program, the individual threads of the base of the light bulb "turn on" one after another until the entire light bulb is illuminated; then suddenly it goes dark and the sequence starts all over again. Thus, the glowing beacon of contemporary art at the edge of Lake Constance will emit a new, blinking light for the duration of the summer.



Kunsthaus Bregenz

Johanniterkirche Feldkirch Michael Craig-Martin

June 10 thru September 17, 2006

Preview for the press: Thursday, June 8, 2006

After the press conference at the Kunsthaus Bregenz there will be a viewing of the installation in the Johanniterkirche in Feldkirch.

Departure approx. at 12.15 noon

Opening: Tuesday June 9, 2006, 6 p.m.

As a counterbalance to the monumental mural on the third floor of the Kunsthaus Bregenz, which is part of his comprehensive one-manshow, Michael Craig-Martin will also be designing the sanctuary's entire wall surfaces at the Johanniterkirche in Feldkirch. A twenty-meter long, eight-meter high panorama of powerfully colorful impact and stunning perspective will unfold here. Mounted against the historical church walls will be a substructure from which a printed plastic fabric will be stretched above the space; the windows will be left uncovered. Michael Craig-Martin creates his design on the computer and lets his typical motifs – everyday objects outlined in minimalist strokes – hover across the wall. Knives, can openers, hammers, pliers, cell phones – things everyone is familiar with – are transformed by simplified drawings, a clear color scheme, and their monumental size into inscrutable figures. The church space will be changed radically and shall offer viewers a fascinating visual experience.

Sponsored by

Stadt Feldkirch, Land Vorarlberg, Montfort Werbung, Wirtschaftskammer Vorarlberg, Arbeiterkammer Vorarlberg, Stadtwerke Feldkirch, Sparkasse Feldkirch, Impulse Stiftung, Hilti & Jehle, Herz-Jesu Apotheke u. Drogerie Dr. Heller&Co., Feldkirch, Johanniterhof, Feldkirch, Atelier Ärmelfisch

We thank typico megaprints for implementing the artwork and for its generous sponsoring.

Opening hours:

Tue – Fr: 10 a.m. – 12 noon, 1– 6 p.m.; Thur: 10 a.m. – 12 noon, 1– 9 p.m.

Sat: 10 a.m.– 4 p.m.; Sun: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Johanniterkirche, Marktgasse, A-6800 Feldkirch, Phone (+43-5522) 3 04 12 72



KUB-Billboards

Anni Ratti

Die Grenzen meiner Sprache
bedeuten die Grenzen meiner Welt.

May 30 thru August 13, 2006

Opening: Tuesday, June 13, 2006, 6 p.m.

With the KUB-Billboards on Seestraße, Kunsthhaus Bregenz is taking part in the binational project curated by Oscar Sandner entitled ECO OLTREMONTE. Running from April through October 2006, the project brings together artists from Austria and Italy who will show in each other's countries, in Rome and Bregenz respectively. On the billboards, KUB presents a series by Annie Ratti. Coming from Como, she spent a long period in Rome before moving to Paris; for years now, she has been working in London and New York, and is not unknown in Bregenz (1997: solo show at Magazin 4; 2000: "Kunst in der Stadt"). In her billboard series, the internationally successful object and media artist focuses on a dictum from Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* (1922): "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world," which she reproduces in several languages – German, Italian, Slovenian, Croatian, Hungarian, and Turkish.

KUB-Billboards: Seestraße Bregenz



Kunsthhaus Bregenz

KUB-Publications

Michael Craig-Martin

Signs of Life

Michael Craig-Martin's paintings and large-scale wall pieces, the light project for the KUB façade, and the in-situ wall work in the Johanniterkirche in Feldkirch constitute a splendid *gesamtkunstwerk*, which is the primary focus of the catalogue book accompanying the exhibition. In the main text, Eckhard Schneider will center on an art historical derivation and classification of Michael Craig-Martin's oeuvre; the artists Liam Gillick and Edgar Schmitz will address the work in well-informed essays. In an ingenious way, the book's graphic design contrasts Craig-Martin's play with clear, precisely contoured shapes and the confusing switching of proportions.

Signs of Life

German/English, edited by Eckhard Schneider

With a contribution by Eckhard Schneider, essays by Liam Gillick and Edgar Schmitz

Approx. 148 pages, 9 3/8 x 11 5/8 inches, hardcover, embossed, with dust jacket

Approx. 60 color illustrations

Due to be published: June 2006, price: approx. 56.00 €

Michael Craig-Martin

Children's Coloring Book

For the first time, the Kunsthhaus Bregenz will produce a little book for young audiences. Craig-Martin's special manner of drawing, of reducing objects to their most striking contours, inspired the KUB to publish a coloring book for children. 20 motifs will offer hours of imaginative coloring.

Children's Coloring Book

Approx. 36 pages, with 4 color illustrations and a hard cover also in color

Edited by Katrin Wiethage

Price: approx. 7.00 €

KUB-Edition

Michael Craig-Martin

Signs of Life

“Reminiscent of signs, the objects of the light box relate to principal images of the exhibition. Its pivot is the juxtaposition of language and experience, the commonplace and the grand, the present moment and the remembered past, the urgent desire to understand and make sense of the world we have invented and the impossibility of doing so, the pleasures and frustrations of the visual world.” (Michael Craig-Martin)

Signs of Life, 2006

Light box made of black painted aluminum with Duratrans color film mounted on glass

Limited edition of 25 pieces, numbered and signed

External dimensions: 49,5 × 67 × 3 cm

Special price during the exhibition: 4,200 €, incl. 10% VAT, plus forwarding expenses; price after the exhibition: 4,800 €, incl. 10% VAT, plus forwarding expenses

Publisher: Kunsthhaus Bregenz

On the first basement level, parallel to the exhibition “Signs of Life,” the KUB will be showing all the artist’s editions that have been published since 2001.



KUB-Preview

Tino Sehgal

August 17 thru September 24, 2006

Tino Sehgal (*1976 in London) has developed a specific form of art that only comes into being when it is encountered. Executed by interpreters (e.g. museum attendants), the works exist only as situations and in an exchange with the visitors. In this way, Tino Sehgal replaces the production of material objects with temporary works consisting of bodies, space, and time.

For his first solo show in Austria, Tino Sehgal uses the four exhibition levels of the Kunsthhaus for three sculptural situations, two of which are new works developed specially for Bregenz. Precisely because his work operates within the existing conventions of the museum, the pieces use language, bodies, and movement to turn experience itself into an art work, thus radically redefining the conditions for the making and for the reception of art.

Opening hours:

Tue – Sun: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.



Kunsthhaus Bregenz

KAZ Concerts

A Concert Series of the Bregenz Festival

In cooperation with the Bregenz Festival, the Kunsthaus Bregenz will once again be hosting seven concerts, thus for the sixth time the architecture of the Kunsthaus will serve as the setting for a series of concerts in the Bregenz Festival program.

Spin

Suite for electroacoustic extended chamber ensemble by Hannes Löscher. Spin is a musical sequence of pieces composed specifically for the space of the Kunsthaus Bregenz.

Music and concept | Hannes Löscher

Ensemble Plus Extended

Date, time | July 22, 2006, 9:00 p.m.

Price | € 15 / CHF 25

Schubert bis Schwertsik

Both bitter and sweet, this music consciously flirts with the emotional pathos of life.

Violoncello | Christoph Stradner

Piano | Luca Monti

Date, time | July 27, 2006, 9:00 p.m.

Price | € 15 / CHF 25

Cerha / Haas

A concert in honor of Friedrich Cerha's 80th birthday, with the world premiere of a new work for string quartet and trombone.

Klangforum Wien

Date, time | August 1, 2006, 9:00 p.m.

Price | € 15 / CHF 25



Kunsthhaus Bregenz

Blech & Literatur

A project that extends to the present, with works by Pirchner and Jandl in which both the tragedy and the humor of the selected texts find their counterpart in music.

Mund.art Quintett

Speaker | Wolfram Berger

Date, time | August 3, 2006, 9:00 p.m.

Price | € 15 / CHF 25

Willi trifft Mozart

One born in Vorarlberg in 1956, the other in Salzburg in 1756 – but what they have in common is not only a coincidence of numbers but a music of unmistakable clarity.

Wiener Concert-Verein

Conductor | Ulf Schirmer

Date, time | August 6, 2006, 9:00 p.m.

Price | € 15 / CHF 25

Porträtkonzert Christian Ofenbauer

The highlight of the concert will be the world premiere of the work “EisMusik” (2005).

Wiener Concert-Verein

Conductor | Ulf Schirmer

Date, time | August 11, 2006, 9:00 p.m.

Price | € 15 / CHF 25

Gaze!

Improvisation and the realtime processing of acoustic material generate a sound spectrum that ranges from soft and fragile to menacingly infernal.

Modular synth | Patrick Pulsinger

Double bass | Werner Dafeldecker

Vibes/percussion | Flip Philipp and guests

Date, time | August 16, 2006, 9:00 p.m.

Price | € 15 / CHF 25



Partners and Sponsors

The Kunsthhaus Bregenz would like to thank its partners for their generous financial support and the cultural commitment that goes along with it.



Sponsor of the
KUB Arena

MONTFORT WERBUNG

DMG

Main sponsor
of the *Kunsthhaus Bregenz*



Hypo Landesbank



Sponsored by

Zumtobel, typico megaprints, neonArt, British Council



Kunsthhaus Bregenz

Kunsthhaus Bregenz

Venue/Organizer:
Kunsthhaus Bregenz
Karl Tizian Platz
A-6900 Bregenz

Exhibition:
Michael Craig-Martin,
Eckhard Schneider

Director:
Eckhard Schneider

Curator:
Rudolf Sagmeister

Press and public relations:
Birgit Albers
Press queries:
Phone: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-13
Fax: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-8
b.albers@kunsthhaus-bregenz.at

Press photos to download:
www.kunsthhaus-bregenz.at

Art Education:
Winfried Nußbaumüller
Phone: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-17
Fax: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-8
w.nussbaumueller@kunsthhaus-bregenz.at

Publications:
Katrin Wiethege
Phone: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-16
Fax: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-8
k.wiethege@kunsthhaus-bregenz.at

Editions:
Caroline Schneider
Phone: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-44
Fax: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-8
c.schneider@kunsthhaus-bregenz.at

Opening hours:
daily 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Thursday 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.
19.07. – 13.08.2006
daily 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.