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GALLERY

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MICHAEL CRAIG-MARTIN California Dreaming

October 19 – December 22, 2023

Berggruen Gallery is proud to announce *Michael Craig-Martin: California Dreaming*, an exhibition of 14 recent paintings. This show marks his first solo exhibition with the gallery. *Michael Craig-Martin: California Dreaming* will be on view from October 19 through December 22, 2023. The gallery will host a reception for the artist on Thursday, October 19, from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. The gallery will host an artist talk moderated by Emma Acker, Curator of American Art at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, on Saturday, October 21. Please contact the gallery for additional information.

Michael Craig-Martin: California Dreaming offers a contemporary exploration of Craig-Martin's evolving artistic practice, reflecting his enduring interest in objects and representational imagery, adeptly transforming the ordinary into the iconic. *California Dreaming* showcases a curated collection of the artist's recent works, depicting minimal yet intimate arrangements of everyday commodities: personal accessories, household electronics, fragments of musical instruments, and various other accouterments. The artist's distinctive graphic style, characterized by bold minimalism, uninflected lines and vibrant colors, remains as instantly recognizable as the objects he depicts.

In the late 1970s, Craig-Martin, whose career has spanned decades and profoundly influenced the field of conceptual art, made a pivotal shift from using real objects in his work to creating two-dimensional images. Progressing through various mediums, Craig-Martin made a substantial transition to painting in the 1990s. Within this medium, the artist continues to translate the world's tangible items into flat representations, bearing in mind our remarkable ability to create and interpret images, while ultimately developing an emotionally charged, visual language that is all his own. Though his drawings remain faithful to the vocabulary of objects they depict, the artist's manipulation of color and scale in his paintings, introduces an unconventional perspective to these familiar items. These playful subversions of reality encourage the viewer to reevaluate the mundane preconceived narratives associated with the commonplace objects that shape our lives.

To achieve the desired precision and uniformity in his work, Craig-Martin employs a unique tool: black tape. Made from crepe paper and originally designed for electrical circuitry, this tape allows the artist to create precise lines without the intrusion of his hand. Marked by these meticulous lines set against flat planes of striking color, the works exhibited in *California Dreaming* extract their subjects from the present-day: branded sneakers, a solitary briefcase, and even a cluster of grapes. Many of the paintings, which are all rendered on aluminum panel, feature various musical instruments. Through these images, Craig-Martin highlights the timeless nature of these sonic artifacts, which remain almost identical across centuries, bridging the gap between the contemporary and the historical. Demonstrating exceptional draftsmanship and infusing his works with a nuanced simplicity, Michael Craig-Martin presents reflective compositions that probe the relationship between object, image, and language.

Michael Craig-Martin, born in 1941 in Dublin, Ireland, and educated in the United States, where he studied Fine Art at the Yale School of Art and Architecture, has been a prominent figure in British conceptual art since relocating to Britain in 1966. Craig-Martin's career has been marked by exhibitions and installations worldwide, including institutions such as the Centre Pompidou and MoMA. In 1998, Craig-Martin represented Britain in the 23rd Sao Paulo Biennial. He served as a Tate Trustee from 1989 to 1999 and received a CBE honor in 2000. In 2006, he was elected as a Royal Academician (RA), and in 2016, he was knighted in the Queen's Birthday Honours for his services to art. Craig-Martin's influence on generations of young British artists is notable through his tenure as a professor at Goldsmiths College, where he taught from 1974 to 1988 and later from 1994 to 2000. In the fall of 2024, the Royal Academy of Arts, London, will present a retrospective, *Michael Craig-Martin*, the largest

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exhibition of the artist's work in the United Kingdom. Craig-Martin is represented by Gagosian and Cristea Roberts in London. He lives and works in London and Venice.

Michael Craig-Martin: California Dreaming, October 19 – December 22, 2023. On view at 10 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, CA 94105. Images and preview are available upon request. For all inquiries, please contact the gallery by phone at (415) 781-4629 or by email at info@berggruen.com.

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