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PRESS RELEASE

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

6-24 BRITANNIA STREET
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GALLERY HOURS:

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Tue – Sat: 10:00am– 6:00pm



Michael Craig-Martin

A for Umbrella

Saturday, 1 December 2007 – Thursday, 31 January 2008

Opening reception: Friday, 30 November from 6 to 8pm

“My work is simple and sophisticated at the same time....My picture of our society is that the things that unite us, at a very simple level, are the ordinary things we make to survive.”

--Michael Craig-Martin

Gagosian Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of new work by Michael Craig-Martin, his first at Gagosian Gallery, London.

Throughout his career, Craig-Martin has explored the expressive and linguistic character of commonplace objects, evincing a dialogue between representation and reality in art. In the new paintings, outlines of everyday objects-- an umbrella, a light bulb, a drinking glass -- are drawn against a background of flat, vibrant colour. Over this he paints a single letter or combination of letters spelling commonplace words and phrases -- ‘sex’, ‘no’ or ‘we’, and so on. Such apparently random groupings draw attention to the relation between line and colour, word and image. Craig-Martin turns the everyday objects that recur throughout his work into pictogram-like images while creating narrative tension by juxtaposing and layering images and text.

A for Umbrella comprises paintings that combine text and image, together with a series of computer monitor works, including two self-portraits and a large triptych. The computer monitor works engage the viewer to participate in the very construction of meaning. Although the image is fixed (a self-portrait or a collection of personal objects) the colours slowly and constantly change in infinite, never-to-be-repeated combinations. The effects of this are immediate and seductive, a sensory experience with a seemingly organic entity. Colour is used to distinguish one object from another, or to delineate one part of an object from another. Craig-Martin has always been concerned with how to make sense of the world, and the relation between objects and the spaces they inhabit. In these new works, despite the highly sophisticated software that he employs, he retains his intuitive artistic sincerity.

Michael Craig-Martin was born in Dublin in 1941 and educated in the United States. He studied at Yale University. He returned to Europe in the mid-1960s, becoming one of the key figures in the first generation of British conceptual artists. He was a professor at Goldsmith’s College from 1974-1988 and 1994-2000, and a significant influence on the emerging British artists. He has recent retrospectives at the Irish Museum of Modern Art (2006) and Kunsthau Bregenz, Austria (2006), and has permanent large-scale installations at Regents Place, London and The Laban Center, Greenwich, a collaboration with architects Herzog and DeMeuron.

A fully illustrated catalogue will accompany this exhibition.

For further information please contact the gallery +44(0) 207 841 9960 or london@gagosian.com.