

WADDINGTON CUSTOT

Press Release

NEW WORK: David Batchelor

29 June – 14 August 2020



NEW WORK: David Batchelor, opening online on 29 June, marks the third iteration of the Waddington Custot digital exhibition series and is the gallery's first solo presentation by Dundee-born artist David Batchelor. Bringing together a collection of the artist's most recent sculptural works, the exhibition emphasises Batchelor's distinct approach to colour, one defined by and tied to experiences of the city.

The works on display are created from offcuts and found materials, which are then embedded into a concrete structure, relating to the manifestation of colour in the built environment. One or more brightly coloured element is supported by a neutral, industrial base, echoing the jagged cement-and-broken-glass compositions that often adorn the top of brick walls in towns and cities.

These pieces are a continuation of Batchelor's *Concretos* series, which explores the artist's ongoing interest in the Brazilian Concreto and Neo-Concreto movements of the 1950s and 60s. Concrete Art, and its subsequent splinter group, flourished in Brazil due to a climate of increased internationalism, following the construction of Brasilia, and the formation of the São Paulo Bienal. With an aim to distance visual expression from figurative art, painting and sculpture took on a distinctive geometrically based form. Similarly to artists from this time, Batchelor's work liberates colour into three-dimensional space. Batchelor explains that the simple, flat and frontal forms of his three-dimensional works 'are primarily vehicles for colour; as such I try to exclude anything that might interfere with or distract from that.'

Batchelor has a long held fascination with the properties and presence of colour throughout history and in contemporary society, having written extensively on the subject in titles including *Chromophobia* (2000) and *The Luminous and the Grey* (2014). In the former, Batchelor writes about colour being 'routinely excluded from the higher concerns of the Mind', an act that he has identified in the West since Antiquity, which sees colour 'systematically marginalized, reviled, diminished and degraded'. As an antidote to this devaluation and purging, Batchelor's work seeks to recover and profile colours present in the everyday. In this instance Batchelor explains that he is not interested in 'pure' colour, but instead references and uses colour from objects that are embedded in materials encountered in the city. Artificial colours, visible for example in street lights and fluorescent road paint, are adopted into Batchelor's palette and used to subvert any connotations to pure or primary tones, celebrating the commercial, industrial, bright, vulgar and modern colours inherent in the urban environment.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Credit Line

NEW WORK: *David Batchelor* opens online on 29 June 2020. waddingtoncustot.com

Image

David Batchelor, *Inter-Concreto* 23, 2020, 114 x 65 x 8 cm, acrylic and concrete.

About David Batchelor

David Batchelor was born in Dundee in 1955 and lives and works in London. In 2013, a major solo exhibition of Batchelor's two-dimensional work, *Flatlands*, was displayed at Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh and toured to Spike Island, Bristol. Batchelor's work was included in the landmark group exhibition *Adventures of the Black Square: Abstract Art and Society 1915 - 2015* at Whitechapel Gallery, London. A separate exhibition of Batchelor's *Monochrome Archive (1997-2015)* was also on display at Whitechapel Gallery until May 2015.

Batchelor's portfolio includes a number of major public artworks, with a commission for the British Council headquarters in Hong Kong, a site-specific work for the McManus Galleries in Dundee, a 10-metre high light installation at the Archway Tube Station in London, a major commission for St. Pancras International Station entitled *Chromolocomotion* and in 2015, *Chromorama*, was situated in Broadgate, London.

Batchelor has written and edited a number of books including *The Luminous and the Grey* (2014), *Found Monochromes* (2010), *Colour* (2008) and *Chromophobia* (2000).

About Waddington Custot

Waddington Custot was formed through the partnership of French art dealer Stephane Custot and long-time London art dealer, Leslie Waddington, in 2010. Located in Cork Street since 1958, formerly as Waddington Galleries, the gallery has a rich heritage and an international reputation for quality and expertise in works by modern and contemporary masters, with a particular focus on monumental sculpture.

The gallery has cemented its reputation over several decades for high quality and well-researched exhibitions of significant artists operating in the mid-twentieth century and beyond. Today, Waddington Custot represents heavyweight contemporary and modern artists and their estates including Peter Blake, David Annesley, Patrick Caulfield, Ian Davenport, Fabienne Verdier, Barry Flanagan, Allan d'Arcangelo, Jedd Novatt, Pablo Reinoso and Robert Indiana. The inventory includes works by important modern European artists including Jean Dubuffet, Pierre Soulages, Joan Miró, Nicolas de Staël, Josef Albers, Maria Helena Vieira da Silva, Fausto Melotti, and Antoni Tàpies. The gallery's long-standing focus on heavyweight American artists continues through strong relationships with John Chamberlain, Peter Halley, Robert Rauschenberg, Frank Stella and John Wesley. waddingtoncustot.com.

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