



**museo  
delle genti  
d'abruzzo**

Exhibition of 85 paintings by

**Paul Critchley**

5<sup>th</sup> April – 4<sup>th</sup> May 2025

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# VISION IS MORE THAN EYESIGHT

## GIUSEPPE BLOGGO – Street philosopher

Paintings are like pages in a diary and slowly, as the days pass and the pages turn over, a story develops; blob after blob of paint, letter after letter. As more paintings appear so do more pages and gradually we can see and read into them the personality of the storyteller expressing ideas and feelings. However what we see in this exhibition is only a part of an installation which has taken more than 20 years to create – and it is still in progress because the artist is not dead. To work on a single project requires dedication; it requires a 'big idea' : a concept, a goal, a vision. All the paintings, if they are going to work together, have to harmonise; there cannot be one realistic and the other abstract unless there is a link between them. So since the whole story is to show the contents of a home there has to be consistency in how they are painted, but where did this idea come from? Nothing is in isolation. The best explanation is to look back in history and see what happened earlier in order to fill in the gaps in our information but, If you need a second opinion, open your other eye... here is a selection of reviews:

Annemarie Bauman – Rheinische Post from his first solo exhibition in 1987 :

'Rooms - surroundings with their atmosphere and at times their occupants - these form Paul Critchley's theme. Through his oil paintings on canvas and his three dimensional cardboard constructions the exhibitor demonstrates series of views which are seen from various angles. Realistic observations, subjective experiences and at times recollections (for instance, associations with the compositions of the Old Master) are all combined here. Paul Critchley designs his totally unconventional and imaginative formats in such a way that they are in tune with the rooms he is portraying; the angular staircases, the Berlin bar layout, the Dutch interior. It is first and foremost these formats in a combination of space, dimension and colour (often producing subtle, shadow-like tones) which make the creation of a harmonious composition possible.

Initial uncertainty and surprise at the sight of such unusual formats, as well as the distortion and alienations of the perspective, gives way to the sheer enjoyment which one experiences through looking and discovering anew more and

more realistically interpreted details. Paul Critchley's paintings are therefore not ultimately pleasing just because they tell stories; here events of the day simply appear, spatial boundaries and sequences of time are broken by the refined synopsis.

In some works the exhibitor introduces eye-catchers, playful gags. For instance, in the Dutch Interior he produces interchangeable window views in the form of blooming tulip fields and brightly coloured windmills: exchangeable pictures which amuse and more over give variable ambiance and atmosphere to the overall composition. In other pictures it is the cut out door slit or the natural fall of the light in a staircase, that joint effect of three dimensional construction and painted illusion which stirs the observer and reveals an additional creative dimension.'

### **Bruno F. Schneider – Kölnische Rundschau 1988**

'The paintings give a view rather like that from the top looking down into unfolded dolls houses, furnished with beds, cupboards, tables, baths and laundry hung on the clothes line in the drying-room. The whole is brought together within an

irregular shaped frame, giving the paintings a relief character. The American Frank Stella also started with similar table objects, but this British artist Paul Critchley follows him only in the formal way. What is happening on these irregular bordered planes, is more of a psychodrama, or better still, what could be happening, for there is not really that much actually occurring: A mouse on the floor is playing with a rose, the artist is sitting or standing in the bath and a Setter is discontentedly guarding a carelessly discarded black lace bra.

The viewer is at liberty to use his own imagination to create appropriate stories inspired by the objects portrayed. The eye experiences the real adventure best by a 'walk' through the unusual and distorted perspectives of the doll-like interiors, which are representations of the artists own house. A walk which makes the viewer sometimes feel uneasy, rather like the 'impossibles', painted architectures by M.C. Escher. But behind the innocent objects and behind the play with the perspective in each painting there is something precipitous lying in wait; a light greyness shouldn't make one forget that behind the mundane decor of this house there could also be a fatal deception'.

## Yann – Journal de Fontvieille 1991

‘Paul Critchley is an original artist, first and foremost in the unconventional way he chooses the format of his canvases. In fact, he doesn't choose, it's his subject that imposes, that defines the contours of his works, so they have multiple sides, some parallel, others oblique, rounded...

And what are these subjects that upset our geometry and our habits? Journeys. Slow, intimate drifts inside a house. A house such as you have never seen before. Critchley's eye sweeps the entire space, and beyond the apparent, he sees in front, behind, above, below, inside, he sees daylight peeking through a window pane while night falls in a doorway... And his staircases redesign the space, reinventing its poetry.

The classical, rigorous style, the perfect mastery of perspective and the interplay of light and shadow allow the artist to offer us interior landscapes in three dimensions, four in fact, since time is omnipresent in Critchley's work, as is humour and distancing, through infinite details, subtle shifts and nuances. Critchley is a happy cross between Magritte and Hopper, who has seen all the films of Hitchcock.’

## El Punto de las Artes 1993

‘Selecting his angle of vision Critchley focuses on a stereotypical scene and then infuses it with life in the lens of his eye. He brings together perspectives of corners, perceptions of light and the idealisation of geographical realities to achieve his aim of transforming a place into a personal statement. And then he refuses to be bound by functional shapes and conventional forms which might destroy the impact of his work. What he does is to focus the attention and single out that element by means of which rational time is suspended and the true magic of the place and its architecture is allowed to shine forth. It is by no means just an introductory sample of things to come; it is a consummate demonstration of artistic skills and imaginative ideas combined to produce abstracts which make use of shape to get to the soul of a place; vision of the highest order; and to this plain and simple description we must add the play of light, the formal harmonies and finally the tones which bring out the poetry which is all pervasive. Not landscape painting but rather a testimony unfettered by the dictates of conventionalism. Exercising his free spirit Critchley breaks the accepted rules, goes from two-dimensional to three-dimensional and delights in the moment, captured by the angle of vision of his own enchantment. Like scenes viewed through a keyhole by a prying eye; like flashes of light which multiply the tonal possibilities so that reality is transcended and the heart-beat quickens.’

### **P. Escanero De Miguel – Información 1993**

‘What attracts me so much about his work is its extraordinary originality, it is truly startling. One gets the impression that this young Englishman has been so captivated by our land, our air, our streets, that the purest Spanish traditions now flows from his paint brushes. The process of assimilation is like a flash of lightening. Paul Critchley's oils have no frames, they come in irregular shapes, which seem to play whimsical games with the viewer. His streets become narrower before our eyes, as if to imprison us within them; his white walls of vibrant lime wash stand out under a sky of intense dazzling blue, the respectable tiled roofs seem to be whispering to us tales of a thousand and one nights; precisely because they conceal part of this mystery where the empty streets call out for the presence of the great absentee - man. Within this extraordinary luminosity there is a true feeling of emptiness and solitude; the street itself is the leading actor. The painter relishes what we sometimes discard as valueless.’

### **Denise Walsh – Costa Blanca News 1993**

‘Good old fashioned traditional paintings? Nothing could be further from the truth for these paintings are not square or rectangular as we were brought up to believe paintings had to be. The shape is determined by the subject matter: a narrow street becomes a narrow painting, skies are curved. Some pictures are wider at the top than the bottom. There is the fantastic 3D effect.

Some of the pictures are in fact 3D, part painting part sculpture, but all give a marvellous impression of depth. No. Not traditional nor old-fashioned but completely original.’

### **Antonio Gascó – Mediterráneo 1996**

‘It is a very seductive surprise to contemplate Paul Critchley's exhibition because of its novelty and charm at the same time. The format is novel, the treatment is novel, the spatial and perceptive approach is novel, and at the same time the subject matter and theme reflect a profound truth about popular Mediterranean architecture. As he himself says in the catalogue's self-critique, an outsider had to come to discover for us the sincere authenticity of what is in our own, in our villages, in our sun, in our sky, and even in our night.

Critchley has taken on many things from the history of art; the extreme costumbrist realism, the plural opinion of vision that implied the decomposition of planes of cubism and also the scenographic valuation of space and the impressive theatricality of the environment. With all this and, of course, with many doses of his own inspiration and emotion, he has described, with admirable entity, the surroundings of those Mediterranean villages asleep in the sun or awake in the dark of the warm night. In short, he has painted time.

The profile of the buildings against the sky of infinite depth is cut out in an external resolution that possesses, at the same time, a sculptural perceptibility.

Even more: the treatment of textures in the modelling of the floors and the plastering of the walls, the profiles of light and shadow... confer on the subjects such a degree of entity that the surroundings vibrate in their visual power. And even more so, the 'fish eye' vision, the plurality of optical angles, the obliquity of the verticals give his urban landscapes a dynamism that is as fertile as it is lively. A lively, very lively dynamism. And this is all the more valid when the environment he portrays, with admirable realism, is in the most reverent of silences, managing to stop time.'

#### **Catherine Belton – Moscow Tribune 1998**

'Critchley's work leaps out beyond the constriction of traditional single plane frameworks to produce startling pictures that immediately impress with their myriad of viewpoints and original perception of space.

The painter left the drab greyness of his home town of Manchester decades ago and has since been soaking up the atmosphere of the continent, painting the angst-ridden mystery of pre-unification East Berlin and then moving on to explore the fascinating play of light in the cities of Italy.'

#### **Bernadette Reijs – Stadlicht Magazine voor Eindhoven 2003**

'In Critchley's work fantasy and reality intermingle. The interiors and exteriors he paints depict not so much those spaces themselves, but his personal perception of them. To best reflect his experience, he adapts the form of his work to the representation. This results in canvases with highly irregular shapes, in which the atmosphere is determined by artificial light. He depicts the theme of space in his own idiosyncratic way, capturing the thoughts and feelings a space evokes in him as adequately as possible in a painting. He does this by simultaneously depicting different points of view. For instance, one work may depict all walls of a room or a building from different angles. Architecture is rendered simply and uncomplicated - large planes, few details - lighting can play a crucial role in depicting spaces. The artificial light source, often no more than a single bulb, therefore strongly determines the atmosphere of the work.

Little happens in Critchley's paintings, but the viewer is free to let his imagination run wild and imagine what could take place in the depicted spaces.

The rather empty and sometimes somewhat twisted architectural forms have a somewhat alienating effect and create a surreal effect. In addition, Critchley often places a single eye-catching object in the interiors as the impetus for a story. The viewer becomes entangled in a psychological game when processing these elements.'

### **Lois Fichner-Rathus – Foundations of Art & Design 2007**

‘Each of the architectural and natural objects recede in arbitrary ways, corresponding to the multiple vantage points of the artist as the scene is surveyed. By limiting the palette to shades of blue-green and brown, and working with simplified shapes, Critchley concentrates the viewer’s attention on the positioning of elements in space. The spatial relationships in the work override the specific content. When you look at the painting, despite the solidity of the objects like the gate or the window frame, there seems to be an instability and feeling of movement. This perception suggests the artist’s own physical movement as he views the landscape and interior from different angles and consolidates them into a pictorial whole. It’s a way to suggest the fourth dimension of time and motion. The use of multiple perspective is an attempt for artists to relay in two dimensions their actual relationship to the three-dimensional world.’

### **Prof. Giorgio di Genova – Catalogue Premio Internazionale Limen Arte 2017**

‘He favours specially shaped formats to accentuate the illusionistic effects of spatial depths, of which, by resorting to mobile doors, he manages to offer multiple views. Thus it is in the striking *A Foot In The Door* of bivalent perspective: all it takes is to move the intermediate door that the vision is totally overturned, offering on one side the landing on which a left shoe points

towards a corridor with a descending staircase that ends up in a room with a green and white triangle floor on which is a bare chair, and on the other side the right shoe (note the subtlety of the inversion) on the green-white floor with the tip pointing towards the staircase-corridor that ascends towards another room lit by a window to the side of which is a grandfather clock. Critchley knows how to fully and intelligently reveal the secrets of illusionism in painting, taking advantage of the perspective games that have been used to deceive the eye since Brunelleschi in pursuit of verisimilitude. And he gives us a double demonstration of this in the context of a single solution.’

### **Il Giornale dell’Arte, January 2020**

On 14 pages of the newspaper 90 art historians, critics and curators selected the best and the worst of 2019. Prof. Giorgio di Genova, critic and historian of contemporary art, selected the sculptor Carlo Lorenzetti, multifaceted Claudio Rotta Loria and Paul Critchley as his three best artists of 2019.

# A SENSE OF PLACE

It is appropriate that this exhibition of paintings by Paul Critchley is in the Museo Delle Genti d'Abruzzo (The Museum of the People of Abruzzo) because, although Critchley was not born here, he has lived almost a quarter of his life amongst the people of Abruzzo in Farindola, almost the geographical centre of the province. Farindola is the 'staging post', the 'base camp' en route between the urban metropolis of Pescara and Little Tibet; Il Campo Imperatore. We all have a sense of place, a base camp which we call home and from where we can make adventures into the wider world before coming back – to home. Home is like an anchor, it reminds us, like a weight of time, that one day we will all have to cease our own circumnavigation of the sun. This exhibition is subdivided into two sections; the first is an installation called *A Sense of Place* and represents the rooms one finds in an apartment: a living room, kitchen, corridor, bedroom and bathroom. Once again the Museo Delle Genti d'Abruzzo is the perfect venue as its size is small and intimate, it's homely.

As with all apartments we can walk from room to room and we see that each room is furnished. However each item of furniture is not three dimensional but a two dimensional painting of the three dimensional piece it portrays. These are *trompe l'oeil* paintings, in fact the whole apartment is one large *trompe l'oeil*, especially emphasised by the fact that the paintings are all life size. Due to the construction of the museum the layout of the individual rooms are in two areas; in the first we enter the living room and notice immediately that the paintings are not in traditional rectangular/square formats as each painting is shaped to represent the actual motif. Since we don't live in a square or rectangular world why should views of our surroundings always be in squares or rectangles?

When we see an exhibition where each individual painting is in a standard rectangular form we analyse it before moving on to the next and don't pay any attention to the space between



each painting. Although they may be a series of landscapes or portraits each is independent, framed off from the background wall they hang on. But in this installation Critchley's paintings all relate to each other, as their shapes are related to the wall and the space which lies between and in front of them. The wall spaces – the negative spaces – link one painting to the next and as our eyes pass from one to another we see that these negative areas are like the spaces between the words you are reading now. Ideas, spelling, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, colours, textures, shapes, feelings and emotions. The poetry of life, the art of poetry all help to tell the stories we are confronted with. Shaped paintings add to the experience by eliminating surrounding elements which are irrelevant and distracting and focus our attention more precisely.

*Mr & Mrs* ~ 204 x 108 cm with two mirrors

# LIVING ROOM

We see the fireplace, the genuine electric cable and the plug socket which takes the power to the electric heater, and the three ducks hanging on the wall above. Next to the fireplace is a cabinet where we can see a TV, plaster animals, a radio and bottles inside. The shapes increase the painted realism, they are extra real: supra-realist.

*Past Times* ~ 180 x 122 cm with electric cable, socket and plug



In the past when art schools actually taught practical skills like understanding what students are looking at and drawing it instead of simply saying, “Look at me I’m an artist because I say so”, they had to do drawings of past sculptures. This classical system in Europe, the era recognized as from Giotto to Cézanne, was gradually abandoned as cubism broke the rules and opening minds to alternative ideas and views. The world society was radically changed as a result of the two world wars; old values were challenged and overturned, abstract expressionism totally replaced the old classical system of copying past art. Those plaster copies were thrown out of art schools – or left in the attic until someone brought them home... I’ve painted (some) them on the shelves in this painting. The broken head is from a copy of *The Dancing Faun with Cymbals*, originally made by Massimiliano Soldani Benzi (Italy 1646-1740), which, I think, is in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence. Beneath the head is a bull by Rosa Bonheur, the 19th century French painter and sculptor, her name is on the plinth.

*Artyfacts* ~ 203 x 100 cm





Italy is renowned for its cuisine, the variety and its quality and the fact that it is different in the north, east, south and west. Apples grow in the north, oranges in the south, rice in the east, buffalo mozzarella made in the west – and Pecorino di Farindola in Farindola. The total opposite to processed foods which have made many people in the world healthy as it contains many of the carbohydrates, vitamins, proteins, fats, etc., needed. However a McDonald's burger in New York tastes the same there as it does in Alaska, Paris, Milan and Pescara. We all want to be healthy, so here we are being encouraged, given the chance to change our diets by replacing real food with chemical substitutes. Even red wine comes as a dissolvable pill in the glass of water, cheers.

*Nouvelle Cuisine*

180 x 122 cm with mirror

How to paint an abstract image?  
In fact what is an abstract image?  
It's an arrangement of colours, shapes  
and textures which have no relation  
to anything other than other colours,  
shapes and textures, and all these  
interact together. Critchley has  
painted an abstract... but couldn't  
help himself from framing it within  
a white rectangle and turning it into  
a jigsaw puzzle. Amusingly all those  
individual pieces of the abstract  
image could be rearranged and the  
image would still be abstract, every  
variation will become a masterpiece  
as there are no rules to follow. Would  
*Abstracts For The Advanced* be any  
better?

*Abstracts for Beginners*  
62,5 x 47 cm

*Miss America* ~ 90 x 151 cm





*The Time Has Come ~ 160 x 122 cm with mirror*



*Time is Valuable ~ 236 x 56 cm*

All homes have electricity and so throughout there are 7 plugs and 7 light switches and, in the last few years, they're also been infected by a plague of 7 CCTV cameras. Plus there are also 6 wall vents.



*Stupid Italian Plug Sockets ~ 15 x 22 cm con filo*



*Crossed Lines ~ 140 x 100 cm with wires*

# KITCHEN

When we leave the living room we walk into the kitchen between two wall panels separating the two rooms and we see, beneath the view through the window of a hilly pastoral scene, lies disaster and chaos.

Cooking is creative, eating is fulfilling – both physically and emotionally – but washing up, especially after a few glasses of wine with the meal... is work. (The chaos in this painting shows a blatant avoidance to do any.) Just look at it: A chicken on the window ledge is sweating in the sunlight, the remains of yesterday's fish are in crumpled foil left on unwashed plates. Bread has been discovered by the ants; piles of dirty dishes, vegetables in a rack and cockroaches scurrying around in all the dark corners. This kitchen sink drama is obviously evidence of an unmarried man.

*Kitchen Sink Drama*  
195 x 175 cm ~ Diptych



It looks like the inhabitants have just had their lunch of roast chicken and are sitting on the dining table reading – or giggling and hiding behind – the newspaper to escape from washing the dishes.



*The Doctor's Lunchtime Appointment*  
150 x 175 cm



*Burnt Offerings* ~ 165 x 98 cm ~ Diptych



*Up In Flames* ~ 52,5 x 34 cm



The population in Italy is dropping, not surprisingly, which woman would marry a man who can't cook? Judge a man by his kitchen not by his bank balance. This man's cooker looks like it has excavated in Pompeii. It's a portrait of burnt offerings; the pancetta is crisp, the pan of bubbling oil is about to boil over, hopefully the steam from the kettle will stop the flames burning the toast from spreading. The lasagna in the dirty oven looks as dry as the Sahara, only the eggs seem to have survived – or are they going to be served semi raw? The fridge is no better; there's no room for the fish in the freezer box, cooked sausages are lying on top of raw ones, there's a head of a sheep bleeding on the shelf and jars are filled with eyes of sheep. As for whatever could be pickled in those jars... Quick turn round and look at something else!



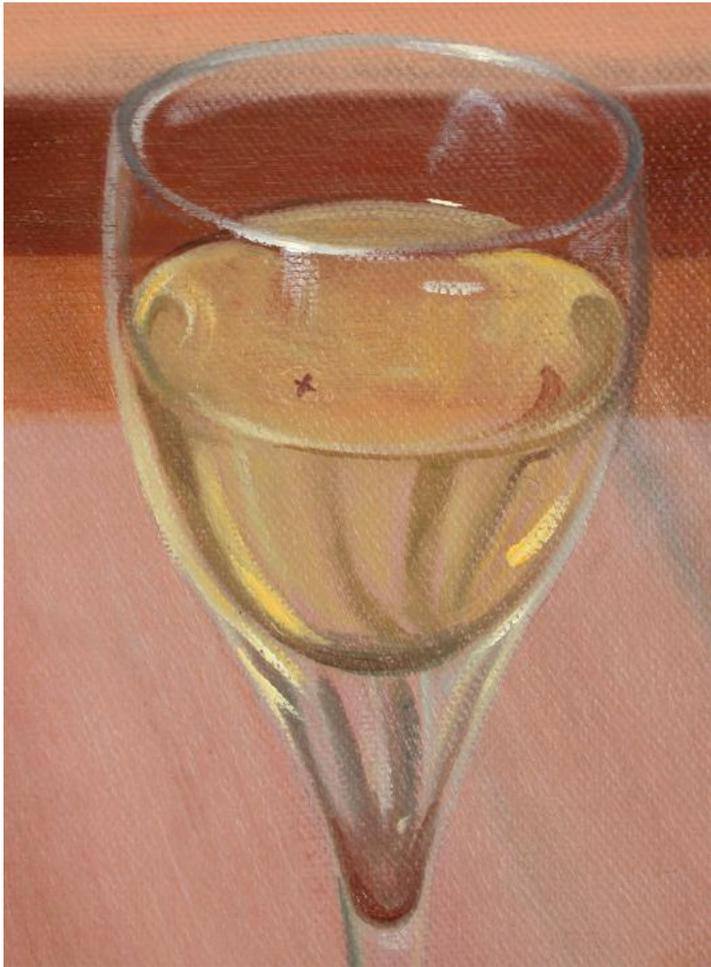
*Eye Spy* ~ 160 x 100 cm ~ Triptych



*The Ironing Board ~ 130 x 40 cm*



*Time For Tomorrow ~ 33 x 33 cm*



*Fish Supper* ~ 180 x 122 cm with mirror





*Chez la Madame*  
86 x 188 cm

Dart boards are circular, all the target areas are equal size but in the square dart board the highest valued area, triple 20 = 60 points, is smaller and therefore more difficult to hit than the triple 18 = 54 points. The combined numbers 5+20+1 = 26 but those in corners, such as in the bottom left, are greater: 16+7+19 = 42. So a square board changes the tactics of the game.



*The Skwer Board*  
46 x 46 cm

# BEDROOM

In the living room there was naked lady relaxing on the sofa and feeling at home and now that we've walked down the corridor and entered the bedroom we've discovered another naked lady lying there like *¡La majá desnuda!* But she too looks quite relaxed, possibly because she's semi-covered by the modesty of the mosquito net. Unlike, however, Sñr Goya who is obviously so embarrassed that he's trying to hide behind the curtain.

*The Hiding Man* ~ 216 x 160 cm





*The Unveiling*  
195 x 195 cm with mosquito net

# BATHROOM

To respect their privacy it would be discreet to move on into the next room, the bathroom, where it sounds like the tap is running. Oh! Oh dear, there's a man, a naked man in the shower! This painting is reminiscent of Tom Wesselman's *Bathtub No. 3* from 1963 which is in the Ludwig Museum in Cologne. Wesselman painted a stylized woman in bright cheerful pop art colours straight out of the can whereas Critchley has painted the man with anatomical accuracy.

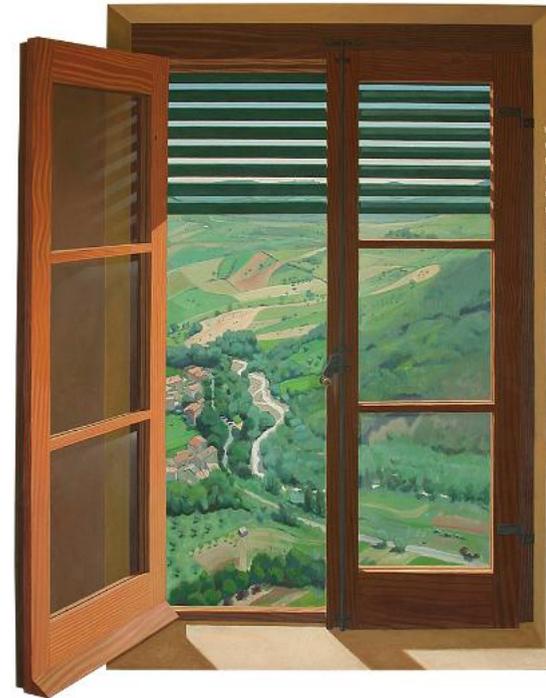
In the ancient Greco-Roman art the Kouros, the male nude, was accorded more importance than the Kore, the female. The male nude, the ideal beauty represented in Greek statues and copied by the Romans, became the symbol for Mankind and established his body as the ideal human form. The admiration for Classical Art and culture explains the ubiquity of the hero in Academic Painting; the heroic nude was particularly valued and thus was the ideal to be attained. As the Roman Empire declined the early Christians rejected the classical ideals by introducing fundamentally different sources of inspiration and wasn't until the Renaissance that the classical spirit

*Taking a Cold Shower* ~ 217 x 170.5 cm



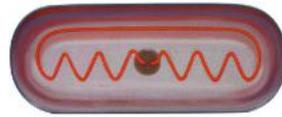
and classical techniques were revived. The invention of photography in the 19th century challenged the tradition of the male nude as the ideal form as photography brought about a realist aesthetic in Western Art, a philosophy which had a dramatic effect on the representation of male nudity. Photography had brushed away the idealization and brought in a new representation and with it a new and embarrassing reality. Revealing the body became an affront to modesty in the male-dominated society of the 19th century, the unclothed male appeared even more obscene and shocking than the unclothed female, and so the male nude gradually became less common as female figures proliferated. Manet's *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* is a good example of this new realism and Courbet's *L'origine du monde* couldn't be more obvious. As science progressed the 20th century looked at the human body differently: X-rays revealed images of the body never before seen. The ancient ideal became a new biological ideal. Yet despite greater knowledge, and presumably understanding, the representation of male genitalia is frequently a source of embarrassment. Since 50% of the world's population possess such an appendage it's bizarre, especially in the 21st century, that its portrayal is still met with ridicule, ignorance and childish trepidation.

*Let The Light In* ~ 127 x 100 cm and 61 x 53 cm





*Cultivated Passions* ~ 150 x 89 cm with mirrors



*The Heater* ~ 50 x 20 cm  
*Towel Rail* ~ 78 x 45 cm



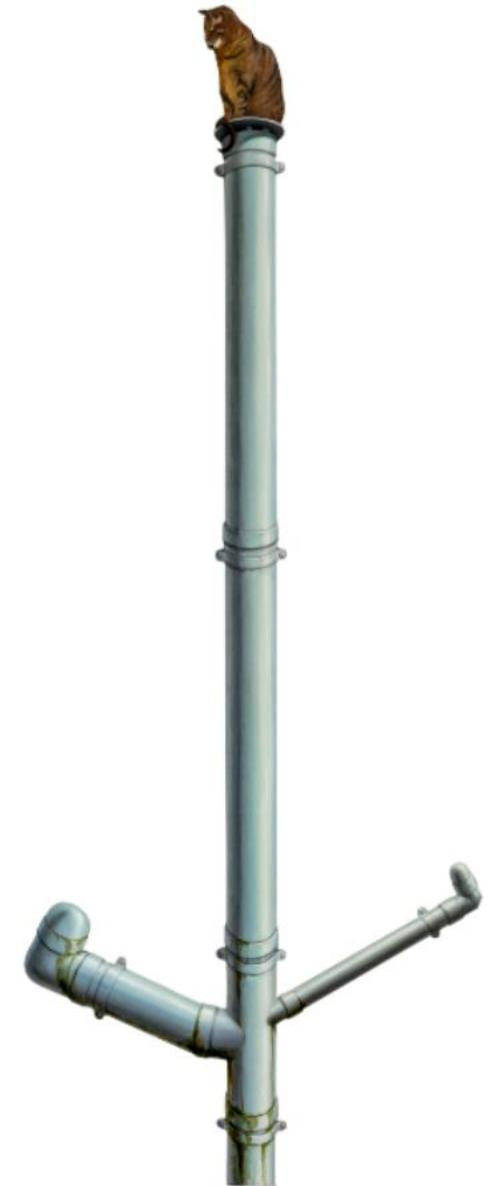
*Bathroom Sink* ~ 83 x 73 cm with mirror

There are two sides to every story but Putin's story is that he is an ARSEHOLE. The best way to express what I think of him is staring you in the face.

Pooch is English slang for shit and the pronunciation of Pooch is exactly the same as pronouncing the name Putin. Poohtin is Putin.



*Tzar Poohtin's Throne ~ Life size*



*Sweet 'n' Sour ~ 243 x 97 cm*



*Mrs Dog ~ 56 x 37 cm ~ Corner painting*



*Mr Dog ~ 56 x 29 cm ~ Corner painting*

# OUTSIDE

We've left the *Sense of Place* and are now in the second part of the exhibition before two series of paintings. The first are interiors where we look into rooms, the second are views of the exterior; looking out through windows to land and seascapes.

These differ from the paintings in the installation because they are independent, they are not connected to the same theme; the concept of being a part of the whole apartment. Those paintings are very controlled, the brush work is limited to explaining the content whether the object is hard, soft, reflective, round or angled. The light falling on them casts shallow shadows to reveal its structure, the form. In the interiors *Angst-iou Moment* and *Midnight Visit* the light and shadows give scope for atmosphere and drama. They seem to have a Kafkaesque, Hitchcock mood, you could almost smell the air, the hint of perfume or damp clothes, floating around.



The German word for fear is *Angst*, for anxiety it is *Ängst*, for anxious it is *Ängstlich*. *Angst-ious Moment* is an invention of an Anglo-German word, it means neither one nor the other explanation but describes the uneasy mood we can see and feel expressed in the painting. The clothes on the chair clothe a woman who is not there yet their arrangement indicates her presence. They can't have been there for years because the shoes are burning, it's happening right now – or could they be burning gas like a cooker: an eternal flame? If that is the case then is the fire in the stove in the other room also an eternal fire, and what about the fish swimming in the handbag on the window ledge? But fish don't live forever, nor do we, only time lives for eternity.



*Angst-ious Moment*  
170 x 155 cm ~ Triptych



*Midnight Visit* is an event which has just passed, has the visitor/s gone – or just arrived? The perspective in the painting points us either to look left or look right and then up the stairs or down to the dark basement. Is/are the visitor/s in the room to the left where a glow of light sneaks out of the room. Is the door closing or opening? Are they upstairs or down, did they leave and are now in the house across the road? Or is that where they came from? Whose are those gloves in the floor, are they a man's or a woman's gloves? I don't know, do you?

*Midnight Visit* ~ 180 x 120 cm



In *All Kissing is Strictly Prohibited!*  
two people have found a dark  
corner where they can embrace  
and kiss, something which was  
frowned upon during Covid when  
people were ordered to maintain  
a distance of 1m from each other.



*All Kissing is Strictly Prohibited!* ~ 153 x 71 cm ~ Diptych



*The World Before Me ~ 200 x 100 cm*

We all have a view of the world before us and although the outlook is different for everyone we all share the same machine, our body, which carries us around so our eyes can see the world about us. All bodies vary however there are just two types, two designs of the machine which carries us: one is male and the other female. 50% of the world's population share one viewpoint and the other 50% share another.



*The World Before Her ~ 200 x 100 cm*



The uncertainty we now face in this new world of isolation can provoke mental problems not just physical ones. We all sit in little cells filling our heads with all sorts of ideas, some valid others perhaps paranoid fantasies. No longer can we trust the air we breath, what if we go outside, what will happen, how do we deal with the unknown, which way do we go? Our imaginations give us the freedom to dream but also for our fears to run amok. Uncertainty makes confusion, what was once a simple problem could become a never ending one. This maze is a metaphor for that confusion, how do we find our way through all the uncertainty in life? We are wandering through that maze with just the white stick of the blind as a guide.



*The Mind Maze ~ 172 x 80 cm ~ Diptych*



This painting was made during the Covid lockdown when nobody could travel and consequentially the yellowish smudge in the air slowly disappeared and in the process the air became crystal clear, so clear that the outlines of trees on the crest of the mountain ridges became razor sharp, etched out by the super bright light, and the stars looked like bright holes in the night. Although the virus is terrible the good side is that it showed how badly we are polluting our environment. The outside is monochrome to illustrate how guilty we all are and that we are responsible for the changing climate. The world has been cast aside as though we don't care, the sky has been ruined by the jet stream of an aircraft and yet the inside in our homes all colourful because that is our personal space, which due to our short sightedness, is all we can see.

On the wallpaper behind the open windows we see the dollar symbol with Mickey Mouse standing on the shell which Botticelli used to announce the Birth of Venus because Mickey (born in 1928) has become a God in the commercial world. When the windows are closed we see that the inside is coloured while the outside of the windows are black and white

and still suffering from neglect. On the wall inside is a portrait of Minnie Mouse in the style of the Marilyn Monroe prints by Andy Warhol the inventor of artification (commercialization). The bright red wallpaper is covered with the symbol of the Golden Arches, the logo of McDonald's. In the middle of the room is a sculpture by Jeff Koons representing a dog in the shape of a blown up balloon. Koons is the king of commercialization because these limited editions sculptures are sold for ridiculous amounts. In the background is a TV showing Donald Trump with a caption saying FAKE. The purpose of all this is to make the statement that we, the ignorant, are more concerned with trivia; the triviality of celebrity, and decorate our nests with colourful confetti while, like Nero playing his fiddle as Rome burned, we blandly ignore the world outside which is rapidly being destroyed by wild fires and melting ice sheets. The climate is changing and Donald Trump, *The Fake Prophet*, bedecked with fool's gold of self-importance believes he knows more than the scientists and arrogantly declares that what they say is all FAKE.

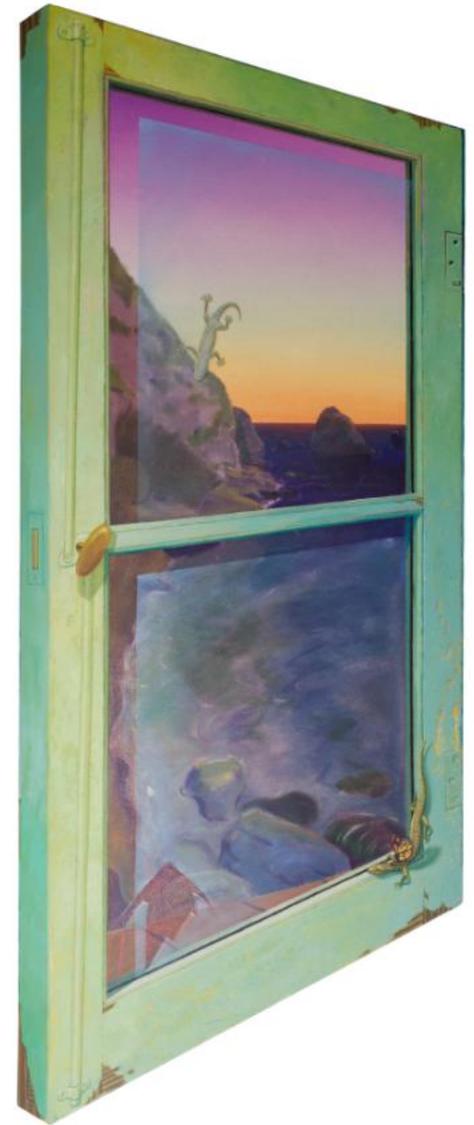


*The Fake Prophet* ~ 163 x145 cm Triptych



When the astronauts encircling the moon took the photo of the earth, the isolation and fragility of our world was visible to all. Our world, a spot of dust in the vast, overwhelming and never ending universe, is so insignificant and yet so precious – never in the face of so much is so little so great. The planet is several billion years old but our species has only existed for a few million, a few seconds in the time of the world's life. In a few nanoseconds we could completely alter/destroy the climate, homo sapiens are the worst virus ever to inhabit the planet, we are rapidly taking the pace out of our space.

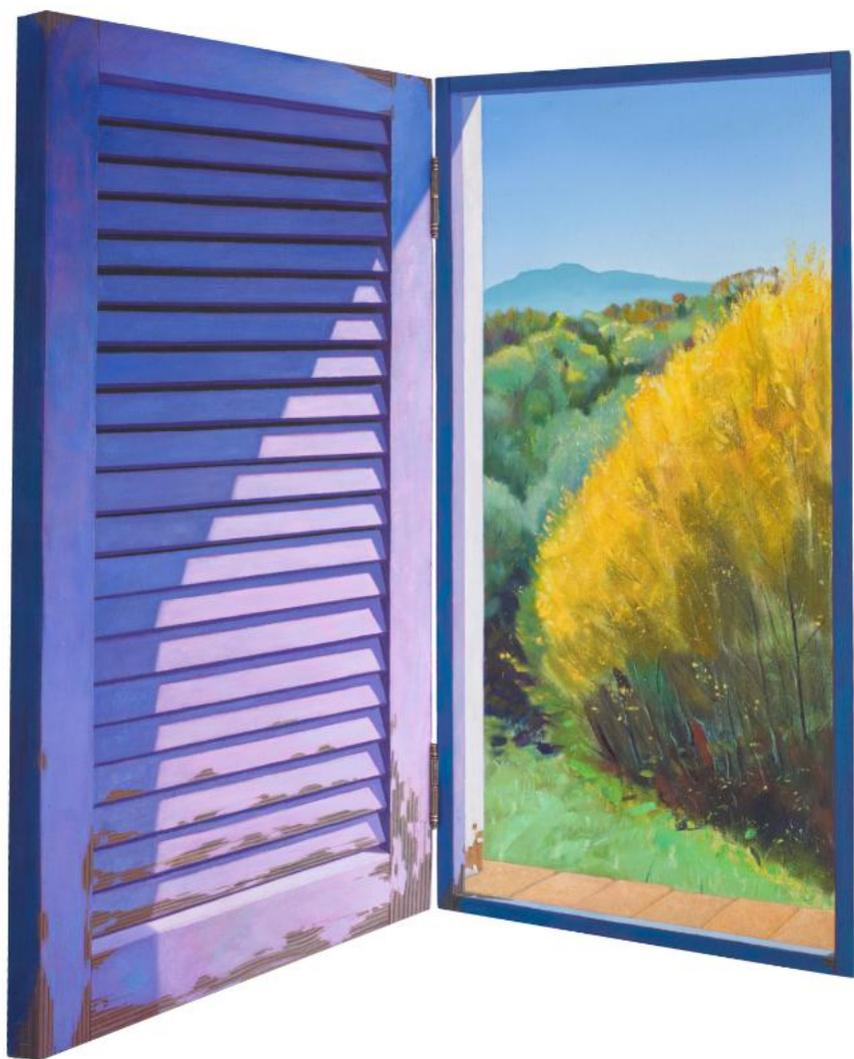
*Think not for whom the ice melts;  
it melts for everyone ~ 55 x 24.5 cm*



*Wildlife Charisma at Aquabella* ~ 100 x 81 cm ~ Diptych



*My Prickly Neighbours* ~ 109 x 106 cm ~ Diptych



*Eye Catching* ~ 100 x 80 cm ~ Diptych



Painting in situ on Il Campo Imperatore

*Winter & Summer* ~ 184 x 174 cm ~ Triptych

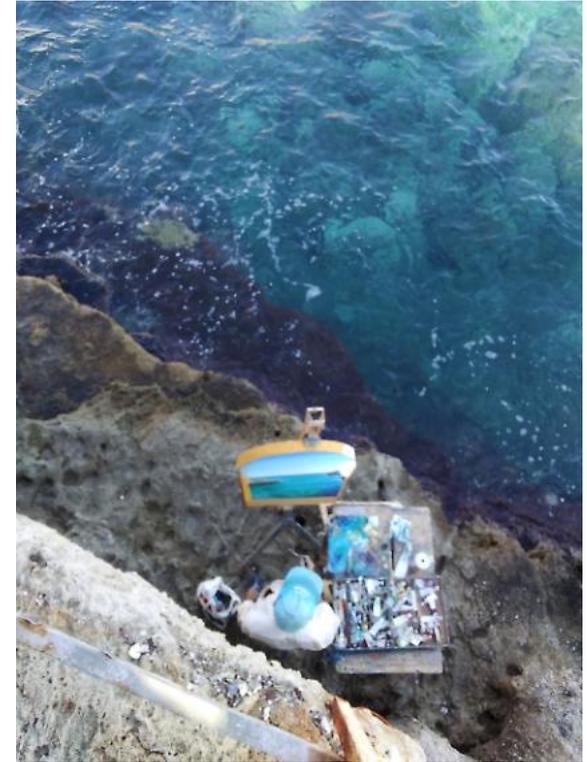




The windows which open onto the world outside are a mixture of control and spontaneity. The control is that the image is contained within the clearly defined shape; the opening and closing window panels where the 'controlled' view is seen either through the glass or reflected on it. But when the view is seen directly through the window frame, as in *Rock Pool*, it's a spontaneous mix of colour, brush marks and movement. Autumn is a vibrant time of the year, the colours of the leaves change daily, the water bubbles past with leaves bouncing along, branches are bending in the wind which has blown the windows open. When they are closed we see that time has changed and now it's spring as the trees are green and full.

*Rock Pool* ~ 170 x 156 cm ~ Triptych





Painting in situ at  
La Marina di Novaglie, Puglia

*"Where is it?", "It's a secret"*  
150 x 117 cm ~ Triptych





Painting in situ at La Marina di Novaglie, Puglia

From the photos showing Critchley painting in situ we can see that part of the process of painting is done directly from the subject and is not a copy of a photograph. While photography can be a help, *un aide-mémoire*, the click of a button only records a fraction of time giving a glimpse of what the weather was like – at that particular moment.

*The Never Ending Waves Mark The Passing of Time*  
144 x 142 cm ~ Triptych

A camera is a machine, it has a light sensor and a single eye, it is very clever but it doesn't feel, that is the problem with AI. The lens takes an image and chooses the perspective with its single eye and everything is recorded. Every splash of the water, every drop of spray. It doesn't select; the artist – the copyist – does. The artist/copyist selects from a 2D printed image what to paint on a 2D surface, yes, it requires invention but the creative part of translating a 3D world into a 2D one is vastly different, especially when the world is changing every second; a cloud passes and the light is altered, when the wind blows the waves ripple differently.

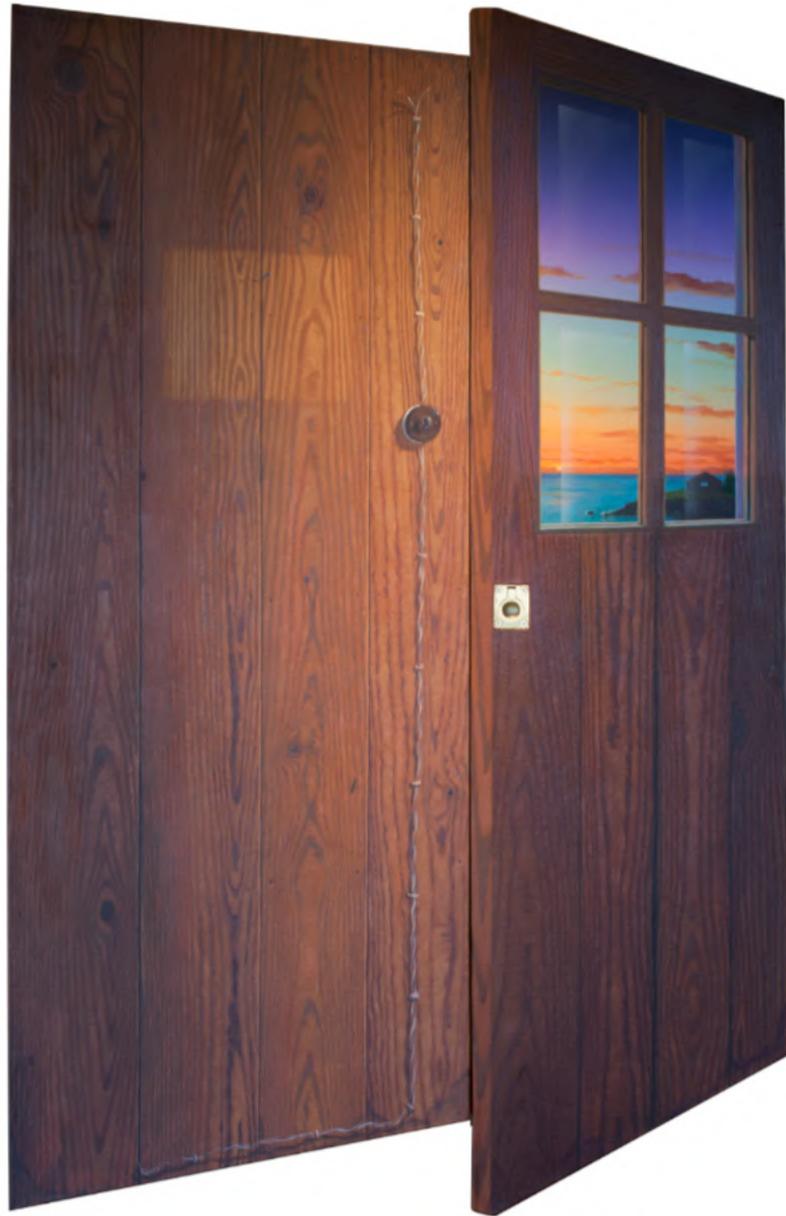
Those never ending waves will kiss the shores for ever and ever.





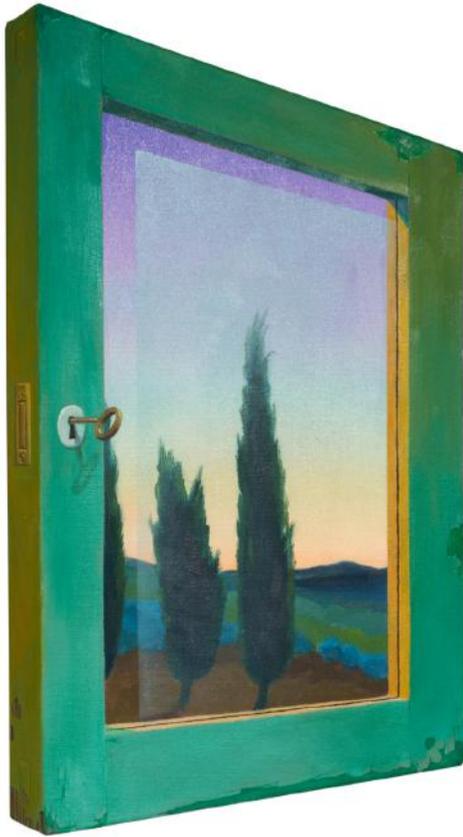
*The Turquoise Sea* ~ 122 x 155 cm ~ Triptych





*“I remember a dream of a house  
by the sea, it was spring... I think”  
124 x 114 cm ~ Diptych*

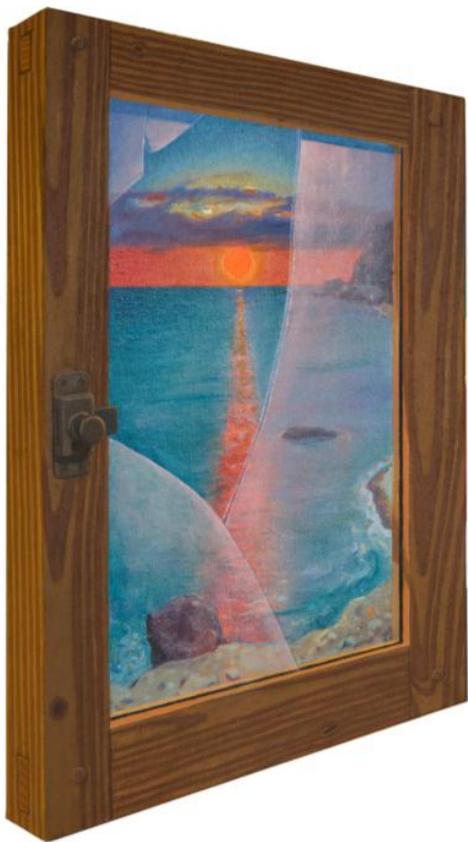




Before the invention of the printing press all books had to be hand written and literacy was limited, so to help tell many of the stories from the bible churches used diptychs and triptychs; opening and closing them like pages. Crichtley uses them to tell stories about time; one view shows day and the other evening, or autumn and spring, summer and winter, inside and outside.



*Nature's Sentinels* ~ 44,5 x 51 cm ~ Diptych



*Aurora, Goddess of the Dawn* ~ 44,5 x 51 cm ~ Diptych

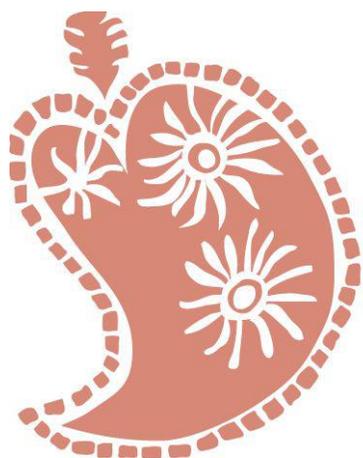


The seascapes are dramatic, the sea is turquoise, the trees are a bright glowing green, the brush marks are visible, expressively rich. In “Where is it?”, “It’s a secret” the railing bars us from diving in whilst *The Never Ending Waves Mark The Passing of Time* invites us to jump off the rocks and bob about for hours with those dancing waves.

Sitting at home in our Sense of Place is comforting but dashing onto the snow covered mountains or splashing in the salt water are addictive adventures none of us should avoid.

Which one would you like to wake up to each morning?

*The White House* ~ Lithograph 80 x 64 cm



# **fondazione genti d'abruzzo**

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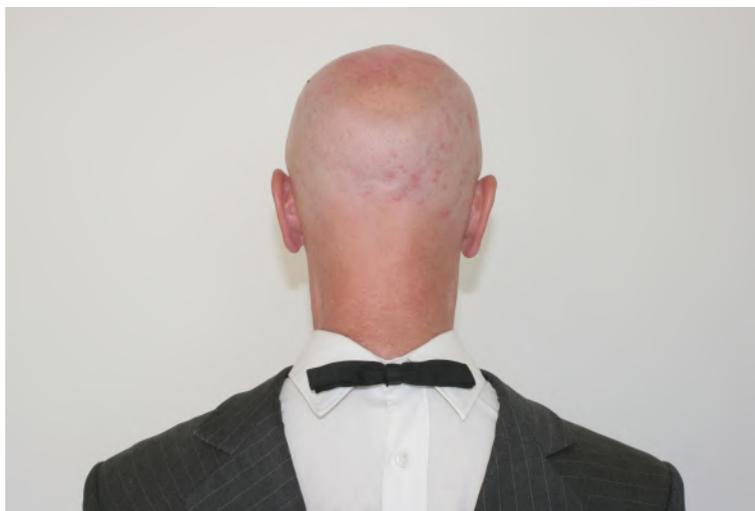
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*Friday: 09:00 -13:00*

*Saturday: 16:00 - 20:00*

*Sunday: 16:00 - 20:00*



President of the Fondazione Genti d'Abruzzo : Avv. Luigi di Alberti

Exhibition organizer : Dott.ssa Alessandra Moscianese

Translator : Dott.ssa Maila Colanero

**PAUL CRITCHLEY** (Rainford, Europe 1960)

1978-79 St. Helens College of Art & Design

1979-82 Coventry Polytechnic, B.A. (Hons) Fine Arts

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Michelle Rosenfeld Gallery, New York

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SCOPE, Basel & Miami

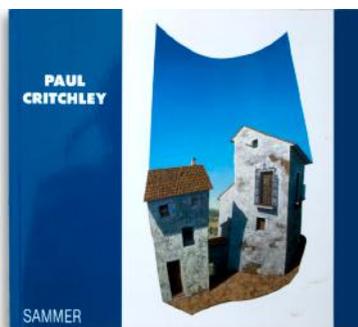
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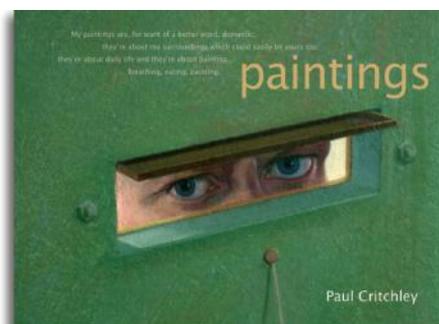
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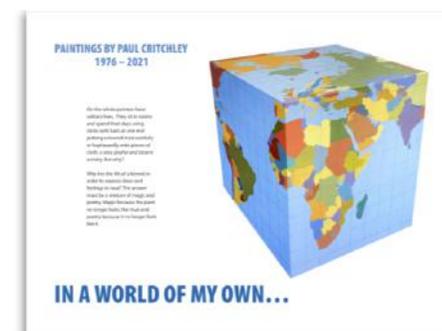
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