



Città di Vasto



a.c.m.

Organizzatore :
Associazione
Competenza
Multidisciplinari

Paul Critchley

Installation *A Sense Of Place* at Palazzo d'Avalos

Piazza Lucio Valerio Pudente 5, 66054 Vasto Italy

27 June – 19 July 2026, Open daily 10.00 - 13.00 e 18.00 - 24.00

I intend to be there in the evenings

paulcritchley.art ~ www.museipalazzodavalos.it



The Doctor's Lunch Appointment
155 x 175 cm, (three pieces)





VISION IS MORE THAN EYESIGHT

Carlo Viaggiani, President ACM

Associazione di Competenze Multidisciplinari - Association of Multidisciplinary Skills

The exhibition dedicated to Paul Critchley, promoted by the ACM in the City of Vasto, represents an important opportunity to discover the work of an artist who has been able to make reflection on the relationship between reality and representation the fulcrum of his creative research.

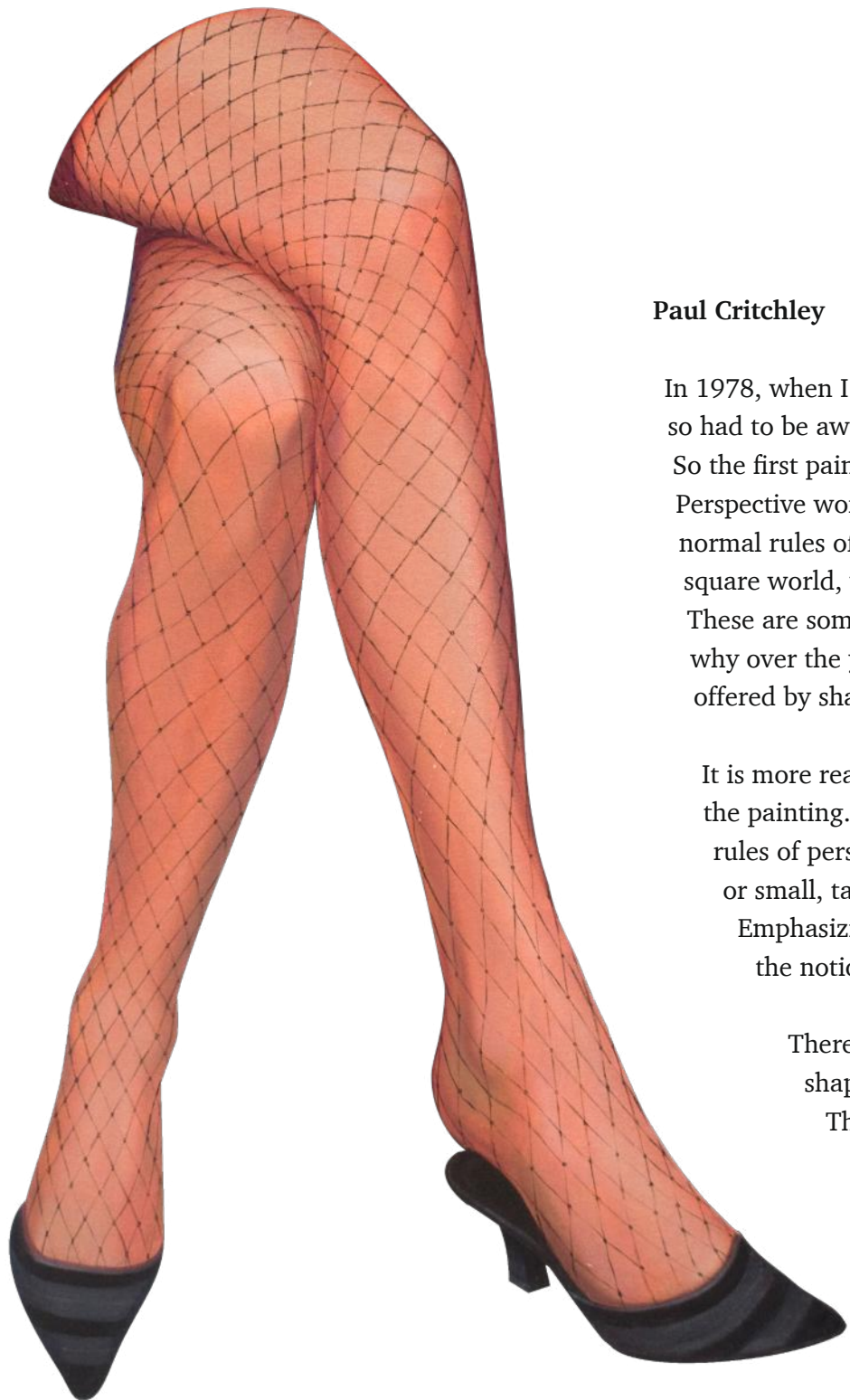
Born in Rainford, England, in 1960, Critchley gained his artistic experience through an international career that has led him to live and work in several European countries, the United States and Russia. This wealth of experience has contributed to the formation of an original sensibility and a deeply personal vision, in which observation, memory and imagination are intertwined in a continuous dialogue. For many years, Abruzzo has been his chosen home, a place of spiritual and cultural belonging in which he has found inexhaustible reasons for inspiration.

Critchley's work is distinguished by a constant tension towards the redefinition of the gaze. Although it starts from observation of reality, it does not end in mere transcription, but proposes a poetic and surprising reinterpretation. Common objects, domestic environments, everyday architecture and apparently marginal details are transfigured into visual experiences capable of questioning perception and suggesting

new interpretative possibilities. Windows, doors, stairs and furnishings thus take on an unprecedented presence, becoming elements of a narrative that is placed between painting, installation and refined play on perspective.

At the center of his research is the thin line between reality and simulation, between physical presence and image construction. Through the skilful use of light, perspective and a discreet but incisive irony, Critchley gives life to universes that appear at once familiar and unexpected, inviting the viewer to question perceptual certainties and to rediscover the complexity hidden in the ordinary. The paintings collected in this exhibition present a vision of everyday life in which depth and lightness, memory and invention coexist in harmonious balance. They testify to the artist's ability to recognize poetic value in the simplest things and to transform the gesture of looking into an experience of knowledge and wonder. What emerges is an invitation to consider reality not as a definitive and immutable dimension, but as an open space, full of possibilities yet to be explored.

The ACM is therefore pleased to present to the public the work of an artist of consolidated international profile, whose research continues to offer stimuli of rare intelligence and sensitivity, suggesting new keys to interpreting the contemporary world and our relationship with it.



Paul Critchley

In 1978, when I started art collage, I also started to learn how to drive and so had to be aware of everything around me all at once; a 360° degree view. So the first painting I made of the interior of the car I was learning to drive. Perspective works in a narrow field of view but a 360° outlook distorts the normal rules of perspective and, since we don't live in a rectangular or square world, why should paintings be limited to squares or rectangles? These are some of the reasons I abandoned rectangular formats and why over the years I've become so absorbed in the opportunities offered by shaped canvases.

It is more realistic if one's vision, one's idea, becomes the boundary of the painting. A boundary decided not just by observation and the logical rules of perspective but by feeling; for example, if something feels big or small, tall or narrow, then make it big or small, tall or narrow.

Emphasizing how something really feels adds an extra dimension to the notion of 'realism' making it, to use a new '-ism', Supra-Realism.

There is nothing arbitrary about the shapes of my paintings, the shapes are all planned out long before I even pick up the brush.

The shapes define the composition within and are there to help by either eliminating large unnecessary areas or by using the shape to emphasize aspects of the story being told.

The origins of the installation *A Sense of Place*

This installation relates to everyone from whichever corner of the world they come because it is about having that feeling of *A Sense of Place*, a universal feeling of being at home. Homes differ but your home; your knowledge, your understanding and your feeling of it make it personal.

I have been painting interiors for years because with perspective I can control the space and, by illuminating it with artificial light, I can control and create the environment too. But one day in 2003 I noticed an old mirror in the street which someone had thrown out as rubbish. I couldn't leave it there so I picked it up and took it home. The following week I found another abandoned mirror and took that home too. After a few months I must have collected at least half a dozen, I didn't know what to do with them and I didn't have space to hang them as the walls were already full of paintings but I took the mirrors home because they must have been from the 1930s/40s and reminded me of the style of furniture in my grandparent's house. These old mirrors were alive with history, if I were to wear a suit and tie and look at the reflection I would have felt as though I was looking back in time; I was seeing myself as my grandparents must have seen themselves. So I decided to dismantle a mirror from its frame and reinstall it into a painting of the missing piece of furniture, a sideboard I half remembered and half imagined from their house.

I was so amazed by the result, by the fact the mirror functioned as a mirror and yet wasn't a piece of furniture but a painting.

Unexpectedly I had transformed the mirror into a functional painting: it wasn't a painting and it wasn't furniture, it was both. So I dismantled all the other mirrors and gave them new homes (paintings of furniture) and then went back to painting my normal interiors until the day I walked past them and suddenly realized that I had actually furnished the apartment with paintings of furniture. Eureka. Instead of painting a picture of an interior the interior had been created by individual pieces of the painted contents of the rooms. Intrigued, I looked around me at the other objects and painted them; a wall clock, a chair, a suitcase.

In 2005 I decided that all these individual paintings should be arranged to furnish a room, but not just one room, every room in the apartment. I should paint the contents of the house. I would install myself at home and that's when I decided to make an installation.

However to do so meant that I couldn't sell these paintings because if I did I would never have enough to make my installation so I had to make others to sell. It took me 6 years (from 2011) to make enough to show them together for the first time in the Municipal Gallery in Oldham in England. There were only 40+ paintings shown and although the installation worked it looked very spartan, like a basic student's house or that of a newly married couple who didn't have enough money to buy anything new but had bought what they could second-hand.

The second-hand nature of the furnishings gives an atmosphere because none of us live in IKEA where everything is new and fashionable, we have all either acquired, been given or found some things to use. I've inherited my parents 1960's dining table, chairs and bookcase - and I've used them as painted furniture. They give me that odd feeling of being at 'home', the home I remember as a child. So I have deliberately avoided painting contemporary or actual antique furniture because nothing dates faster than today's trend and an antique would fix a date too specifically. I want the visitors to the installation to feel a twinge of nostalgia, a nudge back to their past not to enter into an IKEA department store or into a museum as though they are in a time machine. The installation has to feel alive and human.

So, unlike a traditional painted view of an interior, the visitors step into the picture and walk from room to room exploring the contents of a house between the 3D space and the 2D illusion of the objects. All the individual paintings are life-size and of the objects you would expect to find in almost any house: chairs, sofas, windows, radiators, toilet, bath, bed and a even a kitchen sink filled with unwashed dishes. The outside of the house also has paintings of windows with views of the inside, there are also drain pipes and CCTV cameras. The people portrayed transform the house into a home and animate the installation, turning kitchen sink realism into kitchen sink drama.

The installation has become a touring show and this exhibition in the Palazzo d'Avalos is its 10th presentation. The exhibition is not the same every time as each venue is different. Here in the Palazzo d'Avalos there are no exterior paintings for us to look in. Plus, each new exhibition has new paintings to show, either because some had been sold or, as we all add to our homes, new pieces of furniture have moved in, there are now over 80 paintings in my cosy little home.

Previous presentations:

2025 Städtische Galerie Ehingen, Germany

2024 NordArt, Germany

2019 Essenheimer Kunstverein, Germany

2018 FaldusFabrica, Fallo, Italy

2016 Art Karlsruhe, Art Fair, Germany

2013 Art.Fair, Köln Germany

2013 SCOPE Basel, Art Fair, Switzerland

2012 Panorama Mesdag, The Hague, The Netherlands

2011 Gallery Oldham, England

The Hall

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 the paintings relate to each other; each is individual but the whole is the sum of its parts. The whole is the home, the parts are the individual contents; sofa, light switch, sink etc., and each is the shape of that object. The wall spaces between each object/painting – 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.

So everything helps to build up the atmosphere, the environment and brings us into the home rather like entering a neighbour's house where we recognize their objects, their furniture, which are similar to those in our homes and in doing so we feel that *Sense of Place*, that mood.

Mr & Mrs ~ 204 x 108 cm with 2 mirrors







This is the painting I made with the first mirror I found in the street in 2003. The photo is of our downstairs neighbour, Josefina, when she was 18... 60 years ago. I bought one black telephone from a flea market, the red one was a black one but I painted a red one to make it the 'hot line' (and also for the composition). The 1950's telephone still worked and using it felt like you were listening to someone from the past and that gave me the title for the painting; Josefina was having a conversation with her younger self.

Conversing With The Past
167 x 167 cm with mirror





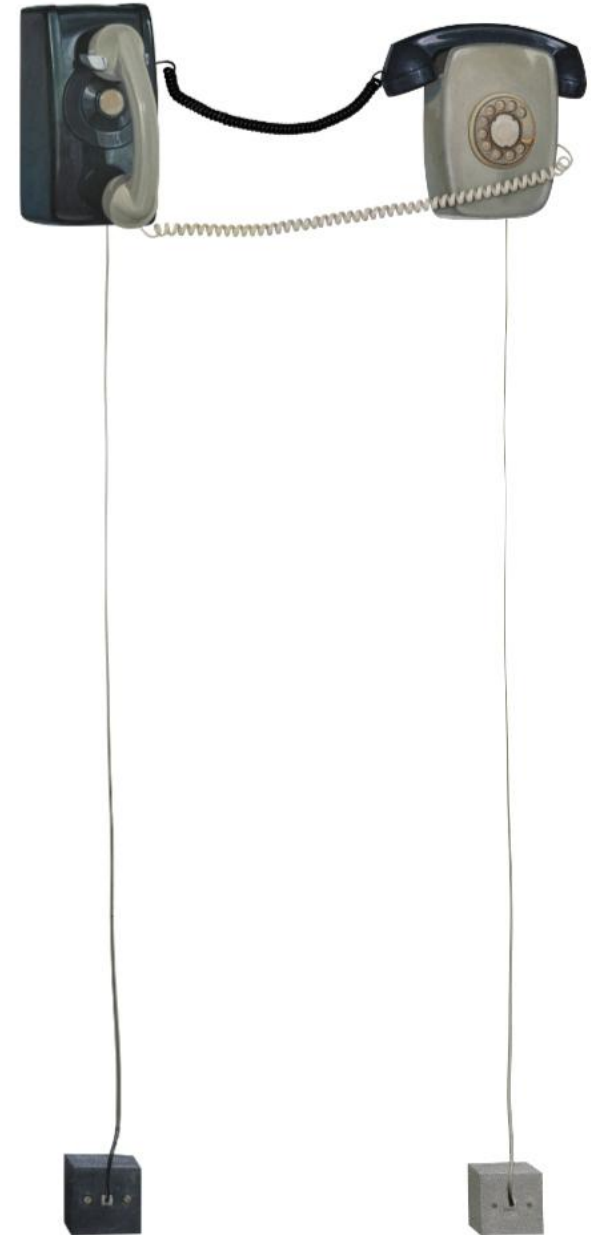
You are now looking at a 2D illustration of a door with the light escaping but if you were actually standing before the door you would see that the light has escaped and is coming forwards to greet you. The door is on the wall and the light coming out is falling on the floor – on the real floor – because the light is painted on the floor. It's what I call a Sculptural Painting, because the 2D illusion has pretensions of being 3D by occupying a 3D place i.e. the floor in front of it.

Escaping Light ~ 200 x 85 x 128 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 with wires



Crossed Lines ~ 140 x 175 cm with wires



Time Is Valuable ~ 236 x 56 cm





The painting hangs in a corner linking one wall to the other diagonally. This diagonal plane is a door into a corner cupboard, within this door are two smaller 'doors' which open, one to the left the other to the right, both are glazed. This is a triptych (the window panels) within a diptych (the actual door) and the view through the windows - whether open or closed - is to the inside of the corner cupboard. However when the door is opened the view is not into the cupboard but into a distant landscape. I don't want a view into the cupboard but to a surprise; to the unexpected. (I'll ruin the surprise because it's the view from the bridge, Ponte di Salle, near Caramanico Terme). Apart from the movable door and glazed panels, all the coffee pots and bottles of wine on the top can also be moved left, right, front, back and turned around.

The altruistic hero who helps an ant deliver a flower to his partner. 200 x 150 x 150 cm
Corner painting, 14 separate pieces.
Triptych and diptych with glass.
Interchangeable bottles and coffee pots.









This painting is actually made of 14 different pieces: The door frame, the actual door, the two glazed windows, the 9 bottles and coffee pots plus the triangular top of the corner cupboard into which grooves are cut so that each of the bottles and coffee pots can slot into and be moved to different places as though we have take a wine bottle off, poured out the wine into a glass and replaced the bottle back on the top. In doing so we can turn it around and see that there is less wine in the bottle. The light on both sides of the bottles and pots comes from the left. The tallest bottle is 30 cm and the coffee grinder is 11.5 x 11.5 cm.

The two white door knobs to the left are genuine ceramic door knobs but the shadows are painted. The handle on the door is also a real wooden handle.



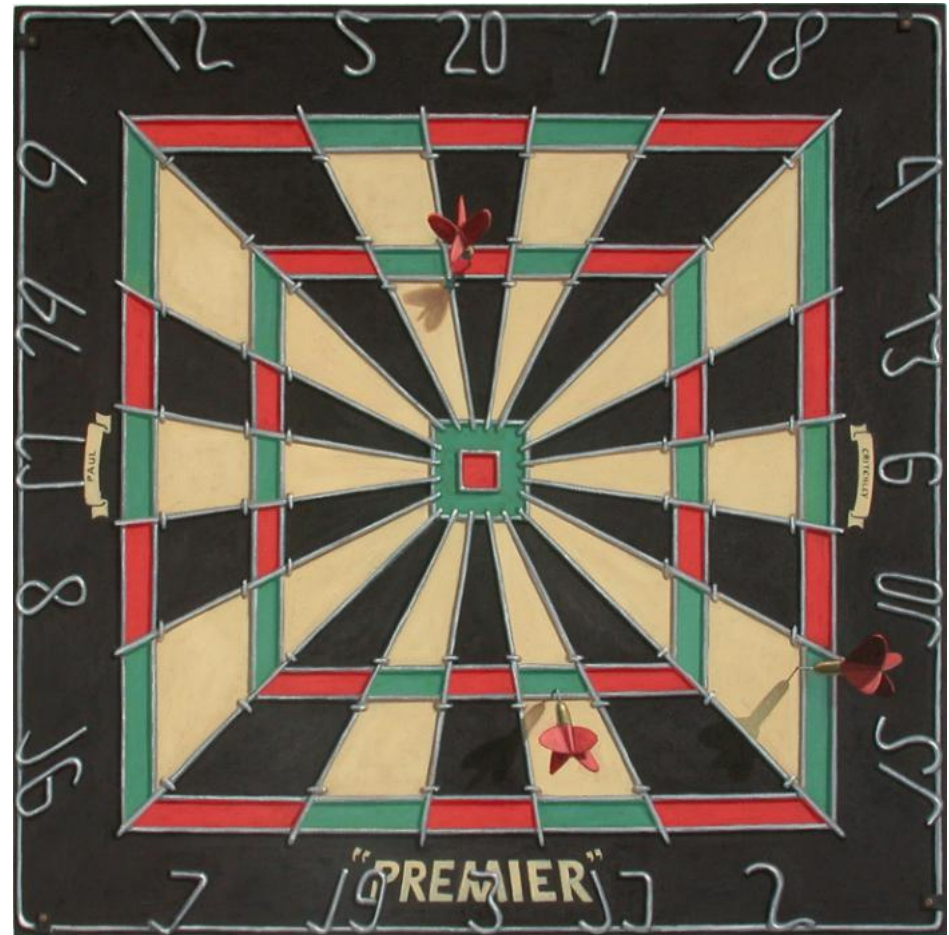
THE LIVING ROOM

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, plug and socket



Dartboards are circular, all the target areas are equal size but in the square dartboard 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



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 of) 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





The idea for this painting came from the lockdowns during Covid when people were told to stay at home and not go out. For weeks families had to stay in their homes, their boxes, often with very young children, the elderly and even some with pets. Lockdown wasn't a problem for those who lived in little villages and had gardens but for those in cities who lived in apartment blocks it must have been seriously claustrophobic. Block after block of boxes like rabbit hutches in an Urban Zoo, with views of the brick walls of other inmates. This painting is in the living room of the installation, itself a collection of rooms in an apartment block.

Urban Jungle

Trittico ~ 173 x 163 cm (open), 173 x 80 cm (closed)





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 soluble 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



“How do you paint Miss America?”

“Diplomatically”

Miss America ~ 90 x 151 cm

THE KITCHEN

When we walk into the kitchen 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







Burnt Offerings ~ 165 x 98 cm ~ Diptych



Up In Flames ~ 52.5 x 34 cm



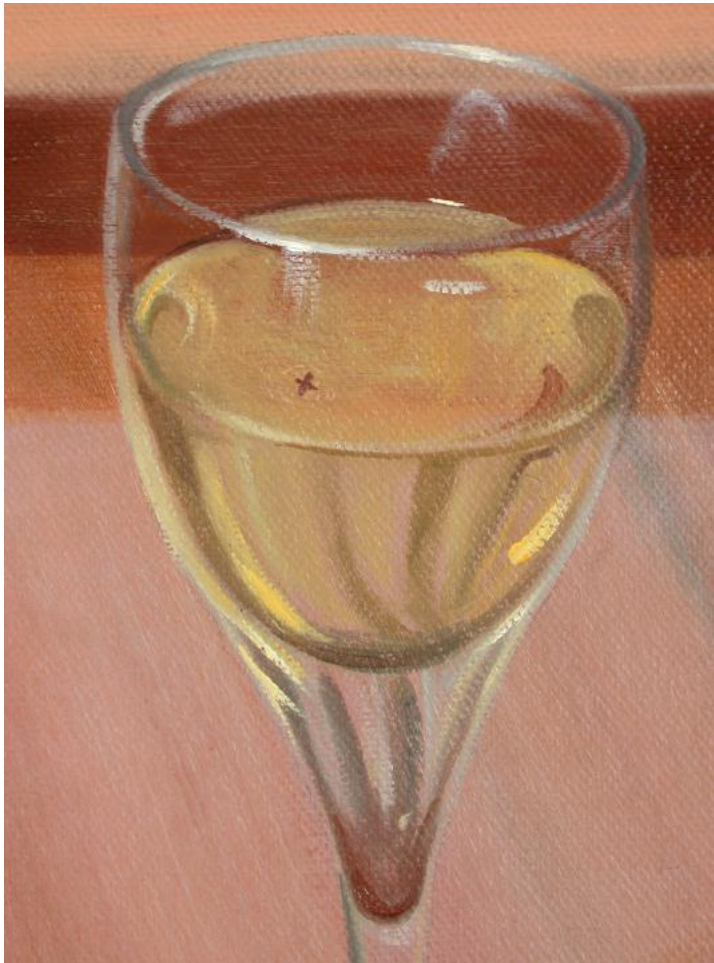
The population in Italy is dropping, not surprisingly, which woman would marry a man who can't cook? Judge a man by his kitchen not by his bank balance. This man's cooker looks like it was excavated in Pompeii. It's a portrait of burnt offerings; the pancetta is crisp, the pan of bubbling oil is about 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



Time For Tomorrow ~ 33 x 33 cm



Fish Supper ~ 180 x 122 cm with mirror

THE BEDROOM

In the living room there was naked lady relaxing on the sofa and feeling at home and now entering the bedroom we discover 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 Man Hiding Behind The Curtain
216 x 160 cm





The Unveiling
195 x 195 cm with mosquito net



Chez la Madame ~ 86 x 188 cm

Like the paintings on pages 14 and 18 these paintings are also 2D but the genuine telephone cable which links the two parts of the telephone across the corner makes them 3D..



*“Sit down in the corner,
I have something to tell you”*
104 x 75 x 85 cm ~ corner painting



The Ironing Board ~ 130 x 40 cm



The Aquarium ~ 164 x 95 cm with mirror





I made this painting in 2004 because *The Time Has Come* to light another candle, the 44th. I was soon to celebrate my 44th circumnavigation of the sun, another year older.

The Time Has Come ~ 160 x 120 cm with mirror



THE BATHROOM

To respect their privacy it would be discreet to move on to 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 it wasn't until the Renaissance that the classical spirit and classical techniques were revived. The invention of photography in the 19th century

Taking A Cold Shower ~ 217 x 170.5 cm

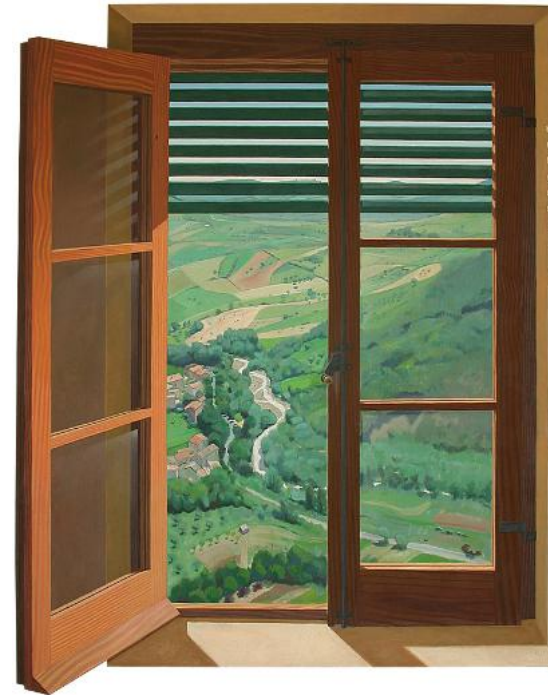


challenged the tradition of the male nude as the ideal form as photography brought about a realist aesthetic in Western Art, a philosophy which had a dramatic effect on the representation of male nudity.

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.

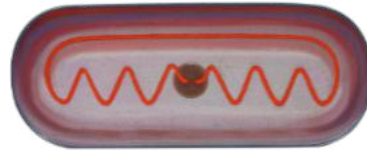
Since 50% of the world's population possess such an appendage it's bizarre, especially in the 21st century, that its portrayal is still met with ridicule, ignorance and childish trepidation.

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





Cultivated Passions ~ 150 x 89 cm with mirrors



Electric Heater ~ 50 x 20 cm



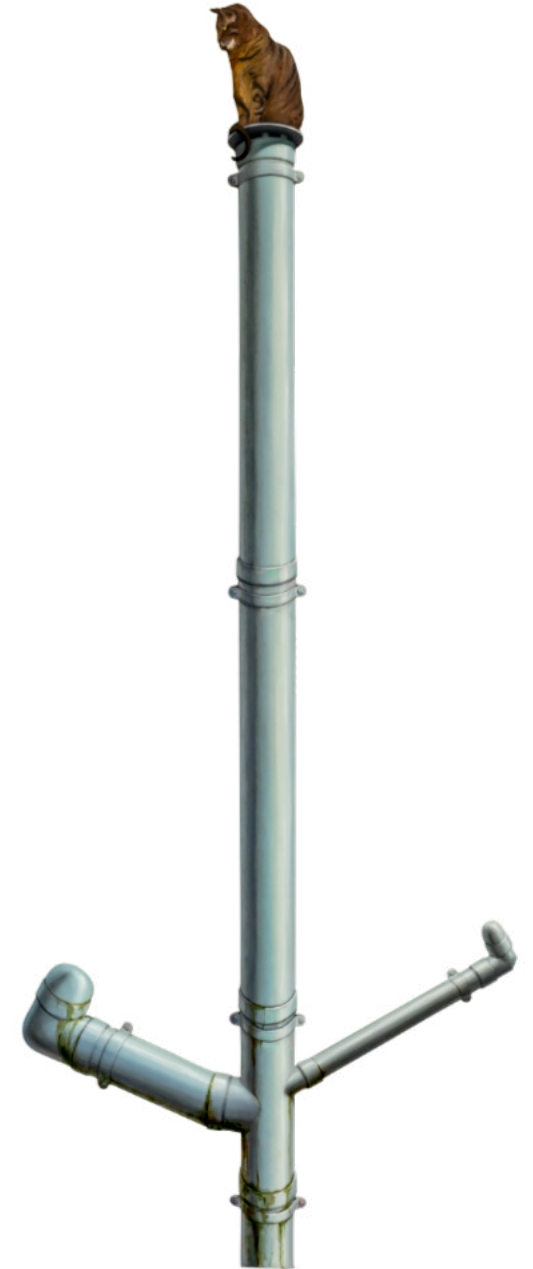
The Wash Hand Basin ~ 83 x 73 cm with mirror

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.

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



Czar Poohtin's Throne ~ Life Size



Sweet & Sour~ 243 x 97

PRESS ABOUT A SENSE OF PLACE

Ehingen Tagblatt – Christina Kirsch 20.9.2025

Exhibition at the Städtische Galerie Ehingen, Germany

‘Poohtin’ next to the toilet seat

Exhibition At the Municipal Gallery, British artist Paul Critchley presents opulent interiors that make you wonder what is painted and what is real.

Please allow plenty of time. The desire to look at Paul Critchley's paintings comes all by itself. At the Municipal Gallery, the British-born artist unfolds an opulent panorama of views and vistas over two floors, which immediately captivate the viewer with their attention to detail. The new exhibition does not feature paintings in the usual square or rectangular formats, but rather the outlines of chests of drawers, refrigerators, chairs, lamps – or a dog lifting its leg in a corner.

It is also advisable to look up. There, suddenly, are ventilation shafts and surveillance cameras. Not everything can be explained. For example, a few fish are swimming in water in the wooden drawers of a chest of drawers. They seem quite alive, but the situation is surreal.

Paul Critchley, who comes from a family of artists, paints interior and exterior spaces. Landscapes and furniture. On a shelf are plaster models that were used as templates for drawing studies at the academy. ‘They come from my parents' house,’ says the artist. Reality and fiction are mixed in the exhibition. Much of it comes

from the house in Italy where he lives with his wife, Critchley explains. But there are also glimpses into somewhat dilapidated student digs, behind shower curtains and into refrigerators.

A sheep's head stares at the viewer from the refrigerator. In the compartment below are preserved sheep's eyes. It's good that this refrigerator can also be closed.

From the inside out

Paul Critchley's trademarks are classic diptychs or triptychs, similar to winged altars in churches. Shutters can be closed and doors opened. Sometimes you look into the distance, sometimes directly into a living room where a naked woman is lounging on the sofa. A painted radiant heater hangs on the wall in the bathroom. With a dangling string at the bottom to turn it on.

The layout of the Municipal Gallery, with its multiple rooms, lent itself to a kind of tour from the outside in. Visitors begin in the hallway with a view through a window from the outside and can then continue the tour in the next room, from the living room through the kitchen and into the bathroom. Details await everywhere. The brand name on the old-fashioned refrigerator door is not ‘Bosch’ but ‘Critchley’. Even a toilet bowl that urgently needs a toilet cleaner bears the artist's name as the company name.

Self-explanatory

The toilet paper is printed with ‘Poohtin’. The slang expression

'Pooh' is self-explanatory. In Russia, this image would probably have resulted in a prison camp sentence. Critchley stages unappetising things in a wonderfully amusing way. Even the remains of a fish dinner seem to be stinking away. Such meal still lifes with gnawed bones and fish heads set aside are particularly difficult to paint, explains the artist. If you ask for details and want to know why the fire extinguisher is on fire, the painter replies, 'because I like it.' The flames are, of course, only painted, but the pull-down safety ring is real. As real as the telephone cable connecting two painted telephones. Critchley's paintings are only amusing and harmless at first glance.

The work *The Time Of Remorse* was created during Covid. The interior of the house is kept in a sombre grey, while outside it is green like the Garden of Eden. In this painting, the artist goes back to Adam and Eve. Here, expulsion from paradise is caused by a virus. In another painting, Homo sapiens is the most terrible virus on the planet. 'We are taking up more and more space,' says Critchley, who has not lost his British sense of humour amid climate catastrophe and warlords.

KulturPort.de - NordArt 25th Anniversary Exhibition, Germany
Marion Hinz 3.6.2024

<https://www.kultur-port.de/blog/bildende-kunst/19089-25-jahre-nordart-ausstellung.html?highlight=WyJjcml0Y2hsZXkiXQ==>

'... Two special projects are sure to attract attention. The first is the project 'A Sense of Place' (Paul Critchley, UK), an installation that encompasses an entire house. The house deceives its visitors, yet at

the same time amuses them: instead of painting a picture of an interior, the artist has painted individual pieces of furniture and 'built' them into the setting of a realistic-looking four-room flat. The illusion is further enhanced, for example, by the fact that the shutters appear to be merely painted on, yet can be opened. The same goes for the fridge door. Other objects, such as the sofa, bed and bathtub, on the other hand, can be touched but cannot be moved. They are purely paintings. This game of deception creates suspense and is great fun.'

Allgemeine-Zeitung.de – Essenheim, Germany

Nicole Weisheit 4.3.2019

Paul Critchley's original installation relies on deliberate illusion and gives the viewer the feeling of being part of a story.

What is real, what is just painted? Paul Critchley's paintings unfold a three-dimensional effect and are intended to appeal to the viewer's mind and emotions - as if they were turning page after page in a picture book and were right in the middle of stories being told: this is how visitors to the Essenheim Kunstforum can feel. Paul Critchley is showing his original room installation "*Sense of Place*" on four floors.

Visitors of all ages can discover many details in the plastic representations of objects found in many houses. The artist has deliberately depicted them in their original size. The paintings of pieces of furniture develop a three-dimensional effect through real elements that have been skilfully integrated into the works. Not

infrequently, they are perceived as part of the surroundings - a deliberate illusion to appeal to the viewer's mind and emotions. By means of mirrors, they themselves become part of the staging; moreover, they can lend a hand and open windows or cupboard doors.

Paul Critchley is very meticulous about light and shadow; he also wants the perspectives to be right. In conversation with Eva Appel and Fred Engler at the vernissage, he gave insights into his life and work: Born in 1960, he grew up in Great Britain; as an art teacher, his parents had aroused his curiosity early on. After years in Barcelona and elsewhere, he now lives with his wife in a house in Italy. The title *A Sense of Place* refers - in addition to physical location - to a sense of belonging, to family and friends, to the street community or city. Scenes on a good 100 works come together to form a visual narrative. The construction of the long-planned new show, which can be seen for three weeks, was very elaborate.

From the "cloakroom", the path leads through the kitchen and living room, with glimpses of the refrigerator or the huge pile of books, through the bedroom and bathroom. Their furnishings appear timeless with deliberately unfashionable furniture, depicted in an old-fashioned painting style, explained Paul Critchley, who wants to inspire questioning: "I don't just paint what you see," he described, "but what could be." The blue tablecloth on *The Captain's Table* becomes an ocean or fish swim in a handbag. Dogs, cats, ducks and other creatures also now cavort in the art forum. How individual views on individually crafted forms combine to form

a huge overall work is shown in *Rauric 1*.

While the artist himself rather appreciates the mystical, with mysterious-looking staircases and corridors, visitors are particularly fascinated by idyllic scenes in powerful colours. Deep blue is the sky in the *Last Light Of Day*, above palpable structures of old walls. Shutters with peeling paint seem quite real, similar to the slats that let landscapes or sunlight shine through. Designed as triptychs, these paintings offer glimpses of colourful nature throughout the year. Other works offer glimpses into the lives of others who can be seen in the midst of everyday life: a couple at the kitchen table, reclining naked women, a man taking a shower. Paul Critchley revealed that he painted himself with anatomical precision.

Atmosphere is supposed to become perceptible when looking at it, sometimes provocative or embarrassingly touching, but always lively and extremely humorous.

Erfolgreich für die Kunst – Art Karlsruhe, Germany

Kirsten Ernst 6.3.2016

“... The English artist Paul Critchley, represented by anOTHERart gallery (Farindola, Italy), immediately invited visitors to share fully in his artistic life.

With *A Sense of Place* he had created a walk-through installation featuring 85 images for visitors to explore. As they walked through and around his house, everyone could sense what was important to him. ...”

TOP 10 gallerie d'arte di Karlsruhe, Germany 22.02.2016

<https://glarify.wordpress.com/2016/02/22/top-10-galerien-der-art-karlsruhe/>

‘...This gallery has been all over the media – and rightly so. After all, transforming the stand into a walk-in house is a brilliant marketing strategy. And the interior changes constantly from one trade fair to the next: the key hatch, for example (a feature typical of British homes), through which house keys used to be left for schoolchildren on a string, has only been there since Art Karlsruhe.’

Art Karlsruhe, Germany – Isabel Steppeler 20.2.2016

Eyes in the Refrigerator

Paul Critchley's New Perspectives in the Old Style

If you see a visitor in Hall 4 tilting their head, you're not far from stand N04. There, the "anOTHER art gallery" from Farindola, Italy, is showing paintings by Paul Critchley. The British artist guides viewers through living spaces in his work, which ranges from painted pieces of furniture to houses whose rooms he unfolds perspectively on a panel. Critchley has a particular fascination with interiors, the depiction of inner spaces. He has also furnished his One Artist Show like rooms with painted furniture, some of which can be unfolded or from which objects practically fall into your hands.

On the gallery's outer wall, like a nested dollhouse and lovingly furnished, hangs a plan of the house in Barcelona where he lived. Critchley, who also lived in Russia and Italy, shares the memory

of this house and the movement through it in two dimensions. And yet, the viewer feels as if they are on a tour. One room folds upside down from the hallway, while another veers off to the right. It continues through the stairwell, onto the balcony and street, back up via a pulley system, and so on and so forth.

Critchley is referencing the centuries-old style of trompe-l'oeil still lifes, an optical illusion that suggests objects are tangible. In the kitchen, one almost feels as if one could take out the animal head in the refrigerator and the eyes in the jam jars, while in another "picture," cracked eggshells spill from the rubbish bin under the sink. "Typical bachelor," quips Critchley. Critchley has also adopted the traditional vanitas theme from still-life painting: the memento mori, the reminder of death, which, from the Middle Ages well into the Baroque period, could be deciphered by everyone through symbols - be it the skull, the fly on the fruit, or the extinguished candles. Critchley manages to capture all of this in a way that doesn't halt the decline. A fascinating interplay of perspectives.

Die Rheinpfalz - Ludwigshafener Rundschau 20.20.2016

Karl Georg Berg

‘... In the case of one of the most striking exhibits – a detached house featuring over 80 vibrantly coloured figures by the English artist Paul Critchley, which has a very human feel to it – Critchley himself offered visitors tips on how best to experience his picturesque art’.

Schwäbische Zeitung – Antje Merke 22.02.2016

It's all in the mix

13th Art Karlsruhe once again in the field of tension between classics and contemporaries

‘...The latest craze is the 'Art House' by the British artist Paul Critchley at the Another Art Gallery stand in Hall 4. In the walk-in installation, you can stroll through a flat and find typical pieces of furniture, but not as real objects, but as paintings. After all the flood of paintings and sculptures, the visitor at home appreciates a real sofa all the more.’

Pforzheimer Zeitung – Sandra Pfäfflin 18.2.2016

Beautiful, garish and rather creepy

‘... Visitors to Paul Critchley's "Art House" should also take a second look. Because the idyll that the English artist gives here in his 85 individual works on 70 square meters quickly sends a Hitchcock shiver down your spine.’

Kunstmarkt.com – Hans-Peter Schwanke 18.02.2016

Market Reports

‘...The Italian anOther art gallery has transformed the original four-room flat into a single installation. Visitors enter an imaginary flat whose furnishings have been incorporated in the form of murals by the artist Paul Critchley, rendered with a distorted perspective. His works in *A Sense of Place* are available for purchase at prices ranging up to the low five-figure euro range.’

La casa – Gaby Miketta Marzo 2014

Discoveries

Fascinating and confusing; since 1982 the Britishman Paul Critchley paints almost exclusively furnishings - which are truly deceptive. Meaning one thinks one is actually in the bathroom with a real toilet roll. The kitchen also has a window with a view of the landscape, even the rubbish bin is deceptively real. Critchley loves to paint sofas, bathtubs, beds, a corridor or a salon. He calls his style Kitchen Sink Realism. Let yourself be bewitched by his enchanting painting techniques.

www.Artribune.com – Serena Vanzaghi 13 .06.2013

Basel Updates: Scope 2013. Switzerland

Art Week spills over to Klybeckquai, a report from the satellite fair making its debut in the new art district.

‘...Of the 80 galleries at the fair, 8 are from Italy... anOTHER art gallery from Farindola has transformed the classic, sterile stand space into a real home, a very intriguing one, where every single piece of furniture and detail has been painted on canvas and installed by the artist Paul Critchley.’

www.nrc.nl – Kester Freriks, The Hague, Holland 13.12 2012

Conjuring with time and space

Panorama Mesdag is a very large painting of the beach which looks real. Paul Critchley now conjures with paint in Den Haag.

In the middle of the Panorama Mesdag museum in Den Haag there is a white house built out of white walls. On one wall is a painted window which is open. It's as though we are looking in through the glass and seeing a woman lying on a sofa. If we continue inside then there is indeed a woman lying on a sofa; she is also painted. Sculptural artist and painter Paul Critchley is a magician who plays an enthralling game with illusion and reality. The exhibition in the Panorama Mesdag is called Fanciful Space (A Sense of Place), a well chosen name. The works of Critchley surprise and allure, you can look at them for a long time and still discover something new. He gives depth and space to the flat surface of the canvas. For that reason it was such a good idea to give Critchley's painting work a place in the Panorama Mesdag: The originator of the museum, the Hague painter H.W. Mesdag, created a complete optical illusion of the beach of Scheveningen with his panorama-painting. By the entrance in the museum on the wall hangs a striking painting which is a few meters long. You'll want to touch it as the bricks are painted so well. As you walk along the stretched out wall at the end of it you can go round the corner. In another painting two chairs hover in space, an old fashioned telephone sits on one chair and the handset on the other. Due to the careful way in which the chairs are painted they appear three dimensional. The sub-title indicates a subtle sense of humour: "*You had better sit down,*

I have something important to tell you."

According to Critchley his drawings are no more than a way to show what he sees in his daily life. In the catalogue he writes: "*All children draw and they draw what happens in their lives.*" Yet it's not so simple as it seems because when you draw you do so on a flat piece of paper, which is what Critchley the painter also does, but he knows how to create space and depth on a flat surface with paint and a brush. Unrivalled and self explanatory is the painting from 1998 in which he painted his new apartment in Barcelona. We see everything together: down at the bottom the removal men are standing hoisting boxes up, in the middle of the painting we see the living room with the double balcony doors open. Through the doors we see the houses on the other side of the street which we also see in the 'real' part of the painting with the removal men. We see the bathroom and bedroom, even the staircase at the bottom of the work. The peculiarity is that the painting does not use a rectangular form, but looks as if the different parts of the interior fit together like puzzles. Critchley teaches you a new way to look; his work is an adventure for the eye.

AD Haagsche Courant – Frank Jansen 12.10.2012

Verbeelde Ruimte / A Sense of Place, Panorama Mesdag, Holland

Another Illusion at the Mesdag. DEN HAAG One of the most beautiful painted illusions in the world - Panorama Mesdag - yesterday was joined company by a modern illusionary artwork. The British artist Paul Critchley built a large 'installation' in one of the rooms in the Panorama building. It is an apartment consisting

of a hall, living room, kitchen, bathroom and bedroom. But only the walls are real. The windows and the whole inventory are painted. Also the naked lady in the bedroom. But yesterday she was there in life with the artist, although clothed.

"The only thing I've done," explains Critchley, "is just change 3 dimensions into 2 and then painted them so that they look 3 again. I could simply have left them flat and relied on the silhouette, that would probably have been enough to get the message over but not the atmosphere."

In order for the paintings to explain their environment the artist takes the visitor into a whole different world.

Actually all the interior parts are the usual things: a bed, a sofa, a wardrobe. But that's the intention. It must be normal, *"Just imagine what they would look like if they were painted in garish flat colours, something from a bad 1960/70s psychedelic trip your parents might have enjoyed/endured. What's important is that the paintings can't be dated to any specific era as nothing dates faster than fashion."*

ORDINARY

Critchley actually says he wants to restore *"the average and ordinary"* and in doing so the reality. At the same time he aims for a particular effect, *"It must be humorous, nostalgic, curious, sexy, embarrassing, intriguing, disturbing, exciting and thought provoking. I'm just greedy! Just so long as it's not boring, because then the atmosphere will be as flat as old beer and the illusion will be as stale as a joke you've heard too many times."*

Artribune – Gianmaria de Lisio, 17.8.2011

Gallery Oldham, Inghilterra

Beyond Super - Reality

Itinerant artist Paul Critchley has been developing a decidedly curious project for more than 10 years. The English painter has decided to reconstruct reality; inevitably from a pictorial point of view.

The concept of resemblance is a complex one that has been studied and discussed over the last 50 years. The concept links, inseparably, the relationship - sometimes resolved and other times not - between reality and representation. If hyper-realism has given us a response which fluctuates between one or other extreme, Paul Critchley (Rainford, 1960) has decided to put himself in the centre. His research has taken him on the tracks of reality, but these are always painted. His objects can be opened and scrutinized but not used (apart from the mirrors).

Usability is another fundamental term for the artist who seems to be looking for a hybrid between canvas and furniture which have their meeting point somewhere between 2D and 3D. It is at this point, to which Critchley has arrived maintaining the perspective dimension, that one sees the sense of his latest project; the total reconstruction of a living environment in which everything happens silently and in which the existence of this satellite is celebrated and, as with every living being and as in the house of Georg Schneider, one moves between life and death.

Video about the installation: <https://paulcritchley.com/2012-video-of-the-installation-a-sense-of-place.html>



PAUL CRITCHLEY (Rainford, Europa 1960)

1978–79 St. Helens College of Art & Design

1979–82 Coventry Polytechnic, BA Fine Arts (Hons)

www.paulcritchley.art +39 3452 376704

Since 1979 :

43 Solo shows

9 Two person shows

79 Art fairs

208 Group shows

Selected exhibitions :

Städtische Galerie Ehingen, Germany

NordArt, Germany 2024, 2025 & 2026 (Awarded the Peoples' Prize in 2024 & 2025)

57th Venice Biennale at Palazzo Mora with the European Cultural Centre
Fondazione Creativi Italiani, Rome

Premio Internazionale Limen Arte, Italy 2014 (Foreigners' prize)

MEAM (Museu Europeu d'Art Modern), Barcellona

Artists Of The Day, Flowers Gallery, London (chosen by Patrick Hughes)

Michelle Rosenfeld Gallery, New York

Broadway Windows, New York

Galerie Alain Blondel, Paris

Galerie Honingen, Gouda, Holland

SCOPE, Basel & Miami

SAMMER Gallery, Madrid, Puerto Banus e Segovia

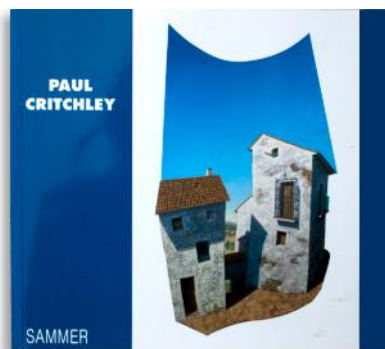
Commissions :

P&O Ventura

P&O Azura

RCCL Enchantment of the Seas

Organized by 'Associazione Competenze Multidisciplinari' : Carlo Viaggiano



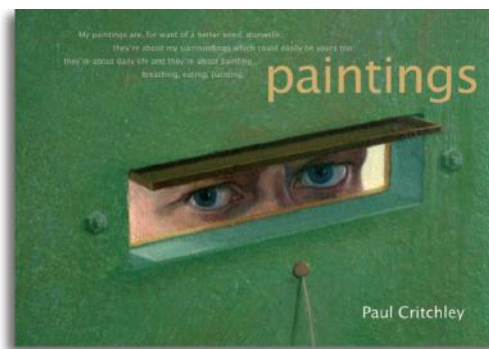
PAUL CRITCHLEY

Published by Sammer Galley, Madrid & Puerto Banus, 1996

88 pages, 99 works illustrated plus 5 details, softback, 24 x 27 cm. Text in English and Spanish. Photography: Paul Critchley, Simon Critchley, Diego Coello

ISBN: 84-922010-0-2
Printed by Graficas Marte, s.a., Spagna

€20



PAINTINGS *

Published by Paul Critchley, 2006

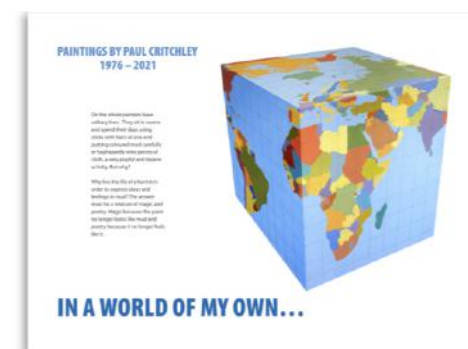
Introductions by:
British artist Patrick Hughes, art critic and professor of Spanish art history José Carlos Suárez and Marjan Ruiters, director of the Dutch Museum Kunstlicht in de Kunst (Artificial Light in Art).

152 pages, 87 works illustrated, 62 details, hardback, 22 x 31 cm. Text in English, translated into Italian by Paolo de Gabrielle Cohen, available via the link below.

Photography: Paul Critchley, Simon Critchley, Rob Severijnen.

ISBN: 0-9524537-0-3
Printed by Anman Gràfiques del Valles, s.l., Spagna

€25



IN A WORLD OF MY OWN*

Publicato da BY Publications, 2021
www.bypublications.com

304 pages, 197 works illustrated 48 details, 102 drawings, 26 photos in situ, hardback 22 x 31 cm. Text in English, translated into Italian by Paolo de Gabrielle Cohen, available via the link below.

Photography: Paul Critchley, Simon Critchley, Micheal Critchley, Rob Severijnen, Robin Roslund, Paul Kozal, Zoë Willis.

ISBN: 9 788412 113778
Printed by Anman Gràfiques del Valles, s.l., Spagna

€30

Books are available at the exhibition and also via: <https://paulcritchley.com/publications.html> (* with translation in Italian)

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