
THE ARTIST

CHRIS CRAN is known for his ability to play with illusion, for manipulating the perception of the viewer while exploring, fusing and subverting traditional artistic genre as well as contemporary movements, from pop art to abstraction and photorealism.

Cran, who lives in Calgary, has been a prolific and influential artistic presence in Canada for decades. A graduate of the Alberta College of Art + Design, where he was an instructor from the 1900s until 2018, he has shaped generations of new visual artists. In addition to the permanent collections of the National Gallery and the Art Gallery of Alberta, his often satirical and self-referential works appear in galleries and private collections across Canada and internationally.

In 2016, he was the subject of the major exhibition *Chris Cran, Sincerely Yours*, featured by both the national Gallery of Canada and the Art Gallery of Alberta. In 2018, the first 10 portraits in his ongoing *Explore* series were exhibited at Canada's Centre for Geography and Exploration, the Ottawa headquarters of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society.

The historic figures and living luminaries celebrate in this series – all of them closely associated with the RCGS, of which Cran is also a fellow – have been rendered by Cran in his iconic “striped” style., which creates an impression that changes depending on distance and perspective. “I’ve always been fascinated by how crude lines can produce photographic images,” he says. The aim is to create something in which the viewer is an active participant – both in terms of meaning and the physicality of moving back and forth. “Up close in a gallery, these images are abstract; people must shift between the making and what has been made, the representation of these Society founders and builders.”

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