

ROB CRAIGIE

The Expanding Color System

July 19 - August 25, 2012

Opening reception with the artist and a Fine Scotch Tasting
with music by Lynne Miller of the House of Bagpipes:
Thursday, August 2, 2012, 5:30pm to 7:30pm



You Can't Go Home Again Beeswax (Melted & Mined), 2012, beeswax, shelves, brackets,
72 in. x 86 x 9.5 inches

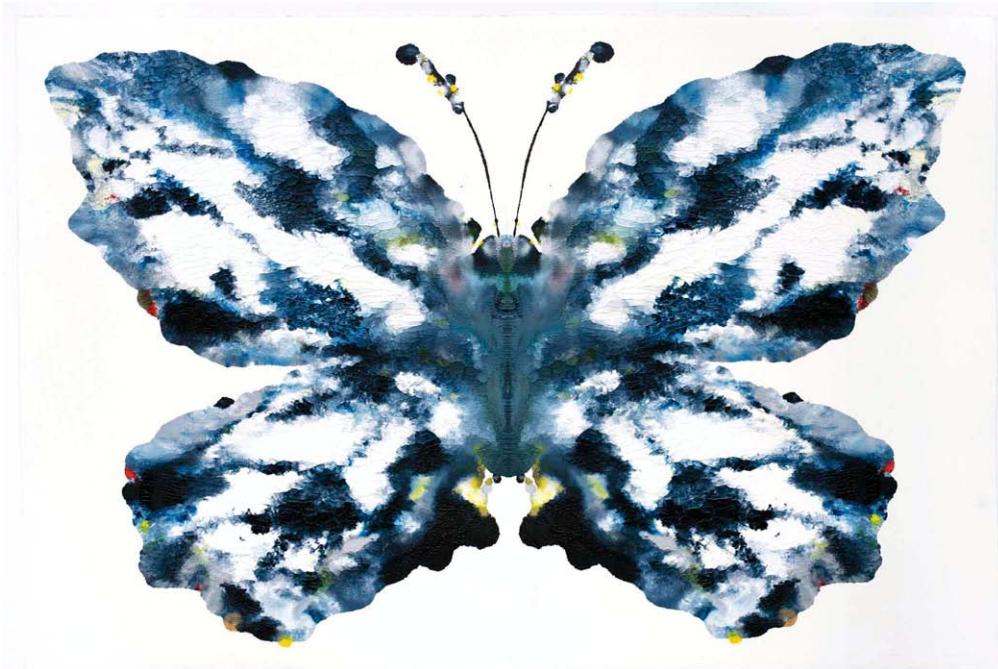
What Tengo would have to do, it seemed, was take a hard, honest look at the past while standing at the crossroads of the present. – Haruki Murakami, 1Q84

SAN FRANCISCO – For his seventh exhibition at Haines Gallery, Bay Area and Chicago based artist Rob Craigie presents *The Expanding Color System*, a collection of artworks drawn from his diverse creative endeavors. Utilizing sculpture, painting, drawing, photography, video and book making, Craigie observes, records and categorizes the world from a highly personalized perspective. Nonetheless, this selection of works encourages the viewer to engage both visually and mentally, sharing in the process of internal questioning key to his unique process. By exhibiting seemingly dissimilar works and ideas together in this way, *The Expanding Color System* brings to light various associations and

relationships from a practice characterized by diverse, ever expanding interests. Craigie hopes to impart the benefits of a more introspective approach to the world around us, prompting visitors “to consider that looking inward may actually be the best way of reaching out.”

Selected objects from *The Beeswax Studio: 1992-1997* function as a survey of works made over a five-year period early in the artist’s career. After working primarily in ceramics, Craigie’s practice shifted during this formative period towards more idea-based art. Beeswax became a key material in, and symbol for, this transition. He explains, “the manner in which beeswax was a natural material that contained a hive interested me. I saw a relationship to ceramics in this way. As in a ceramic tea bowl holds tea. I saw

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About Face Butterfly Painting № 3, 2012, oil paint on sized paper, 40 x 60 inches

from other side

beeswax as a natural container for my ideas.” While rooted in his own perceptions of the world and art, these sculptural and installation-based works encourage interaction, inviting viewers to engage with both the ideas underlying these projects and how they physically operate in space.

Craigie’s distinctive paintings derive from the experience of making art with his daughter when she was three years old. Produced in a manner suggestive of Rorschach inkblots, the symmetrical paint blotches and subtle textures of these works most immediately resemble the elaborate patterning of butterflies. Upon continued inspection, his paintings evoke more wide-ranging imagery, including faces, eyes and abstract forms. Craigie embraces the unpredictability intrinsic to this process, where painter and paint together determine the resulting work. He explains, “I see the painting as an outgrowth of the Zen arts where the end product does not exist solely for the purpose of having created an artwork.”

Like his paintings, Craigie’s photographs and postcards also document a way rather than an end, signifying a much more conceptually driven approach to picture making. These images chronicle his relationship to the world, whether it be a serendipitous interaction with a street performer dressed as Charlie Chaplin or the creation of portraits of people he met while traveling in the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. Depending on how the work is to be communicated, the scale of Craigie’s images varies substantially. Large-scale photographs draw the beholder into the scene, while small postcards – which come from the artist’s long history of making “mail art” – offer a more intimate experience of the world on view.

Craigie’s work is in the collections of the San Jose Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, Bronx Museum and di Rosa Preserve, among others. He has been featured in *Artforum*, *Artweek*, *Sculpture Magazine* and *The San Francisco Chronicle*. This exhibition coincides with the release of a new publication, *The Expanding Color System: Show 2012*, which documents this collection of artwork in its entirety.