

NICK SMITH PIONEERS



RHODES CONTEMPORARY ART
22ND OCTOBER - 28TH NOVEMBER 2020

Press View
22nd October, Rhodes Contemporary Art
Press images [HERE](#)

Rhodes Contemporary Art is proud to present *Pioneers*, a solo exhibition by **Nick Smith** that examines the American canon of art and cultural heritage through a personal lens of word-colour associations.

The exhibition will feature a new series of works **Nick Smith** created during lockdown, from his small village of Crinan. Thematically, the exhibition explores and remasters canonised North American art and culture, from Grant Wood, Edward Hopper and Chuck Close to *The Simpsons*. It is a celebration of iconic American art and design, and how a simple bottle of Coca-Cola has intertwined with art, design history and culture.

In this series, Smith incorporates his method of word-colour associations he has coined “*psycolourgy*”, combining text and image to create intriguing and provocative collaged works. On the surface, we see colour-chips that playfully pixelate iconic artwork and popular culture, but if we step closer, the image is abstracted and the words become readable. Each pixel corresponds to a word, creating either complimentary or subversive meanings. Word associations like “bastion” “waterproof” and “decompose” can be found in *Yellow Raincoat*, a remastering of Chuck Close’s *Self-Portrait (Yellow Raincoat)*. This form of expression gives the viewer an insight into how the artist was feeling at the time, while the world was changing rapidly from the optimistic start of 2020. The process allowed Smith to capture this unique time in history.

North America has great resonance with Smith. His deep-rooted fascination began in early childhood. He coveted the exotic and glamorous American fashion labels his friends brandished after returning from the States. Notably, with an increasing demand for his works in the States, Smith’s American market continues to grow. After the success of his *Purgatory* show at Context Art Miami last December, Smith is set to have his first solo show in New York in 2021, which was cancelled this year when the border closed.

Nick Smith’s P-series (*Psycolourgy* 2015, *Paramour* 2016, *Parlance* 2017, *Priceless* 2018, *Pinched* 2019, *Purgatory* 2019) explores intricately researched concepts, which are always the crucial starting point for each new series of work. Smith has investigated themes of art theft, morality, the cult of celebrity, and erotic literature. Producing large-scale works to micro-chip collages, and print editions, Smith continues to push the boundaries of collage with new subjects and experimentation, forging a unique visual aesthetic.

About Nick Smith

Contemporary artist Nick Smith creates pixelated works with hand placed colour-chips, synonymous with colour swatches, cleverly combining text and image to create intriguing and provocative collaged works.

With a previous career in Interior Design spanning 11 years, Smith references his concept design background throughout his work, reworking the design aesthetic using unique colour swatches in hand-made collages, placing his work firmly in the fine art category. From his first collage experiment, back in 2011 of Warhol’s ‘Marilyn’, when he assembled a tessellation of swatches as a challenge, this eventually inspired his career as an artist and determined his unique style he is now known for.

The multi-layered element of his work, which marries image and word, allows Smith to explore complex art-historical concepts. The text employed is often narrative, referring Greek mythology or classical literature, which can be read in sequence adding another element of intrigue and interest to the work. This additional element of text, placed under the empty space of each swatch, creates either complimentary or subversive meanings. Smith deliberately leaves these word/image constructions open to viewer interpretation, sparking new debates and meanings.

About Rhodes Contemporary Art

Rhodes Contemporary Art represents an international roster from emerging to established contemporary fine artists whose work often has aesthetic roots or sentiment in counterculture.

They represent artists and their works through a curated gallery exhibition programme incorporating solo exhibitions, projects, art fairs and exclusively published fine art editions and releases.

Sam Rhodes, Gallery Director said: *"We're thrilled to be showing Nick's forthcoming exhibition at the gallery and to present what I believe to be his strongest body of work to date. Nick's dedication and fervour for his work is rare and for us to continue our longstanding relationship with bigger and better projects is always an honour."*

EXHIBITION INFO

Rhodes Contemporary Art

Website: www.rhodescontemporaryart.com

PRESS ENQUIRIES

For images and interview requests please contact Leighanne Murray
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PRESS VIEW

Dates: 22nd October 2020

Timings: 10am – 12pm

Address: 42 New Compton St, West End, London WC2H 8DA

EXHIBITION

Address: 42 New Compton St, West End, London WC2H 8DA

Dates: 22nd October – 28th November 2020

Opening Times: Monday – Friday, 11am – 6pm; Saturday, 12 – 6pm; Sunday, Closed