

# Crown Point Press Release

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TOM MARIONI: *HARD EDGES FOR HARD TIMES*

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*A Big Show of Small Prints: A Group Exhibition*

June 15 – September 1, 2023



Tom Marioni, *Down to Earth*, 2023.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA: Crown Point Press announces *Hard Edges for Hard Times*, an exhibition featuring five new etchings by Bay Area conceptual artist Tom Marioni. In reference to the new prints, Marioni wrote, “In the 1960s, there was a cultural revolution. Minimalism was the art of the time. It was based on hard-edge painting and sculpture. Today, in the 2020s, we are in another cultural revolution. Everyone is an artist, and hard edges are back.” The Hard-edge movement within painting began in the late 1950s in reaction to the abstract expressionists. In contrast to the loose, colorful, gestural brushwork of the abstract expressionists, Hard-edge painters mostly used straight lines and strict forms in monochromatic palettes. Minimalism, born out of Hard-edge in early 1960s New York, pushed further the formalism of simplicity.

*Miss Brown to You* is the largest print of the five by Marioni. He has said the painting is based on a painting by Kazimir Malevich called *Suprematist Composition: White on White* (1918). “It is a cool white square on a warm white square, and suggests movement. My print is rectangular and is brown on brown. It represents, to me, Save the Earth,” Marioni said. (*Miss Brown to You* is a song made famous by Billie Holiday, and is a favorite of Marioni’s.)

Marioni’s *Down to Earth*, a spit bite aquatint, is a landscape with five horizontal bands of color. “Blue represents sky; red, pre-dawn; yellow, sunrise; green, spring; and brown, earth,” he has said.

*4 Squares a Day* is a red aquatint with four cream-colored squares in the middle of the image area. Marioni commented that “It is healthier to eat, at my age, four small meals a day rather than three large meals. The print is an illusionary trick. The cream squares dominate the deep red background. With more time looking, the red cross appears between the squares.” *Arm Band* can be worn on the arm for healing others.

Tom Marioni pioneered conceptual art on the West Coast and is an influential member of the movement worldwide. Born in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1937, Marioni moved in 1959 to San Francisco where he still lives. Influenced by Joseph Beuys, John Cage, and Marcel Duchamp, Marioni was one of the first artists to identify performance as sculptural action, otherwise known as relational aesthetics or social art. In 1970 he founded the Museum of Conceptual Art (MOCA), which is the artist’s largest, most ambitious social artwork and possibly the first alternative art space in the country.

Marioni has amassed a body of work comprised of sculpture, actions, drawings, prints, and writings over five decades. His work has been exhibited internationally and is part of the permanent collections of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; the Museum of Modern Art in New York; the Städtische Kunsthalle in Mannheim, Germany; and the Pompidou Center in Paris, among others. The archive of MOCA is held by the Berkeley Art Museum. Marioni is represented by Anglim/Trimble Gallery, San Francisco and Carl Solway Gallery, Cincinnati.

Accompanying Marioni’s new prints is *A Big Show of Small Prints*, an exhibition of small-scale work by 25 artists: Darren Almond, Anne Appleby, William Bailey, Robert Bechtle, Brad Brown, John Cage, Francesco Clemente, Elaine de Kooning, Richard Diebenkorn, Joel Fisher, Mary Heilmann, Shoichi Ida, Joan Jonas, Robert Kushner, Sol LeWitt, Tom

Marioni, Dorothy Napangardi, Chris Ofili, Gay Outlaw, Wilson Shieh, Shahzia Sikander, Pat Steir, Wayne Thiebaud, Richard Tuttle, and David True. Installed salon-style, the works come together to create a large statement while simultaneously each work invites intimate and contemplative engagement.

*Tom Marioni: Hard Edges for Hard Times* and *A Big Show of Small Prints: A Group Exhibition* are on view June 15 – September 1, 2023. Gallery hours are Monday – Friday, 9-5.