

Crown Point Press

PRESS RELEASE

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King Phillip Came Over From Germany Stoned September 12 – November 2, 2019

Crown Point Press announces *King Phillip Came Over From Germany Stoned*, an exhibition of four new color etchings and a sculpture by Gay Outlaw, accompanied by a group of prints she has selected from Crown Point's inventory. Outlaw is a San Francisco-based sculptor, photographer, and printmaker who approaches a broad range of media with a playful and inventive outlook. Her ideas range from food, animals, family relationships and everyday objects, to ways of seeing. The title she chose for the show, *King Phillip Came Over From Germany Stoned*, is a mnemonic device for memorizing the taxonomic order: Kingdom, Phylum, Class, Order, Family, Genus, and Species. Biological classification represents an understanding of evolutionary relationships, not unlike the harmonious connections among the prints in the exhibition. The thoughtfully curated "family" of prints includes work by Chris Burden, John Cage, Francesco Clemente, Elaine de Kooning, Marcel Dzama, Joan Jonas, Alex Katz, Sol LeWitt, Tom Marioni, Susan Middleton, Laura Owens, Markus Raetz, Ed Ruscha, Wayne Thiebaud, and Richard Tuttle.

Familial relations are important to Outlaw's creative process, both in motivational and material aspects. She sometimes recalls memories of her childhood and her own children when thinking about the process of learning something new, like printmaking. Outlaw created a print at Crown Point, *First Painting/First Print* (2001), as an homage to her grandfather who taught her how to paint. Similarly, her new print *ted4phoebe* (2019) is a small etching inspired by her daughter's childhood drawings. It depicts five cats, each a different breed, with individual circles drawn around them. The encircled cats are linked together by lines, indicating an enigmatic connection.

As a photographer, Outlaw is an observant chronicler of her surroundings and uses images as a springboard for her art. She generally focuses on a singular aspect within an image, and investigates that aspect's meaning and material. A new print, *3x3* is a bold orange etching with familiar shapes animating the space. Outlaw chose the nine shapes in *3x3* from her own photographs because of their energetic forms. She selected one of her sculptures, *Wedge* (2014), for inclusion in the exhibition to add a sense of materiality and to reference the forms seen in her prints. The prints and the sculpture relate to one another through what Outlaw calls "formal free association."

When curating the exhibition, Outlaw was drawn to *Type*, the portfolio by Richard Tuttle, because of Tuttle's unconventional approach to printmaking. Each color etching in the series of 26, Tuttle has said, corresponds to a letter of the alphabet. Nevertheless, there are no recognizable letters, only geometric shapes and painterly splashes. By re-envisioning the alphabet, Tuttle examined the complexity of language in an abstract way. He physically incorporated tarlatan cloth, a material used in the Crown Point studio, into his prints by using the chine collé method. The added sculptural dimension that the tarlatan creates was discovered in a search for a "new plane of consciousness," Tuttle explained. Outlaw's print *Juss* appears sculptural and its texture reflects the tarlatan's surface seen in Tuttle's *Type*. Instead of adding material directly to the print, Outlaw pressed tulle into soft ground plates to create texture and layers of color. The four plates of color that make up the final image mimic the four-color printing process used in color photogravure.

Gay Outlaw was born in Mobile, Alabama. Her work has been shown nationally and internationally in exhibitions at Le Consortium, Dijon, France (2018); the Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, CO (2018); the Sculpture Center in New York (2001); the University Art Museum, Cal State Long Beach (2001); Mills College, Oakland, CA (2005); the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (2016); and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, where she received the SECA Award (1999). Her artworks are in the collections of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, the SFMOMA and the Berkeley Art Museum. She is represented by Anglim Gilbert Gallery in San Francisco.

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Juss, 2019

ARTIST STATEMENT

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My new prints are, in part, an effort to categorize images I am drawn to. The urge to put things in groups feels both comforting, and aggrandizing—a way to form relationships and give meaning, and a way to make more of a single object than I might initially think possible. After doing all this grouping, I also yearned to make something that would resist any effort to label—that’s how *Juss* came about.

When Valerie asked me to curate the exhibition to accompany my work, I thought of the process as choosing “family” for my prints. I included prints I have always loved, and I also searched for images that I wasn’t as familiar with but spoke to me within a conversation. Extraneous themes have to do with animals, perception/vision, and energy in general. At the same time, they are all enigmatic in the way I like

art to be. Printmaking is a process that relies on intuition, and intuitive decisions almost always resist analysis.

Joan Jonas’s *Double Dogs* was my biggest discovery. I love the title. Her dog profiles are layered, as if we need to rub our eyes to bring them into focus. Perhaps they are couples? Or shadow puppets? And what a beautiful brown color!

For sheer energy it’s hard to beat the exuberance of Laura Owens’ *Untitled (LO426)*. I love her colors and child-like wave shapes rendered in spit bite. Spit bite speaks a language of its own, and it’s funny to me that the most liquid of acid media (and hardest to control) would be used to render the ocean. Of course!

As for vision/perception, all of Markus Raetz’s work appeals to me, but especially *Views*. As with Owens’ print, there is some absurdity in rendering vision with scratchy broken lines. And what’s the relationship between the women looking? Is it just that they are seeing the same thing, a mysterious dark oval, at the same time? And which is more important, the viewers or the object being viewed? They are completely co-dependent.

Connections and contrasts among the prints in this show work in layers. The prints run from completely pedestrian to uncannily mysterious. Alex Katz’s *Reclining Woman* could be at the beach, like Wayne Thiebaud’s frolicking pack of dogs and Owens’ waves. Katz’s woman is wearing sunglasses that echo Thiebaud’s landscape of frames in *Eyeglasses*, but her eyes are closed as if she is dreaming. Marcel Dzama’s depiction of Marcel Duchamp’s *Étants donnés...* provides a view of another woman, but from the shoulders down and nude. In comparison to Katz’s private reverie, it is an oddly public image, given its place in art history. These are the kinds of relationships I enjoy noticing.

Gay Outlaw
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