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Kind of Blue – Winter Exhibition

January 18 – March 3, 2018



Image: Richard Diebenkorn, *Blue with Red*, 1987.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA: Crown Point Press announces *Kind of Blue – Winter Exhibition*, a group exhibition exploring the color blue as used by artists of different generations and stylistic trends. It takes inspiration from the Miles Davis eponymous jazz album and its mood: contemplative, dreamy, and vibrant. On view January 18 to March 3, the exhibition presents prints by seventeen artists who have worked in the Crown Point studio using blue pigment, and features a new etching by Wayne Thiebaud.

Beginning with Michelangelo and Titian in Renaissance Europe, artists have been attracted to the color blue. During the Renaissance, lapis lazuli was the first blue pigment to hold its color; it was very expensive and of the purest material. Michelangelo, with the sponsorship of the Vatican, famously used large quantities of lapis lazuli in his *Last Judgement* fresco in the Sistine Chapel.

In the early 20th century Joan Miró became known for his blue dream paintings, and Pablo Picasso developed his Blue Period that centered on the somber subject of human misery. He felt “colors, like features, follow the changes of the emotions.” In 1960 Yves Klein went so far as to patent his preferred blue under the name International Klein Blue (I.K.B).

Kind of Blue – Winter Exhibition presents a selection of blue prints made by artists at Crown Point Press over the last four decades. The exhibition premieres the still-life *Snack Bar* (2017) by Wayne Thiebaud and features two notable prints by Richard Diebenkorn. These two artists worked with Crown Point Press at its inception in the 1960s. Diebenkorn often paired soft blues and reds in his art. In *Blue with Red* (1987), he creates a calm luminosity by using transparent geometric forms and subtle strokes of his signature blue. “All paintings start out of a mood,” Diebenkorn said. “Out of a relationship with things or people, out of a complete visual impression.”

New York artist Pat Steir and San Francisco painter John Zurier both use a range of blues to express elements of nature and atmosphere in their abstractions. Conceptual artist Tom Marioni refers to Yves Klein’s blue in the rich, monochrome background of *Leonardo IKB* (2002). Photographer John Chiara introduced a sky blue in his photogravures for the first time in 2006. New York-based artist Marcel Dzama employs varied blue tones to convey emotional states in his narrative *Here’s a Fine Revolution* (2015). The exhibition also presents prints by Anne Appleby, Leonardo Drew, Jacqueline Humphries, Shoichi Ida, Chris Ofili, Laura Owens, Ed Ruscha, Richard Tuttle, William T. Wiley, and Fred Wilson.

Kind of Blue – Winter Exhibition considers the magnetism that the color blue has had on artists throughout art history and today. The exhibition is on display in the Crown Point Gallery at 20 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, January 18 – March 3, 2018. The gallery hours are Monday 10-5 and Tuesday through Saturday 10-6.

Crown Point Press will feature Wayne Thiebaud’s *Snack Bar* at FOG Design + Art, located at Fort Mason, San Francisco, January 11–14. An exhibition titled *Wayne Thiebaud: 1958–1968* is on view at the Manetti Shrem Museum, UC Davis, January 16 – May 13, 2018.