

**Press Release
Not So Original:**

Carlos Cruz-Diez, León Ferrari, Terry Frost, Cipriano Martinez, Bridget Riley, Jesus Soto and Emilia Sunyer

8th November – 25th January 2014

This November Maddox Arts will be staging 'Not So Original' an exhibition that delves into the symbiotic relationship between the print and the original. Though printmaking is often assumed to be an afterthought in an artist's practice 'Not So Original' demonstrates the variety of roles it may play, spurring the artist's imagination and engaging in a dialogue with their primary practices. Taking Walter Benjamin's seminal 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' as its starting point, 'Not So Original' features the work of five, celebrated 20th century printmakers: Bridget Riley, Carlos Cruz-Diaz, Leon Ferrari, Terry Frost and Jesus Soto, alongside the emerging talents of Cipriano Martinez and Emilia Sunyer.

From the Middle Ages to the advent of the digital era, technology has allowed artists to disseminate their images in the form of reproductions to a wider audience than a single canvas would ever be able to reach. In facing the prospect of engaging a wider audience artists are often compelled to formalize their style so that a singular print may surmise an artist's catalogue. Likewise such technologies have enabled art lovers to acquire a 'piece' of an original via a process in which the artist may have had no hand. The rise of e-editions and 3D printing ask further questions as to how we distinguish the original from the reproduction, when an infinite number of copies can be instantly and flawlessly reproduced indefinitely.

In the work of Bridget Riley and other Op artists the manufacture of artworks by mechanical means can in itself serve as a means to an end. The finesse afforded by the methodical, utilization of screen-printing processes enabled Op artists to achieve a degree of optical distortion that would be impossible without such means. But the pure industrial capacity of printmaking is by no means its only lure. With his background in engineering, Cipriano Martinez deploys the printing process as a way to scrutinize and refine ideas- before committing them to canvas. The instantaneous nature of the printmaking also allows the artist to work at the speed at which their ideas flow and by allowing chance a hand in the construction of artworks the artist becomes flexible to the needs of each piece. In this sense, the medium of printmaking itself offers the artist another language in which to engage their muse.

Lastly, in the case of Emilia Sunyer, it is the physical praxis of printmaking that is integrated into the production of her artworks; for her there is no distinction between an original and the print. For Sunyer, without the technological means at her direct disposal it was necessities that lead to the development of her enigmatic style.

Carlos Cruz-Diez (Venezuelan, b.1923) is a painter and installation artist known for his chromatic structures that present color as an experience of encountering light. He has also worked with silk-screen prints, video, architectural models, and traditional paintings. His work has been exhibited at the Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid, Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, among other institutions. He currently lives and works in Paris.

León Ferrari (1920 - 2013, Buenos Aires, Argentina) Multidisciplinary artist, did not receive formal artistic training, but studied Engineering at the University of Buenos Aires In 2007 he received the Golden Lion at the 52nd Venice Biennale, becoming the first Argentine artists to be honoured with the award. His sixty years of contributions to art making and to a number of socio political struggles, including the preservation of memory in the field of human rights, have been awarded with the Casa de las Américas prize, the Guggenheim Fellowship, Premio Cultura Nación and Gran Premio del Fondo Nacional de Las Artes in Argentina.

Knopp Ferro (b. Germany, 1953) from 1973-77 he studied in the Academy for art and design in Cologne. In 1975 he founded the art group "Jet Ferro" which he lead till 1979; besides his artistic practice he co-operated with the circus company Roncalli. From 1980-1990 he worked as author and actor in the performance Project "Bumper to Bumper" in Zurich, organising international Tours with own productions. From 1990-92 Ferro maintained a studio in Zurich, from 1992-94 one in New York, and in 1995 he left for Munich where he currently resides.

Sir Terry Frost (British, b. 1915) Member of the Penwith Society, St Ives, 1950. First one-man exhibition in London at the Leicester Galleries 1952 and in New York at the Bertha Schaefer Gallery 1960. Taught at Bath Academy, Corsham, 1952. Gregory Fellow at Leeds University 1954-6; taught at Leeds College of Art 1956-9. Member of the London Group 1958. Lived at St Ives 1959-63, then moved to Banbury.

Cipriano Martínez was born in Caracas, Venezuela and gained a Masters in Arts from Chelsea College of Arts & Design in 1999. He has exhibited widely in Europe and Latin America including Spain, Colombia, and the UK. The artist has been shown in the Sala Mendoza in Caracas, Venezuela and received a distinction from the jury of the Mendoza Award 2003. Martínez's work is part of numerous private and public collections across Europe and America. He has participated in various art fairs including ARCO, PINTA, the Latin American Art Fair and ArtBo in Bogota, Colombia.

Bridget Riley (British, b. 1931) is a member of the Op Art movement, and a painter best known for her black and white paintings that create unique optical effects on canvas. Riley was born in London, and studied art at both Goldsmiths College and the Royal College of Art; she painted with an expressive, impressionist aesthetic early in her career. Riley received a prize in painting at the 1969 Venice Biennale, and has been awarded several honorary degrees. She currently divides her time between England and France.

Jesús Rafael Soto (June 5, 1923 - January 14, 2005) was a Venezuelan op and kinetic artist, a sculptor and a painter. Soto's work has been exhibited in many public locations, including the hall of the UNESCO building in Paris (1969) and the Forum of the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris (1987). His work is held by several museum collections, including the Tate Modern in London, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, and the Museo de Arte Moderno Jesus Soto in Bolívar, Venezuela.

Emilia Sunyer studied Fine Arts at University Central in Caracas, Venezuela. She also studied History and Sociology at Goldsmiths. Sunyer has previously exhibited in Caracas, London and New York. Selected group shows include: the Bronx Museum in NY; Gimpel Fils Gallery in London and the National Art Gallery in Caracas. The artist currently works and lives in London.