



# PARRISH ART MUSEUM

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**THE PARRISH ART MUSEUM PRESENTS  
FROM LENS TO EYE TO HAND: PHOTOREALISM 1969 TO TODAY,  
ON VIEW AUGUST 6 THROUGH OCTOBER 15**

***The Comprehensive Survey Reveals the Influence of Trailblazing Artists Who Embarked on a New Way of Seeing and Depicting the World***



Richard Estes (American, born 1932) *Hotel Empire*, 1987, Oil on canvas, 37 1/2 x 87 inches

**WATER MILL, NY 3/23/2017**—The Parrish Art Museum presents *From Lens to Eye to Hand: Photorealism 1969 to Today*, a survey of an important contemporary art movement spearheaded by artists who employed a groundbreaking creative process to embark upon a new way of seeing and depicting the world. On view August 6 through October 15, the exhibition features 73 paintings and works on paper by 35 artists—from early practitioners to second and third generation Photorealists—demonstrating that this movement remains undiluted, conceptually coherent, and consistently compelling. The exhibition brings together, for the first time in the United States, important paintings from public and private collections, and a series of watercolors and works on paper never before exhibited in an American museum.

*“From Lens to Eye to Hand* offers audiences an opportunity to see and experience photorealist masterworks, including spectacular paintings—*Wheel of Fortune* by Audrey Flack and *Candy Kane*

*Rainbow* by Charles Bell—from the Parrish collection,” said Terrie Sultan, Parrish Art Museum Director and exhibition organizer. “I am especially thrilled that the Museum will have the opportunity to show more than 30 watercolors and works on paper. These exquisite little paintings shed new light on the creativity and dexterity of these artists.”

From its beginnings in California and New York in the late 1960s, Photorealism (a term coined by gallerist and author Louis Meisel in 1969) was denounced as a fad in reaction to Pop, Minimalism, Land Art, and Performance Art. It gained recognition in the 1970s and continued to prompt exploration through the decades as contemporary artists returned to representation as valid and valuable. From *Lens to Eye to Hand* establishes the early Photorealists as trailblazers of an influential yet under-recognized movement that has sustained for nearly half a century.

The exhibition, featuring 40 paintings and 33 works on paper, begins with highly acclaimed founding artists such as Richard Estes, Chuck Close, Robert Bechtle, and Ralph Goings, whose 1969 painting *Jeep 40 809B (Safway Jeep)*, sets the stage. *From Lens to Eye to Hand* concludes with hyper-realistic works by the later generations of Photorealists such as Yigal Ozeri, Raphaella Spence, Bertrand Meniel, and Anthony Brunelli, who demonstrate how 21<sup>st</sup>-century technological advances in digital image-making via cameras and computers can impact the painterly gesture.

The title of the exhibition, *From Lens to Eye to Hand*, reveals the process that begins with film or digital photographs that freeze a moment and provide a flat, sharp focus 2-D image as the foundation of virtuosic painterly expression. “We know and cannot unknow the fact that the labored-over painting is the end product of a nearly instantaneous mechanical process—a sixtieth of a second stretched out over months and months,” wrote artist and writer Richard Kalina in his exhibition catalogue essay. “This discontinuity works against the smooth comprehension that we quite rightly apply to normal life and leaves us with the sense that something else is afoot.”

In contrast to the large-scale paintings, the exhibition features 30 small watercolor or acrylic on paper works that an entirely new viewpoint on the Photorealist creative approach. “Luminosity, intimacy, and immediacy are the defining motivations for the Photorealists’ works on paper,” wrote Terrie Sultan in her essay. “While a large to medium scale painting might take the artist months to complete, an intimately-scaled watercolor offers a pathway to experimentation, and more important perhaps, a way to express a sense of light and air that is not obtainable with oil-on-canvas.”

*From Lens to Eye to Hand* presents subject matter favored by Photorealists, such as the classic cars, motorcycles, and trucks depicted in Bechtle’s straightforward, uninflected California street scenes such as *'71 Buick*, and in paintings by Tom Blackwell, Don Eddy, and Ron Kleeman. Panoramic views are depicted in works by modern practitioners Brunelli, Meniel, and Spence that forge a link with pioneer Richard Estes, who often combined several photographs to create wide-angle views where metal, windows, and glass heightened the visual intensity, as in *Hotel Empire*, 1987.

Nostalgia—particularly classic American diner exteriors and interiors—was explored by John Baeder, Robert Gniewek, and Goings; Charles Bell focused on the bright color and hard shapes of children’s toys like marbles and tin figures, and penny candy as in *Gumball No. 10 – Sugar Daddy*, 1975. Audrey Flack added magical elements and to her staged still-lives such as *Wheel of Fortune*, 1977-78, with its mystical narrative of tarot cards, skulls, an hourglass with red sand, and mirrors reflecting mirrors. Works in the exhibition by Chuck Close, Hilo Chen, John Kacere, and Ozeri explore portraiture and the human figure.

*From Lens to Eye to Hand: Photorealism 1969 to Today* is accompanied by a 120-page catalogue with 90 color illustrations, published by the Parrish Art Museum and distributed by DelMonico Books • Prestel, featuring essays by Terrie Sultan and Richard Kalina.

The exhibition, *From Lens to Eye to Hand: Photorealism 1969 to Today*, is made possible, in part, by the generous leadership support of Louis K. and Susan P. Meisel, and Linda Hackett and Melinda Hackett/CAL Foundation. Public Funding provided by Suffolk County.

#### **About the Parrish Art Museum**

Inspired by the natural setting and artistic life of Long Island's East End, the Parrish Art Museum illuminates the creative process and how art and artists transform our experiences and understanding of the world and how we live in it. The Museum fosters connections among individuals, art, and artists through care and interpretation of the collection, presentation of exhibitions, publications, educational initiatives, programs, and artists-in-residence. The Parrish is a center for cultural engagement, an inspiration and destination for the region, the nation, and the world.