

Chris Martin is well known for his uncompromising and holistic approach to the process of art-making. As an artist educated in New York of the 1970's, Martin was influenced by several artistic schools, from the abstract expressionist movement dominating the NY scene in earlier decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, through the success of contemporary photographers of his time, to the rise of street art and conceptual art in all its different forms. Although Martin's works demonstrate a clear affiliation with some of these artistic groups, he has managed to develop and maintain a unique and somewhat idiosyncratic language characteristic of his work during the past four decades.

Martin's body of work is comprised mostly of paintings, drawings and collages – all of which are produced under his specific work regime that includes many hours spent in nature, as well as different experiments made with materials and techniques. His works are spontaneous and manage to convey a sense of exploration that is intrinsic to his practice. The current exhibition at Sommer Contemporary Art includes a new series of large-scale paintings, which can allude to other techniques, such as collage or assemblage, in their aesthetics.

Martin is clear about his avoidance of forcing a narrative on viewers, even though specific cultural references can appear in his works regularly. His work is intuitive and he does not commit himself to any dogma of interpretation or construction of meaning. According to Martin, his works are diaristic, "but not in any conscious way." This stream-of-consciousness approach could also be influenced by another significant cultural group of his time, Beatniks such as Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac.

"Sometimes I'm conscious that I'm painting a tree and sometimes I think I'm just mopping up a pool of paint and it looks like a tree – or maybe I'm just seeing trees in everything – so the attempt is not to illustrate a particular form, but to discover that form in the act of forming."

**Chris Martin** (b. 1954, Washington DC) is based in Brooklyn, New York.

His work is included in the collections of the Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam; the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; the High Museum, Atlanta; the MCA Chicago; and the SF MoMA, San Francisco, among others.

Recent solo exhibitions include VNH Galerie, Paris (2017); Rodolphe Janssen, Brussels (2016); and David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles (2016). Recent group exhibitions include *birds, cigarettes, guitars, eyes and trees*, Galerie Rodolphe Janssen, Brussels; *Please Fasten Your Seat Belt As We Are Experiencing Some Turbulence*, Leo Xu Projects, Shanghai, China; *Animal Farm*, The Brant Foundation, Greenwich, CT; *Drawing Island*, The Journal Gallery, New York, NY; and *Thinking Out Loud: Notes For An Evolving Collection*, The Warehouse, Dallas, TX (all 2017).

