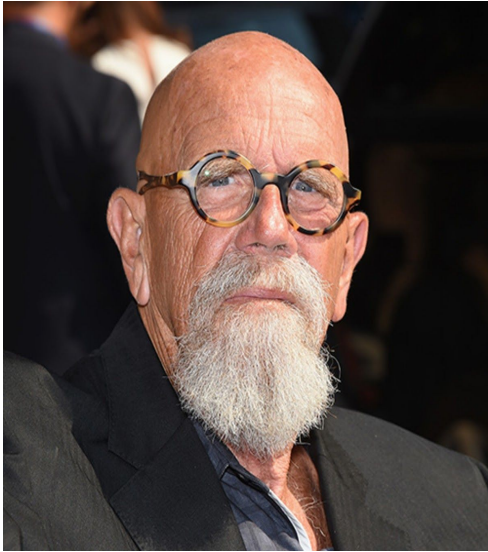


Chuck Close and Photorealism



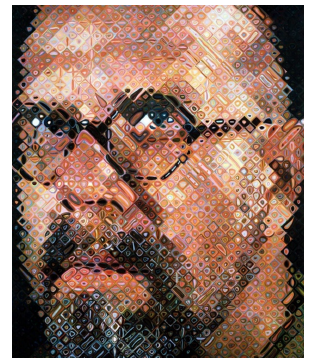
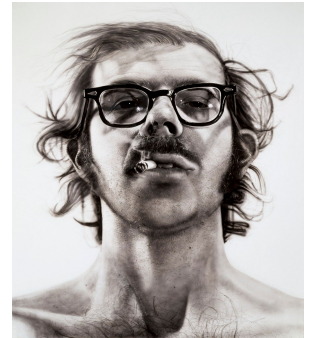
Biography

- Born July 5, 1940 in Monroe, Washington
- Suffered from dyslexia causing struggles in school
- At age 11, Close's father died after long term health complications and his mother was diagnosed with Breast Cancer.
- When Close was 14, he saw an exhibition of Jackson Pollock paintings. Pollock's creativity and style deeply influenced Close and made him determined to become an artist
- Close enrolled at Yale in 1962 where he would develop his signature style of photorealism
- Close suffers from prosopagnosia, meaning he can recognize a face, but cannot look at a face and recognize that person.
- In 1988, Close suffered a sudden rupture of a spinal artery leaving him with partial use of his limbs after physical therapy
- Close continued his art by taping a brush to his wrist. This

led to his art becoming more abstract and less precise, but still gaining international acclaim.

Evolution of Close's Work

- Close began working with black and white photographs which he reproduced on canvas
- His black and white style allowed no interpretive freedom and focused solely on reproduction onto the canvas
- One of his most notable early black and white works is *Big Self-Portrait* (shown on right)
- Close then transitioned into using color and developing the style he was most known for: photorealism
- In photorealism, Close combined reductionism with synthesis to make large scale portraits from photos
- Close would take a large polaroid and divide it into small cubes that he would individually decorate and then transfer onto the canvas
- Shown on the right is one of Close's most famous works of photorealism, *Self-Portrait, 1997*
- This photorealism garnered his worldwide acclaim quickly, and many of his pieces were shown in major art museums across the world
- Close continued to develop his photorealism style through using different mediums such as acrylic, ink, and watercolour





Emma

- The work is a collaboration with Japanese artist Yasu Shibata

- The piece is a 120 color woodblock in the traditional Japanese woodblock style

it is “the biggest Japanese style woodblock ever made”

- Overall the print took Shibata 3 years to make, while the painting took Close 3 months
- The piece is of Close’s niece. A common theme of Close’s work is that his portraits are of relatives, close friends, or other important artists he has gotten to know.
- To make the woodblock print, the image is first drawn onto paper called washi, and then be glued onto a block of wood and carved onto the surface

Critical Reception

- “Chuck Close did not adopt the most radical innovations of that era in his work. Instead, Mr. Close chose to work in Portraiture, one of the most traditional art genres”-Martha Schwendener, *The New York Times*
- Close was often criticized for a lack of branching out his style from portraiture by critics
- Critic Clement Greenberg called a portrait, “the one kind of painting it was no longer possible to make”.

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