



CLIVE HEAD

From an Indian Summer and Other Seasons

All works may be viewed online at www.waterhousedodd.com/clive-head
and are available for purchase on receipt of this catalogue.

Front cover (detail):
Drawing for Dante via Bank
Executed in 2019
Pencil on tracing paper
16.25 x 14.5 in / 41.5 x 36.5 cm

CLIVE HEAD

From an Indian Summer and Other Seasons

24th September - 18th October 2019

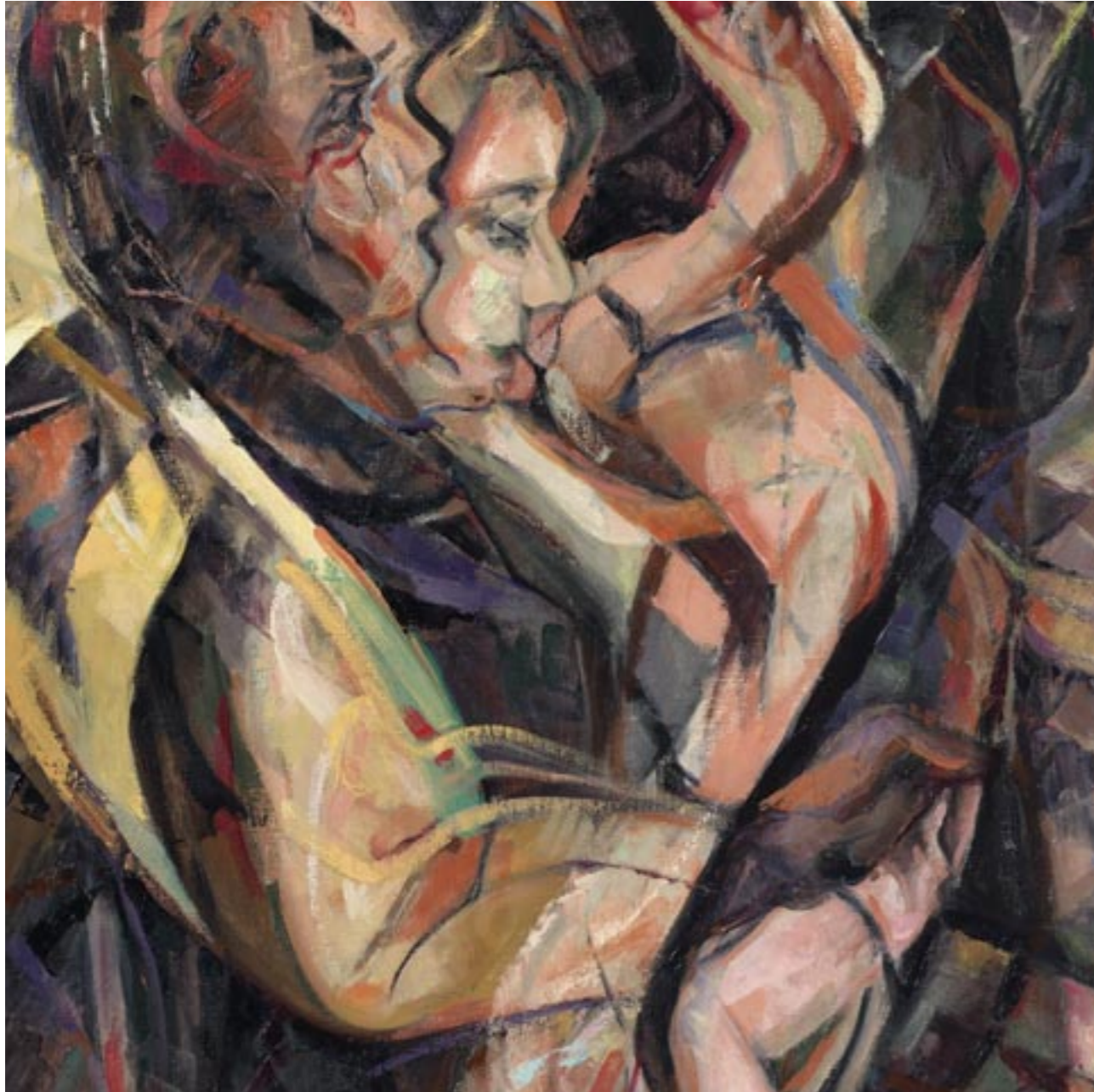
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Foreword

I first discovered Clive's brilliant work in 1991, when he had a small show near my recording studios. His works captivated me then, and they continue to captivate me now.

Whenever I am touring in Yorkshire, I visit his studio. I know I am there just by the familiar smell of oil paint. I am always fascinated to see where Clive's great love of painting and drawing has taken him.

It's a fantastic treat to be shown the most recent work. It is extraordinary, brilliant and totally original. Painterly genius and technique creating a style of picture that I have never seen before that reveals something new at every glance.

I am so pleased that this exhibition makes it possible for more people to see this incredible work.

Jools Holland

Detail of *Elephant in The Room* Oil on canvas 239.5 x 198 cm

Clive Head in conversation with Michael Paraskos

July 2019

MP: When I last interviewed you in 2010 for the Lund Humphries book you were adamant that your work was not photorealist. I seem to remember a lot of people didn't believe me when I wrote that down in the book. Now your work is very clearly not photorealist, but I wonder do you see it as doing something very different to the work you were making in 2010?

CH: I see it as doing a lot more. Aspects have been added to my arsenal if you like, but the fundamental questions and interests remain the same. I know you well enough to say that you would never just take my word for granted. The brilliant in-depth essays you wrote could well be describing my current work, but they were entirely truthful back then. Of course, photorealism was never part of the agenda. Making sense as a painter of my experience of the world and inventing an authoritative but unique response to that experience has always underpinned my work. Perhaps I am more concerned now about the experience of being in the studio. After all, that is where I spend most of my life.

MP: Looking at how you have described your work over the past few years I have a sense that you have developed a way of working almost in search of a name. I think you've called it things like Zoetic Realism and Non-Euclidean Geometry in the past. Has that been about helping you to formulate your own working method, or is it to try to counter a feeling that people still misunderstand your work?

CH: I am not searching for a label. But art for me is a constant process of searching and I will use terms like zoetic to emphasise what I am trying to find. In spirit, I think I am a Modernist in the sense that I believe in the power of the individual to create. I am uneasy about more recent trends to view art as a pre-given product of society and as a vehicle just to communicate. That seems to diminish the extraordinary potential of mankind to invent. The early Modernists talked about embracing Non-Euclidean geometry. In its broadest sense that really is a call to reject the narrow precepts of classical rationalism. In modern times, it would be to reject the rigid algorithms of photographic space, or perhaps the binary system of digital technologies. We live in tough times. Art isn't just going to come from a clichéd dive

into the unknown. We must recognise that the structure of the unknown is Non-Euclidean and chaotically trans-rational. There must be strategies to approach the unknown. But isn't making something zoetic a wonderful ambition? To make something that doesn't just say something but comes to life; has the potential to generate meaning as an autonomous subject.

MP: It is extraordinary to conceive of art as a living thing, and for most of its history that is exactly how art was seen. It's only in very recent times that art seems to have lost what Herbert Read called its vitality. I know when I write there is an element of the text writing itself, as if it is alive, or wants to be alive. To what extent is a living work of art, like one of your paintings, responsible for its own creation?

CH: Almost entirely. One of my ambitions is to become a painter. I might be achieving that now, despite having made paintings for the past 45 years. It is not a technical challenge, more of establishing a relationship where the material nature of painting, and the immaterial nature of pictorial space become the architects of the painting's development. My job is to listen carefully to the demands being made by the painting and act on that. The painting is in control. If I start imposing my will, or some conceptual enquiry, it will begin to fail and become something else. To an outsider it may sound absurd, but paintings are relentlessly demanding and unforgiving. When I walk into the studio it is the paintings that are going to call the shots.

MP: And yet, looking at your paintings, there is a strong personal element to them too. Your wife, Gaynor, and your children and friends are often in them, and the settings are usually places you have visited. I suppose what I am getting at is that there doesn't seem to be a straightforward otherness to the alternative realities you talk about creating in your paintings. Without wanting to sound too highfalutin, it seems more like a 'you-otherness' - to be partly about you - if you see what I mean.



Detail of *L'Après Midi d'une Femme* Oil on canvas 101.5 x 68.5 cm



CH: Maybe a straightforward otherness would be a cliché of otherness. There is always a danger in emulating Modernist tropes. I always start with something tangible and immediate. As you say, friends, family and places that are known to me. For the paintings that I was making a couple of years ago, like *Calder's Ascension* I used a lot of reference material. I think there is a "realism" that permeates the work as a result.

The 'you-otherness' of the current work, paintings from the *Indian Summer Series* is quite different. Painting without reference material and allowing the imagery to be suggested through the activity of painting, and through the demands made by the painting, manifests a different kind of personal reality. Undoubtedly there are images of people that I know but these are coming from within. They become concrete from the dialogue with the painting. In hindsight I recognise who and what I have painted but it's not something that I feel I am controlling.

MP: I can't help thinking that saying this is going to get me into trouble again, but what it sounds like you are saying is that these paintings should not be seen as layered or multiple images — like some photographic multiple exposure — they are more like abstract or nebulous structures from which forms emerge, or are revealed, through the painting process. And it's only in that process of revelation that they might become a recognisable person, or place, or even an unexpected object like a swan or something.

CH: I have no trouble with you saying that. I think that's true. Perhaps some of the earlier pieces are more reminiscent of multiple exposure photography but I think that is less evident in the newer pieces. Of course, the point of layering imagery at the outset is to stumble into something new, and once found, the vestiges of that superficial layering hold little interest for me. It is just a strategy to uncover the unknown. But there are multiple images and I am fascinated by the way one form can morph into another.

MP: So there is an initial layering, but as a starting point rather than a destination? I'm fascinated that you call this a strategy for uncovering the unknown. You have spoken about Surrealism recently, and it seems to me you are heading in a direction which many of the

early Surrealists would have sympathised with. It's that side of Surrealism interested in creating the unknown, rather than illustrating dreams or clichés of the unconscious. And that seems to have been the consistent theme in your work for a long time now — creation, or revelation, rather than illustration, or reiteration.

CH: That initial layering belongs more to the early stages of a drawing. As the lines become a rhythmic web, it is more difficult to talk about layering in the sense of one mundane image on top of another. I think there is a connection to Surrealism (and Cubism), which really form the backbone of later painters like De Kooning who I greatly admire. As a student, I was constantly being reminded of the dangers of illustration and reiteration which helped me to make key decisions about the pathway I should take. I have often said that my current work draws as much upon my imagined reality, dreams, fantasies and memories but of course it is the structure of painting, not its imagery that must have the free form of a dream.

MP: One of the most interesting aspects of all this is that the layering is partly a question of the layers of art history that underpins your work. You mention De Kooning, but also artists such as Gris, and older artists like Titian seem to inform your work. I wonder, how conscious are you when you draw or paint, of other artists looking over your shoulder? Or are you looking over theirs?

CH: The activity of painting tends to centre on the formal challenges. Thoughts of astonishing artists from the past largely belong to other moments. But I am very aware of that history and it has shaped my understanding. Not that painters like Titian, Veronese, Poussin, Gris to name just a few have helped to determine the quantifiable traits of Western painting. Quite the opposite. They are proof that the history of art is a history of remarkable and unfathomable invention. We don't really understand how a great painting by Titian works. So by example they raise the bar to giddy heights. But of course, just as I stumble into an image of Gaynor, or a swan, or a horse, I also stumble into the aesthetic characteristics of other artists. If that's not forced and predetermined, then it is as revelatory as any aspect of the work. I don't feel that other artists are on my shoulder, but I do discover deeply held passions for artworks which I have never openly talked about. Some of the paintings from the current series take me into Goya for example.



MP: I think people who knew your work, say, 10 years ago might be surprised to hear Goya's name mentioned. There's an extraordinary freedom in the way he applies paint, which I can see paralleled in the way you paint now, but maybe wasn't apparent in your work before. What's led you to this freeing of the brush mark?

CH: I have always recognised that at the heart of painting are the relationships between uniquely shaped patches of colour. It is this that separates painting from all those mechanical systems of reproduction where the units are alike. To deny this is to abandon painting's fundamental nature. In this respect, all true painting is painterly whether the marks are small or large. But you are right, recent paintings have a greater variety of marks and some are quite large and gestural. There is also a much stronger use of oily blacks set

against more dusty pastel colours. The work needed to become more alive. For the painting process to generate imagery, it needed to have great variety and greater complexity. That's a complexity of surface and space through the application of paint, not the accumulation of anecdotal imagery. The freeing of the brush mark is another strategy to discover the unknown. It is not painterly for the sake of being painterly.

MP: Perhaps we should end by thinking about what all this means in terms of what people will see in your new paintings. There are multiple forms which seem to flow in and out of each other, some of which appear to resolve themselves into definite shapes — so we might see a recognisable figure or building — and then there are more ambiguous forms, where you are not quite sure what you are seeing. That ambiguity seems to be something you want people to embrace and enjoy.

CH: I think this work really accentuates the distinction between the actuality of the painting and what is perceived by the viewer. I am committed to making the painting, not reaching out to the viewer. The painting process will have led me into all kinds of imagery which subsequently becomes part of the structure, and of course that structure then yields more

Detail of *Dante via Bank* Oil on canvas 133.5 cm x 117.5 cm

imagery. Not everything can be easily identified by the viewer even though it is integral to the artwork. The nature of my pictorial space is invariably dualistic, being simultaneously deep and on the surface. If the viewer approaches the work with expectations of a normal functioning space and a singularity of image, then they will find it to be ambiguous. But I see my work as both in a constant state of flux and absolute. Contrary to the trend for increasingly simplistic consumables in the art world, whether figurative or abstract, I think my work is better experienced over a long period of time.

MP: And what can people expect to see in the exhibition?

CH: My last solo show in London was in 2012. For me, this show is a very welcome return to Mayfair. We have been very selective in what to hang and felt that there was a lot of catching up to do. The title of the show *From an Indian summer and other seasons* alludes to our inclusion of works from a couple of years ago as well as a few pieces from the current work. I think that helps to tell a little story about what has been going on in the studio. Alongside some large oil paintings, we have also selected some smaller paintings and paintings on paper. Very important to me are the drawings. Drawing has become increasingly important to me in recent years. So much is determined through line, not just in the graphite works but throughout my practice.

Michael Paraskos is a writer based in London



Clive Head in his studio

Les Souvenirs du Café Anglais
Painted in 2014
Oil on canvas
78 x 83 in / 198 x 211 cm





Study for Vauxhall Leda
Painted in 2018
Acrylic on paper
30 x 22 in / 76 x 56 cm



Cygnes Gris
Painted in 2018
Oil on canvas
46 x 34 in / 117 x 86.5 cm



Drawing for The Cherry Train
Executed in 2017
Pencil & acrylic on tracing paper
6.75 x 9.25 in / 17 x 23.5 cm



The Cherry Train
Painted in 2017
Oil on canvas
53.5 x 75.5 in / 136 x 192 cm

Calder's Ascension
Painted in 2017
Oil on canvas
52 x 56 in / 132 x 142 cm





Flee to Banbury Cross
Painted in 2017
Oil on canvas
57 x 49 in / 145 x 124.5 cm



To Henry Koerner, With Love
Executed in 2019
Pencil on tracing paper
16.75 x 20 in / 42.5 x 50.5 cm



L'Après Midi d'une Femme
Painted in 2017
Oil on canvas
40 x 27 in / 101.5 x 68.5 cm



The Morning Shift After The Shower

Executed in 2019
Pencil on tracing paper
13.75 x 25.5 in / 35 x 65 cm

Our Comfort Days Where The Ravens Came To Rest

Painted in 2017
Acrylic on paper
27 x 16.5 in / 68.5 x 42 cm





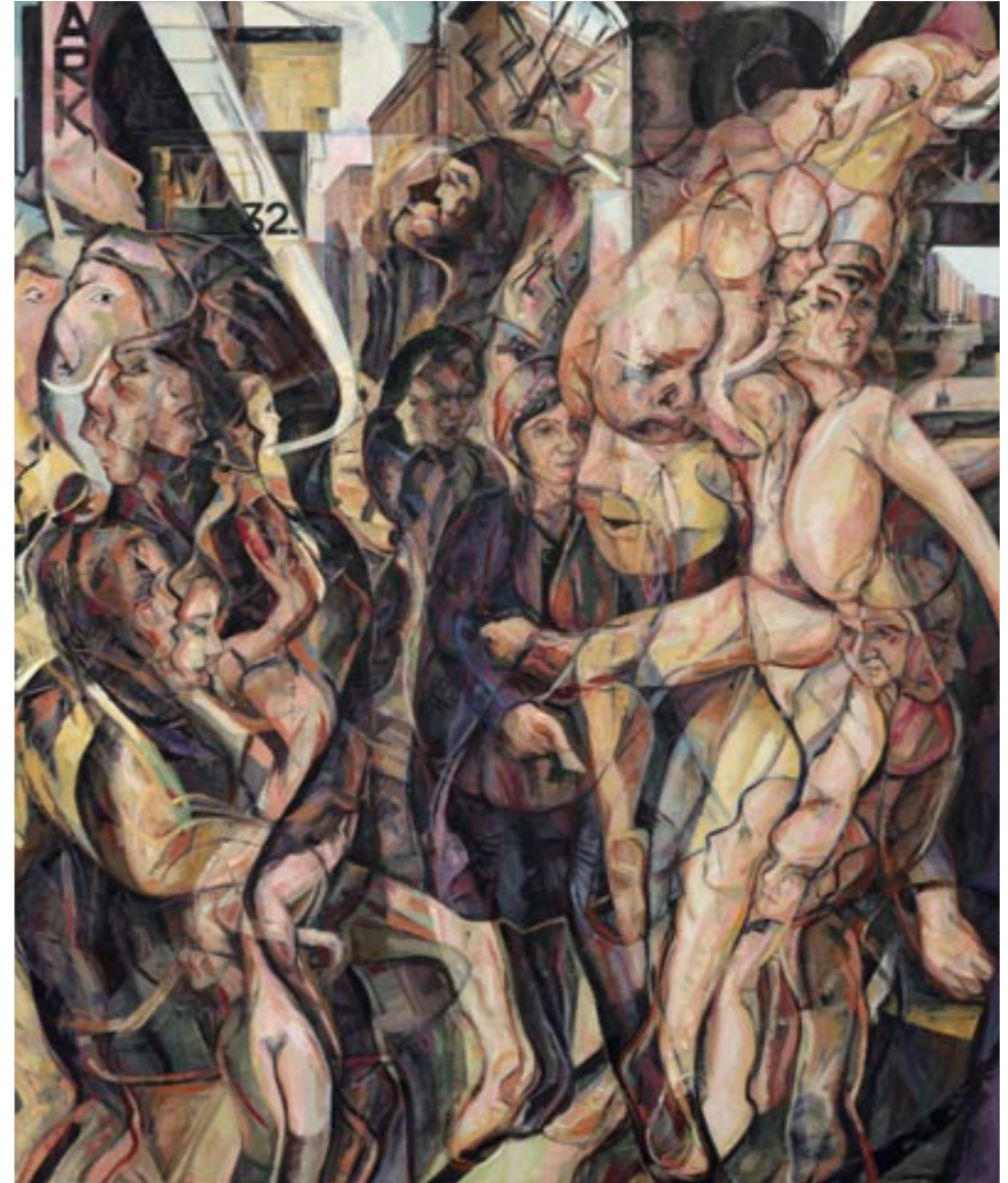
Drawing for The Bar Raiser
Executed in 2019
Pencil on tracing paper
15 x 20.5 in / 38 x 52.5 cm



The Bar Raiser
Painted in 2019
Oil on canvas
78.5 x 108.5 in / 199 x 275.5 cm



Drawing for My Coney Island
Executed in 2018
Pencil on tracing paper
16 x 11.25 in / 40.5 x 28.5 cm



Elephant In The Room
Painted in 2019
Oil on canvas
94.25 x 78 in / 239.5 x 198 cm



Drawing for Dante via Bank
Executed in 2019
Pencil on tracing paper
16.25 x 14.5 in / 41.5 x 36.5 cm



Dante via Bank
Painted in 2019
Oil on canvas
52.5 x 46.25 in / 133.5 x 117.5 cm



Les Sardanapolis
Executed in 2019
Pencil on tracing paper
16 x 23.5 in / 40.5 x 60 cm



Sieneze Nocturne
Painted in 2019
Acrylic on paper
33 x 23.5 in / 84 x 59.5 cm



Whitby Jet

Executed in 2019
Pencil on tracing paper
16.25 x 23 in / 41.5 x 58.5 cm



Paper Neapolitan

Painted in 2019
Acrylic on paper
32.75 x 22 in / 83.5 x 56 cm

CLIVE HEAD (born 1965)

Selected Solo Exhibitions:

- 1991 *Monuments to the Moment. Super Realist Paintings of the Urban Landscape*, Woodlands, Art Gallery, London
- 1995 *Silent Happenings*, Elizabethan Gallery, Wakefield, UK
- 1999 *Clive Head*, Blains Fine Art, London
- 2001 *Clive Head, Recent Paintings*, Blains Fine Art, London
- 2002 *International Cityscapes*, Bernarducci Meisel Gallery, New York
- 2005 *Clive Head, New Paintings*, Louis K. Meisel Gallery, New York
View of London from Buckingham Palace. Commission to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of HM The Queen, Museum of London
- 2007 *Clive Head: New Paintings*, Marlborough Fine Art, London
- 2010 *Clive Head, Modern Perspectives*, National Gallery, London
- 2012 *From Victoria to Arcadia*, Dulwich Picture Gallery and Marlborough Fine Art, London
- 2017 *Zoetic-Realism*, Hollis Taggart Galleries, New York

Selected Group Exhibitions:

- 1991 *Contemporary Realism*, Maidstone Museum and Art Gallery (touring)
- 1991-92 Treadwell Gallery at Marcus and Marcus Gallery, Amsterdam
- 1991-94 Treadwell Gallery at Galerie Goetz, Basel
- 1996 *Making a Mark, The Discerning Eye*, Mall Galleries, London
Trojan, Paton Gallery, London
- 1997 *Talent*, Allan Stone Gallery, New York
- 2000 *Urban Realism*, Blains Fine Art, London
- 2001 *Near and Far*, Louis K. Meisel Gallery, New York
Great Britain! UK in NY, Bernarducci Meisel Gallery, New York
- 2002 *Art Chicago*, Louis K. Meisel Gallery, New York
Photorealism at the Millennium, Louis K. Meisel Gallery, New York
- 2003 *Exactitude*, Plus One Plus Two Gallery, London (curated by Clive Head)
Iperrealisti, Chiostro del Bramante, Rome
Realism, Flowers East Gallery, London
- 2004 *The New Photorealists*, Louis K. Meisel Gallery, New York

- 2004 *Nine Real Painters*, Flowers Central, London
Blow Up, New Painting and Photoreality, St. Paul's Gallery, Birmingham, UK
Some Photorealism, Louis K. Meisel Gallery, New York
The Prague Project, Roberson Museum and Science Centre, Binghamton, NY
The Big Picture, Bernarducci Meisel Gallery, New York
- 2006 *Large Urban Landscapes*, Louis K. Meisel Gallery, New York
Summer Exhibition, Marlborough Fine Art, London
Vienna Fair, Vienna, Marlborough Fine Art, London
The Reality Show, Peninsular Fine Arts Centre, Virginia
2008 *Scarborough Realists Now*, Scarborough Art Gallery, UK
- 2009 *New Photo-Realism Painting in the Digital Age*, Arthur M. Berger Gallery, Manhattanville College, Purchase, NY
Summer Exhibition, Marlborough Fine Art, London
Art International Zurich, Persterer Contemporary Fine Art, Zurich
- 2010 *Winter Exhibition*, Marlborough Fine Art, London
Realism: from Courbet to Duane Hanson, Kunsthal Rotterdam
- 2011 *Accrochage*, Marlborough Fine Art, London
- 2012 *Beyond Photorealism*, Galerie de Bellefeuille, Montreal
- 2013 *Women - Love and Life. Collection Klocker*, Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museum, Duisburg, Germany
Photorealism: 50 Years of Hyperrealistic Painting, Kunsthalle Tubingen, Germany; Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid; Moderne Galerie - Saarlandmuseum, Saarbrücken, Germany; Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, UK
Summer Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London
- 2014 *Reality: Modern and Contemporary British Painting*, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Art, Norwich, UK
Photorealism: 50 Years of Hyperrealistic Painting, Museo de Bellas Artes, Bilbao
- 2015 *Reality: Modern and Contemporary British Painting*, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool
- 2016 *Photorealism: 50 Years of Hyperrealistic Painting*, Art Museum of Estonia, Tallinn; Musee d'Ixelles, Brussels; Osthaus-Museum Hagen, Germany
- 2017 *Photorealism: 50 Years of Hyperrealistic Painting*, Kunsthal Rotterdam; touring to Tampa Museum of Art, Florida
The Europeans, Louis K. Meisel Gallery, New York
- 2019 *Spring Show - Contemporary Artists*, Waterhouse and Dodd, New York

Notable collections:

Imperial College London
Victoria and Albert Museum
Museum of London
Maria Lucia and Ingo Klöcker Collection
David Ross Collection
William Pears Group
Barclays PLC
Minneapolis Art Museum
Duke of Beaufort
Skip and Linda Law Collection
Steve Martin Collection
Linden Nelson
Marcus Tellenbach Collection
Sylvester Stallone

Literature:

- 2001 *Clive Head, Paintings 1996 – 2001*, Linda Chase and Tom Flynn, Blains Fine Art, London
- 2002 *Photorealism at the Millennium*, Louis K. Meisel and Linda Chase, Abrams, New York
- 2003 *Iperrealisti*, Gianni Mercurio, Viviani Art, Rome
- 2009 *Exactitude: Hyperrealist Art Today*, John Russell Taylor with an introduction by Clive Head, Thames and Hudson, London
- 2010 *Clive Head*, Michael Paraskos with an introduction by Jools Holland, Lund Humphries, London
- 2012 *From Victoria to Arcadia: The Avant-Garde Art of Clive Head*, film documentary, William Cran, Invision
- 2013 *Photorealism in the Digital Age*, Elizabeth K. Harris and Louis K. Meisel, Abrams, New York
- 2013 *Photorealism: 50 Years of Hyperrealistic Painting*, Otto Letze, Hatje Cantz, Germany
- 2014 *Reality, Modern and Contemporary British Painting*, Chris Stevens, East Publishing, UK



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