

# THE CUT



15 PHOTOS

Photo: Jessica Craig Martin

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## Jessica Craig-Martin on Her Big Show for Charity

By Erica Schwiegershausen



Fifteen years ago, the photographer Jessica Craig-Martin — best known for her hyper-realistic photographs of the lifestyles of the wealthy — was on assignment photographing the ultrarich women of Fisher Island when she spontaneously decided to take a flight to Haiti. The visit made a profound impression on her. “I was overwhelmed by the place. It’s only a 50-minute flight from Miami, yet the daily struggle for survival is so intense,” she says now. “And I didn’t feel like there was anything that I could do. I didn’t even take a single picture while I was there, because I just felt so ludicrous, so awkward.”

Since that initial visit, Craig-Martin has made several visits back to Haiti, and has started working with [Artists for Peace and Justice](#), a nonprofit dedicated to providing education and health care for the poorest communities there. Most recently, she’s been working with Chuck Close to curate “[Fierce Creativity](#),” a four-day selling exhibition with all proceeds benefiting the organization, featuring works donated by everyone from Kara Walker and Cindy Sherman to Rob Pruitt and Gregory Crewdson, which opened last night at the Pace Gallery.

“The tough thing about curating a show like this is that aesthetically or conceptually chosen — one asks an artist, and they give what they feel they can give,” Craig-Martin told the Cut before last night’s opening (which drew Ben Stiller and Sting, among others). “It’s extraordinary to be playing ‘gallery’ with this kind of art. It’s just really fun.” Though Craig-Martin doesn’t have an extensive background in curating, she says the fact that she was the child of artists helps. “If I could get frequent flyer miles for gallery time spent as a child ... got taken everywhere,” she laughs.

As for her own work, Craig-Martin included her iconic “Let’s Party” in the exhibition — which marks the first time it’s been shown in New York. “I thought it was an amusing piece for New York because it’s of the tipping point, where one goes from the perfect night, where everything is coming together, to uninsurable ... It’s like the Lindsay Lohan moment.”

Click through the slideshow for scenes from last night’s opening. *“Fierce Creativity” will be on view [at the Pace Gallery](#) through October 25.*

