## AFTER MODERNIST MODERNIST PAINS

The History of a Contemporary Practice



Craig Staff

I.B. TAURIS

Published in 2013 by I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd 6 Salem Road, London W2 4BU 175 Fifth Avenue, New York NY 10010 www.ibtauris.com

Distributed in the United States and Canada Exclusively by Palgrave Macmillan 175 Fifth Avenue, New York NY 10010

Copyright © 2013 Craig Staff

The right of Craig Staff to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted by him in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. Except for brief quotations in a review, this book, or any part thereof, may not be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

International Library of Modern and Contemporary Art: 3

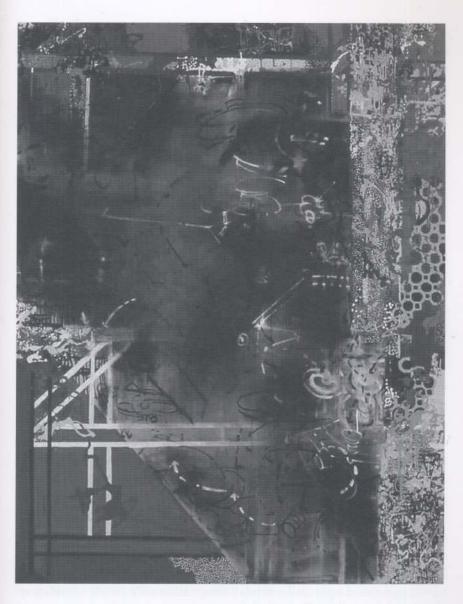
ISBN: 978 1 78076 179 4 (HB) 978 1 78076 180 0 (PB)

A full CIP record for this book is available from the British Library A full CIP record is available from the Library of Congress

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: available

Printed and bound in Great Britain by T.J. International, Padstow, Cornwall





Lydia Dona, *Photo Ghosts and the Labyrinth* Drips on the Void, 1996.

'While painting, as a practice, appears now in a host of widespread plural guises and contexts, attempts to theorise its global terrain have generally been avoided of late. Craig Staff's timely interrogation of the practice does not shirk this responsibility. ... For those who want a highly informed and erudite overview of this unstable and everevolving landscape, this is essential reading.'

David Ryan, Reader in Fine Art, Anglia Ruskin University

'The book's phenomenal achievement is to steadily guide the reader through a multitude of competing theories and debates around what painting is, whilst being grounded in the diverse practices of individual artists as they speculatively push at the frontiers of what painting might become.'

Dan Hays, artist

Since the publication of Clement Greenberg's 'Modernist Painting' in 1960, the status of painting and its continued legitimacy as a medium has been repeatedly placed under question. As such, painting has had to continually redefine its own parameters and renegotiate for itself a critical position within a broader, more discursive set of discourses. After Modernist Painting is both a historical survey and critical re-evaluation of the contested and contingent nature of the medium of painting over the last 50 years. Presenting the first critical account of painting, rather than art generally, Craig Staff provides a timely exploration of what has remained a persistent and protean medium. This book is an invaluable resource for those seeking to understand the themes and issues that have pertained to painting within the context of postmodernism and contemporary artistic practice.

**Craig Staff** is Reader in Fine Art at The University of Northampton, an artist and author of *Modernist Painting and Materiality* (2011).





Cover image:
Giulio Paolini, Senza titolo (Untitled), 1961
tin of paint, stretcher, polyethylene, 21 x 21 cm
(collection of the artist)
Photo © Paolo Mussat Sartor