

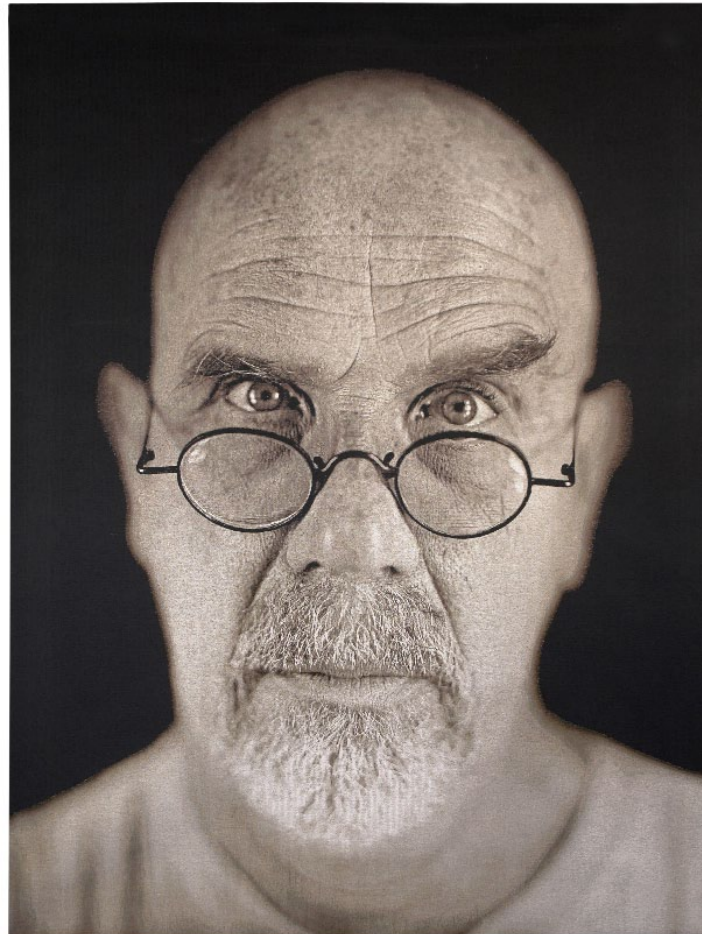
Chuck Close: *Self-Portrait*

For almost four decades, Chuck Close's face has emerged from tonal grids of fingerprints, pointillist dots, brush-strokes, paper pulp and countless other media. Close's countenance continues to serve as a constant throughout his experiments, allowing the artist to foreground his rigorous explorations of the properties and behaviors unique to each medium. A series of daguerrotypes begun in the mid-1990s has yielded a number of self-portraits, one of which became the basis for Close's second collaboration with the Magnolia Tapestry Project: *Self-Portrait*, an editioned Jacquard tapestry.

The formidable impact of *Self-Portrait* draws its strength from two sources, with origins separated by nearly two hundred years of history: on one hand, the lyricism and nearly infinite detail of a 19th-century photographic technique; on the other, the Magnolia Tapestry Project's digitally-driven approach to weaving, a result of experiments conducted only within the last decade. Perhaps more immediate, though, is the unmistakable message of Close's expression, a determined intensity amplified by both the scale and clarity of *Self-Portrait*. If one suspects that Close's resolve to continue refining his craft against all odds is demonstrated by his use of the tapestry medium, the indomitable look in his eye leaves no room for doubt. As the artist's face emerges in crisp, animated detail from the soft focus of its periphery, the viewer participates in a powerful somatic experience: a wordless, intimate confrontation with a dedicated pioneer.

About the Magnolia Tapestry Project

Rather than weaving solid areas of color, as in traditional hand weaving, the Magnolia Tapestry Project's method makes the most of Jacquard technology's potential to weave a complex, mosaic-like network of color combinations. As Tamarind and Gemini put the commercial lithographic technology of the 19th century into the hands of



Self-Portrait, 2006 - Jacquard Tapestry, 103 x 79 in. Edition of 10

fine artists in the fifties and sixties, the Magnolia Tapestry Project is putting the electronic Jacquard loom to work in unexpected ways for contemporary artists.

The project includes tapestries representative of several generations and numerous art movements: the Abstract Expressionist wizardry of Ed Moses; the monumental, Expressionistic figures of Leon Golub; and the post-Surrealist visions of Bruce Conner are re-envisioned in warp and weft. The Magnolia Tapestry Project has also produced tapestries by Alex Katz, Doug Hall, Lewis deSoto, D.J. Hall, Donald and Era Farnsworth, George Miyasaki, Rupert Garcia, Diane Andrews Hall, Robert Kushner, Nancy Spero, and other artists. ■