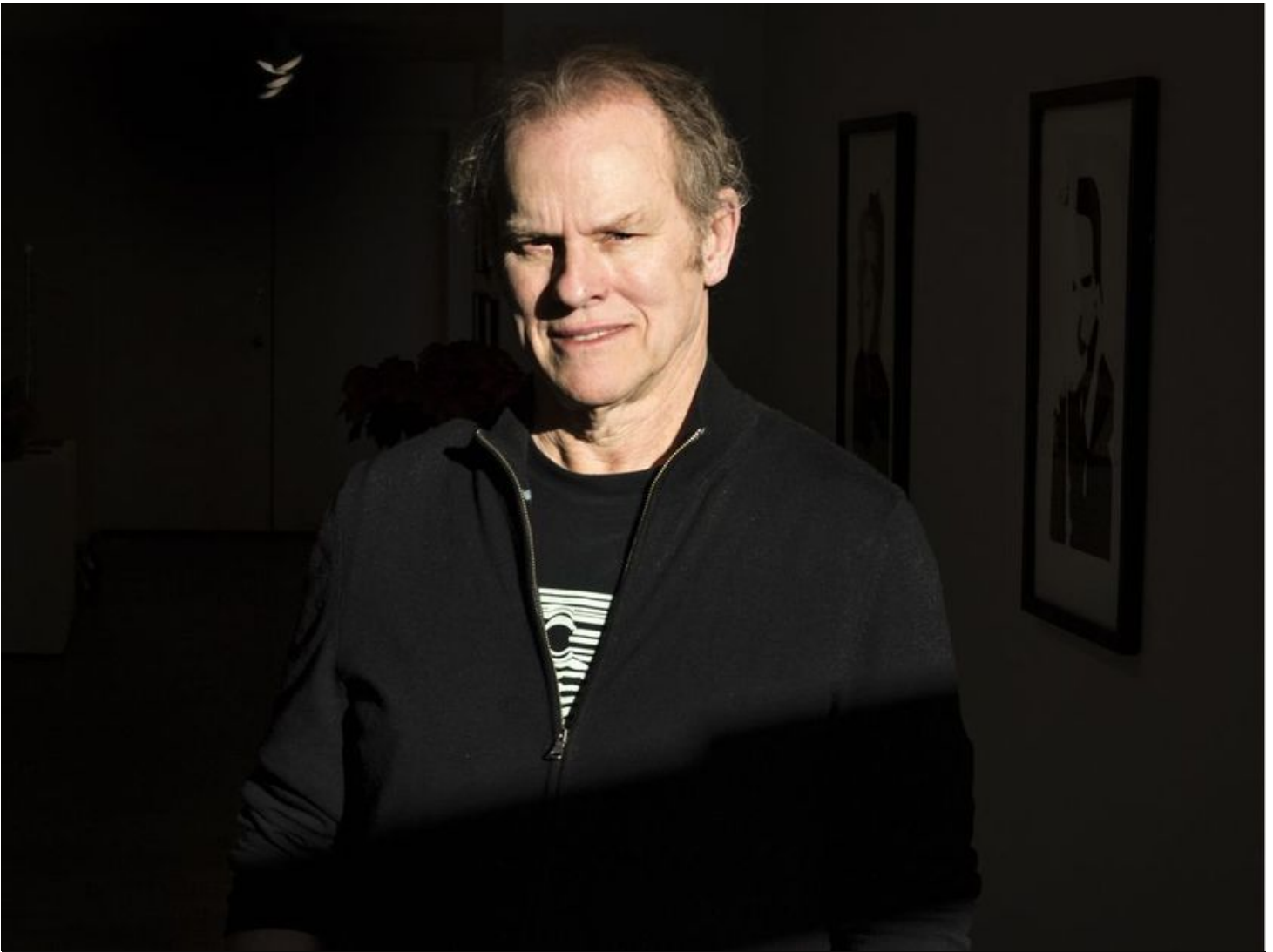


Compelling Calgarians: Chris Cran



BARB LIVINGSTONE, FOR THE CALGARY HERALD

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Postmedia Calgary For Compelling Calgarians feature in the Calgary Herald *KERIANNE SPROULE/POSTMEDIA*

He's an internationally renowned visual artist variously known as a godfather of Calgary's art scene and a seriously funny man.

But Chris Cran describes his career as the perfect place for someone who has "always had an issue with authority."

His career was launched in 1984, with The Self Portrait art series that featured Cran as the central character in everything from a man shooting himself in the foot, to a wife scolding her husband (Cran in both roles), to him accepting a cheque (in classic business handshake style) as art commission payment.

While art expressionism was on the upswing, Cran chose realism — on its downswing. "Things you weren't supposed to do, I was interested in."

The New York Times described Cran's career as "tampering with people's perceptions."

His childhood gave no early indication of an artistic bent, despite the fact walls in his family's B.C. home were covered in art, and his lineage includes a British watercolourist great-grandfather.

"I probably wanted to be a superhero," but a friend suggested giving art a shot.

"I did a still life and it was not good. But I was hooked."

He attended Alberta College of Art and Design and, while making his name in the art world, supported himself (and six kids) as a water-meter reader and portrait painter.

During his four-decade career, Cran has mentored new artists as an ACAD instructor and Stride Gallery board member, while his art is part of prestigious private and public collections (including National Gallery of

Canada and Glenbow Museum).

In 2016, *Chris Cran: Sincerely Yours* documented the nationwide touring exhibition of 110 works and the story behind one of Canada's most influential artists. His next major exhibition is slated for Nickle Galleries in 2019.

The man who always wears black — “it makes life easier” — continues to explore art, and life, with humour.

“When you are playing, there's no authority voice telling you what to do.”