

# ALTMAN SIEGEL

1150 25TH ST. SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94107

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www.altmansiegel.com



Chris Johanson  
November 3 – December 17, 2022

Altman Siegel is thrilled to present Chris Johanson's fourth solo exhibition with the gallery. Pairing new paintings with reworked sculptures, this show belies a major shift from previous bodies of work.

Contemplating the cycle of life, and of the material possessions we accumulate, Johanson's focus on repurposing found objects has deepened. Trading wood substrates for canvases constructed with found stretcher bars and recycled drop cloths, materials more resistant to paint than commercial canvas, Johanson has intentionally slowed down his process, using painting as a means of mindfulness and meditation. In slowing down, Johanson has eschewed text and figuration for thoughtful abstraction, utilizing form, color, and movement to reflect on themes of bereavement, connection, and impermanence. His swirling color fields, each shade unique, create peaceful rhythms, underscoring the artist's exploration of artmaking as a healing, therapeutic process.

Johanson has also revitalized his 2016/17 *Cents* sculptures for the exhibition. Originally created with found wood, these oddly shaped sculptures serially repeated the ¢ symbol to express the ever-present pressure of capitalism on us. Using found rope, collected over multiple years, Johanson transforms these once separate sculptures into one large, interconnected piece, tying them together to represent the sporadic nature of human connection. A cement human sculpture lays on the ground with indented spaces for the viewer to lay on top of. Several chairs made of recycled wood, some of which are made in collaboration with Johanna Jackson, further invite the viewer to rest and contemplate the installation.

Continuing the theme of connection, Johanson will also present a selection of works by 26 artists whose practices he admires. The group show joins together a diverse array of works by friends and colleagues, all of whom serve as sources of inspiration for Johanson's own practice.

"We had just moved to L.A. to try out a new sky and place to be. We were staying in the hills above Griffith Park at a friend's and had taken to long walks and bike rides.

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It was just below at the start of the miles of flat streets on Franklin on a ride that I happened upon a yard sale. A friendly older bohemian person greeted me, letting me know he was selling everything. The yard and driveway were covered in interesting vintage objects. There were a lot of doubles water skis, but only one from each pair. "You never know when you could use one of these". We talked for a while as I inquired about getting this or that. "Oh, I'm not sure I can let that go. Let me think about that one." "OK" I said and let him know maybe I'd come back.

And I did. This time staying for quite a while. He invited me inside, upstairs to his apartment above the garage. "I'm selling everything. I have to move." There was so much stuff. I kept inquiring about things for sale and he would say he would think about what he would sell it for or if he really did want to let it go. One would probably describe him as a hoarder. It was here I realized he was an artist. Lots of paintings of a woman in profile. Over and over painted over many years. He had met the woman he painted at an art school back east. Must have been in the 1960s judging by his age. I was told she was a beautiful person. I recall him telling me she was the daughter of a famous comedian in Hollywood. He loved her and many years ago they had stopped seeing each other. But he continued painting her. Gradually he incorporated these crisscrossed patterns of vibrant colors that were plaid variants in the backgrounds of her. I shared my appreciation for his work describing what I liked about it. He took out a pocket tape recorder and asked if he could record what I'd said. I felt maybe he needed the recording of the encounter we were having like the objects he was keeping. The conversation shifted back to his move, and I was glad to hear that as hard as getting out of there was going to be that he did have a place to go.

I never did see him again. It was perfect magical entrance to moving to a new place. I was personally at a crossroads of change in my life in which I knew art making was a good friend that I still wanted to know but did not know how much else was going to go. "

- Chris Johanson

Artists included are Mario Ayala, Jamal Gunn Becker, Rachid Bouhamidi, Susan Cianciolo, Alex Cohen, Erica Dawn Lyle, Francesca Gabbiani, Sara Mayako Gernsbacher, Marsea Goldberg, Zach Harris, Johanna Jackson, JPW3, Gary Panter, Kyle Ranson, Dylan Roberts, Rommel Romo, Aaron Rose, Eddie Ruscha, Louis M. Schmidt, Ross Simonini, Taravat Talepasand, Jenna Thornhill, Monica Canilao & Xara Thustra, Erin Trefry, Phil Wagner, and Aaron Wrinkle.

Chris Johanson's work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; MoCA Pacific Design Center, Los Angeles, CA; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA; and Malmö Konsthall, Malmö, Sweden. Group exhibitions include Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley, CA; McEvoy Foundation for the Arts, San Francisco, CA; Benaki Museum, Athens, Greece; Museum of Contemporary Art, Santa Barbara, CA; Whitney Biennial, New York, NY; Berlin Biennial, Berlin, Germany; Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul, Turkey; New Museum, New York, NY; Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Drawing Center, New York, NY; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL; SITE, Santa Fe, NM; Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, CA; Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA; Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada; and CCA Wattis Institute, San Francisco, CA. A new monograph of the artists work entitled: "Considering Unknow Know With What Is, And" is available for sale at the gallery.

For more information please contact [info@altmansiegel.com](mailto:info@altmansiegel.com) or 415-576-9300.