



CHRIS JOHANSON

A NEW RELEASE FROM PAULSON PRESS

Paulson Press is very pleased to announce the release of six new color etchings and a portfolio of twelve etchings by Chris Johanson. These editions will be available for release February 2003.

This is Johanson's first project with Paulson Press. He brings to these etchings the same spirit of invention and authentic outlook that characterize his painting, sculpture and installations. Johanson is a social artist acutely concerned with moral issues. His work evolves out of the artistic movement loosely coined by Glen Helfand as "the mission school," referring to the physical place where artists, writers and thinkers congregate. The neighborhood in Johanson's case is 16th and Mission Streets in San Francisco, an area that has nourished a thirty-something generation of San Francisco artists who mine an aesthetic of the local streets. Heartfelt, handmade and deeply observational work typifies this group; their brand of urban realism is blended with interests in graffiti, comic books, skateboarding and social activism. Their art has garnered attention locally and internationally, in part because its content resonates in our current climate of global uncertainty.

Johanson combines whimsical almost childlike, graffiti-based images with large ideas articulated in text. He exaggerates the eccentricities of the human character while simultaneously generalizing about our wide range of shared characteristics. In *You should all know something before we start on the second half of today's session*, a multi-ethnic group gathers together for therapy. A session leader offers inner guidance while brightly drawn figures focus their attention on a multicolored sculptural object. In the companion print *Two dimensional print of casual post-post-modern sculpture*, the same sculpture is enlarged and detailed in a single image. Sixty-four non-repeated vivid colors comprise Johanson's post-post-modern sculpture.

Johanson has been called "passionately utopian" by Holland Cotter in that his work is "about light as sustenance and greed as poison, about the power of fellowship and the possibility of being lifted up." This attitude appears as an underlying current in each of Johanson's prints. In *The main concept of this conceptual art is that peace is square* people sink in a mountain of their own lack of personal accountability and unsavory deeds. In the twelve portfolio images, *Everything that happens is because of the sun*, a set of six non-descript figures are silhouetted against a gray background. In the second set of six, these same figures are transformed into colorfully clothed individuals, basking in bright yellow light and each making statements that proclaim an identity. In *This is a picture of space*, boldly hued planets revolve around the sun, each tagged with signature attributes such as kindness, total order and control, secret needs and sociopath gene.

Lawrence Rinder cites Johanson's work as "universal in its iconography" although "aspects of his style are connected to a do-it-yourself permissiveness that has been flourishing in the Bay Area." He is attuned to his city's marginalia, the alienated, the down and out street dweller and the casualties of the American dream. Yet he typifies them empathetically with a sense of hope and an upbeat opportunity for growth, never disregarding their link to all living things. In the two prints *I am glad that I went to center* and *More awaits me there but right now I'm just going to deal with here*, Johanson aptly brings the isolated individual front and center. In the former, a lone figure sails the wide blue sea announcing himself to be part of the bigger whole. In the latter, a single figure stands atop a mountain peak. In these depictions, Johanson cuts through the core of human isolation and goes straight to the heart of his subjects.

Chris Johanson is represented by the Jack Hanley Gallery in San Francisco. He has also had solo exhibitions in galleries nationwide including Roberts & Tilton Gallery, Los Angeles, Deitch Projects, New York and Vedanta Gallery, Chicago and internationally with Georg Kargl Fine Arts, Vienna, Austria. He has received critical attention and acclaim through museum exhibitions including the 2002 Biennial Exhibition, Whitney Museum of American Art, New

1318 Tenth Street Berkeley, California 94710

Tel 510 559 2088 Fax 510 559 2085

e-mail: info@paulsonpress.com



You should all know something before we start on the second half of today's session, 2002

Sugarlift aquatint and aquatint etching
Somerset soft white textured paper
Image size 27" x 36"
Paper size 35 1/2" x 43"
Edition of 25



Two dimensional print of casual post-post-modern sculpture, 2002
Sugarlift aquatint and aquatint etching
Somerset soft white textured paper
Image size 20" x 16"
Paper size 27 1/4" x 22 1/2"



The main concept of this conceptual art is that peace is square, 2002
Sugarlift aquatint and aquatint etching
Somerset soft white textured paper
Image size 16" x 20"
Paper size 22 1/2" x 26"
Edition of 25



Everything that happens is because of the sun, 2002
Sugarlift aquatint and aquatint and hardground etching
Somerset soft white textured paper
Image size 6" x 5"
Paper size 9" x 8"
Portfolio of 12 etchings
Edition of 15



This is a picture of space, 2002
Sugarlift aquatint and aquatint etching
Somerset soft white textured paper
Image size 27" x 36"
Paper size 35 1/2" x 43"
Edition of 25



I am glad that I went to center, 2002
Sugarlift aquatint and aquatint etching
Somerset soft white textured paper
Image size 27" x 36"
Paper size 35 1/2" x 43"



More awaits me there but right now I'm just going to deal with here, 2002
Sugarlift aquatint and aquatint etching
Somerset soft white textured paper
Image size 7" x 9"
Paper size 13 1/2" x 15"
Edition of 15

York, Hammer Projects, UCLA Armand Hammer Museum, East Meets West, ICA, Philadelphia and Bay Area Now, Center for the Arts Yerba Buena Gardens, San Francisco. He is also a recipient of the SECA Art Award, an auxiliary of the San Francisco Museum of Art.

For more information about these prints, please contact Paulson Press at (510) 559.2088. Prices and availability are subject to change without notice.