

Chris Johanson
The Modern Institute, Aird's Lane Bricks Space
7th November 2025 – 14th January 2026
Preview: 6th November, 5:30 – 7:30 pm

'It is a very loud time right now. I am putting peaceful meditative intention into the work. Not to say that they are free of anxiety, anger and critical thoughts as I spend months to years making them. I do try and get a resonating quality of more loving than hating. That is my goal. These pieces are autobiographical documents of time spent. The politics, the walks in the neighbourhood with my dog, the mental health, the co-existence with what is around now is all in the pieces because to be is to be in everything.' with

Quite some time ago Michael Rooks curated an exhibit of H.C. Westermann that had a companion show of fans of his work that I was in with Ed Ruscha. We both wrote appreciation essays for the catalogue. Anyway, a few months later Eddy Ruscha said his father wanted to get ahold of me to ask about something. So, I was very happy to get a call asking me if I would like to do a print at Ed And Pat Hamilton's print studio in Venice Beach. I, of course, said yes and time and space is a trippy thing. And finally, after years of almost doing it, it's finally happened. I am so happy to have had this experience with them and Tyler Ferreira master printer and Jeff Cairns.'

– Chris Johanson

Chris Johanson presents a new suite of paintings across the Bricks Space. Their limited means – the canvases are former painter and decorator drop cloth and the stretcher bars are composed from recycled wood – belies their magical compositions. His gardens of swirling shapes and harmonious colour, often incorporating ordinary people, suggest that everything is interconnected, related and co-dependent. This chimes with his use of throwaway materials – showing an awareness of the impact of his own actions on the world at large.

Across time, Johanson has built up a variety of methods in his painting and individual pieces can often take several months or years to finish, allowing his thoughts to gestate and develop. The paintings use and follow the artist's body, the arc of the wrist and arm are found in the recurring liquid forms and balanced shapes of his compositions. In his own words, the paintings offer 'pieces of what life is made of'. They have a peaceful and positive quality, and the emergence of figures amid the sections of colour speaks to a desire for harmony between humans and the environment.

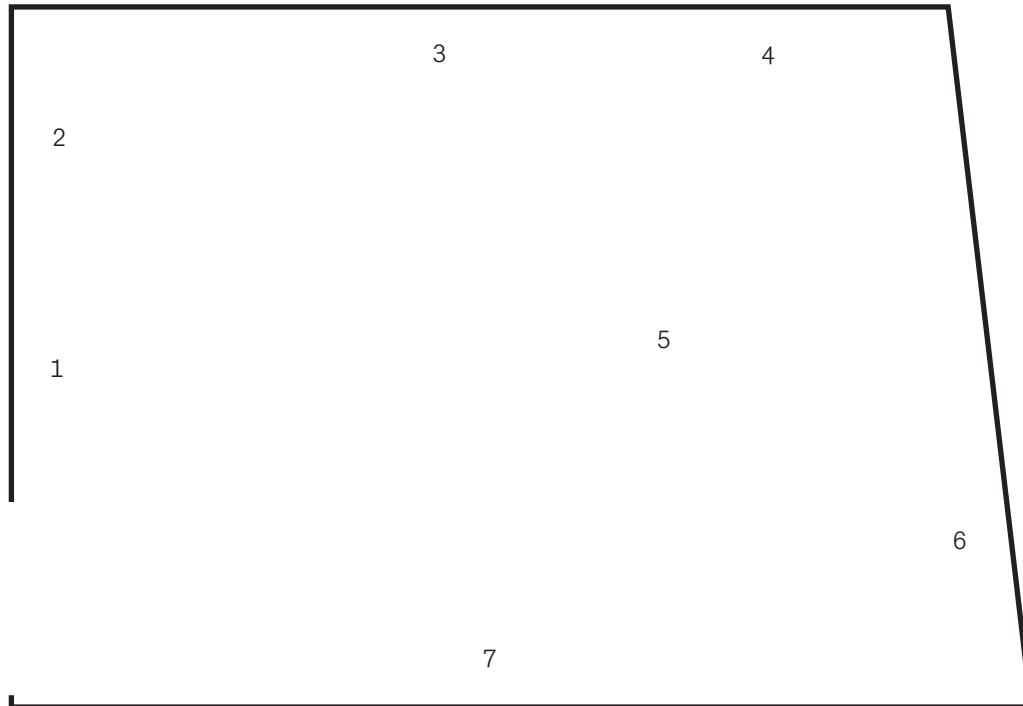
Chris Johanson (b. 1968, San Jose, California) lives and works between Portland and Los Angeles. Johanson's practice is multifaceted, incorporating painting, sculpture, installation and music. He was a key member in San Francisco's Mission School art movement during the 1990s and 2000s, and is the founder of the Quiet Music Festival in Portland, Oregon. Selected solo exhibitions include: 'Navigation', NANZUKA UNDERGROUND, Tokyo (2024); Altman Siegel Gallery, San Francisco (2022); 'Subject Matter, Unblivion, Peace Train of Thought | How I Figured Out How To Have A Show In 2021', The Modern Institute, Aird's Lane, Glasgow (2021); 'Paintings', Nicolai Wallner, Copenhagen (2019); 'Particulate Paper Poems', Albert Baronian, Brussels (2018); 'Imperfect Reality with Figures and Challenging Abstraction', The Conversation, Berlin (2016); 'Within The River of Time Is My Mind', The Museum of Contemporary Art, Pacific Design Center, Los Angeles (2013); 'Windows', Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York (2012); 'Alright Alright', Malmö Konsthall, Malmö (2011); 'APEX: Chris Johanson', Portland Art Museum, Portland (2007); 'Problem Does Not Compute', The Modern Institute, Glasgow (2004); MOMA, San Francisco (2003); and Hammer Projects, UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2001). Selected group exhibitions include: 'About Place: Bay Area Artists from the Svane Gift', de Young, San Francisco (2025); 'Bay Area Then', Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco (2025); 'SECA Award Show', MOMA, San Francisco (2011); 'Constellations: Paintings from the MCA Collection', Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2009); 'Have New Yes', Aspen Art Museum, Aspen (2006); 'Panic Room', DESTE Foundation, Athens (2006); 'Monuments for the USA', CCA Wattis Institute, San Francisco (2005); 'Beautiful Losers', Cincinnati Center for the Arts, Cincinnati (2004). Johanson presented work in the 4th Berlin Biennale (2006); the Istanbul Biennial (2005); and the Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2002).

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| <p>1 <i>Impermanence #2 (I do this dance to tell myself and you in no uncertain terms that this is a dance of love and you will not fuck with this love I have), 2025</i>
Acrylic and house paint on recycled canvas
157 x 85.8 x 2 cm
61 3/4 x 33 3/4 x 3/4 in</p> | <p>2 <i>Impermanence #9 (Ron from the past says hello to me in the present), 2025</i>
Acrylic and house paint on recycled canvas
57.2 x 76.5 x 2 cm
22 1/2 x 30 1/8 x 3/4 in</p> | <p>3 <i>Impermanence #1 (ups and downs, sketchy but not unfilled with figuring it out), 2022-2025</i>
Acrylic and house paint on recycled canvas
165.8 x 241 x 2 cm
65 1/4 x 94 7/8 x 3/4 in</p> |
| <p>4 <i>Impermanence #3 (with the flows that happen with you), 2025</i>
Acrylic and house paint on recycled canvas
106 x 73 x 2 cm
41 3/4 x 28 3/4 x 3/4 in</p> | <p>5 <i>#8 (I am of the infinity), 2025</i> Hand pulled lithograph
65.2 x 54.8 cm
25 5/8 x 21 5/8 in</p> | <p>6 <i>Impermanence #6 (persons are, and), 2025</i>
Acrylic and house paint on recycled canvas
78.9 x 35.6 x 2 cm
31 x 14 x 3/4 in</p> |
| <p>7 <i>Impermanence #7 (...Ajax, Chris, Niko and...), 2025</i> Acrylic and house paint on recycled canvas
105.5 x 78.8 x 2 cm
41 1/2 x 31 x 3/4 in</p> | | |