

HARMAN PROJECTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CONTRASTS

solo exhibition by Chris Austin
August 2nd to 23rd, 2025

SAN FRANCISCO – Harman Projects is pleased to announce *CONTRASTS*, a solo exhibition of new works by Toronto-based painter Chris Austin. Known for his dreamlike paintings of wildlife anachronistically navigating suburban and urban settings, Austin's latest body of work builds on his unique surreal visual language. This will mark the artist's second solo presentation with Harman Projects and his first solo exhibition in San Francisco.



Austin's work explores the precipice of narrative and metaphor. In *CONTRASTS*, marine life drifts quietly through familiar yet eerily ominous terrains: snow-covered streets, dimly lit intersections, and quiet neighborhoods under sodium light. These improbable juxtapositions unsettle and invite, prompting the viewer to confront their own sense of alienation while also sparking imagination and delight. Rendered in rich hues and cinematic lighting, the works suggest the filmic tension of Edward Hopper's twilight scenes (*House at Dusk*, 1935) and cerebral surrealism of René Magritte (*Le Domaine d'Arnheim*, 1962).

At the heart of Austin's practice lies a personal mythology stemming from his own deeply personal autobiographical experiences. The artist describes his aquatic protagonists as "symbolic anchors" drawn from his own childhood experiences embodying moments and memories of both chaos and clarity. Marine life, in particular, becomes a recurring metaphor for higher consciousness and emotional refuge. The scenes he paints are less about a literal coexistence of worlds than about navigating more abstract psychological terrains: moments of serenity and silence cast into the wake of dissonance and estrangement.

CONTRASTS opens on Saturday, August 2nd with a reception from 5 pm - 7 pm. For additional information, images, and feature interview content, email us at sf@harmanprojects.com.

HARMAN PROJECTS

WHAT

CONTRASTS

solo exhibition by Chris Austin

WHERE

Minnesota Street Project
1275 Minnesota Street, Suite 106
San Francisco, CA 94107

WHEN

On View: August 2nd to 23rd, 2025

Opening Reception: Saturday, August 2nd from 5 to 7pm

RELEVANT LINKS

Harman Projects: <https://www.harmanprojects.com/>

Chris Austin: <https://www.instagram.com/chrisaustinart/>

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Chris Austin is a painter and sculptor living and working in Toronto, Canada, whose paintings depict captivating scenes imbued with a surreal luminescence. His works are inspired by his travels through North America, and in particular, the Pacific Northwest. Chris explores the fluctuating state of nature and our place within that narrative. The underlying theme of his artwork is the climate crisis and the irreversible impact it has on wildlife. Chris also seeks to change the perspective of predator animals by introducing an alternative view of these majestic creatures.

ABOUT THE GALLERY

Harman Projects was founded in 2022 by curator and gallerist Ken Hashimoto Harman. Our goal is to provide an inclusive and welcoming environment to foster a community of likeminded artists, collectors, and art lovers in New York City, Los Angeles, San Francisco and beyond. The focus at Harman Projects is broad but lies mainly in the *New Contemporary* genre, encompassing historical movements such as New York City graffiti and SoCal pop-surrealism alongside contemporary schools of art such as Bay Area abstracted realism, International muralism and Japanese-inspired SuperFlat.