

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Chris Engman: *Prism*
April 29 – June 10, 2023
Opening Reception: Saturday, April 29, 4 to 7 PM

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“A prism breaks light into its constituent parts, revealing colors invisible to the human eye. It allows us to see, in other words, what is present but not perceived. This show is titled “Prism” in part for its vibrant colors. More importantly, because a camera is a prism. And most importantly, because my son is my prism. The world that I see through his eyes is new and strange, terrifying and beautiful. How wonderful is that?” — Chris Engman, April 2023

Luis De Jesus Los Angeles is very pleased to announce **Chris Engman: *Prism***, an exhibition of new photographs, on view in Gallery 1 and Gallery 2 from April 29 – June 10, 2023. An opening reception will be held on Saturday, April 29 from 4 to 7 pm.

A child's drawings are erratic, occasionally brilliant, very often brimming with vitality and pleasure. It was this brilliant vitality that made Engman his toddler's student. In studying his son's marks and watching as he made them, Engman observed moments like the way his son held his paintbrush and sometimes, though not always, found he held his in the same way. In reflecting, Engman began to step back to think about what he was doing; how he measures and calculates, making landscapes and rooms, composing and preparing. He considers the meanings and metaphors. When he's ready to make marks, he pushes those considerations to a quieter part of his mind and tries to emulate his son's weasel-like lack of hesitation, his fanaticism, his joy and oblivion.

These photographs are records of drawings and paintings on photographs. The drawings and paintings were made together with his 4-year-old son, Elio, in some cases, and by Engman in others. Drawings on paper by Engman or his son, are often used as source material, embellished or combined or altered freely. They are, among other things, an incomplete record of his and his son's preoccupations, and the struggles and joys of their relationship. Made alternately with dollar store kid's paint, pencils, crayons, chalk, high quality acrylics, oils, and pastels, the vibrant colors are inspired by children's art supply sets.

Combining photography with drawing and painting is an unexpected and exciting turn in Engman's practice. The stubborn indexicality of photography, which is to say, its complicated relationship to things that "were there", lends place and weight to the imaginary world of drawing and painting. At the same time the mark making adds whimsy, and color, and a seductive more visceral materiality to a medium that can often feel like a tomb.

Chris Engman (b. Seattle, 1978) received his MFA from USC Roski School of Fine Arts in 2013 and BFA from the University of Washington in 2003. Recently, Engman was the subject of solo exhibition *Land and Image: Chris Engman 2002-2022* at the Museum of Art and History in Lancaster, CA. Other notable exhibitions include *The Artist as Explorer*, Luis De Jesus Los Angeles,

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Los Angeles, CA; *Art and Hope at the End of the Tunnel*, USC Fisher Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA; *Chris Engman: Prospect and Refuge*, FotoFocus Biennial 2018: *Open Archive*, Weston Art Gallery, Cincinnati, OH; *Bloody Red Sun of Fantastic L.A.*, Piasa, Paris, France; *Landscapes*, 68 Projects, Berlin, Germany; and *Second Sight, New Representations in Photography*, Torrance Art Museum, Torrance, CA. Engman's work is held in collections internationally, including Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA; Houston Fine Arts Museum, Houston, TX; Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA; Portland Art Museum, Portland, OR; The Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, WA; Sir Elton John Collection, Atlanta, GA; Ines Musumeci Greco Collection, Rome, Italy; Microsoft Collection, Seattle, WA; the Cleveland Clinic Collection, Google Cloud Collection, as well as numerous corporate and private collections. Engman lives and works in Los Angeles, and is represented by Luis De Jesus Los Angeles.

For further information, including images and previews, please call 213-395-0762, or email: gallery@luisdejesus.com.

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