



Tony Hope

*Home Sweet Home*

09 December 2023 - 14 January 2024

Washington, DC: von ammon co is pleased to announce the opening of *Home Sweet Home*, a solo exhibition by Detroit-based artist Tony Hope. This is Tony Hope's second solo show with von ammon co and the gallery's twenty-eighth project in its current location.

In the center of the gallery, the artist has installed an entirely handcrafted and hand painted representation of an ice cream truck. With many allusions to the vehicle of the classic *Twisted Metal* character Sweet Tooth, the truck (rendered at around half scale) involves many peculiar alterations. A derelict vending machine carrying Faygo, Flamin' Hot Doritos, and other nutritionally deficient processed foods shares space with a bricolage of ice cream product stickers (those normally seen plastered on the side of an inner-city ice cream truck—all painted entirely by hand in acrylic). Ersatz weaponry—equal parts NERF and military—adorns the exterior of the vehicle, a nod to the video game, a profane melding of child's play and violence ("Watch for Children" warns a rakish hand painted sign on the truck's rear). With welded steel and a rotisserie engine, Hope has engineered a turntable below the truck that makes a full rotation every 45 minutes. The truck's headlights are on, and the gallery has otherwise been entirely blacked out. As a result, the only work that is ever fully visible will be whatever (if any) is in the view of the lights. To fully examine every work in the show, the visitor must reserve time to allow the truck to sweep its full circuit around the room.

On the walls of the gallery are examples of Hope's recent, intensive painting projects. A lineup of new cereal box paintings is dedicated exclusively to the brand-name holiday editions of classic cereals. While veiled under more generalized "holiday" rhetoric, these limited edition consumer products are almost always dedicated to Christmas and its cheerful iconography. The American shopper is used to the saturation of Christmas-themed consumables during the months approaching the holiday; many only have access once the day is over, the crispy cereal has begun to harden, and the unsold boxes find their way to dollar stores and food donation bins. Though phenomenally exacting, these paintings are stretched canvas, and are inflated in size: sugary American Eucharists, monuments to ephemeral consumption.

A variety of Hope's highly analytical photorealist collage paintings will accompany the Christmas paintings. These works use a glut of found and personal images to create a kaleidoscopic vision of Middle American malaise and reverie. Painted entirely by hand in acrylic, these works are so virtuosically rendered that they cease to be read as paintings: a thick resin pour further nullifies the artist's hand, and application of machine-cut holographic films distance these strange objects from the vernacular of painting on traditional support.

A holiday scene will be painted by the artist on the gallery's facade glass, and will remain for the show's run.

Tony Hope (b. 1989, Redford, MI) is a multi-disciplinary artist living and working in Detroit, Michigan. Raised in a city emblematic of quicksilver economics in post-industrial America, Hope's practice bridges video, sculpture, painting, installation, and collage. Often playing off iconic 90's franchises, media, and consumer goods, Hope turns nostalgia into phantasmagoric dreamscapes. The artist's works simultaneously elevate and expose exurban rituals: the county fair, the technicolor strip mall, the seasonal streetside Halloween inflatable or nativity scene. Hope creates a new poetics of the Rust Belt: fearful and mystic, pliable and carnivalesque. The artist's work is informed by his formal and professional training, running the gamut from a 2015 Yale MFA to his time as a set designer for the horror-core hip-hop duo Insane Clown Posse.



Hope's work has been exhibited across the country and internationally since 2012, with notable exhibitions at von ammon co (Washington, DC), Ashes/Ashes (New York, NY), Marlborough Gallery (New York, NY), and Jessica Silverman Gallery (San Francisco, CA). Tony Hope is currently represented by von ammon co in Washington, DC.