

For Immediate Release:

Chris Johanson, Charley Harper and Matt Keegan

January 6th – February 5th, 2011

Altman Siegel is pleased to announce a special group show featuring the work of Chris Johanson, Charley Harper and Matt Keegan. This exhibition compares the process and technique of three artists, whose work is very different but overlaps with a playful conceptualism and meticulous use of materials.

Widely known for his colorful and deeply observational paintings and installations made from recycled and scrap material, Johanson's work balances simple figures and straightforward declarative statements with abstract modernism and a beautiful sense of color. The content he conveys feels immediately personal and humble, yet ambitiously tackles universal issues facing society, the earth, and humankind. Much of his work is humorous, yet at the core of each composition is a pointed comment on the precariousness of the human condition.

Chris Johanson (b. 1968) lives and works in Portland, OR and Los Angeles, CA. His work has been included in the 2002 Whitney Biennial, *Beautiful Losers*, which toured museums in 2004-2005, the Vancouver Art Gallery, Museum of Contemporary Art (San Diego), SITE Santa Fe, SFMOMA (San Francisco), and UCLA Hammer Museum (Los Angeles).

Transferring, accumulating, and recombining existing images and text to construct new images, objects, and situations is central to Keegan's process. Text plays an important role throughout Keegan's work, especially the way in which people connect to each other through language. In all the text-based works, Keegan brings the physicality of language to the forefront of our awareness: he emphasizes the way letters and words are shaped, and the way they sound when they are spoken and repeated. Keegan tends to use familiar words, phrases, and texts that are extremely pared down and require active participation of the viewer.

Matt Keegan (b. 1976) is currently featured in a group show at Conduits Gallery (Milan). Keegan's past exhibitions include shows at The Midway Contemporary Art Center, (Minneapolis); The Guggenheim (Bilbao) and The New Museum, Sculpture Center and White Columns (New York). Keegan is also the publisher of several books and catalogues including the limited edition publication North Drive Press.

Charley Harper (1922 – 2007) is best known for his modernist illustrations of animals. Harper's great skill lies in his ability to reduce complex forms down to their most basic structures without losing the animated dynamism of his subjects. His efficient use of form and color produced stylish and vibrant depictions of birds, animals and scenes from contemporary life. Harper's use of geometric designs to describe natural patterns such as scales and feathers predates the styles taken for granted and mass-produced in contemporary graphic design. His unique aesthetic has created an influential archetype that continues to look fresh and modern today.

A retrospective of the artist's career was presented shortly before his death in 2007 at the Contemporary Art Center in Cincinnati. Charley Harper's work was recently documented in a catalogue called *An Illustrated Life* edited by Todd Oldham and published by Ammo Books.

For more information please contact the gallery at 415 576 9300 or info@altmansiegel.com.