

Wish You Were Here: *Chris Leib*

When did you live in the Bay Area, and what brought you here?

I grew up in the Bay Area, down the Peninsula, and went to UC Berkeley. After college, I stumbled into a job as an illustrator. When that ended I saved money and moved to San Francisco to take art classes. And I ended up staying in SF for nearly 20 years.

Where did you end up?

We've moved a lot since leaving SF. We were in Brooklyn for a time and then back to California. A couple of years ago we moved to Berlin, Germany.

Has your artwork changed or evolved since you left the Bay Area?

In San Francisco I had been painting traditional, though somewhat odd, still life and portraits. After we left SF, making artwork seemed irrelevant for a time. I spent the first couple years thinking I would never show my work again. Oddly, this freed me up. I began making large drawings, working primarily from my imagination, which is how I often worked in my sketchbooks. That led to series of paintings I called 'Sabotaging Eden.' It was about distorted Cosmonauts / Astronauts travelers to the mythical birthplace of Western Culture, Eden, where they are agent provocateurs setting up the Fall of Man and the Expulsion from the Garden. Since then it has branched out from there.

What are you up to now?

I am returning to a series I began in 2013 to 2017 of Queen / Astronaut paintings for shows coming up in Munich this Fall, as well as shows in the US and Australia. I am also teaching a bit online and here in Berlin.