



A New Three-Dimensional Installation by Chris Engman Invites the Viewer to Step Inside a Photograph

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"Containment" (2018), site-specific installation created as a part of FotoFocus Biennial 2018 exhibition "Chris Engman: Prospect and Refuge" at the Alice F. and Harris K. Weston Art Gallery, photo by Tony Walsh

Artist [Chris Engman](#) transports natural landscapes such as waterfalls, caves, and vast deserts to domestic interiors by securing large-scale photographs to

the room's walls, ceilings, and floors. "I believe photography derives its power precisely from the fact it can't be entered, however much we may want to," Engman tells Colossal. "When I make photographs I try to be mindful of this, even to exploit it."

His most recent work, *Containment*, is his first installation which allows visitors to step inside. The work features a rushing stream surrounded on two sides by dense forest, and on the top by a branch-covered sky. Engman thinks of the work as a singular photograph, even though it consists of more than three hundred individual prints applied to the surface of the installation's temporary walls. Although the piece can be entered, unlike his other works, there is still a hesitation on the part of the viewer. Engman explains that once one enters the work its believability as a singular landscape becomes penetrated. Each step deeper inside the work makes the photographed landscape appear increasingly warped and unreal.

"Even so," says Engman, "compared to a singular framed photograph the experience of this installation for the viewer is much more physical and immersive. The structure is a room, not an image of a room. The photograph is an object, in addition to being an illusion. It has weight, and volume, and changes as you walk around it. Making this installation has been a thrilling process, and this new way of working seems to afford many new possibilities."

The work is curated by Carissa Barnard of FotoFocus and is exhibited alongside several of his photographs at the Cincinnati Arts Association's [Alice F. and Harris K. Weston Art Gallery](#) in Cincinnati, Ohio through November 18. The exhibition is a part of the [2018 FotoFocus Biennial](#), a photography and lens-based presentation of over 400 artists at art spaces across Cincinnati, Dayton, Columbus, and Northern Kentucky. You can visit exhibitions and attend programming for the biennial through January 2019. Engman will have his third solo exhibition with [Luis De Jesus Los Angeles](#) in February 2019.



"Containment" (detail) (2018), photo by Tony Walsh



"Containment" (detail) (2018), photo by Tony Walsh



"Landscape for Candace" (2015), Digital pigment print, 43 x 55½ inches, courtesy of the artist and Luis De Jesus Los Angeles



"Containment" (2015), Digital pigment print, 43 x 58 inches, courtesy of the artist and Luis De Jesus Los Angeles



"Landscape for Quentin" (2017), Digital pigment print, 43 x 55½ inches, courtesy of the artist and Luis De Jesus Los Angeles



"Prospect" (2016), Digital pigment print, 43 x 55½ inches courtesy of the artist and Luis De Jesus Los Angeles



"Refuge" (2016), Digital pigment print, 43 x 53 inches, courtesy of the artist and Luis De Jesus Los Angeles



"Equivalence" (2017), Digital pigment print, 43 x 55½ inches, courtesy of the artist and Luis De Jesus Los Angeles