

ARTFORUM



View of "Tony Hope: an end to sleep," 2021

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Washington, DC: Tony Hope at VON AMMON CO

Tony Hope's "an end to sleep"—the artist's most stunning and ambitious presentation to date, as well as his first solo outing with Von Ammon Co.—is a surreal neon fun house chock-full of horror, despair, laughter, and lightness. It is also, auspiciously, the exhibition space's thirteenth project.

In the middle of this gallery turned amusement park, Hope creates a chance for you to exorcise your sleep-paralysis demons—and suss out the somewhat tenuous connections between insomnia and creative genius—by interacting with an assortment of phantasmagoric artworks. The main attraction is a fully playable, six-hole miniature golf course (all works *Untitled*, 2021), which features scenes from the *Nightmare on Elm Street* movie franchise. Hope's animatronic sculptures and hyperrealistic paintings, the latter of which are based on VHS-tape covers from the *Elm Street* films or are ingeniously crafted from children's sleeping bags, are treated with

black-light paint so that parts of them become visible in the dark, after the UVA fixtures are turned on.

The gallery's blocked-out doors and windows add to the sense of disorientation and delirium, obscuring the line between dreaming and reality. As we sleepwalk through the sludge of this pandemic haze, Hope's show gives us an opportunity to confront the myriad terrors of our brave new world. In the middle of a heart outlined on the floor is a bed with a hole at the center of it. Suspended above this void is a long tube of soft fabric accented with glittering lights. Peeking out from beneath some pillows are vintage copies of *Penthouse* magazine. And to one side of the bed is a staticky TV—a portal to Freddy Krueger's bloody cinematic universe, from which he might climb out at any moment. It's entirely apt to say that "an end to sleep" is a form of exposure therapy for this troubling, terrifying age.

Tony Hope's *an end to sleep* runs until 31 October 2021