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"Untitled" by Tony Hope in his show "Home Sweet Home" at von ammon co. (Vivian Doering)

Tony Hope, *Home Sweet Home*

MARK JENKINS | 05 JAN 24

Tony Hope likes to work under the cover of darkness. The Detroit artist's previous Von Ammon Co. show, presented about two years ago, was a miniature golf course whose holes were modeled on "Nightmare on Elm Street" movies. In the blacked-out gallery, the installation was visible principally because its Day-Glo features glowed under ultraviolet lights. Hope's "Home, Sweet Home" is even dimmer, with just one source of illumination: the headlights of a half-size model of an ice cream truck, which makes a complete rotation every 45 minutes so that its beams briefly reveal the other artworks.

On one wall are oversize cereal boxes decorated with Christmas themes, painted exactly on canvas. The 3D creations appear mostly to be facsimiles of actual product packages — one of them a Kellogg's Corn Flakes carton with a Norman Rockwell Santa — but with some elements invented by the artist. On the opposite side are mixed-media, multilevel photo-collages that include cereal imagery among many other commercial visuals.

The ice cream truck is not just central to the show's layout, but also the most striking object on exhibit. Formerly a set designer for Insane Clown Posse, the Detroit "horrorcore" hip-hop duo, Hope is a skilled fabricator. The truck features scary clown faces and an array of mounted weaponry, including rockets and machine guns. The vehicle might seem to be the product of the artist's nightmares, but in fact it is modeled on one from the video game "Twisted Metal." Hope doesn't need to invent ominous visions of American pop culture. He can just replicate ones that are all around him.

Tony Hope: Home Sweet Home Through Jan. 14 at von ammon co., 3330 Cady's Alley NW. vonammon.co. 202-893-9797.