Statement by Esteban Cabeza de Baca

I make observational paintings of my dreams and what I see around me. My work is conceived of in one sitting much like an action painting. Some sessions last hours to trigger involuntary memories. My subjects are best discovered naturally and loosely painted wet into wet. To catch my dreams, I occasionally work in complete darkness with only black and white paint. This sensory deprivation helps me focus on individual properties of light and structure. While painting for instance—the moon through a spider web or my dream of swimming up from oceanic depths, I’m harmonizing my unconscious with reality. I want painting to captivate 21st-century viewers long enough to thoughtfully reconsider their life and our time on earth.

Esteban Cabeza de Baca (b. 1985) is a painter from the border town of San Ysidro, CA. He is currently an MFA candidate at Columbia University.


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