

HESSE FLATOW

Bogojev, Sasha. "Nat Meade's Explorations of Male Archetypes." *Juxtapoz*. Online. July 05, 2017.

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Art & Culture

Nat Meade's Explorations of Male Archetypes

July 05, 2017 | in Painting

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[Froelick Gallery](#) in Portland and [Schneider Museum](#) later this year, we got a chance to have a look into [Nat Meade's Brooklyn studio](#). The new pieces are continuing his ongoing practice of painting portraits based on a photograph, a real person, a scene from movie, and most often, on a memory.

Through his work Meade often explores male archetypes, focusing and exaggerating certain features and accessories such as the nose, glasses, mouths, beards, tears, cigarettes, etc. He usually starts working on several small studies which he then uses as a reference for the final

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painting. Working exclusively with oil on linen or casein on paper, the finished pieces have unmistakable color scheme, intense brush work and recognizable rich texture. This is achieved by layering several iterations of the painting on the same surface, scraping it down and working back on it. Each of the iterations have more reduced attributes until the finished image appears, focused on smallest details that sparked artist's initial curiosity. Later on, he might be working with the exact same image on another painting, only using different color palette or technique, further exploring the ways of portraying the subject and exposing desired features. Using this time consuming procedure on such small scale works, creates a peculiar finish which exalts the image and the overall quality. Both sublime and joyful while buffoonish and absurd at the same time, the subjects are all inspired by Meade's childhood idea of a God or father, based on a family owned woodcut of a bearded Walt Whitman. Through his work the artist is juxtaposing the small formats and cartoonish aesthetic against the monumental representation of statue like manly figures. Through such approach he is parodying the idea of elevated personage by exposing possible weaknesses hidden behind such appearance.—Sasha Bogojev

Photo credit by Cary Whitier and the artist.