

• FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE •

Esteban Cabeza de Baca & Heidi Howard
Night & Day Dreams

August 22 — September 28, 2024
Opening Reception: Thursday, August 22, 6–8 pm
Free and open to the public | Artists in attendance

David B. Smith Gallery is proud to present *Night & Day Dreams*, a collaborative exhibition by New York-based artists Heidi Howard and Esteban Cabeza de Baca. Featuring paintings made individually and collaboratively by the artist couple throughout the Main Gallery and Project Room, poetic and deeply resonant messages on human connection to celestial bodies, landscape, and one another come to the forefront.

The land on which we stand, soaked in blood and bathed in moonlight, is as much a part of the story of humanity as the individuals that comprise society. In their differing ways, Howard and Cabeza de Baca approach the concept of the self vs. the interpersonal, at times divorced from physical grounding while at others tied directly to place. As partners of over a decade with distinct practices that occasionally come together in collaborative works, there is a spiritual quality in each of their canvases, one that spins affectionately through subjects, even when tackling dark historical moments and the echoes of colonialism.

In Howard's portrait work *Mira Dancy in her Garden*, the artist's interpersonal connection in the here and how is underscored, illustrating the fellow artist through her cultivated space and personal effects, energetically deploying abstraction and pattern. Community, an invisible thread that shapes human action, is a benchmark of Howard's work, as seen in their nearly 20 years of painting portraiture. Human and floral subjects thrive side by side, blending through compositions and informing one another.

Acequias, Cabeza de Baca's largest work in the exhibition, features a mirage-like rock portal through time and space above a waterscape sparkling with the sun's orbital path. Referencing agricultural irrigation systems operated by local communities rather than government dating back to Spanish settlement times, Cabeza de Baca complicates our understanding of progress, technology, and community, by revealing the historical truths of Native enslavement and the wrought legacy of colonialism. Fleeting moments and pivotal eras are flattened and examined in Cabeza de Baca's work, often to mystical ends.

In their collaborative paintings, *Carrizozo*, and *Future Butterfly*, a shared vision punctuated by their individual aesthetic sensibilities shines. Desert landscapes in heavy bloom have an optimistic aura, where the palette and human-centric tenderness of Howard and hauntingly atemporal spirals of Cabeza de Baca break the figure plane, reminding viewers of each of our roles in time's unrelenting narrative.

Somewhere in spaces between the incalculable forms of relationships and connectivity, coalesces the experiences that color perception. Heidi Howard and Esteban Cabeza de Baca's *Night & Day Dreams* breaks apart these factors, at times capturing this dissection on the same canvas—ultimately speaking to the interwoven layers embedded within our shared realities.



Esteban Cabeza de Baca, *From Here to Eternity*, 2024, acrylic on canvas, 40 x 40 in. (101.6 x 101.6 cm)



Heidi Howard, *Self Moon*, 2024, acrylic on canvas, 40 x 30 in. (101.6 x 76.2 cm)

About Esteban Cabeza de Baca

Esteban Cabeza de Baca was born 1985 in the bordertown of San Ysidro, CA. Esteban lives and works between Queens, NY and the US Southwest. Cabeza de Baca employs a broad range of painterly techniques, entwining layers of graffiti, landscape, and pre-Columbian pictographs in ways that confound Cartesian single-point perspective. His work is included in the collections of Harvard University (Cambridge, MA); Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (San Diego, CA); Phoenix Art Museum (Phoenix, AZ); and Williams College Museum of Art (Williamstown, MA). Esteban holds a MFA from Columbia University and a BFA from The Cooper Union.

About Heidi Howard

Heidi Howard is an American artist born, raised, and currently based in Queens, New York. Howard paints portraits, whenever possible, with the sitter in the room. Their process and style changes with each sitter, reflecting images, energies, tastes, and smells that emerge over the course of the painting. Since 2018 Howard's practice has expanded to site-specific wall paintings, in- and outdoor sculptures, and collaborative works that examine humans' relationship to their environments.

Howard has exhibited at many prestigious venues including Wave Hill Garden and Cultural Center, Gaa Gallery, Rhode Island School of Design, Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, the Queens Museum, W139, The Hunterdon Museum of Art, and James Cohan Gallery. Howard has been awarded artist residencies including the Terra Summer Residency, Rauschenberg Residency, Carrizozo AIR, and Palazzo Monti. Their work has been discussed in *Vogue Magazine*, *The Paris Review*, and *The Brooklyn Rail*, amongst other publications. *Colors make us do vibrant deeds!*, Howard's first monograph will launch in September 2024 in conjunction with an eponymous solo exhibition at the The LeRoy Neiman Center for Print Studies at Columbia University.

About David B. Smith Gallery

David B. Smith Gallery is committed to presenting intelligent and culturally relevant exhibitions in its Denver location, featuring the region's most important emerging talent alongside internationally recognized artists. Through its curatorial program, participation in art fairs, and extensive media coverage in publications such as *Artforum*, *Art in America*, and *ARTnews*, David B. Smith Gallery has cultivated a strong regional, national and international collector audience. *The New York Times* hailed the gallery as offering "an exciting contrast of cutting edge works." The gallery also maintains an active publishing division, which produces exhibition catalogues and editions.

David B. Smith Gallery is a member of the New Art Dealers Alliance (NADA).

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