

Robert McCann

Statement

I begin from the premise that more is more. I'm very attracted to the number of simultaneous intentions and cross-purposes that can be acted out in a single painting. I've also wanted to depict action—human interaction and dynamic design. This has led me to move from direct observational painting to art that is derived largely through a drawing process. I draw from life, memory, and imagination, in a disjointed searching process. So I make a lot of drawings that instigate painting ideas, that I then make drawings for, and that I then make drawings from.

I think the best subjects for art are things that people have mixed feelings about. Aggression and submission have been recurring themes in my recent work, and the tipping point between action and violence. Putting together these juxtapositions, these visual analogies, doesn't negate any of the other things that a painting is about. Much of it happens at the fingertips or at the arm's radius, or its self-contained within a work. The physicality or the abstract design is something intuited in service of the story—tragicomic, absurd, convoluted; it's a framework, inspiration for elaboration. Its kind of awkward to try to handle a fully-formed thought piece by piece. My art isn't pure.