

Joshua Hagler is an American painter whose practice expands into installation, photography and digital animation and illustration. His work addresses contemporary societal issues such as evangelical religion, or nature of dichotomies such as right wing/left wing, hero/villain and good/evil. His personal experience and autobiographical environment of Middle America is of key concern for his artistic approach.

Joshua Hagler's practice is based on self-directed research and extensive travelling. The perceiving and integrating of creative influences forms a fundamental moment in his artistic process. References range from Italian religious art to Max Beckmann, and in general German Expressionism and New Objectivity. What interests the artist in these artistic movements is their strong psychological and sociological vein. In a late series, Hagler explores the concept of 'violence of the mind', which he defines as any act of imposing a narrative on an individual to create an enemy. Through his work, the artist aims at exposing such inherent mechanisms and foster a reconsideration of existing beliefs and archetypes.

Ranging from small scale to over-life size, Joshua Hagler's paintings reside between the figurative and the abstract. By times clearly discernible, at others only a vague silhouette, the figure always reoccurs in the artist's work alluding to specific situations or subjects, or general topics such as memory or experience. Particularly in his vast landscape paintings, the artist draws upon photographic sources which he abstracts and thereby reappropriates into a new visual language.

His technique is marked by distortions, mark making, smearing, cutting, as well as the use of textile elements to create a three-dimensional aspect to his work. The paintings, thus, present as an excavation of and in time where layers of content fuse with those of color.

"The paintings, I think, are artifacts resulting from a need to make contact with someone who is both present and absent, right there in the picture, yet a product of the imagination."

– Joshua Hagler

Joshua Hagler was born at Mountain Home Air Force Base in Idaho in 1979. In 2002, he graduated from the University of Arizona in Tucson with a degree in visual communications. He has been awarded numerous prizes, among them the Dave Bown Projects Award of Excellence, New Museum, New York, NY, US; and the Juror's Circle Prize, Colorado University Art Museum, Boulder, CO, US. He has completed various international artist residencies such as the Roswell Residence program, Roswell, NM, US; and the residency at Lademoen Kunstnerverksteder, Trondheim, NO, among others. The artist regularly lectures and realizes curatorial projects. Joshua Hagler's work has been widely exhibited internationally in both solo and group exhibitions. In spring 2021, the artist will first exhibit with Bode Projects in Germany. Joshua Hagler lives and works in Roswell, NM, US.