

ESTEBAN CABEZA DE BACA'S NEW MoMA PS1 PLAZA MURAL *ANCESTRAL DREAMS* NOW ON VIEW

LONG ISLAND CITY, New York, June 25, 2026— MoMA PS1's entrance features a new mural by Queens-based artist **Esteban Cabeza de Baca** (b. 1985, San Diego), now on view through spring 2027. The mural, titled *Ancestral Dreams* (2026), weaves together Mesoamerican iconography, labor histories, and speculative futures, envisioning, for the artist, a dimension where advocacy for migrant communities is inseparable from the protection of the land. Cabeza de Baca's work marks the second MoMA PS1 Plaza Mural, an annual commission juried by local cultural leaders, including curators, organizers, and artists. This year's jury included Kaitlin García-Maestas (independent curator); José Esparza Chong Cuy (Executive Director and Chief Curator, Storefront for Art and Architecture); and Jaclyn Reyes (artist and co-founder, Little Manila Queens Bayanihan Arts).

Ancestral Dreams draws from syncretic iconography of resistance, faith, and survival. Black eagles connote the ongoing United Farm Workers movement. Prayer hands entwined with a rosary reflect tenets of Liberation Theology, which originated in Latin America in the late 1960s and drew from Marxist thought to address poverty and other forms of oppression. Cabeza de Baca interweaves these images with environmental abstractions and Mesoamerican symbology, such as a blue headdress referencing the Blue Corn God of Tenochtitlan and Maya stelae, and the "Three Sisters" (corn, beans and squash), deities of sustenance central to Indigenous cultures across the Americas.

Layered with nods to Mexican Muralism and the Works Progress Administration, Cabeza de Baca engages the mural as a site of social advocacy. The mural uses symbology to propose futures of community action that have been imagined across cultures and timelines. It pays homage to migrant families, as well as artists from 5Pointz, the legendary graffiti and muralism site formerly located across from MoMA PS1, as figures climb up a giant hand that carries them towards a better future.

Esteban Cabeza de Baca is a painter who lives and works between Long Island City, New York, and the Southwestern United States. His work has been exhibited at venues such as MoCA Tucson (2023), The Drawing Center (2019), the Royal Palace Amsterdam (2018), the Yale University School of Sacred Music (2017), and the Leroy Neiman Art Center (2014, 2015), among others. Cabeza de Baca has received numerous grants and awards, including a Civitella Ranieri Visual Art Fellowship (2024), a NYFA Painting Fellowship (2021), a Henk en Victoria de Heus Fellowship (2018), a Stokroos Foundation Grant (2017), a Sharpe-Walentas Studio Program Award (2014), a Stern Fellowship (2013), and a Robert Gamblin Painting Grant (2013). He received a BFA from Cooper Union, School of the Arts in 2010 and an MFA from Columbia University in 2014.

MoMA PS1 Plaza Mural: Esteban Cabeza de Baca is organized by Elena Ketelsen González, Associate Curator.

SUPPORT

Support is provided by the MoMA PS1 Emerging Artist Fund.

ABOUT MoMA PS1

Inspired by daring artists, MoMA PS1 is committed to the exploration of contemporary art and culture, broadening perspectives on the issues of our day, and engaging New Yorkers and communities across the world. Founded in 1976, the institution was a defining force in the alternative space movement in New York City, transforming a nineteenth-century public schoolhouse in Long Island City into a site for artistic experimentation and creativity. PS1 has been a member of New York City's Cultural Institutions Group (CIG) since 1982 and affiliated with The Museum of Modern Art since 2000.

Directions: MoMA PS1 is located at 22-25 Jackson Avenue at 46th Ave in Long Island City, Queens, across the Queensboro Bridge from midtown Manhattan. Traveling by subway, take the E, M, or 7 to Court Sq; or the G to Court Sq or 21 St Van Alst. By bus, take the Q67 to Jackson and 46th Ave or the B62 to 46th Ave.

Admission: MoMA PS1 is a place for everyone. Free admission is made possible by Sonya Yu. Tickets may be reserved online at mo.ma/ps1tickets.

Visitor Guide: Discover even more from MoMA PS1 with the Bloomberg Connects. Read wall text, hear directly from artists, and uncover the building's history with this multimedia visitor guide. This digital experience is made possible through the support of Bloomberg Philanthropies.

Information: For general inquiries, call (718) 784-2084 or visit moma.org/ps1.

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