Rodrigo Hernández “with what eyes?” at CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco

Art often engages with the indescribable, and the work of Rodrigo Hernández is no exception. Hernández has developed a practice that does not seek to clarify, but to muddy the lines of categorization. In the worlds he creates, things are never settled or defined.

Decentering the human subject, the exhibition begins with a simple question posed by the Mexican philosopher David M. Peña-Guzmán: Are humans the only dreamers on Earth?

In thinking through this query, Hernández contracts and expands the exhibition space through temporary walls and apertures, making us aware of how we occupy space. Akin to a scientific experiment on animal cognition or the fragmented arrangement of a dreamscape, Hernández’s spatial configurations are an exercise in perspective and perception, a hallucinatory mise en scène.

Considering the exhibition medium as analogous to a dream, Hernández presents a new body of work that oscillates between the 2D and 3D plane, representation and abstraction, the human and nonhuman. Our efforts to access the unique experience of a nonhuman animal—its umwelt—amount to an impossible task, where we encounter a conceptual line that cannot be crossed. Yet we can still represent or picture that line, or, as Hernández says, “have an intuition of where that line sits.”

This is the artist’s first museum solo exhibition in the United States.

Curated by
Diego Villalobos

at CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco
until February 24, 2024