

Meredith Moles - Artist's Statement - *Down El Cerrito*

Hundreds of secret stairways lead up and down the hills of the Bay Area. I've been walking them and painting them for a few years; but the pandemic magnified their meaning. My very first drive after the lockdown started was from my home in Albany to the El Cerrito hills to take reference photos for a painting, which became *Down El Cerrito*. It was eerie and somewhat alarming, that ten-minute drive - empty streets, dark storefronts in mid-day. But after I got to the hills, the stairways still felt safe. The hills stretched out warmly in front of me and the stairways welcomed me, new beauty and even the promise of adventure around each bend. Other walkers kept their distance but were friendly in their greetings.

Soon after, we learned that joining friends outdoors, masked, 6 feet apart was a very safe way to be together. For months, outdoor walks - often stairway walks - were the only ways I saw my closest friends. I've read that others have also taken to the stairs for company and for solace: <https://oaklandside.org/2021/03/26/walking-with-grief-love-and-serenity-on-the-east-bays-secret-stairs/>.

I hope my paintings resonate with viewers in expressing the beauty, fun, and peace of our urban neighborhood walks, and remind them of the way that an outdoor ramble can bring solace, comfort, and even joy in solitude, and can also bring people together, even in isolated times.

MEREDITH MOLES

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SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2020 – Abrams Claghorn Gallery, *Secret Stairways*, Albany, CA

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2021 – Arts Benicia, *That Which Surrounds You*, online

2021 – LightSpaceTime, 11th Annual *Cityscapes* exhibition, online

2020 – LightSpaceTime, 10th Annual *Cityscapes* exhibition, online

2020 – Marin Society of Artists, *Artist's Vision*, San Rafael, CA

2019 – Niza Knoll Gallery, Women's Caucus for Art/Colorado Chapter, *Passage*, Denver, CO

2019 – ArtVale Gallery, *ArtVale Imagined*, Oakland, CA

AWARDS

2018 – Winner, James Gurney's Paint a Parking Lot Challenge

COMMISSIONS

2020 – District Homes, illustration of real estate office exterior

2019 – Nubo MedSpa, illustration of spa lobby

2018 – Hal's Office, illustration of coffee shop and parklet

ARTS EDUCATION

UC Berkeley Extension School, courses in drawing, painting, pen & ink, and photography,
2012-2016

Harvard University, courses in drawing, printmaking, artists' books, stage design, and design
science, 1994-1998

ACADEMICS

- Master of Public Policy, Goldman School of Public Policy, UC Berkeley 2008
- Master of Arts in Women's Studies, University of Arizona 2001
- Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science, with courses in drawing, printmaking, artists' books, stage design, and design science, Harvard University 1998