



JAMES LAVADOUR

James Lavadour is a painter and printmaker. Co-Founder of the [Crow's Shadow Institute of the Arts](#), he is known for creating large panel sets of landscape paintings. Primarily self-taught, Lavadour grew up exploring his environment on the Umatilla Indian Reservation and Western Oregon. His earlier works, reminiscent of German romanticism, displayed what an impact geology and landscape had on his creation process through his own monochromatic abstract lens (he described these works as his *Interiors*). Described as "emotional interpretations of the land," these *Interiors* tend to look like painted, hazy photograph-like paintings with streaks of color traveling through them. Rejecting the iconography and symbolism inherent in Western art, Lavadour believes that rather than *trying* to make his artwork mean something it eventually just became *something*. A theory of rejection that he credits to his relationship with the environment and growing up on the Umatilla reservation.

I believe that a painting must stand up on its own without explanation. I think of myself as an abstract action painter. I just happen to see landscape in the abstract events of paint. I use two elemental structures, a landscape and an architectural abstraction (a vortex and a grid). There's the flow of landscape and then the intersection of the architectural structure, which is just like being in a room looking out a window, with floors, angles, walls, doors, ceilings, pathways. A painting is a complex event with many things going on at multiple levels. Close, far, color, layers, scrapes, and drips all swirled around by memories. I keep it all organized with structure. Structure is the bed to the river.

