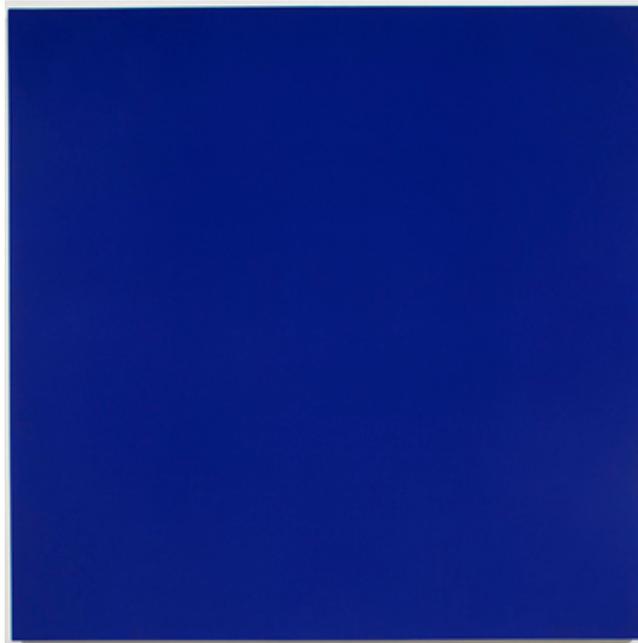


MINUS SPACE reductive art

Rudolf de Crignis: Grays and Blues, Lawrence Markey Gallery, San Antonio, TX



Rudolf de Crignis, Painting No. 97—23
(Ultramarine Blue, Zinc White, Ruby Lake), 1997
Oil on canvas, 30 x 30 inches

May 21 - July 3, 2009

Lawrence Markey presents an exhibition of paintings by Rudolf de Crignis (1948–2006), entitled grays and blues. This is the first exhibition of de Crignis' work at Lawrence Markey.

The exhibition grays and blues focuses on five oil paintings from 1997 to 2004. During this period, de Crignis' primary colors consisted of ultramarine and gray. Throughout, his canvas shape of choice remained the square. The five paintings each measure 30 x 30 inches.

The layering of paint is at the core of de Crignis' paintings from this period. Upon initial examination, de Crignis' paintings appear to be a single color, in the case of these five paintings, ultramarine or gray, or a variation thereof. The specific hue and intensity of each painting results from the over-layering of numerous glazes of paint covering the entire surface of the canvas. Each layer alternates between horizontal and vertical brushstrokes. A painting can have upwards of 60 layers of paint. The original white gesso ground reflects light. Issues of space and light prevail.

In his obituary for the Brooklyn Rail (February, 2007), John Zinsser wrote of de Crignis' paintings: Each piece at first appeared all blue or all gray with deeply color-saturated surfaces. But, in fact, these were the results of the artist layering thin oil washes in accumulation. The gray paintings were made without ever using the color gray. The blue paintings, predominantly ultramarine, were "tinted" with secondary hues, red or silver, for example, creating an illusory experience of color "aura."

In her New York Times obituary (December 30, 2006), Roberta Smith wrote: Mr. de Crignis began making seemingly monochrome paintings, often in radiant blues or subtle grays. Built up from numerous thin layers of different colors, they had a luminous depth that was compared more than once to the light installations of James Turrell. Writing in The New York Times in 2004, Ken Johnson called Mr. de Crignis's work "at once formally severe and materially luxurious" and noted its ability to "bridge the gap between the perceptual and the transcendental."

Rudolf de Crignis was born in Winterthur, Switzerland, in 1948. He studied at the Form + Farbe School for Art and Media design in Zürich and at the Academy of Fine Arts in Hamburg, Germany; his focus was photography, video and performance art. A studio fellowship in 1985 in New York City paved the way to de Crignis' shift to painting. De Crignis lived and worked in New York until his untimely death in 2006 of an inoperable brain tumor.

Solo museum exhibitions include Kunsthalle Winterthur, Switzerland, 1995; Artothek Cologne, Germany, 2001; Kunstmuseum Bonn, Germany, 2003; Swiss National Library, Bern, Switzerland, 2006.

De Crignis' work is in numerous collections, including the Albright-Knox Art Gallery; the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard University; the Indianapolis Museum of Art; the Chazen Museum of Art; the Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University; the Kunsthau Aarau, Switzerland; the Kunsthau Zürich, Switzerland; the Lenbachhaus, Munich, Germany; Kolumba, Cologne, Germany.

A fully illustrated catalogue will accompany the exhibition, and is available for sale from the gallery.

Please also visit www.rudolfdecrignis.com for further information

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