

DYLAN SOLOMON KRAUS IS CURIOUS ABOUT THE UNIVERSE

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Dylan Solomon Kraus (b. 1987 in Ohio, US) is an artist who lives and works between Berlin and New York, creating paintings using rich color and symbolism to channel his curiosity about the universe. Solomon Kraus compares the symbols that recur throughout his work to the pictorial language of hieroglyphs. The repetition of images in his work become ritualistic and can be looked at as patterns similar to the letters in an alphabet or notes in a song and it is through this formula that meaning can be derived.



Tell us a little bit about yourself. Where are you from originally and when did art first enter your life?

I was born in Akron Ohio and as a kid I always loved to draw and express myself through creativity. It wasn't until I was out of high school and living in New York that I discovered contemporary art at the Dia Museum. It was at the Dia that I first experienced firsthand a wider definition of art, seeing artists like Joseph Beuys, Sol LeWitt, Blinky Palermo, Agnes Martin, and more- that I realized art could speak and be read on so many different levels and I thought I would like to try making art like that myself. It was after that when I applied to Cooper Union school of art.

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Has your work always taken on the style it currently embodies?

No, I worked in many different ways in the beginning, experimenting with conceptual art, video art, found objects, collage, I really tried everything (which I would recommend for anyone on an artistic path). As I learned more and more about art and myself I began to discover my own personal style, I would follow my eyes to anything that attracted me and slowly my style began to take shape.

What's a day in the studio like for you?

I am an early bird so I wake up and get right to work— I usually have my walls filled with canvas and I move from piece to piece throughout the day working a little bit on each one. I like my practice to be fun and inspiring to me so i never get too rigid with what i am doing and i let the works develop slowly over time. I think of the studio like a kitchen, I am always cooking or simmering something, letting things proof, adding some garlic, putting on the final garnish before the dish gets taken out to be served. I just want my practice to be alive and exciting to me otherwise it won't be real.

What's next for you?

I'm working on an upcoming solo show at Peres Projects Berlin in April 2023 that will coincide with Gallery Week here in Berlin so I am very excited for that.



From where do you draw inspiration?

I am inspired everyday by things around me. Nature on every level (micro/macro) is a huge unending source of inspiration to me, Also the cosmos and imagining our relationship to them gives me a great context for my work, also the idea of “time” I find to be a doorway into inspiring territory. I also take a lot from my imagination which i think is a very underutilized tool by society today, imagination and creativity applied to all things could lead to many solutions to problems we face. inspiration is like gratitude, the more you search for it the more you will find it and the richer you will be from it. I try to cultivate a wealth of inspiration.

What source material do you base your work off of?

I try to make my own source material whenever possible. I take pictures and videos of things I want to paint

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and through doing that will understand better what I am looking for, oftentimes it is finding the right angle or lighting and that takes a while. it's way better to find your own source material because if you don't and you pull something from google it ends up being so homogenized, the same picture everyone else found, very limiting and sad actually.

Does your work reference any Art Historical movements?

Yes, I feel very influenced and related to art movements from roughly 100 years ago. I feel like we are parallel in many ways to artists working from the late 1800- to 1910's, the rise of industrial revolution, big social changes, everything that would eventually lead to the world wars, and in many way the artistic movements of that time ended prematurely because many of the artists died in the wars or atrocities of war. I relate very much to the romantic movement, favoring nature and childhood over industry and rigid classification. Then onto others like the Blue Rider group I relate very much to, Franz Marc, Kandinsky, Klee, Munter, etc, huge influences on my work both stylistically and philosophically. When I first learned about art history in an accessible way it opened so many doors to me as an individual and as an artist.



What is your process like? How do you begin a work?

I usually begin a work by just filling the canvas with color because I detest a big empty white space, then i will try and see something it in or see how a color reacts to it, and one foot in front of the other a piece begins. It's like I am fishing. I throw something out there and see if I get a bite. i try to have a no mistake philosophy, meaning there are no mistakes, only new possibilities. I like when my paintings have many layers under them because they are paintings not pictures, they are meant to carry everything that went into them not just be read on the surface.

At the end of every interview, we like to ask the artist to recommend a friend whose work you love for us to interview next. Who would you suggest?

I would recommend my friend Rose Salane. Her practice takes from the everyday world and tries to make sense of it all which i love because she succeeds in shows magic and connection through all the seeming chaos of life. We have been friends for a long time and I have enjoyed seeing her practice ripen.