

“Enigmatic representations of an inner universe—like acts of a coming-of-age novel.”



**In April 2022, gallery Peres Projects opened the doors of its new Milanese venue, an 18th-century neoclassical building in the historical center of the city. The weather was moody that day, a nonsensical rain was obscuring the sun as a conduit of metaphysical knowledge. “Holy Unrest,” the first solo show by US artist Dylan Solomon Kraus, seemed to be the perfect exhibition for such a**

**scenario. Under a ceiling of archetypal bas-reliefs, viewers could flirt quietly with the artist’s enigmatic series of nine paintings—representations of an inner universe resolved into elegant blue-shaded symbols. A neighborhood of sapphire palaces suspended in flooded and deserted streets, a bunch of small boats setting sail from sleeping ports, a swan scanning its watery and mesmerizing reflection. The sequence felt like acts of a coming-of-age summertime novel, winding through nocturnal scenes illuminated by one or many moons, each of them deepening the other’s mysteries.**

**Kraus’ open-ended work can trigger an interpretation-mania or a Pierrot Lunaire complex, inspiring a geometrical peacefulness through ascetic contemplation of an uncontrollable cosmos. Our being is expanded into the rarefied atmospheres of the artist’s celestial palette. We recognize our endless presence in a life that becomes more and more distant until we can no longer determine whether it was real, a childhood memory, or a fever dream. Far from the typical Generation Wuss’ narcissistic navel-gazing, Dylan Solomon Kraus’ solipsism has solid roots, and nods particularly to Oskar Kokoschka’s lecture “On the nature of visions” and to Rudolf Steiner’s *Occult Science*, both from the 1910s. His interest in Kokoschka is particularly significant. It evokes an era, the beginning of the 20th century, and a place, *Mittel-Europe*, of formidable avant-gardes, influenced by magical and esoteric elements and infused with the emergence of psychoanalytic studies. Like Kokoschka’s lecture, Rudolf Steiner’s *Occult Science*, can be seen as an attempt to free esotericism from the mark of quackery and superstition.**

**Far from the enlightenment-inspired architecture of their temporary home in Piazza Belgioioso, Kraus’ works suggest higher forms of knowledge that science and the evidence of the senses cannot pursue alone. The concept of time and space in “Holy Unrest” is not that of the solar system, but an alternative one that can only arise from the artist’s process of self-discovery.** WORDS BY DARIA MIRICOLA

**DYLAN SOLOMON KRAUS**

**ONE OR MANY MOONS**