

MARGARETE ROEDER GALLERY

RUDOLF DE CRIGNIS

NEW YORK 1985–2006

December 8, 2012–January 26, 2013



Rudolf de Crignis, 1998



Artothek, Cologne, 2001

Margarete Roeder Gallery is pleased to announce the publication of *Rudolf de Crignis New York 1985–2006*, published by Radius Books, Santa Fe with a foreword by Lawrence Rinder, a text by Georg Imdahl, and an interview with the artist by Joseph Cunningham. An exhibition of the same title will include works from de Crignis's New York years. A book launch and exhibition opening will take place on Saturday, December 8, 2012, 4–7 PM.

This new monograph, the first substantial volume on the work of the Swiss-American artist, presents a thorough overview of his spare and deeply meditative work. It includes texts from both European and American experts; a fully illustrated chronology; an insert of photographs taken by the artist himself documenting the precise and delicate construction of a painting with many layers of paint. This large-format, clothbound book measuring 9 1/2 x 12 1/2 inches (24 x 32 cm), 230 pages, includes 120 color plates of works on canvas, paper, and board.

The exhibition will feature works on canvas, paper, and board from the same period as the book, together with a portfolio of etchings from 2006, published by the Swiss National Library.

The paintings at first appear to be simple monochrome canvases, but are actually built up from dozens of layers of translucent pigment; seemingly simple blues and grays reveal themselves to include glowing yellows and greens. As Roberta Smith wrote in the *New York Times*, “His work had a luminous depth that was compared more than once to the light installations of James Turrell.”

The artist's works on paper (which, tellingly, he referred to as “paintings”) are executed in colored pencil on board. Often partially erased, the pencil lines present almost imperceptible veils of evanescent color. Like his stratified paintings, these drawings are not illustrations, a visual expression of a theoretical position, but rather a rendering of that which cannot be

expressed in language: the entirely direct and accessible sensations that the viewer experiences in front of these works.

Displayed in natural or artificial light, the works are exercises in slow looking, unfolding from different vantage points and under different light conditions. The variable appearance of the works is achieved by the work, the ambient light, and the viewer's attention constantly coming together in a fleeting but unified experience. In the endlessly mutable presence of these artworks we see not only them, but ourselves. As the artist himself remarked in the published interview: "I am interested in work that you have to work at to understand. I have to put something in to get something back ... with a good painting you actually see the piece and you put your part into the piece. That is when it starts to develop and to get richer."

Rudolf de Crignis was born in 1948 in Winterthur, Switzerland, and died in 2006 in New York. Studying at the Form und Farbe School for Art and Media Design in Zürich, his early focus in art was photography, video, and performance art. In 1976, he exhibited at the Venice Biennale in the Swiss Pavilion. A studio fellowship in 1985 in New York helped pave the way to de Crignis's shift to painting. He lived and worked in New York until his untimely death in 2006. De Crignis's work has been the focus of numerous solo museum exhibitions, including Kunsthalle Winterthur, Switzerland, 1995; Artothek, Cologne, 2001; Kunstmuseum Bonn, 2003; Swiss National Library, Bern, 2006; and Haus Konstruktiv, Zürich, 2009. He exhibited widely in galleries in the United States and Europe from the 1980s onward. His work is in numerous public collections, including the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; Harvard University Art Museums, Boston; Kunsthaus Zürich; Aargauer Kunsthaus, Aarau, Switzerland; Lenbachhaus, Munich; Kunstmuseum Bonn; Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven; Indianapolis Museum of Art; Chazen Museum of Art, Madison, Wisc.; and Kolumba, Cologne, Germany.

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Please visit the Rudolf de Crignis Estate's website at www.rudolfdecrignis.com