

Angeline Rivas

MKUltra

06/24/23 - 07/29/23

Chris Sharp Gallery is pleased to present the debut solo exhibition of the Mexican-American, Los Angeles-based artist Angeline Rivas.

Painted with airbrush on wood panel and canvas, the works of Angeline Rivas could be considered vast, yet compact crucibles of a unique form of western Americana. In a way it's all here: the transcendentalist imagery of Agnes Pelton, cults, if not Light and Space and Finish Fetish itself, then John McCracken's interest in extraterrestrial life, Sedona, AZ, the work of cosmologist, astrophysicist, and author, Carl Sagan, inter- dimensionality, Star Trek, the classical, Pynchonian tendency toward paranoid, but ultimately plausible conspiracy theory (MKUltra), the flamboyance of Judy Chicago, spiritualism, the refraction of crystals, et al and etc. Who would have thought all of this could harmonize so seamlessly? But in her work of florid, flowing and voluptuous forms, it all connects.

Here's the question though: Does it believe? Or is it ironic? The proverbial rub. Because this is definitely not ironic. Nor is it the pictorial manifestation of unequivocal belief. Equivocal perhaps. Maybe it wants to believe. Or wants to want to believe. But even that is not certain. It admires, lavishly. Stridently. At a distance. Standing... where, exactly? It is refreshingly impossible to say (Behold, the illicit bugbear of yesteryear: ambiguity). Whatever the case may be, it registers and acknowledges so much of what makes the West the West that it would almost seem a kind of proof. Of how singular it is. And weird. And splendid. Splendidly weird. The nature of truth in these paintings has less to do with any kind of cabalistic complicity than with allegory. Their ambition is large and palpable. They want you to know. Or at least scratch the surface. And pop down the rabbit hole.

Angeline Rivas (b. 1981 Kansas City, MI) lives and works in Los Angeles. She graduated from Art Center in 2022. Her work has been featured in group exhibitions at The Underground Museum, The Lummis House, LA, The Hole, NY, among others. This will be her first solo exhibition.