

VAN DOREN WAXTER

Douglas Melini: *Starry Sky*

November 13, 2018 – January 12, 2019
23 East 73rd Street, NY, NY 10021
Gallery Hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 10 AM to 6 PM



Douglas Melini, *Starry Sky #7*, 2018, Oil and acrylic on canvas with artist's frame, 20 x 22 ½ inches (50.8 x 57.2 cm)

Van Doren Waxter is excited to present paintings by Douglas Melini as the inaugural exhibition in the gallery's new gallery space at 23 East 73rd Street; this newly renovated public exhibition space is an expansion on the building's 3rd floor, adjacent to the gallery's private viewing room. *Douglas Melini: Starry Sky* is the artist's third show with the gallery and is on view from November 13, 2018 through January 12, 2019. It follows the artist's solo institutional exhibition at the Schneider Museum of Art, OR.

For this exhibition, Douglas Melini debuts a new series of paintings that merges his densely textured abstractions with the representation of a field of stars. In these chromatically charged works, pattern and saturated color become night skies, strewn and illuminated by stars. Formally rigorous, the canvases emerge from a meticulous collage process made entirely of paint; first layers of thin, nearly transparent acrylic are laid down in a lattice-like structure followed by gestural smears of oil impasto applied with a palette knife, or by hand. These thick tangles of paint become landscapes themselves transforming the work into a study of landscapes both within its materiality and its content. The paintings are then custom framed by the artist, presenting the works as deliberate objects.

Melini's new *Starry Sky* paintings thoughtfully examine the abstract, pictorial, and conceptual nature of image making. In these paintings, he examines several modernist ideas about painting, including the use of the grid, the painterly surface and the painting's objecthood. The artist also proposes ideas about light and space, both depicted and physical. The artist alludes to varied art historical references and inspirations, in particular the iconography of the night sky, including Italian frescoed ceilings depicting the heavens; saturated stained-glass windows which are illuminated from the back; the image and idea of a star as a symbol and pattern – often used as decoration and background throughout art history; and to gauge and mark the condition of night.

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Douglas Melini (b. 1972) was educated at CalArts, Los Angeles and the University of Maryland, College Park; he currently lives and works in New Jersey. Melini's previous solo exhibitions include 11R & Eleven Rivington, NY (2016, 2014); Feature Inc., NY (2012), NY; The Suburban, Oak Park, IL (2011); Minus Space, Brooklyn (2009); a White Room at White Columns, NY (2003); and Richard Heller Gallery, Santa Monica (1998), among others. Group exhibitions include *People, Place and Things...* at Philip Slein Gallery, St. Louis, MO (2018); *Breaking Pattern* at Schneider Museum of Art, Ashland, OR (2015); *Minus Space: A Survey of Reductive and Post Minimal Work*, curated by Phong Bui, at MoMA PS1, Long Island City, NY (2008); and *Two by Two for Aids and Art* at Dallas Art Museum, Dallas, TX (2003), among others. His work has been reviewed and featured in *The New York Times*, *The New Criterion*, *Time Out*, and *New York Magazine*.

Gallery Information

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