



**Elias Kafouros: The image is unsustainable
Ausstellung vom 7. November – 21. Dezember 2013**

Statements of a cosmic consciousness are interwoven into an infinitude of references to the vocabulary of mass culture. Elias Kafouros' intricately detailed compositions weave figures like gurdjieff, the captain of the Titanic (!) and Colonel Gaddafi (!!) into pen and ink mandalas which owe as much to Tibetan Thangka painting as they do to the novels of Douglas Adams and William Gibson. Can painted works, in a gallery, be transformed into a temporary Autonomous Zone which transcends the wearisome (or cynical) reality of our age? Kafouros displays close ties with the painterliness of the California school (Joe Coleman, Robert Williams, Juxtapoz magazine) and shares the post-hippy ecstasy of some of its exponents, while juxtaposing a more planetary dimension and unprecedented religiosity on the school's more 'Hollywood' elements. At a time when most successful artists of his generation are living a double life in which 'street art', the new media darling, is combined with avant-garde work for 'high' galleries, he has kept his head and remained true to a painting tradition that is paradoxically classical as it is luridly futuristic.

After a period in the wilderness, drawing, painting and figuration in general have shrugged off the critical scrutiny to find themselves back into fashion, this time in a cartoony, Pop form. Still, the old reservations – two centuries of photography have rendered representation quite meaningless“ - remain valid. Like Eastern art – and for the same reasons – Kafouros’ work may be immune to this particular criticism as its figurative elements diffuse into an infinite space. His work bears the effortful mark of meditation and self-discipline while remaining almost totally Pop. Every one of Kafouros’ works confirms a long-held suspicion: that the planet is experiencing a strange effervescence. Truth be told, reality’s looking less and less real. You get the feeling the artist would rather be living at the turn of the Sixties than in this cynical age of ours, though you sense, too, that he has already caught wind of he changes the 21st – and, perhaps, even the 22nd- century have in store for us...

Thanasis Moutsopoulos