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Boatfish and a Red Terrace- Ink, egg-tempera and gold leaf on panel - 7.8x11.8 in / 20x30 cm

KONSTANTINOS PAPAMICHALOPOULOS

“The Great Golden Room” | Artist Statement

From the start of my artistic career I have been interested in comparative cultural aesthetics, the relationship between occidental and oriental art, the distinction between 'high' and 'low' as well as the appropriation of non-art by art. I am fascinated by popular culture, science fiction, B-movies, comics, graphic novels, pornography, Japanese woodcuts and manga, the digital world, videogames, photojournalism and street art, not only because of the freedom and irony underpinning these genres, but because I believe that through the exploration of subcultures and 'alternative' aesthetics, we can begin to answer some important questions about what constitutes art. My work answers this question showing that the lines between 'high' and 'low' are not clear but at the same time it does not intend to actually destroy the categories of ugliness and beauty of traditional aesthetics. On the contrary, it confirms those categories.

For me painting and drawing are methods of expression (communication through visual language) but more importantly of knowing and understanding of the world. My art is a representation of a more or less conscious thinking about the process of the aesthetic

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creation itself; through my work I strive to articulate a definition of art as I understand this to be. I believe that a paradigm shift in the arts has emerged in the digital world and the internet: text and image has further integrated into new art forms; the anonymity and plural character of the internet has brought about a new kind of agency and is shaping our understanding of the notions of intention and the artwork, authorship and the creator. Literature and poetry are written in personal blogs and platforms like Twitter, instantly received, edited, and appraised; perhaps live and evolving art will be created online collaboratively in a global project similar to Wikipedia, instantly acquired and reproduced with 3D printing. Thus, my artwork intends to function as a continuous space of dialogue between present and future, old and new. In my painting and etching but also through my Tumblr and Twitter projects, I strive to make sense and create new meaning of this new technological world by images that are inspired by the realities of the digital world and popular culture but are only made possible through analogue and age-old media.

In particular I am hard at work on an ongoing project entitled "The Great Golden Room" (GGR). The GGR is a large-scale work-in-progress that challenges linear narrativity by creating an immense non-linear experience. Some critics hold the view that analogue media such as drawing, painting or print because of their specificities and history are not appropriate means within the context of the digital era. The GGR argues that this is not the case and shows how it is possible by drawing inspiration from digital sources to create multiple images and narratives fused into a whole that is experienced in a non-linear way. In the GGR there is no requirement to follow through any specific path or optimal course in order to experience the total image: one can instantly take in the whole as it is presented to them by standing in front of it. Alternatively, one can focus on any part of the work and make that intricate detail the work's centre and let everything fall in its place around it. The focus can be repositioned at another part of the painting and the narrative will rearrange itself. In other words, the GGR is an attempt of visualising chaos theory. Like the digital world is organised by chaos, the GGR is a discontinuous, erratic and irregular state and space where everything happens everywhere at the same time but still reaches harmony.

Art is where the subjective/personal/particular and the objective/impersonal/universal interject. For this reason, I believe that the relationship of the artist/the subject and his work/the object is the most important aspect of artistic creation. From intention/inspiration/insight to execution/realisation/manifestation, success/failure, to

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audience/reception, the aim is to enable spectators to examine the nature of representation of images and ideas and to become conscious and critical of the artistic creation process. The Great Golden Room is a work-in-progress whose ultimate goal is the creation of an artwork that will further explore in actual practice the notions of intention, agency and authorship.

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