



Giants and Dwarfs III, 1990-2013, Oil, epoxy and glass on carved and burnt plywood on two panels, 96 x 144 in (244 x 366 cm)

Michael Zansky

A Vacation on Mars with God: Selected works

Opening Thu Nov 21, 6-8 PM

November 21 - December 21, 2013

Stux Gallery is pleased to present the first exhibition of selected works by **Michael Zansky**, "A Vacation on Mars with God". Working with a variety of different themes and concepts, Zansky's vast portfolio and diverse works occupy a brilliantly enticing dialogue about the nature of humanity.

Zansky's world features seemingly innocent, doll-like figures and other nondescript creatures, all immersed in settings that are simultaneously post-apocalyptic and prehistoric. Academically trained as a painter and employed as the master set painter for *Law and Order*, his paintings combine his mastery of the paint brush with his unique sensibility to manufacture engrossing mise-en-scenes. His modestly measured canvases exhibit devotion to masters such as De Chirico, Francesco Goya and Van Eyck, and his unique brushstrokes make these depictions of a lively yet abysmal hell intensely luminous and tangible. Technology melts and nature is mechanized, and his images offer decidedly sublime, enticing narratives that invite and resist interpretation. Several paintings combine line drawings with text that does not serve as clarifying captions, but enhancers of their overall mysterious aura.

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Themes from these condensed scenes are dramatically amplified in Zansky's monumental recent installation at Mana Contemporary, New Jersey, "Giants and Dwarfs", and fragments similar to material in this exhibition will be on view at Stux. At Mana, a soaring industrial space is entirely lined with hundreds of paintings on carved wooden panels in earthy, raw and ominous hues, all depicting events that together form an ambitious attempt at illustrating the entirety of history of both human culture and earth's evolution. His paintings combine painstakingly meticulous woodwork and controlled burns, and emulate sensibilities of the precise, stark woodblock prints of Dürer but without the comfort and clarity of paper. These thematically and stylistically consistent panels are assembled in a visually sensible manner but do not form a continuous narrative; instead, unsettling panels lurk side by side, creating an overwhelming atmosphere of buzzing, highly physical energy.

His remarkable fire drawings present a distilled, cleaner version of his paintings and carvings. From afar, these similarly cryptic, engaging scenes of darkened dreams seem as if they were drafted with a particularly well-inked pen; they are actually created by gliding an industrial torch over paper with tremendous control to create faint burn marks that outline a newly conceived world by breaking down paper into sheer dark carbon. Fire, one of the most ominous and destructive elements in this world, is here applied as a controlled and fully wielded tool, sweetly obeying Zansky's hand like another purchase from the art supply store. The flame's undefined outline conveniently leaves imprints framed by soft, glowing edges, revealing a gentle vulnerability and tenderness not commonly associated the predominant sponsor of hell.

***Michael Zansky** is a New York based artist. He studied at Boston University and pursued advanced studies at Hunter College, during which time he began work as a master set painter and production designer for film directors such as Terry Gilliam, Francis Ford Coppola, and Jonathan Demme. He is the recipient of a Louis Comfort Tiffany Award, and a Fullbright-Hayes Fellowship, among others, and has exhibited widely both nationally and internationally. His works have been regularly reviewed by publications such as The New York Times, Art in America, and Artforum. His works are represented in the permanent collections of The Dallas Museum of Art, The Berkley Art Museum, CA, The Brooklyn Art Museum, The Los Angeles County Museum of Ar, The Neuberger Museum of Art, and The Whitney Museum of American Art, amongst others. This is his fifteenth solo show in New York and his first at Stux Gallery.*

For further information please contact the gallery at Andrea@stuxgallery.com.