

U W E   H E N N E K E N

*Studies in Transfiguration*

January 13 - February 24, 2018

Galerie Gisela Capitain is pleased to announce its fourth exhibition of new works by Uwe Henneken. With *Studies in Transfiguration*, Henneken presents for the first time primarily works on paper.

Henneken's cosmos of images is at once mystical and richly coloured: he first became known for his seemingly surrealistic landscapes featuring grotesque adventurers, wayfarers, vagabonds, clowns, biomorphic or wistful figures, who appear confused about their own situation or getting together for no apparent reason.

The motifs of the new works comprise the artist's own inner imagery—which he accesses with meditative methods—and quotations from the visual realm he has created. Henneken believes the artist occupies the interface between material and spiritual worlds. Like a shaman, the artist journeys to an imaginary realm devoid of space and time, where man and the cosmos are one, and relays visions, insights, or revelations from this world into ours.

Henneken's *Studies in Transfiguration* lead him to develop an expanded and, at times, abstracted vocabulary of forms and images. The drawings on coloured paper display a newly achieved lightness. In most cases, the pictorial space has not been completely filled in; colour is often applied transparently. Figures and setting thus remain open-ended, as well as the possible interpretations of the depictions. Henneken shows us scenes of ephemeral moments that quickly vanish once again, mandala-like designs, or images of allegories that do not exist. On the other hand, the depictions encourage viewers to invent their own potential narratives.

The central theme of transfiguration can be traced both in Henneken's exploration of figuration and in the presence of radiant light throughout the motifs allowing to bring the characteristic coloration of Henneken to life.

The artistic and spiritual exploration of available strategies for gaining knowledge and the thus related process of individuation is continued in a joint project by Uwe Henneken and Anders Dickson: *Beyond the Threshold and Back Again: An Introduction to the Hero's Journey. A Venture by Anders Dickson and Uwe Henneken*. Here, the two artists explore in the exhibited, collaboratively created works Joseph Campbell's *The Hero of A Thousand Faces*, from 1949, in a playfully ironic manner.

In his book, Campbell compares countless legends of myriad peoples and cultures, from the simple hero of the folk tale to divine myths and classic heroic stories. Campbell concludes that all these narratives and myths—be it the myth of a superordinate, abstract hero or the unique individuation process of a single person—all have a collective origin and follow the basic pattern of the so-called hero's journey. The hero's journey also includes the crossing of a threshold. The hero travels to another world, and, upon his return, introduces what has been newly gained to his everyday world. In sharing his experiences with his environment, the hero, i.e. the artist, guides it toward a new level of freedom.

Uwe Henneken was born in 1974 in Paderborn. He lives and works in Berlin.