

THESES

Why I chose this subject matter

During the years of my doctorate course I have come to see proven that the amount of sensibility in art works increased to a great extent. The use of topoi coming from the culture, tools originally used by the church (such as sculptures and church kitsch) and built into installations or pieces of art with a concrete sacral message has also become more frequent. This might be because artists deliberately turned away from the frightening future of a world that was created by the utopian trends in art philosophy at the beginning of the 21st century. This is probably true even though the sacral images of the past are now used for the opposite effect. Everybody would like to have a grip on their roots, and although this process is often mocked, it does create a cultural territory. I have seen this justified at several significant exhibitions in the last few years where the present-day interpretation of the concept of sacrality was observed. The notions discussed in my thesis were inspired by the exhibition *Trace du Sacré* in the Centre Pompidou in Paris. Here the word sacrality was used as something that is applied to art as an eternal universal content referring to existence. I also talked to contemporary Hungarian artists who helped me elaborate my doctoral thesis as well as my masterwork. I was also deeply inspired and personally motivated by my travel experiences. I was mainly interested in religious transformations in Russia, Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Macedonia, Kyrgyzstan, Bulgaria and other countries in Europe.

Structure and objectives

My thesis is built up along the exemplary pieces of art that I was deeply moved by during the time of the DLA course. The interpretation of the concept of sacrality is followed by the discussion of exhibitions in the last few years related to this topic and the summary of conclusions that can be drawn from my discussions with Hungarian artists. I went into more details while dealing with the thoughts of Tibor iski Kocsis and Andrea Huszár whose works and ideas are close to those of mine. Then I also place myself into the range of this artistic discussion. With an opposite intention I also handle those foreign and Hungarian artists who use the motive of desacralization in their works, which is followed by a short examination of the phenomena of sacrality appearing in the media. Finally the stages of the creating process and the inspirational sources for my masterwork are showed, which is also a kind of visual answer to my theses.

This doctoral thesis is based on data collection resulting from my observations of a long time. I would like to share my conclusions with the students of the university because I think it is important for them to understand the globalism of art, so that they are able to select from its inspiring opportunities and use them during their planning tasks. This is of crucial importance because the gigantic mass of objects around us causes a lot of confusion. It is the task of the artist to put things in order, to select and show the authentic directions to be followed by next generation artists.

Theses

1. There exist several pieces of art that, independently from their creator and the time of their creation, can act as independent individuals who are able to speak the same language and communicate with each other in their own right. This is done by leading the viewer into the questions of existence. In their case the origin and the end of the existence is not put between coordinated determined by time and space but into an eternal content beyond physical existence. This interpretation is not open to everyone because it is related to an insight which is either part of the self or not. It can lead to experiencing an eternal catharsis, which is not the result of excessive sensibility or the cliché-like, trendy occultism, but a perspective that has a broad view on life and the ability to perceive the world as a whole.
2. In my opinion a significant amount of artists turn their attention to themselves again and show their own inner, emotional processes to the viewer. They do it so because the task of the next century science is to understand human personality and soul. Science has given its answer to almost everything, but it does not know our brain and psyche thoroughly so research is trying to explore this field nowadays. “The spirit or the soul is a material beyond the physicality. Thus understanding personality and soul is not possible in the material world.”¹
3. It is only art that is able to drive identity disorders of our age back into the track of life’s essential and crucial questions. It offers answers to the questions of where we come from and go to and is able to struggle with the factuality of death. The thinking about the course of life and death is ubiquitous: it is hidden in folk songs, tales, in the cultural entropy resulting from the concept of art having become emptied, in the concept of God existing in the empty present. This is what calls into existence a desire that focuses on the essential questions of life, which is also crucial for the artistic trend of the ‘60s, Arte Povera (discussed in details in my dissertation) with features that are close to religion, pantheism and alchemistic traditions in an age when man is totally indifferent to God. The fact that this subject matter is topical is also shown by the 55th Venice Biennale that was opened just as this doctoral thesis was being finished. The exhibition does not deal with sacrality in the religious sense, but summarizes suggestions made by the observation of the nature of cultural archetypes going as far as mysticism.
4. A crucial part of my doctoral work was my discussions with Hungarian artists about their relation to sacrality. What I could conclude from these conversations is that the sensibility of Hungarian artists fits well into this revival of the concept of sacrality. Tibor iski Kocsis, Andrea Huszár, Zsolt Asztalos, Ilona Lovas, Mária Chilf, Dorottya Szabó, Mária Dorombi and Lőrinc Borsos use different words but talk about the same phenomenon. The eternal artistic, universal cultural and human questions are placed into today’s contextual frame and it is a crucial part of contemporary art. “Real art is timeless and functions according to permanent values. It is only the context of the artistic act which changes.”

¹ Detlef B. Linke írásai különösen érdekesek az agykutatás szempontjairól- Ld. Monory M. András – Tillmann J. A.: *Ezredvégi beszélgetések*.