

Deviations

Sacred manifestations in contemporary art

Thesis

1. Searching for identity.

Understanding the past with the cultural traditions and collective mentalities that have become increasingly pronounced in contemporary art. Remembering, searching for historical-anthropological antecedents and the lost identity, seeing the generational cycle of disappearance, examining the opposite of human culture and the natural environment, the question of sacrality – These are the central themes in a historical, political and religious context. The purpose of my doctoral dissertation is to examine the relationship between today's art and sacrality.

2. Contemporary art responds to present-day social questions.

"It is about any artistic creation," writes Ákos Szilágyi, about the relationship between icons and contemporary art, "that it is not a thing but an event; not a matter but a process; it is not a dead object, it is a live subject, and it is just as lively as it reacts to everything that happens to it, and to everyone who contacts it, like a living person." My dissertation was written with regard to politics, ethics, sociology, ecology and other aspects of today's artistic issues of sacrality.

3. Visual experience has taken on the role of the transcendental experience.

If we look at the world surrounding us, it quickly becomes perceptible that we are exposed to visual 'harassment'; unidentifiable objects, 'supermen', athletes, pop stars, celebrities, Buddha's, Jesus's, Mary statues, skeletons, skulls. Modern man has, in the same manner our Neolithic forefathers had, visualised his fears by creating alters to his Gods and totem animals. His ritual passion of collecting is to reassure himself and helps him to overcome his fears. A distinction should be made between the physical representation of sacred art as an art product and as a cult object. Can we look at the mass-produced ecclesiastical kitsch, which offers cheap reproductions for people, as a piece of art? How does a plastic Virgin Mary (Our Lady of Fatima or Our Lady of Guadalupe) contain sacrality? Are they different from those of superheroes which dominate the shelves of the toy stores?