

Myth and History in the World of Julijonas Stankevičius-Stankus

Summary

The article discusses the difficult fate and creative work of the painter Algimantas Julijonas Stankevičius-Stankus (1933–2002), which was largely ignored during the Soviet period because Stankevičius-Stankus did not have the diploma of a professional artist and spent a large part of his life at a psycho-neurological institution of care due to the later degradation of his psychological health. It was only after Lithuania regained independence that the possibility to showcase Stankevičius-Stankus' creative work and incorporate it into our art history emerged.

The article examines the fate and creative work of Stankevičius-Stankus through two perspectives, or two partially related and at the same time partially opposite approaches. First, the fate and creative work of Stankevičius-Stankus is analysed

from the socio-historical perspective, revealing that both the artist's fate and his creative work were sucked into a grinder and thoroughly crushed. In this respect, the artist's creative work includes symbols of the (Soviet) period that are so familiar to the formal language and motifs of his professional counterparts. Stankevičius-Stankus' work also demonstrates the clear and primitive touch of a mentally ill artist.

On the other hand, Stankevičius Stankus had created an alternate reality for himself. This was the reality in which he lived and in which the Soviet reality would only make fragmented and typically aggressive appearances. In this sense, the reality in which Stankevičius-Stankus painted and which contained his spiritual world was mythohistoric and more or less independent of the "relevant" reality.

Keywords: Algimantas Julijonas Stankevičius-Stankus, Soviet times, painting, history, reality, alternative reality, psychopathology.

Gauta 2015.05.12