

Ivan Rabuzin and nature symbolism in the art (Zagreb, 25–26 Mar 21)

Matica hrvatska, Ulica Matice hrvatske 2, Strossmayerov trg 4, Zagreb, Croatia, Mar
25–27, 2021

Deadline: Oct 1, 2020

Svjetlana Sumpor

The Croatian Museum of Naïve Art invites proposals for papers to be presented at a symposium marking the centenary of the birth of Ivan Rabuzin (1921-2021):

IVAN RABUZIN AND NATURE SYMBOLISM IN THE ART OF THE 20TH AND THE 21ST CENTURY

The symposium is dedicated to the life and work of one of the greatest of Croatian naïve artists, Ivan Rabuzin (Ključ, 1921 – Novi Marof, 2008), known worldwide for his paintings inspired by nature, specifically by the landscapes of his native region that he transformed into symbolic visions of cosmic harmony and divine order.

A classic of the world's Naïve and one of the most eminent lyrical artists of the 20th century, Ivan Rabuzin was born on March 27, 1921, in Ključ, near Novi Marof. He is a painter of characteristic lyrical and idealised landscapes, based on the sequencing of circles and circular forms, radiating optimism and spirituality. With his original painterly visions of nature, he made an outstanding contribution to naïve art in the world and many hold him to be, next to Henri Rousseau, the greatest of all naïve artists. Among naïve artists he stands out for the particular modernity of his artistic idiom, which is manifested in the specific stylisation and abstract treatment of forms, their reduction, that is, to geometrical shapes. For this reason his oeuvre belongs to the high points of not only naïve but also of modern art in general.

The nature, or landscape, of their native regions served as inspiration for many other naïve artists (such as Ivan Generalić and Ivan Lacković), most often as points of departure that their visions transformed into metaphorical and imaginary scenes that, however, still retained traces of the real local origins.

In Croatian modern art, landscape has been addressed in a post-Impressionist and a realistic manner (Celestin Medović; Menci Klement Crnčić) and via reductionism in the spirit of the new Modernist aesthetic (Emanuel Vidović). The colourist features of landscape were pondered as possible source of a "national" style of expression (Ljubo Babić, Vladimir Becić), and in some oeuvres a particular local landscape played an important role in the finding of a painter's own sign or style (Oton Gliha, Frano Šimunović). In the wide range from figurative via associative to abstract, Croatian modern painting has, then, retained strong links with its origins in the reality of local landscape or nature.

The theme of landscape was feature in the repertoire of several of the trends in art of the 20th century (Expressionism, for example, and Cubism). As well as in painting, it was very much represented in the photographic medium (for example, Ansel Adams, Sebastião Salgado). The attitude to nature, as the theme, came particularly to the fore in the land art movement (Richard Long, Walter de Maria, Robert Smithson) focused on artistic interventions in nature or else the introduction of elements of nature into exhibition venues, or specific actions documented with photography. Land Art signalled a kind of return to nature, and for practitioners of this art, interaction with elements from nature often had the role of meditation and revitalisation. In the context of the art of the 21st century and the inroads of a dystopian imaginary of devastated and dehumanised landscapes (Michael Kerbow, for instance) the theme of nature has renewed topicality.

As well as the theme of technological progress, which has set its mark powerfully on the art of the 20th century, the relation of man and nature has proved to be an inexhaustible theme for all time, taking on new importance with the growth of the ecological awareness of the situation of the world today.

Since the symposium is dedicated to the centenary of the birth of Ivan Rabuzin, we would particularly welcome the submission of papers that provide:

- new readings and interpretations of Rabuzin's works, themes, motifs, symbols and working procedures,
- researches into Rabuzin's connection with the contemporary context, other artists and art historians,
- papers that are concerned with mapping the position of Rabuzin's poetics on the artistic and cultural scene.

Also very welcome are papers that

- explore and interpret the work of other prominent 20th century artists that treated nature as their main or sole motif or symbol, irrespective of the means or technique they used to convey their message.

The symposium is being organised by the Croatian Museum of Naïve Art and will be held on March 25 and 26 in the hall of Matica hrvatska in Zagreb (Ulica Matice hrvatske 2, Strossmayerov trg 4) and there will be an excursion for participants to Ključ and Novi Marof on March 27, 2021, organised by the Novi Marof Open University.

Members of the organising committee are Academician Tonko Maroević, Dr Petar Prelog, Dr Ivana Mance and Dr Svjetlana Sumpor.

Official symposium languages are Croatian and English. An address should be no longer than 20 minutes. There is no registration fee. The organiser of the symposium is unable to refund participants' travel costs and subsistence costs in Zagreb.

We would ask those interested to send their proposals for papers, with name, surname and affiliation of the contributor, together with the title and an abstract of the paper (from 1200 to 1800 characters) to the coordinator of the symposium, Dr Svjetlana Sumpor at the address svjetlana.sumpor@hmnu.hr by October 1, 2020. Those interested in participating will be informed

of the acceptance of their papers by November 1, 2020.

Abstracts of works accepted for delivery will be published in the Booklet of Abstracts. All of the papers from the symposium will be reviewed and published in the proceedings of the symposium Ivan Rabuzin and Nature Symbolism in the Art of the 20th and the 21st Century.

Reference:

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