

PRESENTATION OF PAINTING

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MACHINES AND MONKS, BEES AND PLANETS

PRESENTATION OF PAINTINGS BY PROF. NENAD STANKOVIĆ, MA

Dejan ĐORIĆ

Art critic and art historian

Similar to the finest paintings of the Mediala movement, those by Nenad Stanković (Mačvanski Belotić, 1965) are rooted in the unity of opposites—blending sharp, warrior-like motifs with poetic and feminine ones. His work introduces images of machines (both ancient, wooden, and pre-industrial), monks, bees, planets, the textured Moon, and solar symbols. In this world, Noah's Ark arrives in Venice, symbolizing the intertwining of male and female principles. In line with Šejka's idea that painting should reflect both heaven and earth, Stanković incorporates all elements of figuration: the human figure, objects, and landscapes.



Stanković's art is rooted in the aesthetics of beauty, capturing not only the most poetic and beautiful scenes but also the dramatic, quintessential landscapes of Serbia as expressions of the Balkan soul. His work depicts the horizons

of Zlatibor, Uvac, Tara, Lovćen with the Njegoš chapel, Drina, Višegrad, as well as the fortresses and churches of Serbia, and the tranquil Sremski Karlovci—motifs that frequently appear in his paintings. Recently, a noble motif has emerged in his art: a painting within a painting, where a landscape features an easel and a work of art. Stanković's paintings resonate not only with space but also with time, particularly reflecting ancient, primordial eras such as those of Lepenski Vir, Vinča, Starčevo, and the ancient Greek and Roman periods.

His paintings depict Balkan Neolithic goddesses, drawing inspiration from the ideas of Marija Gimbutas, a renowned scholar who proposed that the pantheon of the Mediterranean hinterlands influenced the development of Greek mythology. While this hypothesis is not widely accepted in academic circles, it remains a significant part of Gimbutas's scholarly work.

Stanković's unity of opposites confronts poetry and reality, nymphs and astronauts, young women and world maps, and feminine principles and symbolism as opposed to the world, civilization and history. The indirect result of this opus is the world soul – *anima mundi* – which, in the painter's vision, is beautiful, manifested as a bee, flower, women's hair and soft skin, a dreamy profile figure, Venice, etc. Opposite this beauty is the cruel yet honest and just masculine principle



of the Meteora monasteries, asceticism versus abundance, ideas versus sensuality, the rationalism of ancient temples, the divinity of mountain peaks, glaciers, and chess as a rational yet sometimes warlike game, a game of fate, even a game played with death, according to Bergman, that demands intelligence and a mathematical mind.

When it comes to the themes of these paintings (Stanković does not create drawings or graphics), the colors are rich, vibrant, and playful, with pronounced light and dark contrasts and a complex, often centrally and symmetrically placed composition. Recently, the painter has introduced the crystal as a solar, celestial, and regal symbol, traditionally associated with sacral symbolism. In his art, solar and Uranian symbolism take precedence over the chthonic, underground, and demonic, as well as the strength of God and ancestors, and beauty in many forms of manifestation, not just the feminine. His art strives for the translucent – what Leonid Šejka would call “radiantly lucent.” Artistically speaking, this would all be worthless without Stanković’s solid mastery of



the technique, craft, and realism as the foundation of his poetic fantasy and his fantastic realism. His paintings are atmospheric, containing a secret without which there is no true creation. They are counter-revolutionary in relation to some avant-garde tendencies toward destruction.