

Stan Litz (USA)

Why are civilizations captivated by their arts ? Why are civilizations fascinated by the arts of other cultures and civilizations? Why are the arts revered across cultures and across time? The arts form the base of organized civilizations : a gathering of people who developed dances , rituals, music, language arts, architecture.

We observe that other species have their own form of Arts and rituals be they songs, dance, architecture, aesthetic arts . During the mating season male penquins rummage through stones through stones until they find the one that suits their fancy. That stone is then presented to a female of their choice and laid at the feet of the female. The female penguin examines the stone and decides whether or not to mate her suitor .

Most ancient civilizations revere and worship the Sun to be God or a God that provides light and heat and seasons for agriculture. The stars and planets are deemed bodies across time and cultures. The spoils of war in ancient times were gold objects and jewels .

I do not have the answer to these questions and observations. Perhaps the creative process has some bearing with the need to find order out of chaos; the need to communicate and organize civilizations. As in the world of other species the perhaps the ritualistic nature of the arts are the basis for perpetuation of life. Maybe the conduct of the arts relates to creating order in the material world and a search for order in a spiritual world across cultures, species and time.

Why is there such a passion to look at artifacts from an archeological find? Why do we care about a clay pot , its shapes, patterns and its colors? What is so important about an ancient stone carving of a goat or chimera?

I have a passion for the arts . I am honored to have been selected to participate in this International Art Festival Anima Mundi in Lithuania. My family are Ashkinasi Jews , known as Litvaks, who emigrated to the USA from Lithuania and what is now Belarus to escape Russian occupation and oppression. My heritage includes multiple generations of European artists on both sides of my family. I believe some of my ancestors at the Vilnius University . My heritage includes multiple generations of European Artists and Musicians , and Architects. I have photographs of my ancestors in these lands dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In the U.S. we tend to take Freed of Speech and Freedom of Religion for granted. We are also passionate about protecting these Freedoms from Government oppression and in advancing freedoms and human rights throughout the world. Lithuania has a long and proud history of proving these Freedoms and Liberties of thought, speech and religion. Lithuania has been known as “ The Great Lithuania “ : centuries ago Lithuania was the largest country in Europe and was the first country I know of to provide Freedoms of Speech and Freedoms of Religion to its people.

This Arts Festival brings together Artists from many cultures and Civilizations to promote Freedoms of Speech, Freedom of Religion, and peaceful reconciliation of disputes in a world torn apart by violence. We convene as friends, kindred spirits to enjoy life, celebrate the arts , to sing , dance , paint and honor divergent cultures. We convene to make the world a better place for all in our quest for Freedom and Peace.

