

**THE CREATION OF REXHEP FERRI,
SYNTHESIS OF CONCRETE AND
ABSTRACT EXPRESSION, REAL AND
IMAGINARY AT THE SAME TIME**



Visual Art

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Abstract

This analytical view, which outlines the artistic scope of Academic Rexhep Ferri, consists with the treatment of the creative profile of this multi dimensional personality who by virtue of the expressive figurative language, rightly distinguished as one of the most original painters of the nationwide space. Painter of concrete and abstract expression, as well as real and imaginary, through the associative figure (by masterfully integrating all these elements into a whole brings authentic art, authentic style - totally Ferrian.

Purpose: Work intends to offer comprehensive information on artist's creativity, who thanks to the modernist figurative expression,, creativity, innovation, sensibility, specific conception, reached the highest peaks of figurative art not only in Kosovo but also in the former Yugoslavia and the international arena. Therefore, considering high artistic position of rexhep Ferri, the main purpose of this review is exactly knowledge of the broad public with the essential creative values of this author.

Methodology: As regards to the research aspect, we say that are used usual methods of research. The view is based on primary and secondary sources, direct analysis of the creative artist's opus, monographs, catalogs, journalistic articles, as well as other material and other publications, which point out the artistic achievements of Academician Rexhep Ferri.

Results: This work testifies the creativity of Ferri through all his creative stages which necessarily leads us to an even greater representation of the painter's work of the Painter, which really deserves specific treatment. We consider that “Ferrian Art” should be elevated and promoted altogether, because it is distinguished as a special treasure of Albanian culture and art in general, which inevitably left traces even in the international art.

Conclusion: As we analyze the painting of Ferri, naturally we conclude that the artistic vocation of this personality requires dignified, attentive and serious treatment. Because it is about of one of the artists of the golden generation (along with Muslim Mulliqi, Gjelo Gjokaj, Nusret Salihmixhiqi, Xhevdet Xhafa, and many others) known as co-founder of contemporary art of Kosovo, but also of the nationwide one.

Academic Painter Rexhep Ferri Personality and Follower of Unique Artistic Creativity

“From the window and the likeness I captured a 'master' Like I believe, so I know, just as I like it. The world that draws me, who put outside of the gravity I can not put it differently, one step beyond repeating towards the light”

Rexhep Ferri

The first generation of artists who laid the foundations of contemporary art in Kosovo, inevitably involves one of the artists belonging to the generation of individuality creators which insisted with a typical originality and enriched Albanian artistic creativity not only to Kosovo but in all other spaces where it was presented.

It is the academic painter Rexhep Ferri, whose work along with that of Mulliqi, Çavdarbasha, Gjokaj, Xhafa, raised it to the rank of artistic elite to us, while his work was the starting point for a literary school to be followed by generations of young artists (Basha, 2007,18).

Rexhep Ferri is rightly identified as one of the most original painters nationwide. His art is a synthesis of concrete, abstract, real, and imaginary expression at the same time, where thanks to

continual search, through associative figuration, by integrating masterfully all these elements as a whole, managed to bring authentic style - completely Ferrian.

Artistic expression of Ferri it is suggestive, full of metaphors and spiritual messages. Man, skulls, broken limbs, transfiguration, masks, silhouettes, and other associative details within Ferrian composition, confess stories, injustice and many pains, also express expectation, despair, disappointment, sensitivity and hope again...

It is human being with its essence that throughout the journey integrates the artist... "I try to find the man, to reach it, to give it its essence", says Ferri at the individual exhibition organized in honor of the 80th anniversary of his birth and the 50th anniversary of his sensational creativity, at the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo (Aliu, 2017).

It was exactly this effort that he had been **constantly looking for, unstoppable and eternal**. He consequent, explores the man and his being entering carefully in every labyrinth of life with the sole purpose of penetrating deep into the secrecy of the character.

Painting compositions of Ferri, bring varieties of puzzles, human psychology, sensibility, semantics, semiotics, drama, harmony and contrast, melted into one, but treated with artistic purity, full all content and massages, emphasizing elimination of excessive elements. appears as a personality and expressionist of individual authenticity (Aliu, 2017) therefore rightly his "Art" is qualified as a new legend in the spectrum of contemporary expression, high expression of an artistic intellectuality which in the history of visual arts will remain as a research history with extremely original expressions (Aliu, 2017).

Rexhepi makes battle on two fronts in front of the figurative art, painting and graphics that is distinguished as his main vocation, as well as in the literary art that is also cultivated by him with dedication.

Albanian elite painter and poet and novelist who left traces in Albanian letters, is expressed for the artist well-known academic Agim Vinca in his writing "Between fiction and factography" (Vinca, 2014, web).

Ferri's Life Journey

Rexhep Ferri to reach the culmination in the art, made long, but troublesome journey, since he was identified as a "Immigrant" (since he was born in Kuk0in 1937) and as a such was considered unworthy of the regime, as a result, it was often hindered to move towards progress. His life was a trues drama.

Since the age of eight because of the circumstances of the time, to avoid risk of war, leaving behind his father and big brother was forced to leave the country.

Lead by his mother, family Ferri initially was sheltered in Plava, then the waves of life sent him to Peja, in Babaj of Boka, to end in Gjakova. All this movement during and after World War II it was thanks to the altruism of mother Hatixhe, which, to save her children challenged problems of life and all alone, with much sacrifices, succeeded to protect, raise and breed her

children, despite the dream of overthrowing communism and her family to be reunited remained unrealized dream. “Mother Heroin” called his mother with pride and mixed feelings Rexhep. In his reminiscence he felt the pain as in the evening he faced sad eyesight that derived from the eyes of heroin who never laughed.

It was exactly that sadness reflected by those eyes causing him pain, suffering and fear. However “The Heroin” with its trust passed all the difficulties, expressed Ferri in an interview with Alda Bardhyli in the article titled “Rexhep Ferri in a story about painting, family and writing-Meeting with her father after 35 years” (Bardhyli, 2013).

Rexhepi, during his growth, felt spiritually mutilated, embedded with infinite pain because of the closure of borders other half remained in Albania, and this bitter reality disables family reunion The artist only after 35 years met his father and big brother.

His suffering is confirmed by Ferri himself where in a conversation with writer Zejnullah Rrahmani in the part “Conversation with Creator, “Game of Crossing and Layout of Elements” (Rrahmani, 1957, 11) from the beginning is explanation lonely life and loneliness that accompanied him *“I did not have the luck to live with my family, to learn from my father or brother... I felt cold... cold... I'm from those children who no one told me stories”* (Rrahmani, 1957, 11). And indeed his childhood was icy, scary, with dreams filled, full of emptiness.

Yet suffering and loneliness already hardened him, made him stronger, adding to him the self-confidence, enthusiasm, and ambition to achieve life goals. Pain did not exhaust it his dreams never. The obsession of seeing the wall between Albanians destroyed was unbeatable to him.

That wall divided his family in two, for him it was insurmountable, as well as for the Albanian nation everywhere.

And for many years fatal historical and ideological wall, became trauma of new Ferri, for which it was not allowed to speak openly (Maliqi, 2007, 6). Ferri has earlier chose the way to express internal revolt against national injustices.

It was fortunate that visual art and literary art as spiritual powers lived, grow and developed within his being. So art was best way to outline and say the things that were not said.

But artist through his universal language of art, Throughout the whole creativity treated unsaid opinion, pain, the existential issue, the destiny of the nation through historical stages, as well as the life story in time chronology. And despite being under the regime's observation, due to the country of origin, he decided to communicate with the public through the art.

Feeling the artistic momentum inside him earlier he was oriented towards figurative education.

In the school year 1954/55 he was registered at the Handicrafts School in Peja. This year marks the sixth generation of this artistic temple. Like the others of his generation, Rexhep was enthusiastic to be artistically formed. As a result, being attentive and self-organized, he approaches

seriously and devotedly to schooling, and since the first initiatives we found him proven not only in practical-professional subjects, but also in the theoretical ones.

However his artistic works occupied a special place in collective exhibitions, which were organized at the craft school premises in Peja.

Thanks to his talent and work, in June 1958, we find Ferri graduated at this dignified institution.

And from there he decided further to develop his artistic-cultural identity, of course because of the support that his friends offered who encouraged him to pursue studies at the Academy of Arts in Belgrade. And thanks to the special talent that distinguished the artist, managed to successfully pass the entrance exam and to be enrolled as a full time student at this prestigious academy.

In 1966, he graduated at the Branch of monumental painting. A year after opened the first personal exhibition at the Cultural Center Gallery in Pristina. Since in parallel with the painting he was also dealt with poetry, in 1962, in the literary magazine "Jeta e re", in Prishtina publishes poetry from the cycle " Shëtitësit e lodhur"/Tired walkers/ (Kult-plus, 2018)

While in 1970, in t'he Academy of Arts in Belgrade completes postgraduate studies. In 1971 awarded the Spring Salon Award by the Association of Figurative Artists and Applicants of Kosovo (SHAFK). While his first personal exhibition was held in 1967 at the Cultural Center Gallery, Pristina (Kult-plus, 2018).

During this period of time, besides Muslim Mulliqi, Gjelosh Gjoka, Tahir Emra, Xhevdet Xhafa, and many others, we found Ferri engaged about the constitution of the Academy of Arts in Pristina. Therefore in 1974, starts working as a lecturer at this academic institution.

In 1975, wins prize of the Spring Salon for painting of the Association of Kosovo Figurative Artists ([wikipedia, web](#)),

His works that testified high artistic invention, were exhibited at many personal and collective exhibitions not only in Kosovo, throughout Yugoslavia, but also in the world metropolis (Belgrade, Novi/Sad, Ulqin, Tirana, Sarajevo, Paris, Munich, Istanbul, Alexandria, etc.) where the artist praised not rarely with prestigious awards and special acknowledgments.

From 1999, we find Ferri as a Secretary of the Section of Arts in Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo ASHAK, and in 2000 regular Member of ASHAK, where he is still working today.

The Pictorial Creation — Authentic Choice of Author

Rexhep Ferri belongs to the artists who formed their style, through study and research in the disciplines of world modernity.

His works openly reveal that he decisively expresses many morphological and syntax elements of the visual language of traditional art (Qëndro, 2010,12).

He successfully overcame their powerful and influential times and managed to have his own visual language.

Aesthetic-artistic content in his pictorial compositions ennobles the soul, while us of expressive lyrical texts expresses true creative energy that Ferri possesses.

The spiritual value and inner revolt Ferri embodies with means of artistic expression, incorporating elements of imaginative nature expressed with expressiveness and treated with aesthetic cultivated taste, to bring true artistic works.

In the center of his creativity is the fate of human being, the struggle for existence and human fatality, which the author treats in a unique way. This seems not only in the way the artist operates during the creative process giving full freedom of spontaneity to his creativity, but also in the originality of the subject and its presentation that holds the stamp of his artistic personality (Maliqi, 2007, 3).

The works of the artist through figuration bring the human world, and world proposed by Ferri it is entirely that of human subjectivity.

He stands for pure figurative image, where the initiated subject is digested as a leaving impression and imaginary opinion takes the main power and is distinguished in the midst of the infinite wealth of conscious figurative experiences (Bardhyli, 2013, web).

According to the artist, all human beings are equal without emphasized distinctions. Therefore, and most work of Rexhep Ferri it is with human figures that usually stand upright. The figures have the shape of the sketches that show only the contours of the body with few concrete gender indications, clothing and its social status. For more they are headless. Instead of the head Ferri makes the neck a bit prolonged proportionally too small compared to the body (Maliqi, 2007, 3). Perhaps Ferri thinks the man what we know historically and currently, is an unfinished project or "Headless", writes Maliqi among others (Maliqi, 2007, 4).

While Nebih Muriqi describes as a mouth less figure, they look without eyes and cry out loud. More visionary and less realistic. Realistic fantasmagorique is called Ferri by Muriqi. According to him, Fantastic of Ferrit is suggested by concretized forms of the figures that speaks. they speak with internal effects, tone, shape, space says the author "Artist of question marks, Third Biennial of Drawing (Muriqi, 1979, 4).

His figures placed at the center of the picture are often accompanied by silhouettes where through valeristic reports dramatic lines of bold contrasts express sadness and inner concern including philosophical thoughts at the same time.

Special attention artist paid to the noble attitude and the human physical development of this land which highlights with our essential features, so his characters have alpine physiognomy. And despite being treated by him with modernist artistic expressions they resemble the arketipe.

Significant space in Ferri's work is mask which sounds totally mysterious suggesting a lot of meaning. As long as it appears enigmatic, again it appears playful, as intriguing, hermetic, and cunning. Because it hides identity, we encounter difficulties in decoding it, in a word being presented as a metaphorical element, creates uncertainty.

The artist while treating it as the protagonist, full of power which stands in the center of composition as it reveals its spiritual concerns to mysteriousness. Perhaps the mask as a metaphor contains the migration itinerary of Rexhep Ferri through the treacherous path to recognition, is the seismograph of his spiritual shocks, challenge to the annihilating power of time (Qëndro, 2012, 90).

In the works of Ferri, we not only do not find borrowings from other artistic disciplines, but strengthening the area of competence of his painting often takes extreme forms by working with technical dexterity those innovations which fundamentally transformed the fundamental European art relations: of the artist with the reality, of the real space with pictorial, or the latter with contextual space, of the image with the reality, opinion with technique and modal plasticity with the subject (Qëndro, 2012, 24).

So we say that the creator who belongs to the Albanian universe and which was also highly acclaimed and exalted by world critics, making us feel equal among the competitive challenges of European civilization it really is an artistic figure that makes us proud. And in this context Gëyim Qëndro in the Monography dedicated to Rexhep Ferri he rightly categorizes him as an Albanian painter who interacts with ranking authors Picasso or Bacon.

“Here is finally a painter who does not compromise with the public and who is bowing to the call for deep and imperial lucidity with all his youth warns of an exemplary is expressed on the occasion of the exhibition of Ferri in Paris in 1977 – Jean-Marie Dunoyer (Donoyer/1977- 2007, 13).

While the famous French poet and essayist Alain Bosquet, in the preface to the exhibition of Ferri catalog at the Lambert Gallery in Paris in 1977, calling it a modern creator, among other things emphasizes: “Rexhep Ferri walks straight to being, within the balance of the ellipse measures, of the movements that are crossed, it has the sensitivity and the gift to use extremely comprehensible geometry, where gravitations of earth and matter occur. However the foremost is elsewhere. Adjacent characters with the kingdom of plant and with the mineral world, recognize some kind of ancestral concern, deep, tragic and with an uncontested brilliance” (Bosquet/1977-2007, 12).

And Robert speaks about the strange characters of Ferri: “One with a head of predation, the other one headless or however, as a covered chief, all covered with the casket. They are lonely or two or two, holding hands.

From this unusual piece of work comes a weight impression, worries which is not common for artists coming from the east” (Barret-1977(2007),18).

The most eloquent searcher of the artistic elite in the field of figuration, as called by Eqrem Basha, it is not even on the abyss of the abstract, nor in the game of concrete, but firstly in the trials of an associative draw.

His art is permeated with the very original of the body in motion. Of geography, portrait and mask, of the specific character, line and surface, which often dictate the saving of color in favor of finding of residence, measured motion, mosaic of associative trials, of the broken walk which at the same time imposes pain and pride, birth and destruction, the beauty of construction, the horror of the ruin, the running force, the broken limb, monumentality and human wounded chest before the devastating fortunes to maintain an identity “White and black” from “Bjeshkët e Nemura” (Basha/1998-2007,18) emphasizes Basha in the preface of the catalogue of exhibition in the Galery VAKKO in Istanbul, Turkey.

While Academic Besim Bokshi, in the occasional speech during the promotion of the monograph of Ferri in Tirana, among others, states: The Brush of Ferri reveals homoide shadow movements in their dramas, through concerns, intentions, fears, and hopes of walking by man. And comes from their world, concerned about the fate, and suggest us actions to walk in life. From levels of love and concern to man the painting of Rexhep Ferrit stands humane and bright (Top channel, 2011).

For the Art of Academic Rexhep Ferrit as a column of visual arts development in Albania and Kosovo (Shqiptarja.com, 2013) can be written further. But, I chose to conclude with a quotation from Albanian critic and historian Gëzim Qëndro, who studied in detail the activity of Ferri “We can unequivocally say that his work was inscribed in the period of modernist art of Kosovo, has already entered the golden fund of the Albanian visual art heritage for formal innovations and a clear modernist character of the impressive corpus of his works for prominent talent as an artist and for the dignity and human values that he carries (Qëndro, 2012, 91).

At him he feels steadfast the determination to climb on “Supergiant” to look up and farther, insensitive to the passage of motifs and seasons (Qëndro, 2012, 90).

Conclusion

Academician Rexhep Ferri is undoubtedly considered a high-profile creative and multi-dimensional personality. He brought important pictorial works that are characterized by a special style of artistic expression.

And thanks to the quality, creativity, independence, contemporary artistic expression “Ferrian Art” stands firm on the pedestal of Kosovar art, all Albanian, but also and that international. Painter of human figuration, masks, transfigurations, wall, and broken limbs, as well as the pure color of the compositional compound conceived in advance, why not rationalize the elements inside the painting, deserves to be elevated and promoted subsequently because it is recognized as the culmination of Albanian culture and art without excluding the presence and impact that his creativity has left in the field of international art. As we analyze the painting of Ferri, we naturally conclude that the artistic vocation of this personality, requires dignified, attentive and serious treatment, because it is about one of the artists of the golden generation along

side with Muslim Mulliqi, Gjelosh Gjokaj, Nusret Salihmixhiqi, Xhevdet Xhafa, and many others) known as co-founder of contemporary art of Kosovo, but also of the nationwide one.

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