

## From Expressionism to Kosovo`s Abstract Expressionism

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### Abstract

In this paper we have included the most essential characteristics of the historical developments of this artistic movement and the most remarkable names of the field who have lived in Kosovo. Some artists such as Abdurrahim Buza, Qamil Grezda, Kujtim Buza, Muslim Mulliqi, Tahir Emra, Nysret Salihamixhiqi, Rexhep Ferri, Xhevdet Xhafa etc., of the old generation were inspired by this movement in the modern Art in Kosovo, which was also reflected to their art works for a long time.

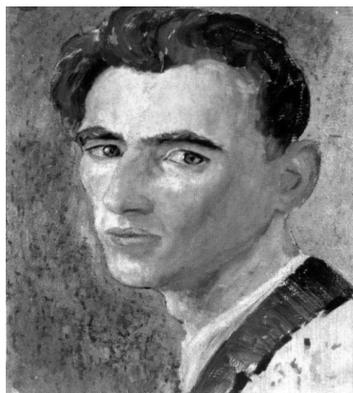
In this paper we will write about the history of the beginning of the classical direction up to modern and conceptual art. Many Kosovo`s artists, such as Muslim Mulliqi, Tahir Emra, Xhevdet Xhafa, Rexhep Ferri, Daut Berisha, Karmon Fan Ferri and some others from the new generation of the Faculty of Arts in Prishtina for the first time have transitet from their traditional elements (in their art works) to new concepts of modern contemporary art. Thus, we thank the artists from the three generations that are involved in our Topic "From Expressionism to Kosovo`s Abstract Expressionism". Through the presentation of their research work they have reached the concept of new movements that derive from the classic expressionism involved in European and world historiography starting from Paris until the late sixties of abstract expressionism by the well-known American painter Jackson Pollock who tries to geometric expressionism, informel, Pop Art, and so on..

In this paper we have analyzed the most prominent names of Kosovo`s Art and Kosovo`s paintings which are generally involved with this concept and until the last cycles of work they have remained faithful to the direction of expressionism.

**Keywords:** Painter, sculptor, directions (Pictorial movement), Art works, artistic experiences, impressive and expressive reflection.

### Introduction

Vincent Van Ghog, Henri de Toulouse -Lautrec, Edvard Munch and James Ensor were artists that belonged to the Expressionism period between 1874 -1900. Vincent Van Ghog was the first artist who expressed through the colour the passion of human drama or as he said "With red and green colors can express the most terrible human experiences". The expressionism in Kosovar Art began from the XIX century with the first generation of figurative creators. This generation appeared immediately after The First World War with painter: Abdurrahim Buza, Qamil Grezda, Shahin Kryeziu.



*Fig.1-Self portrait, by Abdurrahim Buza*

They were mostly inspired by the landscape of Dukagjini, from the difficult economic and political situation and especially the position of Albanians that degraded to the extreme. All of these worries were reflected in their emotional souls and through colors they expressed the passion of human drama, centuries -old suffering of the various invaders, especially the Serbo-Sllav.



*Fig.2-Walking, by Kadrush Rama*

The first trends of "modern elements" have started from this generation and were reflected from realism, impressionism and post impressionism. Abdurrahim Buza and Qamil Grezda were both painters from Gjakova and they painted motifs and expressive images with flattering colors. Through the phenomenon of colors they tried to emphasize the symbolism and the deep psycho-sociological significance. Impressive and expressive directions in Kosovo were very short period because in this country many Albanian people began to leave their homeland from the Serbian regimes. Abdurrahim Buza and Qamil Grezda, two famous Albanian painters were settled in the Republic of Albania and stayed there until the end of their lives. The Art works of these two Albanian famous artists were full of expressive lines and forms, pure colors which give us nostalgia nowadays. Their creativity was never stopped even during the difficult moments of invasions. The first art generations, who have studied in Secondary Art School in Peja, were the first artists in Kosovo of expressive direction. This Art School from 1948/49 was the first School of Art in Kosovo. Some generations from this school continued education to Art Academies in Europe and

Former Yugoslavia. When they finished their graduation, they returned in Kosovo with great artistic experiences (and were inspired from European artist's works). The first painter of these generation was the Muslim Mulliqi and I mention other artists next to Mulliqi: Tahir Emra, Rexhep Ferri, Xhevdet Xhafa, sculpture-Agim Cavdarbasha, Nusret Salihmixhiqi, Kadrush Rama, Nebih Muriqi, Esat Valla and many others.

### Introduction

The expressionis in Kosovar Art began from the XIX century with the first generation of figurative creators. This generation appeared immediately after The First World War with painters: Abdurrahim Buza, Qamil Grezda, Shahin Kryeziu. The Art School from 1948/49 was the first School of Art in Kosovo. Some generations from this school continued education to Art Academies in Europe and Former Yugoslavia. When they finished their graduation, they returned in Kosovo with great artistic experiences (and were inspired from European artist's works).



*Fig.3-Towers, by Muslim Mulliqi*

Artistic directions such as: neoclassicism, realism, romanticism, impressionism and other in XX century –fauvism, expressionism, surrealism, cubism to postmodern art, were reflected to Albanian artists from Kosovo. In this study we present the best artists from Kosovo with their best Art expressive works. The first painter was Muslim Mulliqi with his works (social themes) until other art works themes “Invasion of New Fields”. All of his cycles (Art Works) contained expressive elements from dark colors to figuration forms or many portraits with characters from the Ethnic Albanian Lands. The first composition cycle “Sharraxhijve” and “Hamajve” expressed human drama, historical moments, sizifian’s life where people for decades and centuries were subordinated, abused and enslaved. They also leave their country and settle in the centers of Former Yugoslavia for the better life. All of this drama was expressed through their pictures (portraits especially through eyes) art works. The artist–Muslim Mulliqi with grey and red –blue colors represented expressive dramatic feelings. In addition to contentious content of psycho-social, characters (were painted) from his cycle (“Hamajve”) has much dark colors with lights on their tired faces (tired from hard work) and psychological loads. The color for Mulliqi became like a symbol of human destiny. The same way of paint were in other of his paintings –a cycle of towers: “Towers from Junik”, “Halili and his family”, “Halili in front of Tower”, etc.

These motifs became a source of inspiration for many other artists. Towers have been a symbol of sustainability of existence, wars and a philosophy which has took a place inside their chambers where they were taken with important historical actions for the Albanian people. The painter Mulliqi at his cycle of Art Works calls- "Invasion of New Heavenly spaces" has used a light and expressive colors. I also noticed the expressive colors at the Art works of painter-Tahir Emra, such as: "Toka e kuqe (The red Land)", "Homazh Martireve (Homage to the Martyrs)", "Elegji per Kosoven (Oration for Kosovo). The expressive elements expressed to the Dukagjini Landscape's from "Cabрати" to the "Carshia e Madhe e Gjakoves".

### Conclusions

Colors, motifs and many expressive elements were as symbol to express more painting in abstract and expressive style. Artistic directions such as: neoclassicism, realism, romanticism, impressionism and other in XX century –fauvism, expressionism, surrealism, cubism to postmodern art, were reflected to Albanian artists from Kosovo. In this study we presented the best artists from Kosovo with their best Art expressive works.



*Fig.4- Homage for Martyrs, by Tahir Emra*

This painter in the later working showed other way of working (learned and took from his studies in Belgrade). This kind of paint (this painting) in Kosovo's Art after 60s brings expressionism vocation better than from 30s. This actuality brings for the first time in Kosovo and in Albanian painting the Informel (the pictorial movement- This artistic notion that was born of expressionism). The Informel Art was last until 2000 in paintings of Tahir Emra, until his new cycle called "Elegji per Kosoven". At all of his Art Works, he has focused colors and some other elements, sands and sheets. Xhevdet Xhafa is the other painter who has treated the expressionism, abstract-expressionism to some way of Informel Art at his Art Works. Xhafa has his Art Work called "Autobiografia (Autobiography), in this work he applies two figurative elements: form and color, and in many other ways the light element features the compositional plasticity through objects and these objects has transposed into compositions. So, beyond the contentious part of his works, Xhafa the figurative expression presents

also through his flattering colors and he enters among modern Albanian creators and his art works belongs in the direction of abstract expressionism.

Agim Cavdarbasha is the best Albanian sculpture of Contemporary Art in Kosovo, who has been a creator in the field of sculpture since the young age. Many of his sculptures such as: "portraits Pieta", "Kafazi (Cage)", "Sofra (Eating Table)", and some of his new later sculptures in bronze and marble have expressive and abstract elements where he has expressed the aesthetic concept of the forms and he has transformed into symbolic meaning. So many authors from Kosovo have a lot of Art Works with expressive and abstract direction with geometrical and object ways to Pop Art direction.

In this study we focus and analyze to the best artists, painters, sculptures from Kosovo, who have been constantly dealing with this concept of expressionism until their last Art works in other directions. At some creators we have focused in to their works in details and more analyzing by mentioning the development way of this artistic direction.

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