

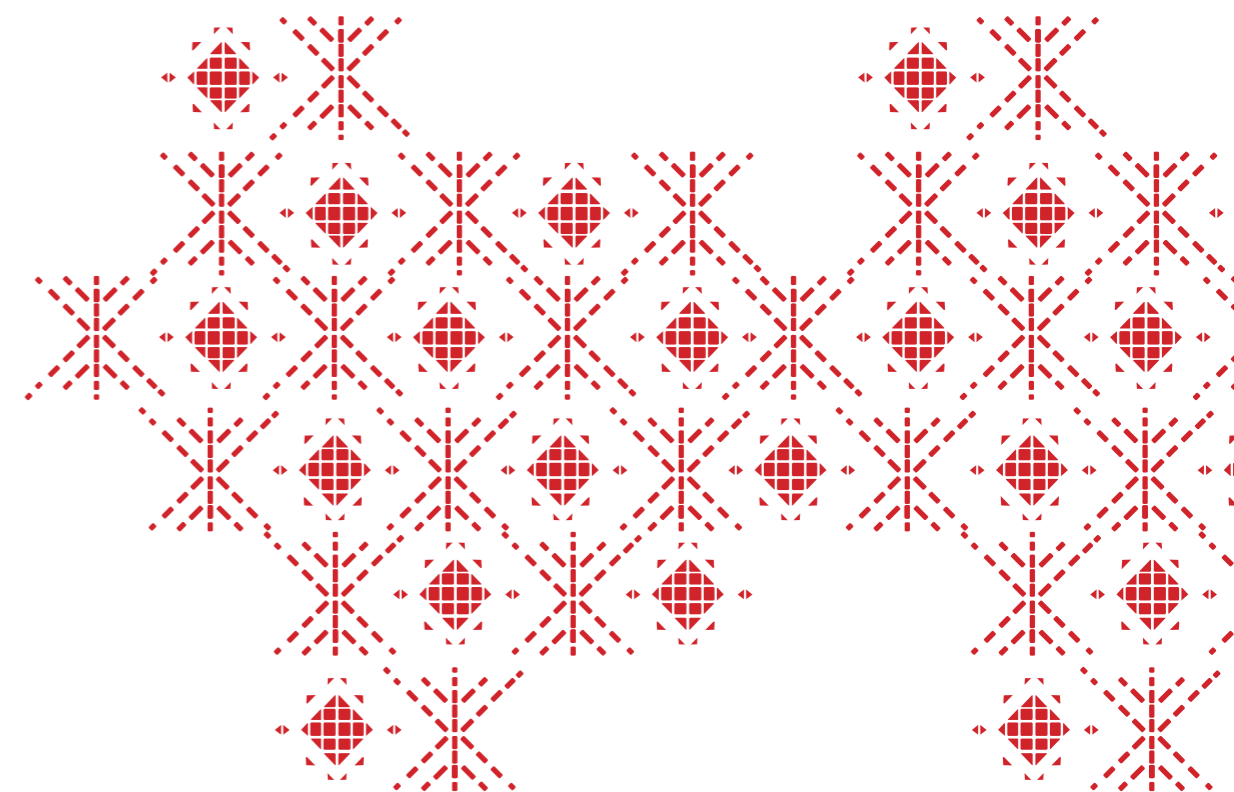


Bruno Bulaja
Ramski vez



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Ramski vez



U spomen Ramskim fratrima / In memory of the Ram friars
Dr. sc. fra Eduardu Žiliću i fra Živku Petričeviću

svibanj, 2023.

Tkanje budućnosti

Prije više od 140 godina fra Jeronim Vladić je pri kraju svojih *Uspomena o Rami* zabilježio kako se u austro-ugarsko vrijeme počeo graditi put preko planinskoga prijevoja Makljen. Pri tom opisu, očito promatrajući kotlinu Rame s Draševa, zapisao je kako Ramu krasi predivan prizor što se pred putničkim očima otvara, ali u isto vrijeme čini tužnim težak pristup ramskim selima, do kojih se sa svih strana trebalo „svaljati“ uskim stazama i kamenom zasutim putovima. Preuzeo je Vladić misli nekoga francuskog ministra onoga vremena koji je navodno rekao da će njegova zemlja biti sretna kada pred svaku kuću mognu doći kola i ustanovio da bi ramskom ubogom narodu bilo dobro kada bi kola mogla doći i do svakoga ovećeg sela.

Prekrasan pogled i nepristupačnost mjesta, divan prizor i težak život, prelijep kraj i tragedija naroda, njezina ljepota i zapostavljenost zaista su kontrarnosti koje opisuju Ramu kao takvu i samu općinu Prozor-Rama. Možda bismo ovdje mogli dodati još i današnji pogled na Ramu iznutra: ogromni resursi i potencijali koji su općini u prošlosti malo pridonosili i njihova isplativost koja je samo drugima koristila. Fra Jeronim nije odustao od ramske kotline, ponajprije trudeći se pokazati kako su volja i umijeće rada nužni. Važno je da sam narod prihvati ljepotu svoga kraja i da se uvjeri kako je izgradnja pristupnica od presudne važnosti za budućnost kraja i naroda.

Ljepota i zapostavljenost vodili su i nas, današnje Ramljake, do zaključka da nam je napokon potrebna volja i s njom umijeće, kako bismo svoj kraj počeli izgrađivati i spajati sa svijetom. Volja koja će napokon Ramu i ramskoga čovjeka staviti u prioritete svojih ciljeva i umijeće koje svoga čovjeka gleda kao obrazovanoga i sposobnog, stručnoga i obučenog za prosperitet i promociju rodnoga kraja

u svijetu. Rami nije potrebna odcijepljenost od svijeta iz koje će se samo crpiti resursi i snage, a ni prirodna ljepota o kojoj ćemo samo pričati. Rami je potrebna otvorenost drugima i ljepota koja je dostupna svima.

Volja i umijeće bili su nama u općini Prozor-Rama od samoga početka nit vodilja. U infrastrukturnom i gospodarskom smislu ostvarili smo u zadnjem desetljeće nužne i značajne projekte i time „umrežili“ ramski kraj te ga učinili pristupačnijim i drugim ljudima, strancima, posjetiteljima, sportašima i turistima. Ni naša pozornost za umijeće čovjeka, umijeće u najširem smislu te riječi, pa tako i za umjetnost, zadnjih godina nije izostala. U laganom ritmu bili smo dionici više umjetničkih projekata. Osim što smo poticali razvoj umjetnosti kroz poticaj umjetničkih izložbi, oplemenili smo zgradu Općine brojnim umjetničkim djelima. Umjetnička djela *Tvrtkov biljeg* (P. Dolić, 2017.), *Kralj Tvrtko* (K. Kovačić, 2021.) i *Ramski gastarbajter* (P. Dolić, 2022.) skulpture su većega formata koje smo trajno izložili u ulicama našega grada Prozora. *Amblemi ramskoga sjećanja* (P. Dolić, 2019.) zbirka je skulptura manjega formata, iz koje je proizišao *Ramski gastarbajter* i koju smo posvetili ramskim običajima i kulturnim vrednotama. *Amblemi* su neobična i vrlo uspješna kiparska predstava sjećanja na nekadašnji duh i život Rame te su kao takvi inspiracija i za buduće projekte.

Sva ova djela izlažemo i postavljamo kao spomen na prošla vremena s karakterom duhovnoga poticaja za buduća pokoljenja. Ne samo da se prošlost ne zaboravi, nego i da se nove naraštaje ramskoga čovjeka ohrabri za buduća vremena, osnaži u novim idejama i potakne na otvorenost širim životnim horizontima, čuvajući uspomenu na rodni kraj s aktivnim iskorakom

u novo vrijeme. Prošlost se i vjernički vrednuje nadom u budućnost, a i prošlost i budućnost imaju smisla jedino u aktivnoj sadašnjosti.

Potičemo stoga svaku umjetnost koja je otvorena prošlosti i budućnosti, koja se ne zatvara u ideologije aktualnih tumačenja povijesti i iluzija savršene budućnosti. Kao povijesno sjećanje i kao spomen bolje budućnosti započeli smo tako i projekt izgradnje *Ramskog trga*, koji će umjetničkim uređenjem nove zgrade Općine i prostora ispred zgrade postati lijep prizor Gornje i Donje Rame na samom ulazu u grad: fra Jeronimovim jezikom rečeno prizor koji „putničkom oku godi“, a grad Prozor, uz ostale projekte, postaje umjetnički uređeniji, privlačniji i ljepši.

U tom pogledu bili smo spremni u okviru cjelokupnoga umjetničkoga i prostornog uređenja Franjevačkoga samostana na Šćitu sufinancirati i projekt *Galerije* Franjevačkoga samostana Rama-Šćit kao i nabavku određenoga broja vrhunskih umjetnina. Projekt *Galerije* bio je predviđen kao sveobuhvatno i središnje mjesto izložbe umjetnina poznatih i velikih hrvatskih kipara i slikara, koje

posjeduje Franjevački samostan. Nažalost, naišli smo na neodobravanje i blokadu suradnje od pojedinih franjevacu u samostanu od 2016. godine, kako u ovom projektu, tako i u drugim. Možda razlozi počivaju na višeslojnosti politike u našoj zemlji, ali je tijekom vremena postao osjetan manjak volje, a i umijeća za suradnju.

Izložbom umjetničkih ostvarenja mladoga akademskog slikara ramskih korijena Bruna Bulaje i njegovim ramskim umjetničkim motivima ponovno se vraćamo na ono što nam je kontinuirano važno: sjećanje na Ramu u poštivanju svoje prošlosti i iskorak mlađih generacija u novo „sutra“, kojem i slikar Bulaja svjedoči. Stoga kao načelnik općine Prozor-Rama od srca podržavam ovaj umjetnički projekt s nadom u još veći broj mladih Ramljaka, koji će svojim znanjem i umijećem opravdati vrijednost Rame, ramskoga kraja i njezinoga puka.

Moje zahvale ovdje idu, također, i svima onima koji su i ovu izložbu u znaku Rame idejno osmislili i pretvorili u događaj susreta svih nas, a katalogom umjetničkih djela našega mladog slikara učinili i drugima dostupnim da se ono lijepo iz Rame može vidjeti i promatrati.

Dr. Jozo Ivančević
načelnik općine Prozor-Rama





1. Dvoje, ulje na platnu / oil on canvas — 70 x 55 cm



2. Dvoje, ulje na platnu / oil on canvas — 225 x 185 cm



3. Stopanica, ulje na platnu / oil on canvas — 225 x 185 cm





4. Stopanica, ulje na platnu / oil on canvas — 70 x 55 cm



Weaving the future

More than 140 years ago, at the end of his *Rama Memoirs*, father Jeronim Vladić noted that the construction of a road over the Makljen mountain pass began in the Austro-Hungarian times. In this description, apparently observing the Rama valley from Draševo, he wrote that although Rama was a wonderful sight opening up before a traveller's eyes, it simultaneously made sorrowful the difficult access to Rama villages, which had to be "descended into" from all sides by narrow footpaths and macadam roads. Vladić built on the thoughts of a contemporary French minister who had allegedly said that his country would be happy when a wagon could come in front of every house, when he stated that the poor people of Rama would be happy if a wagon could come to every larger village.

The beautiful view and the inaccessibility of the place, the wonderful sight and the difficult life, the beautiful area and the tragedy of the people, its beauty and neglected condition are the opposites that best describe Rama and the Prozor-Rama municipality. Perhaps we could also add today's view of Rama from the inside: huge resources and potentials that have contributed little to the municipality in the past and their profitability that only benefited others. Father Jeronim did not give up on the Rama basin, but primarily attempted to show that will and skilful work are necessary. The people themselves need to recognize the beauty of their region and come to realize that the construction of access roads is paramount for the future of both the region and its people.

The beauty and neglected condition led us, the present inhabitants of Rama, to conclude that we finally need to find the will and the skill to start developing our region and connecting it with

the world. The will that will finally make Rama and its inhabitants the priority of its goals and the skill that sees our man as educated and capable, professional and trained for the prosperity and promotion of his home region in the world. Rama does not need separation from the world, which would only drain its resources and strength, nor natural beauty which is only the subject of conversation. Rama needs openness to others and beauty accessible to everyone.

Will and skill have been our guiding principles in the municipality of Prozor-Rama from the very beginning. In terms of infrastructure and economy, we have implemented necessary and important projects in the last decade that "networked" the Rama area and made it more accessible to other people, foreigners, visitors, athletes and tourists. Our attention to the artistry of man, artistry in the broadest sense of the word, as well as to art, has not been lacking in recent years. At a leisurely pace, we have been involved in a number of art projects. In addition to encouraging the development of art through art exhibitions, we enriched the Municipality building with numerous works of art. Works of art *Tvrtkov biljeg (The Emblem of Tvrtko)* (P. Dolić, 2017), *Kralj Tvrtko (King Tvrtko)* (K. Kovačić, 2021) and *Ramski gastarbajter (Migrant Worker from Rama)* (P. Dolić, 2022) are large-format sculptures that we have permanently exhibited in the streets of our city Prozor. *Amblemi ramskog sjećanja (The Emblems of Rama's memory)* (P. Dolić, 2019) is a collection of small-format sculptures, including the *Migrant Worker from Rama*, which we have dedicated to the customs and cultural values of Rama. *The Emblems* are an unusual and very successful sculptural representation of the old spirit and life of Rama, and as such an inspiration for future projects.

We present and exhibit all these works as a memorial to past times in an attempt to spiritually stimulate future generations. Not only to ensure they don't forget the past, but also as an encouragement to the new generations of Rama people for the future, to empower them with new ideas and encourage them to open to broader horizons in life, and preserve the memory of their homeland while actively moving forward into the new era. The past is also evaluated against hope for the future, and both the past and the future have meaning only in the active present.

We therefore encourage any art that is open to the past and the future, that does not close itself in the ideologies of current interpretations of history and illusions of a perfect future. As a historical memory and as a memorial to a better future, we also initiated the *Rama square* construction project, envisaging the artistic decoration of the new Municipality building and the area in front of the building that will offer a beautiful view of the Gornja and Donja Rama at the very entrance to the town: in the words of father Jeronim, a sight "pleasing to a traveller's eyes", and, in conjunction with other projects, make the town of Prozor more artistically decorated, attractive and beautiful.

In this respect, we were prepared to co-finance the project of the *Gallery* of the Rama-Šćit Franciscan Monastery, as well as the acquisition of a certain number of first-class works of art within the framework of the overall artistic and spatial development of the Franciscan Monastery in Šćit. The *Gallery* project was envisioned as a comprehensive and central place for the exhibition of art by renowned great Croatian sculptors and painters owned by the Franciscan Monastery. Unfortunately, we have been facing the disap-

proval and refusal to cooperate from some Franciscans in the monastery since 2016, both in this and other projects. Perhaps the reasons lie in the multi-layered nature of politics in our country, but over time there has been a noticeable lack of will and the ability to cooperate.

In the exhibition of the artistic creations by the young academic painter of Rama roots, Bruno Bulaja, and his artistic motifs characteristic of Rama, we revisit that which is continuously important to us: the memory of Rama reflected both in respect for our past and in younger generations taking a step forward into a new "tomorrow", which the painter Bulaja is witness to. Therefore, as the mayor of the Prozor-Rama municipality, I wholeheartedly support this art project with the hope that an even greater number of young people from Rama will use their knowledge and skills to demonstrate the value of Rama, the Rama area and its people.

I would also like to thank all those who conceptualized and turned this exhibition dedicated to Rama into an event where we can all get together and made the collection of works of art by our young painter available to others so that the beauty of Rama can be seen and observed.

Jozo Ivančević, PhD
Mayor of the Prozor-Rama municipality





5. Ramski panoptikum 3, ulje na platnu / oil on canvas — 70 x 55 cm



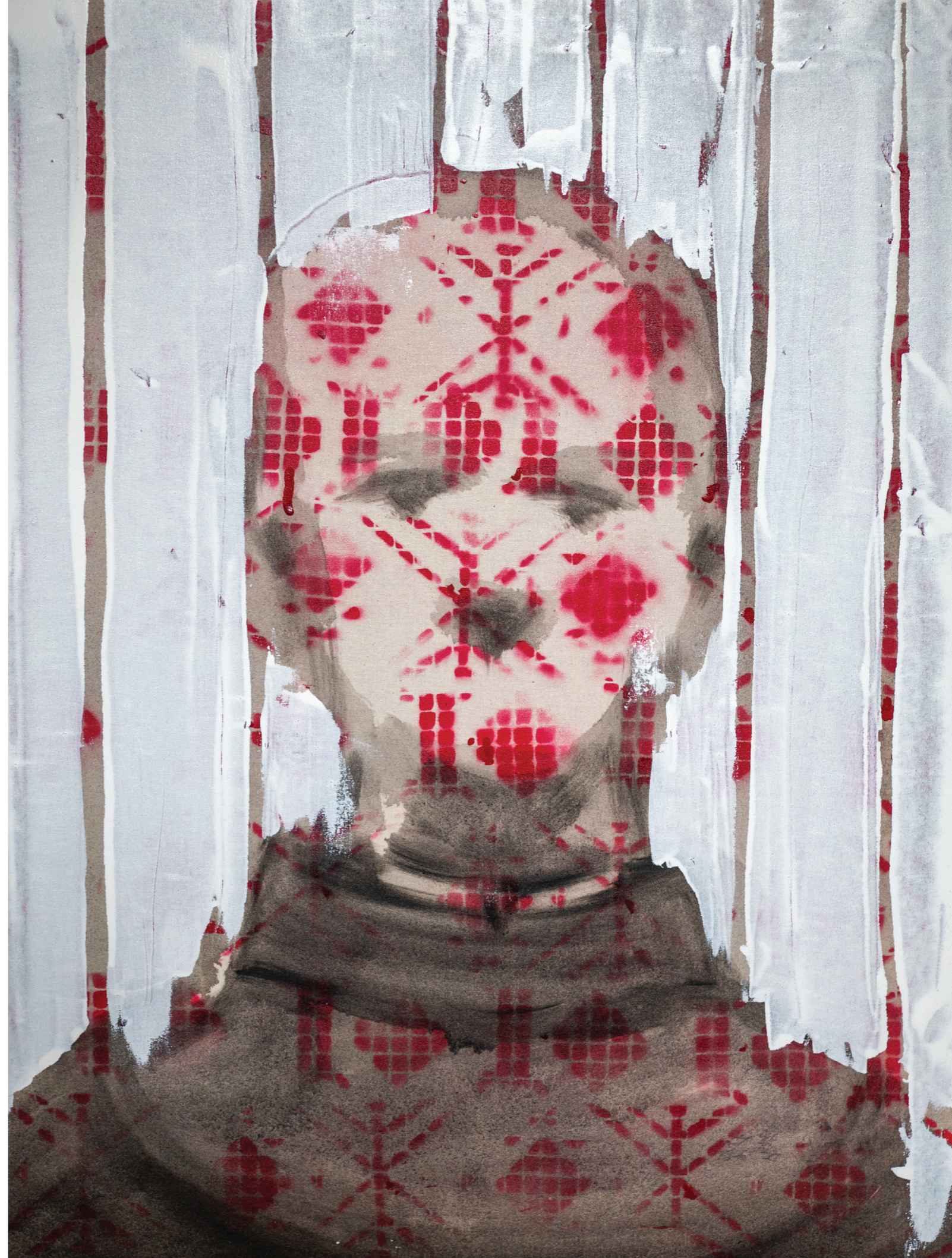


6. Ramski panoptikum 1, ulje na platnu / oil on canvas — 70 x 55 cm





7. Ramski panoptikum 6, ulje na platnu / oil on canvas — 70 x 55 cm





8. Ramski panoptikum 8, ulje na platnu / oil on canvas — 70 x 55 cm



9. Ramski panoptikum 9, ulje na platnu / oil on canvas — 70 x 55 cm





10. Ramski panoptikum 4, ulje na platnu / oil on canvas — 70 x 55 cm





11. Ramski panoptikum 2, ulje na platnu / oil on canvas — 70 x 55 cm





12. Ramski panoptikum 10, ulje na platnu / oil on canvas — 70 x 55 cm



13. Ramski panoptikum 7, ulje na platnu / oil on canvas — 70 x 55 cm





14. Ramski panoptikum 5, ulje na platnu / oil on canvas — 70 x 55 cm



Križićanje i ćesmanje ramskih uspomena

Obično se umjetnost razumijeva kao slobodnu djelatnost kojom se nešto saopćava. Po tome se ona razlikuje od zanatskih radova koji su uvjetovani karakterom posla i svojom svrhovitošću. Karakterom saopćavanja, s druge strane, umjetnost uspostavlja komunikaciju s onim tko je sposoban za promatranje. Po tome se ona razlikuje od igre i razonode, jer umjetnost nosi nešto i od odgovornosti saopćavanja, izricanja, prikazivanja. U umjetnosti se iskazuje određeni stav, specifična osobnost umjetnika i odgovornost za ostvareno djelo.

Čini se da osim slobode i odgovornosti postoji i onaj karakter umjetnosti kojim se izriče egzistencijalno povjerenje u smisao onoga što se predstavlja. U sakralnim, povijesnim ili regionalnim umjetničkim temama u našim bosanskim krajevima vrlo često dolazi do izražaja povjerenje u smisao usprkos teškim i nesretnim vremenima. Ovim povjerenjem u smisao umjetnost ne predstavlja lijepo samo u smislu „privlačnih veličina“ ili „zanosnih boja“, lijepo samo u „svidanju“, nego se djelima komunicira smisao događaja koji se predstavlja. Tako, recimo, ogromna skulptura ne mora biti privlačna zbog svoje enormnosti, nego zbog izraza vjere u smisao ogromne patnje, smisao koji se kategorijama razuma ne zapaža. Posebna forma neke skulpture može biti izraz neobične ili neponovljive situacije, koja kao životna priča djeluje besmisleno, ali u umjetničkoj formi pronalazi oslonac u smislu koji se golim okom ne zamjećuje. Lik ponizne i napaćene žene predstavljen u golemoj skulpturi može biti izraz ljubavi majke koju više ne vidimo, a čije su nam riječi tako puno značile.

I u sakralnim motivima može se naslutiti sličan karakter umjetnosti. Sveci su zaštitnici vjerničkoga puka i predstavljeni su često u povezanosti sa stvarnim događajima i koloritom nekoga kraja, ponegdje i uz prepoznatljive povijesne likove. Me-

đutim, uopće vezivanje svetačkoga i vjerničkog, vječnoga i prolaznog života sluti egzistencijalnu povezanost zemaljskoga s nebeskim, smisla često neshvatljive patnje i muke na ovoj zemlji sa smislom neshvatljivosti i nedokučivosti krajnje tajne života. U svim svojim empirijskim elementima umjetnost često prikazuje ono što se uopće *ne može* vidjeti.

U ramskom kraju, čini se, ovakav karakter umjetnosti pronašao je svoje definitivno mjesto. Ako govorimo o umjetnosti ramskoga kraja, potrebno je početi od onoga što se u Rami uopće *više ne vidi*, a izvor je stoljetne orijentacije na putu vjere. To je *Ramska Gospa*, koju su prema predaji franjevci 1687. godine u bijegu od Turaka zajedno s narodom ponijeli u Sinj. Ona nam je danas poznata kao *Gospa Sinjska*. Ova će slika ostati stoljećima simbol čežnje, simbol znanja da se čežnja ne ispunja kao nekakva želja i simbol vjere da se čežnja može ispuniti. Slika *Ramske Gospe*, one danas u Sinju, ostat će tako neprestani pokretač vjere između stvarnosti i sna, između trajnoga ponižavanja i borbe za dostojanstvo, između narušenoga i punog života, između stalnih odlazaka i stalnih povrataka, osobnih razočaranja i uvijek novih odluka, uznemirenosti i smiraja, smrti i uskrsnuća.

Ova „odsutna“ *Ramska Gospa* i s njom povezana čežnja naći će svoj izraz na Šćitu 1892. godine u djelu *Majka od milosti*, rimskoga slikara Alberta De Rohdena. I ova će slika postati „nevidljivom“ i ostati samo u sjećanju ramskoga puka, jer je spaljena zajedno s crkvom 1942. godine. *Majka od milosti* na ovoj slici nije sama. Nose je nebeski anđeli, ali ni oni nisu sami. Uz *Majku od milosti* je ramski puk. *Gospa* je okružena pogledima žena i muškaraca u narodnoj nošnji i franjevac koji joj se utječu. Nebeski događaj „uvijen“ je ovdje u onaj zemaljski, u događaj odlaska Gospine slike u Cetinsku krajinu, dok je u pogledima vjernika izražena više možda

vjera u povratak Gospe u svoj kraj. Vjernici i fratri kao da dočekuju Gospu, koja se vraća i ponovno donosi smisao u konkretnom i vrlo teškom vremenu ramске povijesti, vremenu fra Bone Milišića (1841. – 1902.), koji je s pukom bio razapet između neimaštine i želje za novim životom, „vječnoga“ iščekivanja fermana za gradnju crkve i nove slobode vjere, bolesti koje su harale ovim krajem i čvrste odluke za život.

Ova čežnja za *Majkom od milosti* i vjere u život održala se i nakon Drugoga svjetskog rata, kada su i fratri i narod nosili križ pritvaranja i zatvaranja, ideološkoga progona i straha, novoga podizanja crkve i žive zajednice. Usred nedaća poslijeratnoga vremena slikar Gabrijel Jurkić naslikao je 1955. godine repliku Rohdenove slike *Majke od Milosti*. Ovo Jurkićevo djelo, danas u desnoj apsidi crkve na Šćitu, nije samo umjetnička replika. S novim i svježim bojama ona je prisjećanje na ono čega više nema. I više od toga, Jurkićeva *Gospa od Milosti* predstavlja očito „povratak“ Gospe u svoju crkvu, približavanje *Majke od Milosti* svome puku, potvrdu „blizine Milosti“ ljudskoj mucu i križu vremena.

Ono što će Rama zajedno s fra Eduardom Žilićem (1905. – 1971.) desetljeće poslije Jurkića u umjetnosti dobiti, možda najbolje opisuje egzistencijalnu povezanost nebeskoga i zemaljskoga. Freska hrvatskoga slikara Josipa Biffela *Marija zaštitnica ramskoga puka* u apsidi srednje lađe u crkvi na Šćitu prikazuje Marijin „zagrljaj“ puka. Opet je *Majka od milosti* blizu čovjeku vjerniku, ali sada s prepoznatljivim likovima svetih Nikole Tavelića, Franje Asiškoga i Ante Padovanskoga te svjedoka vjere fra Anđela Zvizdovića. *Majka* grli svoj vjerni puk, čak i u prepoznatljivim likovima onoga vremena. I više od toga, *Majka od Milosti* svojim plaštem zakriljuje cijeli kraj, koji će i u ovo vrijeme nositi križeve potopa, kolektivnoga iseljavanja, odlaska u druge pokrajine i da-

leke zemlje. I koliko god teški bili križevi napuštanja rodnoga kraja, koliko god daleko morao otići običan čovjek, tolika je i zaštita *Majke od milosti*. Marija širi svoj plašt i nad kostima bezimernih mučenika i pokojnika po kojima puk na slici hoda. Time umjetnik kao da proširuje obzorja smisla: pa čak i ono što je davno bilo, što je zaboravljeno, što je bezimeno, lica vjernika kojih se nitko nema spomenuti i sva njihova muka ulaze u povijest spasenja.

Krajem osamdesetih i početkom devedesetih godina prošlog stoljeća ramski Franjevački samostan i puk našao se ponovno pred novim križem, križem zadnjega rata i stradanja u njemu. Osim toga, mnogi su ljudi radeći u inozemstvu nosili križeve razdvojenosti od obitelji, križeve „bauštela“ u tuđim zemljama, križeve gradnje novih obiteljski kuća, često u infrastrukturno neadekvatnim uvjetima. Tada je fra Živko Petričević (1935. – 2020.), i sam pred križem gradnje novoga samostana i obnove samostanskoga dvorišta, pokrenuo ogroman umjetnički projekt koji još do danas nije okončan. Novi samostan, stara „kapela“ i dvorište samostana na Šćitu postat će temom dugih večernjih razgovora frataru i njihovih prijatelja na „famoznoj“ terasi Franjevačkoga samostana na Šćitu. Ideja da se ponovno osmisli svu povijest patnje i stradanja u Rami lagano je zadobivala svoje konture i počela se ostvarivati kao izložba umjetničkih djela na otvorenom.

Postavljanje *Ramskoga križa* u dvorište samostana 1996. godine, djelo hrvatskoga kipara Mile Blaževića, početak je jednoga novog vala umjetničkih ostvarenja u ramskom kraju i jednoga posve novog svjetla vjere u smisao kolektivnih i osobnih križeva. Djelima akademskoga kipara Kuzme Kovačića *Diva Grabovčeva* i *Gospina vrata* (1997.), te *Posljednja večera* s „jednim mjestom s Isusom za stolom“, *Put križa* kroz gaj (2009.), djelom spomenutoga kipara



Mile Blaževića *Ramska majka* (1999.), ali i mnogim likovnim ostvarenjima hrvatskih slikara Đure Sedera, Blaženke Salavarde, Vlatka Blažanovića, Igora Rončevića, Matka Vekića i drugih, ramski samostan postati će novo umjetničko središte – mjesto *novoga osmišljavanja križa*. Ovdje se smisao vjere (milost) spustila s visina i kao da se pokazuje na imenima poginulih ispisanim pod *Ramskim križem*, na onom jednom slobodnom mjestu za stolom *Posljednje večere*, na licu *Ramske majke* koja čvrsto drži svoje dijete, u nevidljivom „klecalu“ kao osloncu *Dive Grabovčeve*. Milost ovdje „novim plaštem umjetnosti“ grli svakoga tko joj priđe: običnoga čovjeka, vjernika, putnika, gosta. Perivoj ramskoga samostana postao je otvorena galerija i neprestance poziva na novo iščitavanje povijesti, novu vezu s Transcendentnim, novo traganje za smislom križa, možda i današnjega križa iseljavanja cijelih obitelji, nesretnih političkih i privrednih okolnosti i stranačkih nerazumijevanja.

Ramski je samostan tako postao mjestom u kojem se patnju izrazilo u umjetnosti s vjerom u konačni smisao. Ovaj cjelokupni umjetnički izraz spoj je patnje i lijepoga, muke i nadanja, boli i ornamenta, spoj je onoga što u Rami u umjetnosti tkanja platna odavno već nalazimo: „križicanja i česmanja“. Povijest ovoga kraja nije samo obilježena nego je i povezana ponavljanim stradanjem i spaljivanjem, pokoljem i seljenjem, ali uvijek s vjerom i čežnjom da će biti bolje. U ovu povijest je „ukrižićana“ nada u bolju budućnost, zapravo je povijest izvezena križevima baš kao što su odjevni predmeti *košulje i ćurdije, aljine i anterije* „križićani“ stoljećima. Križ je stvarnost, ali i ornament, kao što su to i sva moderna umjetnička ostvarenja u ramskom Franjevačkom samostanu.

Promatrajući likovna djela ramskoga slikara Bruna Bulaja teško se oteti dojmu „križicanja i česmanja“ ramskih uspomena. Prikazi stvarnih ramskih likova, nekada fotografiranih i portretiranih, idu ovdje pomalo u smjeru neprepoznavanja. Time Bulaja upozorava na generalni karakter sjeća-

nja i prisjećanja, uspomene i spomena. Uspomene vremenom blijede. I kao što mlađi naraštaji pamte lica s Jurkićeve slike ili Biffelove freske samo „po čuvenju“, tako Bulajini prikazi ramskih motiva upozoravaju na vrijednost spomena, pa možda i onoga molitvenog, u čiji smisao duboko vjerujemo i kada ga samo pomalo ili zamagljeno naziremo.

Ono što je izrazito u empiriji umjetničkoga iskaza Bulajina djela jest motiv „križicanja“ s ramske tradicionalne nošnje. Povremena široka crvena boja na velikoj plohi sigurno simbolizira patnju i mučeništvo. Pomiješani kolorit na drugim Bulajinim djelima pokazuje određeno „otimanje“ jedne boje u borbi s drugima. Ali vezeni crveni križići na ramskim motivima zasigurno su otimanje od zaborava ramske kulture i tradicije. Što više, crvena boja „križicanja“ prisutna je na licima predstavljenih ljudi s fotografije, na njihovu čelu, ustima, obrazima pa i „starijskim brkovima“. Time je naglašena činjenica da zapravo obraz čovjeka, njegovo lice i njegov govor trebaju biti odraz križa i vjere koju se povijesno sabiralo i umjetnički sročilo na *Ramskom križu* u samostanskom dvorištu.

Po nejasnoj bijeloj boji, pomalo igrom crne i bijele boje, tipične za odnos „košulje i ćurdije“ u ramskoj nošnji pa i sivom pozadinom, Bulaja stvara „tkanje od sjećanja“ koje se usmjerava i na budućnost ramskoga čovjeka. Budućnost je nejasna bijela boja, često siva, a zna i pocrniti. Ali „križicanje“ ostaje stalni poziv na čvrsti oslonac u križu. Tko se dotakao ramske nošnje ili ju je slučajno obukao, zna da su utkani ornament „križicanja“ čvrsti, tvrdi i opori i da ih se ne može jednostavno razvezati. Ova čvrstina „križicanja“ kao da i danas, kako na nošnji tako i na umjetničkim djelima, pokazuje ono što hebrejska riječ za vjeru *Amen* stvarno znači – biti čvrsto usidren u Onoga koji nas nosi, „ukrižićan“ u Milost, u smisao u koji i umjetnost vjeruje.

Josip Jozić





15. Orašačko kolo, ulje na platnu / oil on canvas — 200 x 600 cm



“Crisscrossing” and “threading” of Rama memories

Art is usually seen as a free activity that communicates something. This distinguishes it from artisan work, which is conditioned by the character of the work and its purpose. On the other hand, by being a communication tool, art establishes communication with those who are capable of observing. This distinguishes it from play and entertainment, because art also carries something of the responsibility of communication, expression, presentation. Art is an expression of an attitude, the specific personality of the artist and the responsibility for the work itself.

It seems that in addition to freedom and responsibility, there is also that character of art that expresses existential faith in the meaningfulness of what is presented. Sacral, historical or regional artistic themes in our Bosnian regions often express faith in meaningfulness despite difficult and unfortunate times. Through this faith in meaningfulness, art does not represent beauty only in the sense of “attractive proportions” or “ravishing colours”, beautiful only in the sense of “liking”, but also communicates the meaning of the event presented. Thus, for example, mere size does not necessarily make a large sculpture attractive. Rather it is the expression of faith in the meaningfulness of enormous suffering, the meaningfulness that can not be perceived by the categories of reason. The specific form of a sculpture can be an expression of an unusual or unique situation, which seems meaningless as a life story, but finds support in the artistic form that lends it meaning that is invisible to the naked eye. A large sculpture of a humble and suffering woman may be an expression of the love of a mother we can no longer see, but whose words meant so much to us.

The similar character of art can also be seen in sacral motifs. Saints are patrons of the faithful and are often presented in connection with real events and the colour of a region, sometimes with recognizable historical figures. However, in general, the fact that a parallel is being drawn between the life of saints and believers, eternal and transitory life, foreshadows the existential connection of the earthly and the heavenly, the meaning of the often incomprehensible suffering and torment on this earth and the meaning of the incomprehensibility and inscrutability of the ultimate secret of life. In all its empirical elements, art often depicts that which *cannot* be seen at all.

This characteristic of art seems to have found its definitive place in the Rama area. The discussion about the art of the Rama area needs to start from that which can *no longer be seen* in Rama, but is the source of centuries-old orientation on the path of faith. It is *Our Lady of Rama*, who, legend has it, the Franciscans and the people took to Sinj in 1687, fleeing from the Ottomans. Today she is known to us as Our Lady of Sinj. For centuries, this painting will remain a symbol of longing, a symbol of the knowledge that longing is not fulfilled as a wish, a symbol of faith that the longing can be fulfilled. The painting of Our Lady of Rama, which is now in Sinj, will thus remain a constant driver of faith between dream and reality, between permanent humiliation and the struggle for dignity, between broken and full life, constant departures and constant returns, personal disappointments and always new decisions, anxiety and tranquillity, death and resurrection.

This “absent” *Our Lady of Rama* and the longing associated with her will find expression in Šćit in 1892, in the work *Mother of Grace* by the Roman painter Albert De Rohden. This painting will become “invisible” too and linger only in the memory of the Rama people, because it burned down with the church in 1942. The *Mother of Grace* is not alone in the painting. She is carried by heavenly angels, but they are not alone either. The people of Rama surround the *Mother of Grace*. Our Lady is followed by the gazes of women and men in national costumes and Franciscans who find solace in her. The heavenly event is “intertwined” with the earthly event - the departure of the painting of Our Lady to the Cetina region, with the eyes of the faithful expressing the faith that Our Lady will return to her homeland. The faithful and the friars seem to welcome Our Lady, who returned and restored meaning at a specific and very difficult time in Rama’s history, the time of father Bono Milišić (1841-1902), who was thorn between poverty and longing for a new life, the “perennial” waiting of the confirmands for the church to be constructed and the new freedom of religion, the diseases that ravaged the region and strong determination to survive.

This longing for the *Mother of Grace* and faith in life persevered even after the Second World War, when both the friars and the people bore the cross of detention and imprisonment, ideological persecution and fear, construction of the church anew and of a living community. Amidst the hardships of the post-war period, painter Gabrijel Jurkić painted a replica of Rohden’s painting *Mother of Grace* in 1955. This work by Jurkić, now situated in the right apse of the church in Šćit, is not just an artistic replica.

Its new and fresh colours are a reminder of that which is no longer there. And more than that, Jurkić’s *Our Lady of Grace* represents the obvious “return” of Our Lady to her church, the Mother of Grace getting closer to her people, the confirmation of the “closeness of Grace” to human suffering and the cross of time.

The work of art that Rama and father Eduard Žilić (1905 – 1971) got a decade after Jurkić perhaps best describes the existential connection between the heavenly and the earthly. The fresco by the Croatian painter Josip Biffel, *Mary the Patron Saint of the Rama People*, in the apse of the central nave of the church in Šćit, depicts Mary “embracing” the people. Once again, the *Mother of Grace* is close to the faithful, but now with the recognizable figures of saints Nikola Tavelić, Francis of Assisi and Anthony of Padua, as well as the witness of faith, father Anđel Zvizdović. The mother embraces her loyal people, even the recognizable figures of the time. More than that, the *Mother of Grace* is shielding the entire region with her mantle, which will, in these times as well, bear the crosses of floods, collective emigration, leaving to other provinces and distant countries. And no matter how heavy the cross of leaving one’s homeland is, no matter how far an ordinary person has to go, the protection of the *Mother of Grace* extends to him. Mary also spreads her mantle over the bones of the nameless martyrs and the dead thread upon by the people in the painting. With this, the artist seems to expand the horizons of meaning: even events from long ago, the forgotten, the nameless, the faces of believers whom no one remembers anymore and all their suffering enter the history of salvation.



In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Franciscan Monastery and the people of Rama found themselves faced with another cross, the cross of the last war and the suffering it brought. In addition, many people working abroad carried the crosses of being separated from their families, the crosses of migrant workers in foreign countries, the crosses of building new family houses, often in infrastructurally inadequate conditions. Then father Živko Petričević (1935 – 2020), himself bearing the cross of building a new monastery and renovating the monastery courtyard, initiated a huge artistic project that has not been completed to this day. The new monastery, the old “chapel” and the courtyard of the monastery in Šćit were destined to become the subject of long evening conversations between the friars and their friends on the “fabulous” terrace of the Franciscan monastery on Šćit. The idea to present the entire history of suffering and plight in Rama once again slowly took shape and began to be realized as an open air art exhibition.

The placement of the Rama Cross in the courtyard of the monastery in 1996, the work of Croatian sculptor Mile Blažević, marked the beginning of a new wave of artistic achievements in the Rama area and shed a completely new light of faith on the meaning of collective and personal crosses. The works by academic sculptor Kuzma Kovačić *Diva Grabovčeva*, *Gospina vrata (The Gates of Our Lady)* (1997), the *Last Supper* with “one seat for Jesus at the table”, *Put križa kroz gaj (The Path of the Cross through the Grove)* (2009), the work of the aforementioned sculptor Mile Blažević, *Ramska majka (A Mother from Rama)* (1999), as well as many works of art by Croatian painters Đura Sedler, Blaženka Salavarda, Vlatko Blažanović, Igor Rončević, Matko Vekić and others, transformed the Rama monastery into a new artistic centre - the place for the new conceptualization of the cross. Here, the meaning of faith (mercy) de-

scended from heavens and seems to be reflected in the names of the dead written under the *Rama Cross*, in the one free place at the table of the *Last Supper*, on the face of *A Mother from Rama* who is holding her child firmly, in the invisible “kneeler” supporting *Diva Grabovčeva*. Here, mercy embraces everyone who approaches it with a “new mantle of art”: ordinary people, believers, travellers, guests. The gardens of the Rama monastery have become an open air gallery that constantly invites a new reading of history, a new connection with the Transcendent, a new quest for the meaning of the cross, perhaps even today’s cross of emigration of entire families, unfortunate political and economic circumstances and the inability of political parties to come to an understanding.

The Rama monastery thus became a place where suffering was expressed in art with faith in the ultimate meaning. This overall artistic expression is a combination of suffering and beauty, torment and hope, pain and ornament, it is a combination of what we have long found in Rama in the art of the fabric weaving: “crisscrossing and threading”. The history of this area has not only been marked, but also connected not only to repeated suffering and burning, slaughter and migration, but always to the faith and longing that things will get better. The hope for a better future has been “crisscrossed” into this history, in fact, history has been embroidered with crosses, just like *shirts* and *ćurdija (waistcoats)*, *aljina (overcoats)* and *anterija* (dresses) have been decorated with crosses for centuries. The cross is both a reality and an ornament, as are all modern works of art in the Franciscan monastery in Rama.

Looking at the works of art by Rama painter Bruno Bulaja, it is difficult to escape the impression that Rama memories are being “crisscrossed and threaded”. The depictions of real people from Rama, photographed and portrayed long ago, are somewhat unrecognizable. Bulaja seems to be

emphasizing the general character of memories and recollections, remembrances and memorials. Memories fade over time. And just like the younger generations remember the faces from Jurkić’s painting or Biffel’s fresco only “by hearsay”, Bulaja’s depictions of Rama motifs stress the value of memorials, and perhaps also of praying memorials, whose meaning we deeply believe in even when glimpsed only slightly or dimly.

The “crisscrossing” motif from Rama’s traditional costumes is distinct in the empiricism of the artistic expression of Bulaja’s work. The occasional broad sweep of red colour across a large surface certainly symbolizes suffering and martyrdom. The mixed colour scheme in Bulaja’s other works shows a certain “strife” of one colour clashing with others. But the embroidered red crosses of Rama’s motifs certainly snatch Rama’s culture and tradition from oblivion. What’s more, the red colour of “crisscrossing” appears on the faces of the people represented in the photo, on their foreheads, mouths, cheeks, and even their “ancient moustaches”. This emphasizes the fact that the visage of a man, his face and his speech

should be a reflection of the cross and the faith that have historically been accumulated and artistically represented on the *Rama Cross* in the monastery’s courtyard.

With a vague white colour, subtle interplay of black and white, typical for the relationship of the “shirt and waistcoat” in the Rama costume, and grey background, Bulaja weaves the “tapestry of memories” that also focuses on the future of the Rama man. The future is a vague white colour, often grey, and can also turn black. But “crisscrossing” remains a constant call to strongly rely on the cross. Anyone who has touched a Rama costume or accidentally put it on, knows that the woven “crisscross” ornaments are solid, resilient and strong and cannot be easily removed. This resilience of the “crisscrossing” seems to illustrate even today, both on costumes and in works of art, the true meaning of Hebrew word for faith, *Amen* - being firmly anchored in the One who carries us, “crisscrossed” into Grace, in the meaning believed in by art as well.

Josip Jozić





Ramski vez

Suvremena umjetnost nerijetko se oslanja na povijest. Jedan od razloga tome svakako je i privlačna mogućnost upisivanja psihološke konstitucije autora u šire društvene narative. Osobnom i lokalnom poviješću u svojim se slikama bavi i Bruno Bulaja. Budući da je vlastitom obiteljskom poviješću generacijama vezan uz ramski kraj te su slike posveta tradiciji i kolektivnom sjećanju toga kraja. To se najbolje vidi na seriji portreta rađenih prema starim fotografijama tamošnjih stanovnika. Preko njihovih lica prelazi ornament s *ramskih peškira*, *ramski vez*, koji je znak stoljetne povezanosti ljudi s njihovom zajednicom. Fotografija je relativno moderan izum koji vjerno čuva lik neke individue. Nasuprot njoj, ornament postoji tisućljećima i posve su apstraktni. Ali, kao što je fotografija jamac nečijega prebivanja na nekom području to je isto i ornament. Njegove su forme nedokučive i u sebi kriju tajnu ekspresiju generacija. On je kôd raspoznavanja kultura.

U kraju oko Rame za vezenje se kaže „križicanje“. Izraz u svom korijenu ima riječ „križ“ koja sugerira ukrštanje, presijecanje i ispreplitanje. To me navodi i na viziju povijesti kao tkanja u kojemu se isprepliću i ukrštavaju različite generacije i različite kulture te njihove slične priče i slični pojedinačni životi, u istom krajoliku i s manje-više istim kalendarskim obavezama oko zemlje, sa sličnim slavljinama i tragedijama. Cikličnost ljudskoga života, slična prirodnoj cikličnosti, možda je najočitija u ruralnim krajevima, gdje je i snažnije prisutna veza između čovjeka i prirode, a netko bi rekao i čovjeka i metafizičkoga temelja prirode, odnosno općenitoga postojanja. Ipak, ni ti krugovi unutar kojih se vezu i isprepliću (ili, ukrštaju) ornament ljudskih života na selima nisu nepromjenjivi. Tradicija nije okamina nego živ organizam. Ona je nevjerojatno žilava pa

opstaje u gestama, jeziku, neobičnim običajima ili odnosima i nakon brojnih pokušaja njezina iskorjenjivanja. A isto tako je i nevjerojatno prilagodljiva, neuhvatljiva, eterična i merkurijalna, spremna da se sakrije i asimilira u nove odnose, tehnologije, zakone, skrivena u spomenutim mjestima svakodnevnoga iskustva, odakle izvire jednako kao što se neki genotip manifestira na fizionomijama ljudi sličnoga podneblja.

U tome je ključ poetike Bruna Bulaje. Slikarstvo, općenito, ima transformativnu snagu spajanja tradicijske prošlosti (ovdje u smislu ornamenta) i tehnološkoga napretka (ovdje u smislu fotografije), možda čak i s nekom budućnošću koja bi nadilazila ono očito i svakodnevno (kao što je repetitivnost ljudskih poslova, repetitivnost ornamenta i repetitivnost fotografske reprodukcije) u onom nadvremenskom koje spaja pozitivne aspekte čovjekova suživljavanja s nekim mjestom i moguće potencijale širenja ljudske svijesti. To širenje uvjetuje spoznaju kako je neka specifična lokacija istovremeno jedinstvena i univerzalna – to jest povezana je sa svim drugim mjestima svijeta arheološkim, etnografskim i genetičkim tragovima, ali i jednakim prisustvom specifičnoga osjećaja ispunjenosti ljudske svijesti.

I tehnološki napredak, korišten s mjerom usvojenom u dugim tisućljećima dijaloga s prirodom, može biti dragocjen pomagač u takvom širenju svijesti. Često neoštre, crno-bijele fotografije izrađene na krutom papiru, koje ovaj umjetnik koristi kao predloške, imaju puno erotičniju auru (i na dodir i na pogled) od bezbrojnih i beznačajnih fotografija visoke rezolucije koje se nakupljaju u memorijama naših pametnih telefona. One su i nesigurni referent jednoga minulog vremena, tajanstvene i intrigantne kao legendarne ličnosti i jednako

legendarni autori narodnih pjesama. Tehnologija nije suprotstavljena harmoniji uspostavljenoj između čovjekova (kratkoga), prirodnoga (dugoga) i svemirskog (vječnoga) postojanja. Ona je samo nastavak čovjekova djelovanja. Bruno Bulaja slikarstvom premošćuje jaz između drevnoga, suvremenoga i onoga što će doći (iskoristio bih ovdje popularnu riječ „transhumanistički“, ali u najpozitivnijem smislu nadilaženja civilizacijskih metastaza grabeži i gomilanja, koje se danas tako olako proglašavaju ljudskom naravi).

Slikarstvo sugerira vječnu prisutnost, u trenutku istaknutom u dvije dimenzije (baš kao i ornament i fotografija). Ispunjeno je osobnim i istovremeno univerzalno čitljivim simbolima. Ono nas tjera na imaginaciju i na mentalno stvaranje nekoga prostora, narativa, osjećaja. Zbog svega toga ono ima gotovo magijsko djelovanje, a na to baš i računa Bruno Bulaja kada na većim formatima isprepliće ramski vez i segmente obiteljskih fotografija, kao i prikaz lokalnoga kola na Orašcu. Inzistiranje na ornamentu i rasteru

naglašava površinu kao glavno mjesto likovnoga događanja, dok nas dijelovi fotografiranih prizora ubacuju u prostore i vremena drugačije od onih u kojima se nalazimo dok promatramo sliku. To je (opet) istovremeno kretanje kroz različite dimenzije vremena i prostora, ali i potpuno bivanje u sadašnjosti, jer u ovom prikazu gledatelj slike može uistinu osjetiti energične pokrete i odlučne, tupe zvukove plesača kola.

Tradicija se, nažalost, danas često shvaća kao nešto regresivno i tribalizirajuće. Međutim, pred ovim slikama Bruna Bulaje, predlažem drugačiji pogled na nju. Sjećanje na dinamičnu protočnost vremena može biti i preduvjet ispunjenoga života u sadašnjosti, uživanja u plodovima prirode i ljudskoga uma, kao i prihvaćanja drugačijih tradicija i individualnih postojanja. Jer, ako smo svjesni da je jedna zajednica čvrsta, složen i fascinantna vez, tko može reći da se to neobično tkanje prekida na (ionako arbitrarnim) granicama općina, država, kultura i jezika?

Fedja Gavrilović



Rama embroidery

Contemporary art often builds on history. One of the reasons is certainly the attractive possibility of projecting the author's psychological constitution onto broader social narratives. Bruno Bulaja is also preoccupied with personal and local history in his paintings. Since his connection to the Rama area can be traced back for generations of family history, his paintings are dedicated to the tradition and collective memory of the region. This is best seen in a series of portraits based on the old photographs of the inhabitants. Their faces are covered by an ornament found on *Rama towels*, the *Rama embroidery*, which signifies centuries-old connection of people with their community. Photography is a relatively modern invention that faithfully preserves the image of an individual. By contrast, ornaments have existed for millennia and are completely abstract. But, just as a photograph bears witness to a person's residence in a certain area, so does an ornament. Its forms are unfathomable and hold the secret expression of generations. It is a cultural recognition code.

In the Rama region, embroidery is called "crisscrossing". The word "cross" is at the root of the term and suggests crossing, interlocking and interweaving. It offers a vision of history as a fabric in which different generations and different cultures, their similar stories and similar individual lives, in the same landscape and with more or less same land tilling obligations, similar celebrations and tragedies are intertwined and interwoven. The cyclicity of human life, similar to the natural cycles, is perhaps most evident in rural areas, where the connection between man and nature is felt more strongly, and some would say the connection between man and the metaphysical foundations of nature, general existence. However, even the cycles within which the ornaments

of villagers' lives are connected and intertwined (or crisscrossed) are not immutable. Tradition is not a fossil, but a living organism. It is incredibly tenacious and persists in gestures, language, unusual customs or relationships even in the face of numerous attempts to eradicate it. And it is also incredibly adaptable, elusive, ethereal and mercurial, ready to hide and assimilate itself into new relationships, technologies, laws, concealed in the places of everyday experience, from whence it springs just as a certain genotype manifests itself in the physiognomy of the people inhabiting a similar climate.

This is the key to the poetics of Bruno Bulaja. Painting, in general, has the transformative power to combine traditional past (here in the sense of an ornament) with technological progress (here in the sense of photography), and perhaps even with the future that would transcend the obvious and the everyday (such as the repetitiveness of human affairs, the repetitiveness of ornaments and the repetitiveness of photographic reproductions) into timelessness that combines the positive aspects of human coexistence with a place and potentials for the expansion of human consciousness. This expansion requires the realization that a specific location is both unique and universal – that is connected to all other places in the world by archaeologically, ethnographically and genetically, as well as by the equal presence of the specific feeling of expansion of human consciousness.

Even technological progress, used with the measure adopted during the long millennia of dialogue with nature, can be a valuable helper in such expansion of consciousness. The often blurry, black-and-white photos made on stiff paper, used by the artist as templates, have a much more

erotic aura (both to the touch and to the eye) than the countless and insignificant high-resolution photos that accumulate in the memories of our smartphones. They also bear uncertain witness to a bygone era, mysterious and intriguing legendary people and equally legendary folk song authors. Technology is not incompatible with the harmony of human (short), natural (long) and cosmic (eternal) existence. It is simply an extension of human activity. Bruno Bulaja's painting bridges the gap between the ancient, the contemporary and what is to come (I would use the popular word "trans-humanist" here, but in the positive sense of transcending the civilizational metastases of plunder and hoarding, that are now so easily considered human nature).

Painting suggests eternal existence in a moment captured in two dimensions (just like ornament and photography). It abounds with personal and at the same time universally understandable symbols. It forces us to imagine and mentally construct a space, a narrative, evoke a feeling. This endows it with an almost magical effect, which is exactly what Bruno Bulaja is counting on when he interweaves Rama embroi-

dery with segments of family photos, and depicts local circle dance at Orašac on large format. The insistence on ornaments and grids emphasizes the surface as the main venue of the artistic event, while parts of the photographed scenes transport us into spaces and times different from the one we are watching the painting from. It is (again) simultaneously movement through different dimensions of time and space, and complete being in the present, as in this depiction the viewer of the painting can truly feel the energetic movements and determined thuds of the circle dancers.

Unfortunately, tradition is nowadays often perceived as regressive and tribal. However, looking at the paintings of Bruno Bulaja, I suggest a different perspective. Remembering the dynamic flow of time can be a prerequisite for a fulfilling life in the present, enjoying the fruits of nature and the human mind, as well as accepting different traditions and individual existences. Because, if we bear in mind that a community is a solid, complex and fascinating embroidery, who can claim that this unusual fabric stops at the (at any rate arbitrary) borders of municipalities, states, cultures and languages?

Fedja Gavrilović







Biografija

Bruno Bulaja rođen je 1997. godine u Požegi.

S očeve strane podrijetlom je iz Rame te se time očituje u svome umjetničkom radu.

Godine 2021. završava preddiplomski studij slikarstva na Akademiji likovnih umjetnosti u Zagrebu, u klasi prof. Igora Rončevića.

Godine 2022. diplomirao je slikarstvo na Akademiji likovnih umjetnosti u Zagrebu, u klasi prof. Duje Jurića.

Izlagao je na nekoliko skupnih izložbi, te jednoj samostalnoj.

Živi i radi u Zagrebu.

Biography

Bruno Bulaja was born in 1997 in Požega.

On his father's side, he is from Rama, which is reflected in his artistic work.

In 2021 he completed his undergraduate studies of Painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb in the class of prof. Igor Rončević.

In 2022 he graduated in Painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb in the class of prof. Duje Jurić.

He has exhibited at several group exhibitions and one solo exhibition.

He lives and works in Zagreb.



IZLOŽBA / EXHIBITION

BRANKO BULAJA
Ramski vez

18. 5. — 28. 5. 2023.

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Ramski vez / Rama embroidery

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