

Uros Predic 1856-1953

Uros Predic was born in Orlovat – Banat (previously Austrian Empire, now Serbia). There he spent his childhood and attended primary school. After finishing his gymnasium in Pančevo he went to Vienna to study arts. He studied in the class of Professor Christian Griepenkerl and graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts of Vienna in 1880. In the period from 1883 to 1885 he was an assistant professor at the Art Academy in Vienna.

During that time, under the instruction of professor Griepenkerl, and the renowned architect Theophil Freiherr von Hansen, Uros Predic painted 13 wall paintings of mythological compositions for the Vienna Parliament.

In 1885, after his father and his brother died and his mother got seriously ill, Uros Predic returned to Orlovat, where he painted a series of paintings about the simple life of his fellow villagers. The themes of his paintings varied from historical and church motives to portraits and everyday compositions.

The works of Uros Predic display the highest level of Academic Realism, at which he excelled already as a student with his painting „Moravkinja“ – a female portrait with a blue dress and red head scarf. His talent is also evident in the works with historical content such as “Bosnian Refugees”, „Starina Novak“ and others. Furthermore, he also succeeded in iconostasis painting and is considered to be one of the most significant Serbian icon painter.

His other famous paintings include: „Happy Brothers, Their Poor Mother!“, „Orphan on Her Mother's Grave“, „Clients in Front of a Lawyer's Door“, „Children near Well“. Predic was not only attempting to realistically depict contemporary village life but also to convey a message, trying to make villagers aware of their bad habits and unhappy way of living. In that period of twenty years Uros Predic lived in Orlovat- Vojvodina, where he dedicated his art to national and historical themes, as well as portraits. His famous portrait paintings include the portraits of Vojvodina-

personalities, the members of Serbian Royal Academy (he himself was a member since 1910) as well as ordinary people.

Instead of simply copying the old masters to succeed in the painting of iconostasis, Uros Predic studied biblical materials and subjects and made a lot of sketches.

The iconic paintings of Uros Predic give the religious people consolation and hope and the depictions of sacred scenes intensify the Christian feelings in their souls. His depicted saints are not stiff; they are full of life and love.

Uros Predic`s most prominent paintings of churches include the church in Becej, Sremski Karlovci, and other places in Serbia, the Chapel of Njegos in Montenegro and the church on top of the mountain of Lovcen.

In the end of his life Uros Predic was a living legend, who worked hard all his life and remained loyal to his home place. He was one of the founders of the "Lada" society in 1904, and became its president. He was elected as associate member of the Serbian Royal Academy on 26 January 1909, and on 3 February 1910 as a regular member.

Uros Predic had a strong bond to his birth place Orlovat until his death in 1953 at the age of 95. He was buried in Orlovat in a family tomb.

On a cold February day people of Orlovat were silently and respectfully watching the procession through the dirty village roads with Uros Predic on his final journey: a final farewell to an artist who immortalized the houses, the streets, the people and the nature of Orlovat.