

## Ferjo

Ferjo (Fernando de Jesus Oliveira) was born in Bahia Brazil, in 1946. Ferjo is one of the most dynamic and intriguing artists on the contemporary international scene. His surreal, even metaphysical way with a canvas has been earlier lauded with Ferjo winning the prestigious Crescent Scholarship at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and the New York Council for the Arts Award for Excellence in portraiture and interiors. Ferjo's signature style continues to excite our imagination and perception.

From 1974 - 1979, Ferjo trained at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts - an institution long-recognized for its tradition in realist painting and sculpture. During this five year period, he began painting cubist-style landscapes in the tradition of the early Georges Braques, eventually moving to realist portraiture. This is perhaps best exemplified in a mock group portrait (1978-79) of the faculty of the Pennsylvania Academy in which Ferjo posed his subjects in sitting positions those of Leonardo Da Vinci's "Last Supper". Having received special honors on two occasions from the Pennsylvania Academy (in 1978, and again in 1979), Ferjo's mastery of the medium and subject matter in realist painting became widely recognized in galleries that emphasized this kind of work. Since leaving The Academy, the artist's technical virtuosity led him to explore various themes and styles, ranging from realism to surrealism. Ferjo's wildly lyrical interpretations of famous artistic motifs, such as the works by Leonardo Da Vinci, or his "homage" series to important historical figures such as Picasso, Van Gogh and Chagall have made Ferjo an artist of merit.

Those with backgrounds in the arts will recognize Ferjo as an artist who can draw, render and paint with an extraordinary life-likeness. Ferjo's ability to paint realistically and then to extend realism into a hallucinogenic surrealist vision, filled with symbolic connotations taken from the world of dreams and fantasmagoria, is one of the more startling attributes to be found in recent painting. Whether Ferjo is representing automobiles or portraits, still life arrangements or sports events, imaginary or life-like portraits, there is convincing evidence of his talent as a technician of painting. There is also evidence of Ferjo's versatile and shifting imagination, as he moves with considerable agility from one motif to another, often shifting styles in the process.

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