



A FLAGSHIP MUSEUM

THE LEGACY OF PEPE EL FERREIRO



The truth is that at, currently, and when walking around the Museum's rooms, I find it hard to understand that it has recovered such an important historical legacy from the past. I don't know if it's vanity or simply amazement at what I didn't think could be done at first.

(...) The fact that the work carried out at the Museum is published in various media outlets makes [one] believe that his dedication to preserving the history and popular heritage of his land was not totally misguided, because after all, it will be of some use to future generations.

(...) What I do end with is the well-known "haxa salú (que fame nun faltará)"; which, for those unfamiliar with the phrase, means in our reviled language "I hope there is health (because there will be no shortage of hunger)".

José María Xaveiras Escanlar

After the creation of the Museum, José María Naveiras's work was appreciated immediately and constantly until his death. Much less enthusiastic would be Pepe's judgement of his own work, which he went so far as to say had fallen far short of what he had planned and dreamed of.

The Museum we enjoy today is Pepe's tangible legacy. Unanimously celebrated as one of the best of its kind, with an enormous collection of material, it served and continues to serve as an example and inspiration for the creation of other museums, both in Asturias and everywhere else.

Pepe el Ferreiro's true legacy that will reach generations is, like the heritage he always wanted to preserve, intangible. The project has become one of the main catalysts of feelings of respect generated among the neighbours themselves for past, but not so distant, ways of life, which were reviled by their own protagonists because they were burdened for generations by backwardness, misery and social deprivation. Time and the unquestionable success of the Museum have helped to radically change the secular disdain for what is our own and have accentuated the respect for the assets that make it possible to recreate that world that became extinct in a few decades and which today is claimed as a shared reference point and a source of collective pride.

The social significance of the Museum shows that it is possible to create community around a cultural institution. A community that, like the "Pepe el Ferreiro" Ethnographic Museum of Grandas de Salime, is not limited to the materiality of the pieces, nor does it confine itself to the limits of its installations. An institution that weaves networks of belonging and identity. A museum that strengthens the bonds of a community that is able to create a future with its past.



During the awarding of the Exemplary Village of Asturias prize to the neighbourhood community of Grandas de Salime in 1993.

His many writings, newspaper articles and reflections are an inexhaustible source for understanding the recent societies of western Asturias and the processes that led to their dismantling. Also for the knowledge of the difficulties and obstacles that come with the creation of a Museum of these characteristics and that only with a personality like Pepe's can they be successfully overcome. The museographic and museological approaches, which are not always understood, their concept of "living museum", are today at the centre of the consensus on how and why to make a museum in a rural environment.



Mallega at the Museum.

