

**Father Christmas and Potter
the Stowaway**

Salsa

**Evaluación económica de los
metálicos familiares para
almacenamiento de granos y
cereales**

FAO staff Artists Corner

Fire Alarm

**Un mondo di forme e di
colori**

Spirit of the Cinque Terre

fao
Casa
gazette

SANTAKLAUS

di Patrizia Cimini



L'argento e l'oro e poi la mirra
sono borsa che quota questo freddo
e il solo modo d'averne un po' riparo
è guardare al tuo viso gote rosa
che appare dalle ricche lastre
di metallo traforato.

Una fitta miriade di cuori si rapprende ai bordi
là dove il rosso costume santaklaus si tende
a mostrare il tuo fianco o seno o braccio
che si orla di ermellino pèluche
manicotto di neve.

Sei appesa ad un ramo d'abete, candelina
sei stella lucida di fuoco su un regalo
sei ricco pomello della porta slitta verso nord
foderato di renne boreali

e
liquorosa bambola scampata alla corazza ageminata di ricami
sulle spiagge australi
compagna di sule, albatrici e iguane
che del rosso costume di Natale fanno riparo al sole
e tana per l'inverno, stai.



fao CASA gazette

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For Advertising:
STAFF COOP OFFICE
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla - 00153 Roma
Tel: 06/57053142 or 06/57054112 - Fax 06/57297286
E-mail: FAO-STAFF-Coop@fao.org
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Typewritten electronic contributions for the FAO CASA Gazette are welcome. These can be in English, French, Italian or Spanish - articles, poems, drawings, photographs, etc. in fact anything interesting that staff members and/or their families in Rome or the field may like to contribute. No anonymous material will be accepted, and the Editor reserves the right to choose and/or reject material that is not in keeping with the ethics of the Organization. Send contributions electronically to the Editor at jill.stevenson@fao.org or leave signed copies with the COOP Office on the ground floor of Building E. The deadline for editorial material is due on the 1st of the month preceding the date of issue.

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Father Christmas and Potter the Stowaway

Peter Steele

Keeping track of those of the world's children that believe in Father Christmas is a task for which the Christmas reindeer with their network of electronic information services excel. They have never been known to fail to deliver and, as experience has been gained and new monitoring systems have evolved, the Christmas reindeer have basked in the confidence of their capabilities that 'all things are possible'. Even those kids on the move can be tracked during Christmas Eve. Sometimes, however, the unexpected arises, take the case of Marina from Croatia.



Deck with a view. The beauty of a medieval port city in all its splendour- albeit a faded and gradually declining grandeur as the lagoon takes back the city. The birthplace of Antonio Vivaldi, and a language that gave the world 'Ciao', 'Venezuela', 'lagoon', 'gondola' and many more.

Through the eyes of a five-year old

Leaning into the stern rail on the 13th deck of the ship with her mother and father either side of her, five-year old Marina was largely oblivious to the feast of roofs that to her mind and with her limited experience of life, seemed to cover the whole world. The 117 islands in the lagoon that comprised the city-state that was once the richest in Europe and dominated Euro-Asian trade for more than 300 years in the Middle-Ages was beyond her understanding. This did

not, however, stop her father from describing the city, the main historical buildings that could be seen from the ship and the beauty of the pastel blues that dominated the winter sky that afternoon.

Marina was also oblivious to the ship on which she was standing. Travelling at a benign 4-5 knots/hour to minimize the bow wave that is so destructive of the foundations of the buildings that bring more than three million visitors a year, the ship





Hamster: Not Potter; but one very much like him. Hamsters are popular house pets. They have poor eyesight and compensate by leaving a trail of scent to enable them to track their own movements.

dominated the landscape – just on 300 metres long and nearly 100 000 gross tonnes – it would be home for the week to more than 3 500 people – passengers and crew. It was larger than a city block and it dominated the skyline as it edged its way along the Canale della Giudecci. Marina watched the multitude of vaporetta, taxi boats, ferries and pleasure cruisers that scurried back-and-forth around the ship.

It was 23rd December, and Marina and her family had booked a week's cruise in the Adriatic Sea and further south – a Christmas Cruise, no less. Christmas had dominated the little girl's planning during the past few weeks. Back home in Zagreb the family typically celebrated the end-of-year holiday with an exchange of presents and the arrival of 'Grandfather Christmas' on 6th December.

What's in a name?

But you need an aside on this one to appreciate the confused nature of the impact of the socialist policies of Eastern Europe that dominated for more than 60 years – and longer still in the defunct Soviet Union – and the effort made by national planners to disassociate the traditional 'Ded Moroz' (the Santa-Claus equivalent) with

the internationally dominant Coca-Cola derived image of the jolly white-whiskered robust/weight challenged (can't call him 'fat' anymore) red-suited Father Christmas character that has captured commercial hearts everywhere.

After the break-up of Yugoslavia during the 1990s, the derivative 'Djed Bozicnjak' was introduced as a means of making a new beginning, but this was before the tourist industries began to dominate, and before the foreigners moved in to snap up the real estate that was a gift to Italian entrepreneurs and retired couples from the Netherlands alike. With them came western values and domination by the mark, franc and guilder which, after 2000, became submerged into euro-land. *Of course this affected Christmas festivities.*

Shifting allegiances

Whilst Marina's mother and father in-turn had grown up to as kids to appreciate the old messages promoted by the old systems, they were ambitious enough to encourage their daughter to appreciate the wider opportunities available in the outside world. The cruise was the result of an unexpected end-of-year bonus from the banking industry in which father had invested his professional life, and the couple had been

(continued on page 8)

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and Spanish**

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Father Christmas. Showing a Father Christmas trainee undergoing basic training on board a mock-up cruise ship mid-northern summer:

quick to re-position Marina for 'Father Christmas' and the festivities of on-board life during Christmas week.

This only served to confuse the little girl further – for her earlier messages that year had been to Djed Bozicnjak in his traditional blue coat; and now she was expected to wait another three weeks for the visit from another character, but this time wearing a red coat. Fortunately, mother had been able to cover these issues with familiar routines about the need to change clothes occasionally and this thing about 'every thing comes to those who are patient – and good'.

Christmas is expensive – let's ban it

Time for another aside on this one. Freedom to manage your own affairs as a nation state is one thing, but in 2008 the political managers of Croatia took the unprecedented step of trying to banish Christmas for that year as a means of helping the national exchanger to balance the budget. At first the Father Christmas team at the North Pole was astounded, then disbelieving and finally sad; and saw it as a

throwback to the bad old days of the early Twentieth century in the Soviet Union. Fortunately, this initiative was *not* a success.

Following Marina

Mother was also able to re-assure her little girl concerning her move from Zagreb during Christmas week – this thing about Father Christmas being able to follow her movements down the Croatian coast. And on this particular point, she was spot on; the reindeers had picked up the move. Djed

Bozicnjak typically enters the house by the front door, and there is none of this death-defying challenge of entering houses down the chimney that western kids expect (and tend to agonize over in modern apartment blocks). So entry on to the ship should not pose an issue – or so Marina thought.

Tracking kids from the North Pole monitoring centre is one thing – the reality of actually delivering on Christmas Eve quite another. Routines for entry into modern buildings of all kinds came within the training programmes for would-be-Father Christmas trainees, and all kinds of scenarios are explored. This included cruise ships. But, notwithstanding the size of modern ships and their galaxy of electric lighting, they are not always easy to spot from 15 000 feet or more. Fortunately, all modern sleighs are fitted with GPS equipment.

In her letter to Djed Bozicnjak, Marina had asked for a 'Winnie-the-Pooh' bear. She had recently seen the Disney film, and her grandma had earlier bought her an omnibus edition of the original four books that Dad



had read to her each evening - and re-read, and re-read such that she had virtually leaned the stories off by heart (and would laugh with pleasure *before* her dad reached the funny part - like when Piglet was a kite). Marina was desperate for a 'Winnie-the-Pooh' bear. But then her parents knew this for they had written her letter for her, although she had signed it.

Tucked into their luggage was a small foldable Christmas tree (plastic, unfortunately, and Made in China) but the ship had a real tree in the Tiger Lounge, and surrounded it with gaily wrapped gifts - one for each of all the kids on board.

Covering the Balkans

Father Christmas #357 had just cleared Trieste and was on route south for Dubrovnic for early Christmas Eve, with another 193 000 homes to visit during the next nine hours. There were fewer demands in Bosnia Herzegovina, but Slovenia, Croatia and down into Montenegro covered many stops and sometimes in demanding mountainous country with deep valleys and wind sheer that could tax the best of the reindeer teams. Plus the ships in the Eastern Adriatic that had to be found. It was, however, in the little town of Zaton north of Split that the first inkling of the story that was to become the Father Christmas legend began.

Say 'hello' to Potter

Just on one year old and just about the friendliest hamster that you have ever seen, Potter belonged to a 10-year old kid named Andrea. (His family watched Italian television each evening and had liked the name.) Tame and amiable, Potter was overfed and over-loved, and had never-ever bitten anyone. Turning over on his back and showing his teeth may be aggressive with some hamsters, but with Potter it was an invitation to have his stomach tickled.

Like his wild ancestors in Syria more than 70 years back he remained largely nocturnal, and Andrea would release him

from his cage in the late afternoon after school, and race Potter around on the floor with his small push cars. By early evening the rodent was back in his cage for the night. Or was he? Sometimes the catch on the door to the cage was not latched properly, and sometimes Potter would use his teeth and front paws like a safe-robber with a bunch of skeleton keys. A wire catch may fool a budgerigar, but it's no match for a hamster.

Potter would worry away at the catch until it sprang and, hanging face down from the front of the cage, drop the 5-6 centimetres to the table top. From there it was a swinging drop down the table cloth to the chair and then the floor. The floor was a jungle of interesting things to sniff and sometimes to eat.

Enter Father Christmas

Stopping briefly (*yes, really briefly*) at Andrea's house, Father Christmas #357 took off his top coat for the short time that



Winnie-the-Pooh. One of the most successful children's characters of all time since AA Milne first wrote down the 'go-to-sleep' stories that he made up for his son Christopher Robin more than 80 years ago. Just like the bear Marina wanted.





Cruise ship. There have always been people who like cruises - taking the hotel with you as-it-were. The North Pole Christmas Team has long been able to monitor the whereabouts of deserving kids on board. (Aircraft, however, are a different matter.)

it took to read the note left for him, eat the carrots (that were scheduled for the reindeer) and sip the glass of milk. His coat slipped off the chair and on to the floor, and caught Potter at his most inquisitive. He ran up the sleeve and, as the coat was humped back over the body of its owner, he fell into a deep inside pocket and found himself in hamster's heaven - warm, furry, dark and with the remains of some half-eaten egg and tomato sandwiches and a bag of nuts on-hand. Within five minutes he had stuffed his cheek pouches to bursting, curled into a ball and was fast-asleep; the speed of the night-sky around him notwithstanding.

Potter escapes

The ship was where the North Pole Centre had expected it to be - 60 nautical miles north of Dubrovnic - and the sleigh spiralled down and positioned itself halfway down the port side next to the line of lifeboats. Activating appearance mode software, the sleigh and its team looked just like the other lifeboats - but without any means of support 10 metres off the ship - but then it was unlikely that anyone would be out-and-about that time of the morning - and those

that were, were typically enjoying a drink or two.

There were 174 kids to find in 126 different cabins - typically sleeping on the pull-out settee/bed. Kids travel free-of-charge. Plastic key entry was a cinch, and Father Christmas #357 with his red-suit changed to look like that of one of the Assistant Pursers was in-and-out of the cabins before you could say 'Potter' - following the cabin list downloaded by his controllers. He tripped over the door jamb, fell into the cabin where Marina and her parents were sleeping, and went sprawling across the floor presents scattering everywhere.

Raised from his sleep by the urgency of the tumble, Potter did a 'runner' - snuggling out of the inside pocket, dropped to the floor as Father Christmas #357 stood up and raced under the main bed. Father Christmas recovered, left his gift and was gone in a flash. Of course, the sleepers had heard nothing.

Twenty minutes later, Potter's whiskers had stopped twitching with anxiety, he had

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* * * *

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Meet the teachers: Jeremie, Amit & Marlyn (JAM)!



Marlyn /Amit /Jeremie

It has been quite some time now that FAO colleagues have been teaching salsa classes for FAO Staff Coop members (current FAO/WFP/IFAD staff members) - and they donate their services free of charge.

Amit

Amit started this group with Colin Khoury from AGPM in February 2009. He started learning salsa in 1999 from a Turkish engineer in the USA, and by 2001 he formed part of a performance group based in upstate New York. He has been teaching salsa for about 6 years, favours the circular Cuban Style and focuses more on the communication between leader and follower than complex turn routines. He uses a technical teaching style in which movements can be explained by their context, i.e. – “you step back here because your body should be going in that direction anyway”. Amit is an Engineer in the NRL Division.

Jeremie

Jeremie joined FAO salsa group last year and was offered to teach salsa with the departure of Colin but he accepted this endeavour recently. Jeremie started learning salsa in Canada while completing his master and PhD studies. He favours Puerto Rican and New York styles and has been involved in teaching salsa in Canada for several years on a voluntary and occasional basis. His main strengths are on breaking down complex salsa turns into simple and smooth moves. His teaching approach puts leaders in the centre of the learning process where skills are built upon individual and collective weakness and strengths. This means, if a follower makes a wrong move, the right signal might probably not be given by the leader. Jeremie is a Forestry Officer in the FOE Division.

Marlyn

Marlyn has been learning salsa for some time now and has been tasked to teach the Level 1 students, since mid-February of this year. She is also a Zumba dance/fitness instructor since November 2008 and teaches also for the FAO Staff Coop members. Zumba uses steps from all the styles of Latin dance like Salsa, Cha Cha, Mambo, Samba, Rumba, Bachata, Merengue, Reggaeton, Cumbia with a few Hip Hop, Techno, Rock & Roll and Belly Dancing moves, combined with a few aerobic steps. Marlyn's background in teaching also comes from being the dance instructor for many years for a Philippine folklore group (“*Kasarinlan*”) composed of 35 members which participated in numerous cultural activities and international festivals both in Rome and other parts of Italy. Marlyn is the Secretary of the Director of the CIO Division.



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**For further information about the course, please contact Amit Kohli by email:
 Amit.Kohli@fao.org**

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A medical certificate is required, for details ask at Coop Office, ext. 54112/53142

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pushed a couple of nuts from out of his pouches and eaten them, groomed himself and he was ready to explore his new surroundings. The cabin was small and strange. Twice round the room during the next half hour and it was time to sleep again. He could not get into the bathroom. He found a shoe under the bed, curled up in it with nose in stomach and dropped off.

Potter finds a new owner

Shrieks of delight woke Marina's parents early on Christmas Morning. There below the little Chinese-made silver Christmas tree lodged on the dresser was a Winnie-the-Pooh bear. Mother, father and Marina were delighted, and the little girl with bear in hand dived into bed with her parents and snuggled down in between them grinning from ear to ear.

But it was as she was getting ready for breakfast that her delight turned to wonderment, for just as she was about to put on her second shoe (they had Velcro tabs – so even a five-year old could manage them), out popped a golden nose with whiskers twitching. Potter snuffled the hand before the little girl drew back. This was something new for both girl and hamster. Dad had gone on deck for a swim, and Mum was still in the bathroom. What to

do? Was it real? Was it a friend of Winnie the Pooh, although Marina couldn't associate it with Piglet, Tigger or Kanga – or any of her favourite characters in the Hundred Acre Wood?

The little girl wasn't sure what to do.

End of story

Marina kept Potter hidden in her pocket and in the bottom draw of the dresser during the rest of the week; and eventually took him home with her. Andrea searched the house for a week, setting food traps each night, but failed to find his hamster. Mum bought him another one the following week. He called him 'Harry' (although they were not sure if it was a girl or boy hamster). The reindeer monitoring team following the Father Christmas teams around the world had picked up the additional heart beat on Team #357 for the hour or so that Potter had stowed away, but could not figure it out. When it stopped the issue was shelved for the night. A month later the M&E team followed up the enquiry and found DNA traces of *Mesocricetus auratus* in the pocket of the Father Christmas jacket. They were able to confirm the stowaway, checked out where and with whom it had stopped – Marina – but failed to find out from where it had come. *It was the first recorded Christmas stowaway in modern times* ■



Evaluación económica de los silos metálicos familiares para almacenamiento de granos y cereales.

D. Mejía y D. Francescutti
(Organización Mundial de la Alimentación y la Agricultura, FAO-Roma)

El silo metálico de almacenamiento es una estructura valiosa recomendada por FAO para mejorar la seguridad alimentaria de pequeños y medianos productores de granos. Es una tecnología bastante simple para el almacenamiento de granos y cereales, relativamente fácil de ser implementada y puede proporcionar, no sólo la conservación, sino también mantener la calidad de granos y cereales durante su almacenamiento. Sus principales características y ventajas son:

- La capacidad de almacenaje puede ir desde 120 kg hasta 3000 kg
- Requiere tecnología local para su manufactura y mantenimiento, la cual puede ser provista por las mismas comunidades rurales
- Es fácil de adquirir y es rentable
- Es hermético permitiendo una fumigación efectiva
- Requiere muy poco espacio
- No requiere uso de insecticidas y permite el uso de fumigantes que no dejan residuos

Sus principales beneficios son:

- Las pérdidas del grano almacenado pueden ser reducidas casi en su totalidad
- Permite almacenar y vender más tarde, a un mejor precio, los excedentes de la cosecha
- Conserva alta la calidad del grano
- Mantiene el hogar libre de roedores y de posibles enfermedades transmitidas por ellos
- Facilita el trabajo de la mujer
- Es una tecnología simple que puede durar hasta 20 años. Ver Figura 1.



Fig. 1 Silos metálicos familiares para la seguridad alimentaria

Estimación de costos

Cuadro 1 muestra algunos costos del silo dependiendo del tamaño en algunos países en desarrollo donde estos han sido introducidos. Dichos costos de fabricación incluyen: costos



de materiales, amortización del equipo de fabricación, mano de obra, costos financieros y utilidad del fabricante artesano. Los materiales suplementarios representan un 2% del costo total y son esencialmente tabletas de fosforo de aluminio y cinta adhesiva o de goma para sellar la tapa. Dichos costos fueron actualizados a costos del 2009, sobre la base del Índice de Precios al Productor del FMI y finalmente su promedio general fue estimado.

Cuadro 1. Costos de fabricación de silos metálicos y materiales suplementarios (USD por silo)

País	Capacidad de almacenaje				
	120 kg	250 kg	500 kg	900 kg	1800 kg
Afganistán	-	37	92	-	122
Bolivia	36	63	108	-	-
Burkina Faso	49	55	79	106	132
Camboya	21	35	53	-	88
Chad	-	54	79	104	152
Guinea	-	-	103	-	123
Madagascar	-	53	66	92	132
Mozambique	35	60	95	131	-
Senegal	43	79	113	143	189
Promedio	37	54	88	115	134

Fuente: Varios estudios realizados entre 1998 y 2005, con actualización de precios al 2009 con base en el Índice de Precios al Productor del FMI.

Estimación de beneficios mínimos esperados

Considerando los beneficios citados anteriormente, la reducción de pérdidas poscosecha es el rubro principal y comúnmente estimado. Dependiendo del país y el producto almacenado, dichas pérdidas oscilan entre 10 y 50%. Considerando un escenario conservador en el cual las pérdidas poscosecha sean del 10%, el beneficio mínimo anual esperado del silo metálico sería el valor de reducir dicha pérdida de 10% a casi 0%. Cuadro 2 presenta una estimación de dicho beneficio sobre la base del valor de los productos más comúnmente almacenados. El valor económico se estima sobre la base de los precios internacionales de los productos considerando un promedio de los últimos tres años y un factor conservador de corrección entre el precio internacional y precio a puerta de finca de un 2%.

Cuadro 2. Beneficio mínimo esperado para una reducción de pérdidas poscosecha del 10%

Producto	Valor (kg) ¹	Capacidad de almacenaje				
		120 kg	250 kg	500 kg	900 kg	1800 kg
Maíz	0.19	2.30	4.78	9.57	17.22	34.44
Trigo	0.23	2.75	5.73	11.46	20.64	41.27
Sorgo	0.18	2.10	4.38	8.75	15.76	31.51
Arroz	0.40	4.83	10.07	20.15	36.26	72.52
Frijol	0.90	10.82	22.54	45.07	81.13	162.26

¹ Fuente: World Bank Commodity Price Data: precios promedios 2008-10. Para frijol, Sistema de información de Mercados en México (SNIIM); precios promedios 2008-10 para frijol negro.

Estimación de rentabilidad económica

Si el beneficio mínimo esperado en cuadro anterior se obtuviera durante los veinte años de vida útil de los silos metálicos, se puede estimar una Tasa Interna de Retorno Económica mínima para silos de distintas capacidades y para los productos más comunes. Dicho análisis se basaría en el



costo promedio de los países citados en Cuadro 1, actualizando dicho costo a precios del 2009. Al final de la vida útil, se reconoce un valor de rescate del silo del 10% de su valor inicial. Los resultados de dicho análisis se presentan en Cuadro 3 (a continuación).

Cuadro 3. Estimación de Tasa Interna de Retorno Económica considerando beneficios mínimos

País	Capacidad de almacenaje				
	120 kg	250 kg	500 kg	900 kg	1800 kg
Maíz	(2%)	3%	6%	12%	25%
Trigo	0%	6%	9%	16%	30%
Sorgo	(4%)	1%	5%	10%	22%
Arroz	10%	16%	22%	31%	54%
Frijol	29%	41%	51%	70%	121%

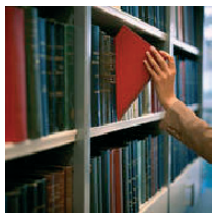
Cabe resaltar que si pudiéramos valorar otros beneficios, como la mejora en la calidad del grano, la reducción de daños por roedores y la reducción del trabajo de la mujer rural, dicha rentabilidad económica sería sustantivamente mayor. Si bien el retorno económico mínimo estimado para silos de 120 kg es negativo para maíz, trigo y sorgo, dicho retorno es igual o mayor a 10 % en el caso de arroz y frijol. Considerando dicha situación, este silo sólo es recomendable para almacenaje de semilla de maíz, trigo y sorgo, ya que el grano para semilla es de mayor valor comparado con el grano de consumo.



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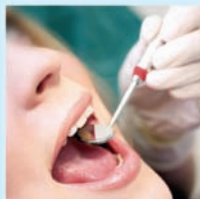
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The FAO Staff Artists Corner

Mrs Ingrid Alldritt, an exquisite watercolor painter

by Flavia Carbonetti



Les Voiles de Saint Tropez

Water colour and ink - 50x20cm

(painted from a photo of the famous Saint Tropez yachting competition)

The watercolor tradition dates back to prehistory. Utilized throughout the centuries all over the world, by the twelfth century watercolor (or aquarelle) spread to Europe and during the Renaissance became an essential art medium. Perfected in England in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it gained even more importance with its adoption by the French Impressionists. In the twentieth century with the introduction of new techniques watercolor grew in importance becoming a must for many artists around the world.



Mooring Poles, Venice

Water colour - 27x34cm

(from a photo taken in Venice in 1981)

The beauty of aquarelle can easily be tasted by looking at Mrs. Ingrid Alldritt's glowing works of art. Ingrid was born in Scotland and works at FAO Headquarters since 1980. She participated in 2008 in the FAO Artists Group competition "The Colors of Rome" and won the first prize with a watercolor "San Pietro al Tramonto", which she painted in an evening.

Ingrid, why have you chosen to paint watercolor and how long did it take you to become professional in this field? Are you a traditional watercolor painter or are you trying to be innovative? Do you also use other techniques such as oil or acrylic?





Stirling Bridge
Water colour - 30x42 cm
(Stirling, Scotland)

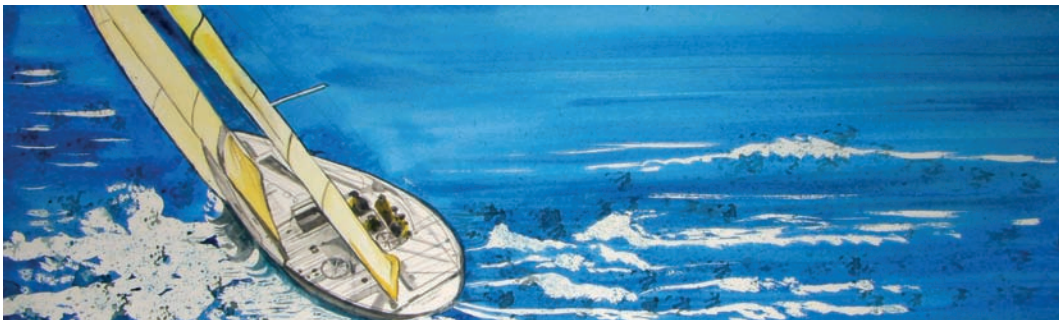
I have chosen to paint with watercolors since I find it the most delicate and the most interesting medium because of all the special effects it can produce. I had dreamed of going to art college, but I went to university instead to study business administration! So when I graduated and started working, I went to night classes at the Edinburgh College of Art. I have been painting as a hobby ever since. I consider myself a traditional watercolor painter although I have experimented with oils, acrylics, inks and also painting on ceramics.

The contemporary American philosopher Mrs Elaine Scarry stated “beauty leads to repetition” and we all know that nature is a continuous source of material. The brightness and freshness of watercolor invites artists to capture the transparency of water and to paint shining landscapes. Ingrid, in your paintings space and water are reproduced so realistically. Do you paint outdoors or your avail yourself of books or pictures?

First of all I love the outdoors, my upbringing in Kenya and Scotland has probably made me appreciate open spaces, and my love of water - sea, rivers, lakes - has led me to experiment with water themes, landscapes with water or seascapes. When I am out and about I try to study and absorb all the lighting effects, but when I am actually painting I rely a lot also on books, photographs and pictures.

Ingrid, your charming touch does not prevent each of your art works to have a strong personality, to transmit a lot of energy and especially to fix a precise time in a precise place. Do you consider that the artist’s emotionalism is more important than technique for the successful execution of a painting?

I think its a good mixture of both - emotion and technique. Emotion has to be there, otherwise there is no interest and it would be boring; technique is important then to find the best way to convey those feelings. For example, a couple of times I have painted the same painting twice - I had the same emotion, but I had changed the technique. The result was that, in the first case I considered it to have been a great improvement - technique won over emotion; but in the other case, even with a better technique, the previous painting was better because I must have had a stronger emotion! In any case, emotion and technique must go hand in hand.



Regata (America's Cup)
Water colour - 27x37cm
(from an aerial photo of the famous America's cup in New Zealand)





The Japanese Painter

Mixed media (water colour, ink, crayon)
40x30cm

(copy from and ancient Japanese print)

Painters using watercolor have a double attribution - that of “painter“ and “watercolourist”. Why do you think that this technique deserves this special attribution?

Probably because its such a specialized technique and an art form in its own right. It takes years to master... and I am only at the beginning, but I like the challenge. Watercolor has so much opportunity, much more than other art forms I believe, and the for me it is the best form for depicting space, sky, clouds, light, reflections, water and movement. That is why I love painting water and boats, because they lend themselves to watercolor techniques and effects. The water used in watercolor painting spreads on the paper and makes its own unique art form, even if there is no technique as such! It is alive! One must not underestimate the importance though of the quality of the watercolor materials – the colours, brushes and especially the type of paper is fundamental for good results.

Artists such as Albrecht Dürer, Paul Sandby, William Turner, Cezanne and

Wilson Homer, established watercolor as an independent mature painting medium. Vincent Van Gogh developed his watercolor technique to create an important number of works of art . Have you ever been inspired by any of these great Masters?

Yes of course, by most of them, but especially by William Turner and Vincent Van Gogh because of the colors and emotions. I am also inspired by good photographers, like the Scottish photographer Colin Baxter, for landscapes, and of course all the photographers who contribute to National Geographic. I use a lot of photographs for studying themes, effects, color, lighting etc. and learn a lot from them.

Ingrid, do you have a Web site where our colleagues can admire or buy your paintings? Do you accept commissions for your works?

I have just started to develop the Web site and have uploaded the December staff lounge exhibition paintings – “*The Boat Show*”. The URL is: <https://picasaweb.google.com/102899138752187740231/CollectionBoats?authkey=Gv1sRgCLCh3IrWvcKedg#>

I have only painted one commissioned landscape so far, for a Scottish Institute. I would be thrilled to try other commissions.

What are you plans for your future artistic career? Are you going to participate in any exhibitions outside FAO? Is there any chance to follow an art course held by you?

I really would like to participate in some more exhibitions, especially some of the well-known Roman exhibitions. I would also love to teach art, especially to children.





Snowy Night
Mixed media (watercolour and ink)
 40x30cm
 (copy from a Japanese print)

It has been said “do not try to become a successful person but rather try to become a valuable person”. Ingrid is both successful and valuable and this is also clearly demonstrated with her decision to donate all the proceedings of any painting sold during her next art exhibition to Fasting For Food, a group of persons fasting once a week and donating the symbolic cost of a meal to the support of micro projects, identified by them, all over the globe.

While we thank Ingrid for her kind availability and also wish her much success in her artistic path, we invite you all to visit and support her next exhibition, “the Boat Show”, which will be held at the FAO Casa Lounge from 12 to 22 December.

Thank you for your attention and in line with her last art work presented in the article we take leave from you in saying“Sayonara”!

Turkey Quiche

Ingredients

250 gr brisée pastry (prepared)
 1 tbsp extra virgin oil
 150 gr small onions (cipolline)
 1 green pepper (peperone)
 250 gr turkey (cut in small strips)
 2 tbsp sage (finely chopped)
 salt, black pepper
 2 eggs
 15 cl milk

Method

Line an 18 cm pie dish with the brisée pastry and refrigerate for 15 minutes. (If you buy the prepared one already rolled out no need to do this procedure.) Heat the oil in a casserole and add together the onions cut in half, the turkey strips, diced green pepper (peperone), chopped sage, salt and pepper mixing well, cook for 20 minutes over moderate heat stirring occasionally.

Heat the oven to 200 °C. Cover the brisée pastry with an aluminium foil and place some dry beans on this (to keep shape flat). Cook in the hot oven for 15 minutes. Remove from the oven, eliminate the aluminium foil and beans. Distribute evenly the contents of the casserole in the pastry shell. Beat thoroughly the two eggs with the milk and pour over the meat mixture. Bake for another 25 minutes.

Variation: replace 100 gr of turkey strips with chopped lean bacon for a more rustic dish.



New Year's Traditions

by Edith Mahabir

Auld Lang Syne

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne.

in Edinburgh

CHORUS:

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup of kindness yet,
For auld lang syne!

And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp,
And surely I'll be mine,
And we'll tak a cup o kindness yet,
For auld lang syne!

We twa hae run about the braes,
And pou'd the gowans fine,
But we've wander'd monie a weary fit,
Sin auld lang syne.

We twa hae paidl'd in the burn,
Frae morning sun till dine,
But seas between us braid hae roar'd
Sin auld lang syne.

And there's a hand my trusty fiere,
And gie's a hand o thine,
And we'll tak a right guid-willie waught,

For auld lang syne.

The most commonly sung song for English-speakers on New Year's eve, "Auld Lang Syne" is an old Scottish song that was first published by the poet [Robert Burns](#) in the 1796 edition of the book, *Scots Musical Museum*. Burns transcribed it (and made some refinements to the lyrics) after he heard it sung by an old man from the Ayrshire area of Scotland, Burns's homeland.

It is often remarked that "Auld Lang Syne" is one of the most popular songs that nobody knows the lyrics to. "[Auld Lang Syne](#)" literally translates as "old long since" and means "times gone by." The song asks whether old friends and times will be forgotten and promises to remember people of the past with fondness, "For auld lang syne, we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet." The lesser known verses continue this theme, lamenting how friends who once used to "run about the braes,/ And pou'd the gowans fine" (run about the hills and pulled up the daisies) and "paidl'd in the burn/Frae morning sun till dine" (paddled in the stream from morning to dusk) have become divided by time and distance — "seas between



Fireworks over Edinburgh on New Year's Eve 2009

Photo by Robbie Shade



us braid hae roar'd" (broad seas have roared between us). Yet there is always time for old friends to get together — if not in person then in memory — and “tak a right guid-willie waught” (a good-will drink).

But it was bandleader **Guy Lombardo**, and not Robert Burns, who popularized the song and turned it into a New Year’s tradition. Lombardo first heard “Auld Lang Syne” in his hometown of London, Ontario, where it was sung by Scottish immigrants. When he and his brothers formed the famous dance band, Guy Lombardo and His Royal Canadians, the song became one of their standards. Lombardo played the song at midnight at a New Year’s eve party at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York City in 1929, and a tradition was born. After that, Lombardo’s version of the song was played every New Year’s eve from the 1930s until 1976 at the Waldorf Astoria. In the first years it was broadcast on radio, and then on television. The song became such a New Year’s tradition that “*Life* magazine wrote that if Lombardo failed to play ‘Auld Lang Syne,’ the American public would not believe that the new year had really arrived.”

Hogmanay (Scotland): The birthplace of “Auld Lang Syne” is also the home of Hogmanay (hog-mah-NAY), the rousing Scottish New Year’s celebration (the origins of the name are obscure). One of the traditions is “first-footing.” Shortly after midnight on New Year’s eve, neighbors pay visits to each other and impart New Year’s wishes. Traditionally, First foots used to bring along a gift of coal for the fire, or shortbread. It is considered especially lucky if a tall, dark, and handsome man is the first to enter your house after the new year is rung in. The Edinburgh Hogmanay celebration is the largest in the country, and consists of an all-night street party.

Oshogatsu, Japan: The new year is the most important holiday in Japan, and is a symbol of renewal. In December, various **Bonenkai** or “forget-the-year parties” are held to bid farewell to the problems and concerns of the past year and prepare for a new beginning. Misunderstandings and grudges are forgiven and houses are scrubbed. At midnight on 31 December, Buddhist temples strike their gongs 108 times, in a effort to expel 108 types of human weakness. New Year’s day itself is a day of joy and no work is to be done. Children receive **otoshidamas**, small gifts with money inside. Sending New Year’s cards is a popular tradition—if postmarked by a certain date, the Japanese post office guarantees delivery of all New Year’s cards on 1 January.

Spain: The Spanish ritual on New Year’s eve is to eat twelve grapes at midnight. The tradition is meant to secure twelve happy months in the coming year.

The Netherlands: The Dutch burn bonfires of Christmas trees on the street and launch fireworks. The fires are meant to purge the old and welcome the new.

Greece: In Greece, New Year’s day is also the Festival of **St. Basil**, one of the founders of the **Greek Orthodox Church**. One of the traditional foods served is Vassilopitta, or St Basil’s cake. A silver or gold coin is baked inside the cake. Whoever finds the coin in their piece of cake will be especially lucky during the coming year.

United States of America: The most famous tradition in the United States is the dropping of the New Year ball in Times Square, New York City, at 11:59 P.M. Thousands gather to watch the ball make its one-minute descent, arriving exactly at midnight. The tradition first began in 1907. The original ball was made of iron and wood; the current ball is made of Waterford Crystal, weighs 1,070 pounds, and is six feet in diameter. A traditional southern New Year’s dish is Hoppin’ John—black eyed peas and ham hocks. An old saying goes, “Eat peas on New Year’s day to have plenty of everything the rest of the year.” Another



American tradition is the **Rose Bowl** in Pasadena, California. The Tournament of Roses parade that precedes the football game on New Year's day is made up of elaborate and inventive floats. The first parade was held in 1886.

Widely Observed New Year Symbols and Traditions

Resolutions: It is believed that the Babylonians were the first to make New Year's resolutions, and people all over the world have been breaking them ever since. The early Christians believed the first day of the new year should be spent reflecting on past mistakes and resolving to improve oneself in the new year.

Fireworks: Noisemaking and fireworks on New Year's eve is believed to have originated in ancient times, when noise and fire were thought to dispel evil spirits and bring good luck. The Chinese are credited with inventing [fireworks](#) and use them to spectacular effect in their [New Year's celebrations](#).

A History of the New Year

A move from March to January

The celebration of the new year on 1st January is a relatively new phenomenon. The earliest recording of a new year celebration is believed to have been in Mesopotamia, c. 2000 B.C. and was celebrated around the time of the [vernal equinox](#), in mid-March. A variety of other dates tied to the seasons were also used by various ancient cultures. The Egyptians, Phoenicians and Persians began their new year with the fall equinox, and the Greeks celebrated it on the [winter solstice](#).

Early Roman Calendar: 1st March Rings in the New Year

The early [Roman calendar](#) designated March 1 as the new year. The calendar had just ten months, beginning with March. That the new year once began with the month of March is still reflected in some of the [names of the months](#). September through December, our ninth through twelfth months, were originally positioned as the seventh through tenth months (septem is Latin for "seven," octo is "eight," novem is "nine," and decem is "ten.")

January Joins the Calendar

The first time the new year was celebrated on 1st January was in Rome in 153 B.C. (In fact, the month of January did not even exist until around 700 B.C., when the second king of Rome, [Numa Pontilius](#), added the months of January and February.) The new year was moved from March to January because that was the beginning of the civil year; the month that the two newly elected [Roman consuls](#)—the highest officials in the Roman republic—began their one-year tenure. But this new year date was not always strictly and widely observed, and the new year was still sometimes celebrated on 1st March.

Julian Calendar: January 1st Officially Instituted as the New Year

In 46 B.C. [Julius Caesar](#) introduced a new, solar-based calendar that was a vast improvement on the ancient Roman calendar, which was a lunar system that had become wildly inaccurate over the years. The [Julian calendar](#) decreed that the new year would occur with 1st January, and within the Roman world, 1st January became the consistently observed start of the new year ■

* Information retrieved from Google (New Year's Traditions - Author B. Bonner)



Un mondo di forme e di colori

di Flavia Carbonetti

La mostra collettiva d'arte contemporanea, svoltasi con successo lo scorso mese di Ottobre al Quartiere Generale della FAO sotto l'egida del FAO Caribbean Cultural Group (CCG), ha presentato le opere di un selezionato gruppo di artisti italiani. E' stato interessante potere ammirare opere dalle tecniche più diverse, potere incontrare e discutere con gli artisti ed anche importante sapere che il 15% del ricavato delle vendite è stato devoluto a due progetti di sviluppo (Haiti e Jamaica) sponsorizzati dal FAO Caribbean Cultural Group. La mostra è stata curata in ogni dettaglio dal Sig. Emanuele Modica, responsabile dell'Art Project, che con grande professionalità ed attenzione ha risposto alle domande formulate dai colleghi interessati all'evento. Ringraziamo tutti gli artisti per la loro disponibilità e per la costante condivisione della loro creatività che permette, a chi sa apprezzarla, di viaggiare nel mondo delle idee, di stupirsi, di sognare, di sentire il cuore battere più forte per le emozioni suscitate dai colori, dalle forme, dalle immagini e dalle parole che le loro menti traducono per noi in bellezza. In questo spazio presentiamo, in ordine alfabetico, tutti gli artisti che hanno partecipato alla mostra insieme ad una delle loro creazioni.

Armillei Giovanni Battista



"Bubbles Soap" - Olio su tela 60x80cm

Pittrice d'origine piemontese, definita un'artista glamour, fa della moda un elemento importante dei suoi lavori. "Ad oggi i miei soggetti sono le donne e i loro stati d'animo attraverso i quali cerco di trasmettere emozioni in bilico tra sogno e realtà alla continua ricerca di atmosfere luminose e colorate per me di fondamentale importanza".



Pittore e scultore apprezzato in campo internazionale. Dal suo catalogo "..... la dote migliore di Armillei è la riconoscibilità del suo stile; e ciò non è dato da un preciso soggetto ripetuto o da una tecnica utilizzata bensì il colore è il contrassegno ed il timbro che bolla tutte le sue composizioni. Non conta il soggetto perché transumanato in colore. La forma ritorna ad essere materia dalle tinte pure, senza però sconfinare nell'astrattismo, ma rimanendo in bilico su di un crepaccio irto di croci alla memoria dei caduti-pittori". In questa frase è sintetizzato l'Espressionismo Italiano, stile pittorico creato dal maestro Armillei "Con il colore si può costruire un mondo senza rappresentarlo, quando il colore si impadronisce della forma".

Cerruti Rossana



"Rosy" - Tecnica mista cm120 x 80

FANY - Cabello Fernanda Andrea



“Eclisse e Oceani”

“ Pittrice, ceramista scultrice, Fernanda Cabello, in arte Fany è di origine argentina. Il filo conduttore di tutta la sua opera di ceramista pittrice e scultrice è la natura che rappresentata simbolicamente sotto forme astratte, che comunicano passionalità, emotività, luce e colore. La linea da lei creata, Fany, nata da un insieme di tecniche che utilizzano ceramica ferro e legno, origina delle creazioni ricche di forza, di passione. Legano il tempo e lo spazio, la natura e l'uomo che le osserva.” da una recensione di Mario Dal Bello.

Fincato Rodolfo



Formatosi all' Accademia de Belle Arti di Venezia, l'artista condivide con noi il suo mondo “.forse per la mia vocazione di “artista sperimentatore di laboratorio” mai soddisfatto dei risultati ottenuti, per i miei lavori e per la mia attività di docente, in modo del tutto autonomo ho appreso decine di tecniche ed utilizzato innumerevoli varietà di materiali. Così dall'argilla, alla ceramica e dal gesso sono passato al bronzo, al vetro, al vetrocemento, alla vetrofusione, alla vetrata ed ora al plexiglass. Per me lavorare è solo piacere.”

*“La Lettura” Arlecchino, deluso per la fallita serenata, preferisce leggere....
Tecnica Tiffany cm 37 x 88 - vetrata montata su telaio con legatura a rame.*





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Imperatori Roberta



“La lettrice” Acrilico su tela cm 50x100

L'artista nasce a Roma, dove consegue la Maturità artistica e frequenta l'Accademia di costume e di moda. Prosegue la sua ricerca pittorica partecipando ad esposizioni collettive dove ha i suoi primi contatti artistici. Nelle sue opere prevalgono esili apparizioni in eleganti abiti, la cui forza interiore si manifesta amalgamandosi in armonia con il paesaggio circostante. Il suo stile concilia l'iconografia figurativa con esperimenti dell'astrattismo.

Mazzuoli Laura



“Portami nella Luce” Acquarello cm 35x55

Perdersi

Nell'inebriante sogno
dell'infinto
io sento una forza
sovraumana
che si infrange
divampa
e irradia il mio essere...
...nel caos del mare
tormentoso
e immenso
mi perdo nella totalità...
in un vortice
di delirio.

Pittrice e poetessa marchigiana si diploma all'Accademia di Belle Arti di Urbino nel 1999. Espone in numerose collettive, mostre personali in Toscana, Marche e dal 2010 anche nel Lazio. Qui sopra una sua particolarmente emozionante poesia. Pubblica due libri di poesie "Attimi - 2003" e "Pensieri Indelebili - 2004".



Medini Ronnj



Wind Force

Fotografo d'arte considera la fotografia il mezzo che blocca un frammento di emozione nella sua continua evoluzione. Le sue immagini sono dinamiche, dirette e fulminanti anche grazie a luci contrasti a volte esasperanti. Le prospettive raggiungono l'infinito. Predilige le foto di strada. Da un suo pensiero *“La fotografia mi ha permesso di rigenerare il passato, trasformando un semplice ricordo visivo in qualcosa capace di evolversi e rinnovarsi. Lobbiettivo continua ad essere il filtro che trasforma in immaginazione tutto quello che vedo”*.

Musumeci Carla



” Sono un insegnante ed i miei interessi sono molteplici e vanno dalla pittura ad olio, acrilico, acquarello alla lavorazione della ceramica alla scultura e alla vetrofusione cercando ogni volta diversi modi di esprimermi perché l'arte è il respiro dell'anima e se non si respira si muore. Quest'opera si intitola "La forza delle donne" perché per me la forza di noi donne è nell'amore che ognuna di noi mette nella propria vita, nell'amore per i figli, l'amore per la famiglia, l'amore nell'amicizia, nel sostegno nella cura e nella passione che si mette in ogni cosa che si fa”.

“La forza delle donne”– vetrofusione (vetro di murano, graniglia di vetro colorato ed oro zecchino)



Ugo Pergoli



"Dopo il temporale - Vele" Tecnica mista su tela cm 80x70

Allievo di Mario Mafai, Ugo Pergoli ha recepito il sentimento emotivo di un rinnovato Impressionismo, il calore dell' Espressionismo, il sentimento poetico di una proiezione Cubista.

Roberto Pinetta

Roberto Pinetta un Surrealista Contemporaneo dallo stile unico e inconfondibile, tra perfetto cromatismo e stilizzazione e attenta disposizione di figure e forme geometriche, che alternate a spunti antropologici, creano un curioso ritmo comparativo, nel quale sembrano fondersi l'ascendenza strutturale del Cubismo, la sapiente costruzione dei piani, nonché una sfumata e disinvolta vena creativa.



*"Maternità" Omaggio a Gustav Klimt
Acrilico su tela cm 80x100*

Grazie per l'attenzione ed un arrivederci a tutti alla prossima mostra collettiva!



Spirit of the Cinque Terre

by Kate Little

Tuesday, 25 October 2011, the sky and earth fell down on Monterosso and Vernazza, two small communities on the northwestern Ligurian (Italian) coastline, which make up the renowned Cinque Terre (five lands).

During the course of a night and day of constant, and often violent, rainfall, the land could not absorb any more water. Landslides tumbled downhill and downstream, taking dirt, trees, boulders, automobiles, and in many places - people, with them.

I went into the village of Monterosso on Thursday (27 October) and was not prepared for what I would see. The buildings were standing in their correct places as if nothing had happened. However the roads, the piazzas and the ground floor of almost every building was a good 2 to 3 meters under mud. Automobiles, tree trunks, refrigerators, chairs and barrels were mixed in with the mud.

The town was full of pale faces but fierce eyes. Shovels in hand and rubber boots on their feet, they had gone right to work to restore their village. They lost everything, but not their spirit.

As I returned each day, I saw that an ad-hoc self-organization gradually took place in town, even before the state services and emergency groups arrived. The elderly, sick and children were evacuated to safe places. An outdoor communal kitchen serving 3 meals a day plus snacks was set up immediately. As all of the restaurants gradually used up the remains of their freezers, the meals were excellent. A make-shift nursery school was organized in a hotel. They even dressed the kids up for Halloween. Local bars donated beer kegs so that after a long day of hard work, the young people could have some time together in the impromptu bar set up in the tunnel that runs through town.

Now will be the real test. The good food has ended and now the town is eating what the emergency services bring in. It is getting exhausting to shovel day after day and come home to no lights, heat or running water. Poor weather is predicted to hit the area this evening and last for nearly a week. School has been suspended again in anticipation of further disasters and everyone is frantically trying to do what they can to secure all of the areas that could be in danger. When it starts to rain, the work will be at a standstill, except for the excavators and backhoes which run constantly.

As the clouds roll in this evening, the atmosphere is filled with cautious optimism. We wonder what will happen and hope for the best.

More information, including updates reports and methods of donating, is available at www.littleparadiso.com



A lit candle with a warm, glowing flame is the central focus. The candle is white and has handwritten Latin text in a cursive script. The text includes "Gloria in excelsis Deo", "in Deo", and "Gloria in excelsis". The candle is surrounded by a cluster of bright red holly berries and dark green leaves. The background is a soft, out-of-focus golden-brown color.

Season's Greetings

*from the FAO Staff Coop Board
of Directors and office staff*