

# fao Casa gazette

OCTOBER 2011

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**Ecosystems are for Ever**

**6<sup>th</sup> Edition of the RUN FOR  
FOOD Race**

**Towards a Holistic Approach  
to Oil Painting**

**Window on the world: the  
wonder & beauty of  
Postage Stamps**

**When in Rome...appreciate that  
city Engineering**

**World Rabies Day 2011**

**FAO Staff Artists Corner**

# Natura

di Laura Guerrini

Il verde della campagna  
Il blu del mare  
Il giallo della montagna

Tre colori  
Tre luoghi  
ma una sola identità

la natura

infinita,meravigliosa,completa,fantastica  
vera, intrigante, eccitante, flutuante, devastante

complice

nell'averci dato-nel darci-nel donarci se stessa

non permettiamo di togliercela-non togliamocela

**NON UCCIDIAMOLA**

*Dal libro di poesie "Sognando Liberamente"*





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**View of the West Nile from  
Plantation Island**

photo: (c)FAO/Rosetta Messori

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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](mailto: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 1<sup>st</sup> of the month preceding the date of issue. The Editor may schedule articles according to the priorities and editorial requirements of the FAO Staff COOP. The FAO CASA Gazette is published every month.

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# Ecosystems are for Ever

by Peter Steele

*Dig up the soil and grow crops and you mess with the natural ecosystem that was in reasonable dynamic harmony with the neighborhood biosphere before you came along. People, of course, have been doing this for more than 100 000 years but they only really got serious about it when settling Mesopotamia – the land between the rivers – about 6 000 years ago. Conditions were good – and populations began to expand. People still farm this land.*



*Arid ecosystems. Dry climate shrubs, bare soil and hills in the distance that provided the water shed that filled the lake during the winter months. Precipitation may be as low as 250 mm/year; with high evaporation loss from open water during the summer months.*

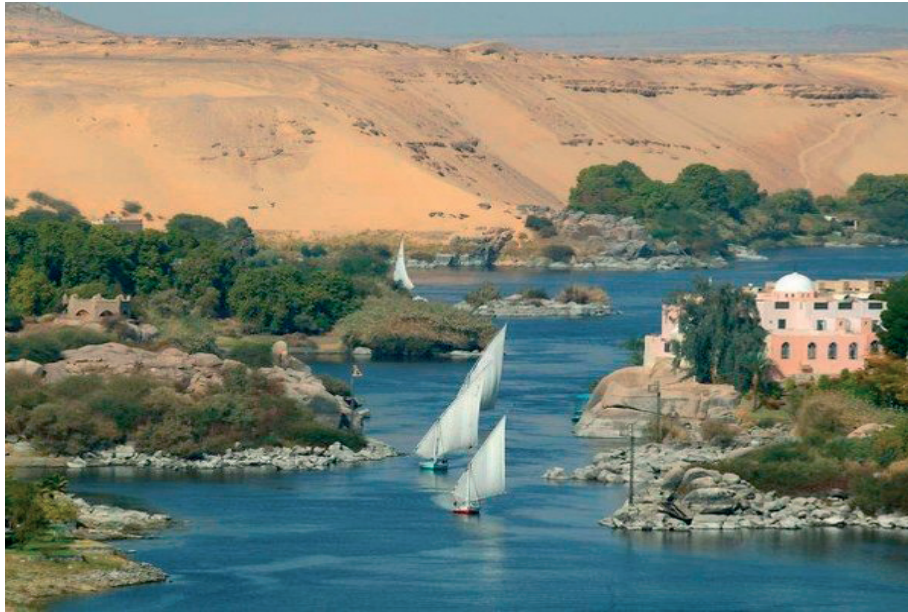
## **Nature takes a role**

The people of the countries of the Middle East and North Africa face the challenge of social expectations typical of people everywhere – increased wealth and security, equitable lives, sufficient food and opportunities for raising families and planning for their future. Expectations of this kind come from the stability of communities working in harmony with each other and, equally important, working in harmony with their natural resource base.

Much of this comes from an understanding of

the extent of those resources, their value as a means of creating economic wealth and from levels of exploitation. The key issue is one of sustainability - exploitation within limits that can be managed.

Ultimately it is people in the community who take responsibility for the resilience of their local environment; and if not directly, then by means of national decision-makers who establish the laws, maintain the institutions of state, plan on the basis of national priorities, encourage direction and mobilize the technical



*Water is a key resource. The beauty of the Nile at Aswan in Upper Egypt belies the reality of the deserts that dominate the country; with a cultivated valley that is at best 30 km wide for >500 km. River flow is also relatively low given the lack of tributaries north of the Atbara River in Sudan, and water loss from evaporation.*

and financial resources with which to take action. This is done as part of the public services provided to all citizens.

This notwithstanding, understanding the complexity required of natural resources management remains extremely difficult, but this is exactly what is required of agricultural producers everywhere; people working with nature to produce the foods and materials required of socio-economic development. As societies industrialize, machines replace people on the land, production intensifies and the agro-technologies adopted become more demanding - but productivity and yields increase.

### **Sharing space with people**

People construct their societies on the basis of the food and materials produced; and people prosper and grow in numbers, and typically demand more of the natural environment. Viable agro-food industries depend ultimately on the exploitation of the natural resources available – and particularly organic materials,

soils, land and water; all of which exist in dynamic change one-to-the-other. Nature works within firm ecological systems that provide for the native flora and fauna, and the biological and other life-supporting services required.

Whilst our species has evolved and expanded such that we dominate everywhere, it is a moot point that we share the planet with almost nine million other species (plus or minus a million or so) - and that's without counting the bacteria. Human activity is almost certainly causing species to disappear; not so much those on the IUCN red list of endangered animal species – mammals, birds and reptiles - but the micro-fauna, fungi, plants and more that have not even been identified.

People are no exception to the rule and depend upon exactly the same ecological systems – for food, freshwater, pollination and regulation of the climate. Across the region, however, climate is subtly changing – and these changes can be tracked. Change will come within two

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generations – and it will seriously impact upon those living in the region.

### What people want

Populations of people continue to expand and, during the next 40-years, there will be an additional 50 percent more people living on the basis of the same resources and, crucially, expecting higher standards of living. For the countries of the Arabian Gulf world food markets continue to provide those surpluses that can be purchased. For the 10-12 agro-producer countries the options are more prosaic - shifting priorities into boosting production in all countries where agriculture is practical, increased investment by the mineral-rich countries and the adoption of a techno-culture of 'sustainable intensification'. Everything else brings risk.

### Sustainable what?

The latest in a line of technical terms for the early Twenty-first century that catch the mood of the day - sustainable intensification comes with realization of population growth expected to peak at estimated 9-10 billion

people worldwide by 2050; up from seven billion in 2011. And, more realistically, the need to provide an additional 70 percent more food and industrial materials from largely existing resources of organic materials, soil, land and water during the next 40-years. In a region which is already 50 percent food import dependent, this will mean an additional 250 million people. This additional output will be required, *without* further negative impact on the environment.

For the food producers, challenges become those of change and adaptation from the socio-economic values of existing society and the need to adopt new agro-resource management technologies. This requires focus upon crop improvements, conservation agriculture, agro-forestry and soil conservation, integrated pest management, horticulture, livestock and fodder crops, aquaculture and novel policies and partnerships. Others argue realistically for a non-agricultural future; except that 40 percent of regional people make a living from agriculture.



*Horticulture. High quality and high value vegetables and fruits are in demand in local towns and export markets. They represent cost effective use of water resources that may already be in short supply. Better returns than growing cereals. Less resilient than small ruminants.*





*Irrigation. Drip technologies – precision placement of water around the root growing zone and with none of the inefficiencies of flood or furrow application; and none of the runoff, waterlogging or salination that results.*

### **Social progress - disrupted economies**

The original optimism that regional countries would comfortably trade their way out of the impasse of the international economic downturn beginning 2007/2008 has changed during the course of this year; and the ‘Arab Spring’ has brought disrupted economic progress, damaged infrastructure, reduced investments, raised expectations on the part of large proportions of national populations – including higher wages, better social welfare, etc. - and the uncertainty of the new political order that may follow.

Comment and projections of ‘*what next*’ are available from many contemporary analysts – and cutting through the rhetoric remains a challenge. Most observers predict a period of turmoil and disruption followed by a semblance of ‘*business-as-usual*’, but this may be a western view and directed mainly at regional oil industries and associated services and networks. This is the world’s petrol station – driving the international energy

markets upon which everyone depends. This is also the richer regional countries ‘*buying themselves out of trouble*’. Options of this kind are not available to the poorer countries.

### **Focus upon investment - quickly**

What is certain, however, is that the main constraints of limited natural resources, outdated agro-production and nascent agro-industries, state-intervention, impoverished rural communities and cities that remain out-of-contact with food production will continue into the next period. People will continue to expect instant results, and state services will come under increasing scrutiny for delivery and quality of performance. Not so much a gloomy prognosis of change, but one to be appreciated for the opportunity it presents; and the quicker investment funds can be shifted into agro-production, materials, structures and systems, the quicker those socio-economic changes can be made. The time-line involved, however, remains unknown ■

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# 6<sup>a</sup> RUN FOR FOOD 16 . 10 . 2011

## 6th Edition of the RUN FOR FOOD Race

Join in the 2011 World Food Day celebrations, participate in the 6th Run for Food at the Terme di Caracalla Stadium on Sunday 16 October 2011. The Race will depart from the Stadium at 10.00 hrs, it will consist of a non-competitive 5-km race and a 10-km competitive race with professional and amateur competitors. The percorso will be through the very suggestive and beautiful streets of the historic centre of Rome.

The Competitive race is open only to athletes with tessera while the non-competitive race is open to everyone, old and young, fast and slow. The maximum time is 90 minutes so you can also stroll.

All registration fees and voluntary donations will be given to the Telefood Fund and will contribute to finance projects in the developing countries in the Horn of Africa. All participants will receive a T-shirt as a souvenir. The participants in the non-competitive race will be given a pectoral with 1 Miliardo (1 billion) written on it to testify that almost 1 billion people, mainly women and children, are suffering from hunger and malnutrition and hence risking death.

There will be other fun activities at the Stadium from 9.00 until 16.00 hrs such as a cultural and musical show featuring the Tam Tam Morolla, Heroes Crew, Hip Hop breakdance Group (acrobatic dancers) and entertainment for children.

Naturally there will also be the traditional Ethnic Food Fair where you can buy lunches, finger food, cakes and sweets from around the globe and our Italian favorite - Porchetta from Ariccia. Mauro and his assistants will be at the Bar Service which will function throughout the event with coffees, cappuccino, cold tea, soft drinks, Caribbean sorrel and ginger drinks and rum punch (to complete your lunch). Thanks to a generous sponsor there will also be a distribution of water and milk.

All proceeds from the food and drinks sales will go towards the Telefood projects in the Horn of Africa.

**We count on your support, please pass the word and bring along families, friends and relatives.**

### FAO Staff Coop



Long distance runners near gazebo's  
credit: ©FAO/Giulio Napolitano

Prize giving (women)  
credit: ©FAO/Giulio Napolitano



## *Towards a Holistic Approach to Oil Painting*

*Fahmi Bishay*

*Based on my experience as an amateur painter and drawing on selected literature on the subject, I found that a number of key principles, constituting an effective holistic approach to oil painting, can be very helpful in realizing the painter's objectives. This approach is highlighted in this article*



*Figure (1). Content. A portrait by the author (oil on canvas: 60x40 cm)*

### **Introduction**

In the literature on art techniques for oil painting, there are so many theories, principles, approaches and a large number of schools of painting. For a professional painter, he/she has, indeed, to study, analyze and reflect on that very rich literature. However, for the amateur painter I have singled out in this article only a *few* techniques that, in my judgment and experience, *are simple yet effective* elements that would help him/her to achieve his/her objectives.

Those elements constitute a holistic approach to oil painting.

Notwithstanding the above, we must keep in mind that art (all sorts) by definition has a significant element of "*subjectivity*". And that is what makes it innovative, dynamic, interesting and enjoyable. Note that we say "an element of" and not "total subjectivity" for there is a number of basic "objective" principles that can help the artist to achieve his/her objective. Furthermore, in view of that subjectivity element in the art of painting, the selection

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of and the emphasis placed upon each one of the key “objective” painting principles vary from one painter to another; one subject to another and one media to another.

With the above in mind, the following are my *selected* elements of a holistic approach to oil painting.

### ***On a Holistic Approach to Oil Painting: An Integrative Process***

I wish to postulate that there is a holistic approach to painting. That is, the art of painting is a process, a holistic process, not an event. Although the discussions to follow on the selected painting techniques are presented in sets of separate elements (to facilitate presentation), the effective approach is, indeed, *holistic*. That is, at the implementation phase of painting the artist *has* to fully *integrate* those aspects in a single holistic approach in order to realize what he/she aims to achieve from his/her work.

### ***Key Components of a Holistic Approach to Oil Painting***

#### ***Focal Point: The Concept and the plan***

In one of my earlier articles in the Casa Gazette (January 2010), I strongly argued that *before* you start your painting, you should have a *concept* or an *objective* of the envisaged painting. The painting’s objective culminates in your *focal point*. You should next have a *plan* for your painting to achieve that objective. A painting plan is how the painting will be implemented and how it will be read by the viewers. The integration of the objective, focal point and the associated plan demonstrates the artist’s way of seeing things. In the above-mentioned article, a number of examples of paintings’ objective, focal points and plans were highlighted.

Other *examples* are presented here. For instance, in Figure (1) above, the objective of the painting was to show the contentment of the character in that

portrait. The focal point was, thus, the smiling peaceful face and the eyes expression. The plan of the painting was to emphasize the light movements on the face’s muscles as the subject was smiling. The eyes were cast in a happy mood. Using bright colors both in the face and the clothing helped to bring the radiance in the smile and emphasize the painting’s objective.

### ***Composition: Guiding the Viewer’s Eyes***

Once you have decided on your painting’s concept or objective, the focal point and the execution plan, you would have a *mental image* of your painting. Next, you compose your painting to realize that image. Although the phrase “painting composition” could be intimidating, it should not. When, you have a mental image of your painting, composition of the



Figure 2. *Thirsty: A painting by the author (oil on canvas: 50X40 cm)*

painting becomes easy and simple. In composition you have to mainly focus on the following three elements: **direction**, **balance and integration**.

Under “**direction**” you design your painting such that you guide the viewer’s eyes towards your focal point. In general the focal point of your painting should **not** be in the **centre** of your painting for that could make the painting too symmetrical and boring. The components of the painting should, in a subtle way, guide the viewer’s eyes to your focal point. For instance in Figure (2), the focal point is the water coming from the pot into the girl’s mouth. The main elements leading the viewer’s eyes are: The movements in the girl’s face, eye, neck and shoulders. The position of the water pots and the girl’s left arm further direct the viewer’s eyes to the focal point.

Under “**balance**” you balance the “weights” of various shapes in your painting. That is because in painting, shapes are conceived as if they have weights: A shape may look “heavy” if it is large, dark, busy or very bright. You have to aim at balancing those imaginary weights in your painting. This element in particular is especially subjective. Thus balancing the weights in a painting composition is based on how you **feel** about those imaginary weights (see Figure 2).

Under “**integration**” you avoid a painting of scattered components. Shapes or major components of the painting should lead to each other so that you should have a flow to the painting structure. This aspect is especially important in the composition of “**still life and flowers**”, (see Figure 3).

### **Color and Value: From Two to Three Dimensions**

Of the many theories of **colors**, I found that a few color principles work very well. Those are: First, **contrast cool** colors (e.g., blue, light blue, white...) with **warm** colors



Figure 3. Portrait (of Roses:  
A painting by the author  
(oil on canvas: 60X40 cm)

(e.g., red, brown, orange, yellow...). Second, contrast neutral against pure and intense colors. Third, repeat colors intelligently around the painting until it looks virtually balanced.

The “**value**” refers to “lightness” or “darkness” of a particular color in the painting. Value is very important to reflect **lights and shadows**, and, thus, value can create the illusion of transforming the flat two dimensions image on the canvas into a seemingly three dimensions painting. This is achieved by making objects and spaces seem to “**recede**” (darker) or “**come forward**” (lighter).

### **When a Painting is finished?**

Finally you have to know when your painting is finished; otherwise you might reach an overworking stage in your painting. An overworked painting loses its

freshness and becomes dull. The answer to that question was presented in my earlier article in the Casa Gazette referred to above under the title: "When a painting is finished?" As noted in that article, when your perceived objective and the essence of the plan of your painting are achieved, you stop. Your painting is finished. This approach makes the painting process thoughtful and well guided.

### Concluding Remarks

While the above proposed holistic

approach will certainly help you in going about your oil painting in an effective and working manner, I wish to reiterate the above-mentioned innovative subjectivity element in painting. Thus, while the proposed holistic approach will be helpful, ***you have to use your own feelings, your own personal perceptions and your own taste in your painting.*** Only then you will be *innovative*, and you will *reflect your own personality in your art work: A process that is most enjoyable and highly rewarding* ■



## ART NEWS

*by Edna Howe*

If you have already done your Christmas shopping 'on-line' and dread the idea of going to the centre with the Christmas crowds, make a note in your November Diary.

Clara Hemsted has joined forces with Edna Howe to show water colours at 'The Studio' Viale Aventino 44 (Cortile).

Inauguration 16 November at 5 p.m. The MOSTRA will run from 16 – 19 November.

times: 11.00 – 14.00 morning  
16.00 – 19.00 afternoon.

meanwhile Clara is in Tuscany taking part in the Vendemmia.







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## CREATING WITH THE FAO STAFF COOP ARTIST'S GROUP

**H**ave you ever wanted to paint or draw a picture but didn't know how to get started?

The FAO Staff Coop's Artists Group is your answer if you work in FAO. In fact, during the daytime FAO staff wives and relatives can use the well equipped Artist's Studio for lessons in oils, water colours, acrylics, pastels or drawing for 3 hours. No one has a fixed time to begin or end their session.



For example the well known artist and teacher, Bob Dickerson, is in the Art Studio from 10.00 to 19.00 hrs on Mondays and Thursdays.

Students can come and work for 3 hours in this time schedule. The idea is a sort of ART WORKSHOP where the creative process goes at the pace of the student as each receives personal attention. There are no beginners, middle or advanced level as working next to more skilled artists encourages and stimulates progress.

The FAO Staff Coop Artists' Group has its studio in Building E Basement (Gym A). It is well equipped with studio easels, sinks and hot and cold water, drying racks for paintings and a library of art books. Even lockers for storing art materials are available.

There is a session for staff from FAO, WFP and IFAD from 17.00 to 19.00 hrs.

Marina Haas also teaches in the Art Studio on Tuesday evenings and Wednesday mornings. If you would like to try you can have a free use of materials which are available in the Art Studio. You will have to be a member of the FAO Staff Coop and lessons cost 30.00 for a 3-hour lesson to be paid in the Staff Coop office beforehand.

Comments from an artist group member on the Art classes:

*Are you a budding Monet, or maybe you're a person who would love to try painting but, like I was, not brave enough to take up the challenge? I had a few friends encouraging me to join the FAO Staff Coop Artists' Group and one eventually managed to drag me along (thank you Margaret, it really was my "lucky" day). The classes are run by Bob Dickerson, a very experienced and inspiring professional. Under Bob's gentle encouragement, you will discover talents you never thought existed. IF you are a beginner you will soon be creating something you are pleased with, and if you are experienced, you will have the opportunity to develop and extend your skills. So, come and join the friendly group for classes at FAO ■*

For further enquiries contact: Bob Dickerson on 340.3415028  
Marina Haas on 0637851623

## Window on the World: the wonder and beauty of postage stamps

*by Tony Grey*

**T**he collecting and study of postage stamps (philately) has been popular since the first national postage service was introduced in Britain in 1840 using adhesive prepaid stamps printed unperforated on sheets requiring cutting with scissors. Prior to this posted letters were paid for per each written sheet on delivery. Stamps used on envelopes, postcards or parcels were cancelled by rubber stamp to prevent reuse. In time stamps were perforated allowing them to be detached without the need for cutting by scissors. Stamps were not always adhesive – as recently as 2003 I sat in a post office in Viet Nam using a pot of glue and a brush to attach my stamps to postcards!

Stamps for collectors are sold as used (cancelled), mint (unused) and mounted (with a stamp hinge attached) or unmounted and values vary according to which category the stamp falls in. Stamp collecting was popular from the late Nineteenth century and earlier to mid-Twentieth century providing a window on the world for both young and old before the days of mass travel, TV and the internet. In fact stamp collecting could lead to arrest and the gulag in Stalin's USSR on a charge of 'cosmopolitanism!' Earlier stamp albums had a page (or more) per country starting with Albania and ending with Zanzibar. Stamps were

attached to the page by adhesive hinges. Nowadays stamps are housed loose behind transparent paper or plastic strips on the album page. Stamps must be undamaged to have any value and rare types are 'expertised' by a recognised specialist with a certificate of authenticity. The benchmark value of all the world's stamps is set by recognised organisations, the most famous of which is Stanley Gibbons of the Strand, London with regularly published catalogues. Dealers at stamp fairs usually sell at half to two-thirds of the catalogue value.

Stamps from earlier times were printed from careful and detailed engravings and occasionally printed on watermarked paper (as in bank notes) to deter forgery. The postal authorities of different countries invited designs to show various themes reflecting the country concerned. Commemorative stamp sets (often issued quite frequently) might show themes like flora, fauna, geography and cultural treasures. Definitive stamp sets remain unchanged for a long period and may simply portray the ruler (president, prime minister or monarch). The authoritarian nations of the Twentieth century aimed to portray national pride by showing famous people, military victories, aviation, cars, claimed territories and so on. Some stamps depict unrestrained propaganda.



*Stamps as propaganda: stamp block with Colonel Gaddafi and his green book*

Stamps of this kind closely track modern history and form the basis for my own collecting.

Sudden political change has yielded very interesting stamps from earlier regimes overprinted to show the new regime which were used until new stamps could be issued. New countries

emerging from the wreckage of World War 1 using overprinted stamps included Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia, Palestine and Iraq while more recent examples include India and Bangladesh. Stamps could also be overprinted to show a change in value (a surcharge).



*Overprinted stamps showing regime change: upper row from left, Vichy French stamp from World War 11with R.F. (for Republique Francaise) liberation overprint, Tsarist Russian stamp with Bolshevik regime surcharge, Imperial Chinese dragon stamp with 1912 republic overprint, Nigerian stamp with Biafra overprint. Centre row: British Raj stamp overprinted Pakistan, Imperial*

*Austrian stamp overprinted Polish Post, 1919. Lower row: British Occupation in Iraq with Indian currency (annas) on an Ottoman Turkish stamp, State of Katanga on an Independence for Congo stamp, newly restored Austria on a Third Reich stamp 1945.*

Stamps provide a fascinating window on the world. Why not start collecting?

## L'armonia perfetta di Mondrian in 70 capolavori

Dall'8 ottobre alla fine di gennaio a roma, al Complesso del Vittoriano

**L**a mostra autunnale del complesso del vittoriano sarà dedicata a **Piet Mondrian**. A lui fino al 29 gennaio 2012, a partire dal 7 ottobre, sarà dedicata una mostra monografica "L'Armonia Perfetta" che racconterà la sua ossessione per l'idea di progresso. Negli anni a cavallo tra i due secoli infatti gli artisti d'avanguardia non si accontentavano più di un'arte deputata a rappresentare l'aspetto esteriore della realtà e ricercavano una verità più profonda, oltre l'esteriorità. Affascinato dalla corrente cubista, Mondrian continuò a lavorare sulle possibilità di strutturazione per riduzione, già contenute nel Cubismo, fino alla pittura astratta e, alcuni anni più tardi, inaugurò quello che definì "Neoplasticismo". Come in **Kandinskij**, agli elementi espressivi della pittura – linea, colore e forma o superficie – veniva attribuito un valore proprio, che non rimandava a qualcos'altro. In più, Mondrian ridusse tali elementi all'essenziale: soltanto linee rette, verticali e orizzontali, mai diagonali; soltanto colori primari – nessun colore composto, come in natura – e i non-colori nero, bianco e grigio. Ne derivò una delle fasi più affascinanti della storia dell'arte moderna: il gioco di Mondrian con le linee orizzontali e verticali e la ricerca della composizione ideale ■



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## When in Rome ... appreciate that city engineering

by Miguel Moreno

*Newcomers to the city are always overwhelmed at the structures that the ancient Romans left behind; as if modern man (and woman) were the first to plan, design and construct on city-scale. It took Western Europe more than 15 centuries to catch up with the Romans – and re-establish and surpass the intellectual empire that ancient Rome represented. Remember your first impression? Engineers sometimes see things differently.*



*Coliseum. Roman engineering in all its glory – classic design, functional, durable and massive; wherever the Romans established themselves in Europe or North Africa they build their entertainment centres. Two thousand years later the majority remain intact.*

### First impressions

If you have ever visited this city, you will agree with me that what makes Rome special are the people, the crazy roads and the food....yes, and the Coliseum also helps. That monument, like many other ancient structures which still remain in this city are the last vestiges of the vast Roman Empire. And for better or worse, these are the main things that remain....the structures.

Those old fellows prepared the foundations of this city so well that their original town

planning and public facilities still function: roads, palazzos, drainage systems. Yes, of course the materials may have changed but the original concepts remain unchanged. What a well-known Roman engineer decided thousands of years ago is still relevant today.

I guess thoughts like those made me decide to study engineering when I was still a kid. I also considered studying architecture, like most engineers do, but I found engineering much more democratic. Fashion won't

(continued on page 24)

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(continued from page 22)

demolish your structures if they are well projected. And even when I endured loads of suffering during my studies, including the challenge of mathematics and many complex equations such as:

Studying-booze-girlfriends+money+K =  
becoming an engineer

Where K is a constant that all students need; sometimes called 'good fortune', 'being in the right place at the right time' or simply 'doggedness'.

Surprisingly, I made it.

### **Cambodian side-track**

So then, by luck I found myself doing an internship with a consultancy company in Cambodia. When a client asked me what my opinion was about their half a billion USD project in water irrigation schemes, I was dumbfounded. No doubt my answer wasn't the best that I could have given. Helped by

my lack of English, the fact that I was a novice in engineering I recall answering something along the lines of ....'It is pretty big'. Peals of irrepressible laughter followed.

Now I can say that I've been to Cambodia and helped the modern day equivalent of the Roman engineer design those ponds that will feed the country in the future and, if the work is properly done, two thousand years from now a young engineer like me will write an article about that same man who laughed at me.

This month I started my internship at FAO, Rome - full of hope and pride for joining the engineering team - but also surprised that the engineering unit has become so small in a city that so perfectly demonstrates how majestic good engineering can be. But I am still young, and the Coliseum of the future is still out there waiting for me to design it ■



*Cambodia. A green and pleasant land with water and vegetation as far as the eye can see – natural resources aplenty. But it's this thing about management that ultimately counts, and >80 percent of the population continues to live in poverty. This is a floating village on Tonle Sap Lake.*



## World Rabies Day 2011

**R**abies is a disease that can infect both animals and humans, and although the disease is more readily associated with domestic and wild animals, infection of humans can also occur all too easily. The rabies virus is usually spread to humans through bites or scratches via infected saliva, and if timely preventative treatment is not carried out, the disease may prove fatal. If bitten, the first action to prevent rabies infection is to wash the wound thoroughly with soap and copious amounts of water for 15 minutes. In developing countries where soap is not available, ashes may be used instead. Bite victims should next seek out medical attention as soon as possible for evaluation, and post-exposure vaccination.

Rabies may, in fact, be the oldest known infectious disease to man, with references of the disease dating from as far back as 2000 BCE, including ancient Babylonian text and references from Homer and Aristotle. Rabies remained an unpreventable disease until Louis Pasteur and Emile Roux developed their rabies vaccine in 1885. Since then, rabies has been tightly controlled in the developed world, but continues to be a serious problem elsewhere, killing hundreds of people and animals each day.

Rabies is found throughout the world, however, Asia and Africa account for more than 95% of human rabies deaths. It is estimated that more than three billion people are at high risk of contracting rabies. Most unvaccinated mammals may serve as a route of rabies virus transmission to humans, but the predominant species varies by region. For example, skunks and raccoons are the most important vectors in North America, while in South America bats are important sources of infection for both livestock and humans. That said, in the Asian and African continents the dog is the most important source of rabies virus transmission, accounting for 99% of human infections. It is estimated that more than 55,000 human deaths occur annually, and of these deaths 40% are children under the age of 15. This number is probably greatly under-estimated due to under-reporting. In line with other diseases in poorer areas, the main problems associated with combating rabies are inadequate access to healthcare (especially in rural areas), lack of education and the prohibitive cost of preventative treatment when infection is suspected. Overcoming these barriers is important because canine rabies is an entirely preventable disease otherwise.





*Boys taking their dogs to be vaccinated at the Veterinary Faculty in Huambo, Angola.  
(Credit: Marisa Ventura da Silva).*

## FAO and rabies

The impact of rabies goes beyond individual health and influences food security and livelihoods in developing countries. FAO has become increasingly involved with the issue of rabies control in recent years, raising awareness, aiding in the development and distribution of educational materials, and supporting rabies control campaigns. In this way, FAO is not only recognising and strengthening the fight against rabies, it is also broadening its vision of “One Health” to strengthen FAO’s role in fighting disease at the animal, human and ecosystem interface. More specifically, FAO aids and contributes to partnerships combating rabies such as the Partnership for Rabies Prevention and the Global Alliance for Rabies Control. FAO is also a strong proponent of the annual World Rabies Day.

World Rabies Day, September 28<sup>th</sup> 2011

World Rabies Day plays a key role in educating people and advocating with government leaders and policymakers for the prevention and control of rabies. Started in 2006, the World Rabies Day initiative was put

into action and since then has grown from strength to strength. The campaign now involves major entities in animal and human health promotion worldwide, including FAO, WHO, the World Society for the Protection of Animals, as well as governmental, non-governmental and community partners. The initiative has also substantially grown at the grass-roots level to include student organisations and animal health clubs. The over-arching aim of the initiative is to raise awareness while also increasing the availability of funding for preventing rabies and saving lives. From the first campaign in 2007 up until 2010, World Rabies Day events have been held in 135 countries, having reached 150 million people and has led to the vaccination of 4.6 million dogs. For World Rabies Day 2011, it is expected that this impact will grow once again, including yet more countries, more events and deeper reach. With the support of FAO staff both working in headquarters and in the field, this year we hope to make it the best yet!

For further information on World Rabies Day 2011, including all the different events from around the world, please visit <http://www.worldrabiesday.org> ■

## The FAO Staff Artists Corner

### La ricerca interiore di Momcil Milanov

by Flavia Carbonetti



“Ritratto di Rita” - matite su cartone - cm. 50 x 70 - anno 2008

**I**l Sig. Momcil Milanov, Bulgaro, è diplomato in scenografia presso l'Accademia delle Belle Arti di Roma ed è iscritto al FAO Staff Artists Group dal 2010.

***Sig. Milanov dove e come nasce la sua passione per la pittura? E' forse figlio d'arte? Perché ha deciso di venire a studiare arte in Italia?***

La passione per l'arte si trova nel mio DNA, i miei genitori sono insegnanti d'arte. Fin da ragazzino ho disegnato e dipinto e penso di avere ereditato da mia madre la passione per i ritratti. Mi sono diplomato in un liceo artistico in Bulgaria ed uno dei miei sogni era di frequentare l'Accademia delle Belle Arti di Roma e così seguendo il mio sogno, nel 2000, sono venuto in Italia. Ho dovuto frequentare la quarta e la quinta superiore per ottenere il diploma di Italiano, obbligatorio per avere

accesso all'Accademia. Devo dire che è stata una bella esperienza che mi ha aiutato moltissimo a proseguire i miei studi.

***A quale linguaggio pittorico si sente più vicino e perché? Quali sono i suoi pittori preferiti? C'è un pittore in particolare al quale si ispira?***

L'Impressionismo: sono sempre stato attratto da Claude Monet e la tecnica dell'impressionismo mi appassiona. Mi dà quel senso di libertà nell'usare i colori direttamente sulla tela senza preparare prima le tonalità e nello stesso tempo di ottenere la leggerezza, la vivacità, l'attendibilità nella creatività. Sono a dir poco “innamorato” di Caravaggio, Kokoshka, Picasso, Kandinsky, Chagall, Dali. Stili diversi, comunicazione diversa, linguaggi diversi fra loro, epoche diverse, però in tutti questi grandi artisti io trovo qualcosa di me.



*“Donna incinta” - Pigmenti naturali su tela.  
110 x 90 cm – anno 2009*

Come se loro possedessero una piccola parte della mia anima e della mia arte.

*Non sarebbe meglio dire che è lei ha possedere una parte della loro arte, poiché sono loro che l'hanno preceduta? Forse non potrebbe essere più giusto pensare ad una "Anima Universale" alla quale ognuno attinge a secondo delle proprie personali peculiarità, interessi o sensibilità?*

Ognuno di questi artisti ha vissuto in un'epoca diversa, con dei problemi e dei temi dell'epoca stessa. Ognuno di loro esprimeva e viveva i "problemi" e le "emozioni" in modo diverso e proprio attraverso il loro prisma.

*L'energia cosmica che si manifesta attraverso la vita con l'attesa, la nascita, la famiglia e si riassorbe nell'infinito con la morte. Sig. Milanov le sue opere d'arte sembrano più ispirate dal suo cuore che*

*dalla sua mente. Ricerca della vera conoscenza del sé? Quanta "anima" c'è nelle sue opere d'arte?*

Io credo che l'arte abbia una forma esterna ed un'anima interna. Per me il senso e lo scopo dell'arte è nella ricerca dell'artista di cercare e di ritrovare se stesso, della consapevolezza di se stesso, di accettare la realtà attraverso il suo prisma, di potersi liberare e di poter ricreare la reazione della sua anima. Io creo quello che provo dentro di me in quel momento concreto, quello che mi ha colpito. Se riesco a riprodurre il mio stato d'emozionale, di materializzarlo in qualche modo, di trasformarlo da una cosa eterea ed invisibile ad una cosa visibile, allora sono riuscito nel mio intento. E se devo rispondere quanta anima c'è in ogni mia opera, posso rispondere con una sola parola: tutta!

*Sig. Milanov molte delle sue opere, intense, dal significato profondo, trasmettono una forza misteriosa. Che cosa cerca di comunicare al suo pubblico? La sua idea di spiritualità? La percezione dell'esistenza in altre dimensioni oltre a quella materiale?*

Credo che la dimensione dell'aldilà sia proprio in noi stessi. L'anima dell'uomo è illimitata ed



*“Feto” - Olio su tela – 50 x 70 cm - anno 2011*



*“L'altro mondo” - Pigmenti naturali su tela.  
120 x 90 cm – anno 2009*

inesauribile, la questione è che un uomo deve provare a cercare di scoprire il misticismo. E qui veniamo ancora una volta alla questione della coscienza. Quando una persona è in grado di dare libertà al pensiero e all'immaginazione per andare oltre le norme stabilite e le categorie al di là dalla personalità ed a cercare il senso nella profondità del dettaglio, allora ha scoperto il misticismo. E se le mie opere riescono davvero a trasmettere un potere mistico, significa che sono riuscito a far sentire allo spettatore il mio messaggio, che in ogni caso è il risultato di uno sforzo per trovare il misticismo in se stesso.

***Gli antichi greci chiamavano la pittura “skiagraphìa” , cioè scrittura delle ombre. Lei pensa che la pittura sia solo l'ombra della realtà?***

Penso che l'arte in generale, e la pittura in particolare, sia provocata dalla realtà e in

questo senso potrebbe essere chiamata “l'ombra della realtà.” Tuttavia, decisivo è lo sguardo dell'artista, il modo di ricreare, la presenza personale in quest'ombra, la capacità di generare la vita. Se “ nell'ombra del reale” è incorporato il senso della riflessione illusoria della realtà, allora io non sono d'accordo con questa definizione. L'arte è connessa con la realtà. Se è isolata, tagliata fuori in qualche modo lontano dalle cose che ci circondano, è remota ed inaccessibile. La pittura non è una finzione. E' il pensiero, processo e filosofia.

***Sig Milanov, in Ottobre 2011 è prevista una sua mostra personale presso il FAO Lounge al Quartiere Generale della FAO a Roma. Sono previste anche delle sue mostre collettive o personali al di fuori della FAO? Dove?***

Dopo la mostra personale “Metamorphosis” prevista ad Ottobre 2011 presso il FAO Lounge al Quartiere Generale della FAO, ho dei progetti a breve per una mostra a Sofia in Bulgaria e per altre mostre presso i centri culturali di Budapest, Praga e Mosca.

Nel ringraziare il Sig. Milanov per la sua disponibilità gli auguriamo un futuro artistico ricco di soddisfazioni e di successi. Per le persone interessate alle sue opere d' arte questo è il sito dell'artista [www.momcil.com](http://www.momcil.com) ■



*“Famiglia” - Terra cotta dipinta - 50 x 50 cm  
anno 2010*

## *Some notes on Speck*



### *Speck – smoked prosciutto*

The Alto Adige region is heavily influenced by its German speaking neighbours and so its culinary specialties reflect this. In Alto Adige there is no ingredient more prominent than Speck – or smoked prosciutto. The process of making speck first begins with curing the legs of pork in salt and various spice combination which may include juniper, pine, cinnamon nutmeg and coriander. After this the smoking process begins.

Speck is smoked slowly and intermittently for two or three hours a day. The whole process takes about 3 months, slow smoking allows for the inner layers of meat to be really penetrated with the flavours of the wood – commonly juniper and pine woods.

Speck used to be smoked by hanging the meat in the chimney space above the domestic fire, but today smoking is completed in a cold smoking process, in which temperatures do not exceed 68° Fahrenheit. Though the meat is now kept in well-ventilated smokehouses around, the altitude and cool climate of the Alto Adige region is ideal for cold smoking.

A consortium of speck producers for the Alto Adige, *the Consorzio dei produttori speck dell'Alto Adige*, was formed in 1987. Its goal is to guarantee that consumers are buying a product that tastes as good as traditional prosciutto and made in a way that honours the small-scale handmade approach to smoking meat, even though production has been altered with industrialization methods.

In the Alto Adige, speck is revered and it is often eaten with most meals and this delicacy is well-appreciated beyond this region and is now quite popular throughout Italy.

## Chicken breast with Asiago cheese and Speck

by *Edith Mahabir*

### Ingredients

2 chicken breasts	6 slices Speck (sliced like ham)
6 slices Asiago cheese	4-5 tbsps Olive oil
Salt	Black pepper
½ glass white wine	Toothpicks

### Method

Cut the chicken breast into 3 long slices each. Place a slice of speck on top and then a slice of Asiago cheese. Roll to form 6 round involtini and secure ends with 2 or 3 toothpicks (to ensure that all the melted cheese does not ooze out during cooking).

In a non-stick heavy frying pan heat briefly the olive oil and place the involtini close together. Season with a little salt and black pepper, turn them after 3 minutes, and season also the other side. Cook them covered over moderate heat for an additional 3 minutes to allow them to get a little colour. Add the white wine, lower heat and simmer gently covered for about 8 minutes turning once or twice. By that time they should be cooked through and there should be a little sauce. Serve hot with the sauce on a heated plate accompanied with a mixed salad or boiled or steamed broccoli or cauliflower and carrots sauteed in olive oil, garlic and dried hot pepper.

## Ciambellone (Ring Cake)

by *Elvira Bonacci*

### Ingredients

4 eggs  
 300 gr sugar  
 400 gr flour  
 1 glass of milk  
 1 glass of oil  
 1 lemon  
 1 packet Pane degli Angeli or 1 heaped teaspoon  
 baking powder

### Method

Mix together the eggs and sugar well until light and fluffy. Add the lemon rind grated. Mix in the flour, milk and oil a little at a time. Pour the mixture in a greased and lightly floured baking dish for ciambellone or ring cakes and bake at 180°C for 40-45 minutes. Cool before serving. Excellent for breakfast and afternoon tea or simply as cake after a meal.



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