

JUNE 2013

fao Casa gazette

El sembrador de estrellas

Orchids in Rome... A possible dream?

FAO Staff Coop Caribbean Cultural Group donation

Today's Headlines

Letter from Melbourne #5: Appreciating History

Un mordisco de tradición Venezolana

fao Casa gazette

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©cover by Silvio Alejandro R. Catalano

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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 FAO-STAFF-Coop@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. 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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Orchids in Rome... A possible dream?

by Fernando Jara

Though I am into fisheries and aquatic ecosystems, from very early in life I developed a close relationship with the green terrestrial world. Back at home, I used to roam the temperate rain forests from southern Chile and orchids were the one treasure I would keep my eyes opened for. But though the environment would seem right, there are almost no instances of epiphytic orchids [*i.e.*, living on trees] in those places. It is



Vanda in full bloom

actually on open humid areas, sometimes in fields with sandy substrates (also volcanic ashes)

where most epigenous orchids [*i.e.*, with roots in the ground] are found back there. Once we moved to Roma, and coming across a diversity of orchids at local markets and several other stores, I hoped to discover their secrets and enjoy their beauty at home. Starting from the rather inexpensive and widely available *Phalaenopsis* and *Dendrobium* (e.g., those from IKEA), I moved to some of the most commonly available hybrids sold with commercial names such as *Cambria*, *Miltonia*, and *Miltoniopsis*.



Zygopetalum a delicate-scented orchid, Mercato dei Fiori, Roma

The best place to obtain great specimens at a very reasonable price in Roma is the Mercato dei Fiori from Via Trionfale (open to the general public every Tuesday morning). Before being fully engaged at FAO, while living closer to Via Trionfale free to visit the market often, I had plenty of opportunities to acquire a rather large variety of plants. Sad to say... many of them ended their days at home either due to my ignorance on how to keep them or due to the inadequate conditions the local climate represents for many of them. Excess watering, direct exposition to sunlight being my most frequent mistakes. Later, a new discovery renewed my willingness to insist on keeping orchids alive.



Phalaenopsis thriving in our window

annually around the third weekend in April at Monte Porzio Catone, near Roma, provides one great opportunity to admire specimens rarely seen locally and also to make good buys at reasonable prices. This year, there were exhibitors from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Belgium, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Malaysia, and Taiwan. It is there where I became acquainted with the wonderful and often perfumed *Cattleyas*, *Zygopetalum*, *Paphiopedilum*, *Oncidium*, and *Vanda*. And although when you buy there directly from the growers you receive good advice on handling and caring, my ambition made me want those orchids definitely not adapted for a Roman

The International Orchid Show, held



Bipinnula fimbriata from Central Chile



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Paphiopedilum at the orchid show, Monte Porzio Catone

conditions. Now for some years we have been enjoying the seasonal blooms of *Cymbidium* in our balcony. Large flowers that may appear by December, lasting for some months to welcome the new year. By staying outside year round, these large plants will be exposed to a drop in temperature most needed to trigger the formation of floral stems. Being outside they benefit from plenty of light and hence grow vigorously, though protection from direct sunlight is

climate.

So, I continued killing many wonderful plants that only lasted the blooming period and then went to waste. Seems like today's mass production of house plants can easily turn us into consumers of those goods, with little care and responsibility for their fate, once we obtain them and satisfy our desire of possession.

With limited understanding of orchids, added to a lack of time to talk to each one of them daily, I ended up finally settling for those that survived, and seem to be the most robust, sturdy, and well adapted to the local climate



Dactylorhiza along a forest trailing path, Monti della Laga



Cymbidium, large plants that do well outside year round in Roma

needed in summer; while in winter they need to be kept protected from frost and snow. Watering with added orchid fertilizer may be needed once a week in summer; during winter reduced watering to once every two (or even three weeks) is advisable, with no fertilizer during the blooming period. New *Cymbidium* hybrids are coming out in the market these days; they are compact smaller plants (with smaller flower) but with multiple profusely populated floral stems. They may need lots more care as they tend to be more delicate and not so recommended for local roman climate.

Of course one learns many things while trying to keep these wonderful creations alive, modesty being one of them. Definitely, each living wonder has a long evolutionary history behind, and we certainly feel great joy by keeping them healthy and happy away from their places of origin. However, in addition to be protected, orchids are extremely diversified and restricted to given local natural conditions. So, why

not go and enjoy them at those places where they naturally grow? Luckily, there are plenty of them once you start looking around carefully. Taking a walk along a trail in the Abruzzi during June or July, for instance, will provide plenty of wonderful surprises as you start finding the different species along the trail as you gain altitude. So, next time you are thinking orchids, why not plan an outing to the Gran Sasso or Monti della Laga national park? You will be able to breathe fresh air and bring back home lovely memories and images. Enjoy the ride and good luck.



NR
Department



The Importance of Behaviour Change

“We cannot solve a problem using the same level of consciousness that we used when we created it” – Albert Einstein

What are the key goals of your work at FAO? What is the ultimate purpose of the reports, training sessions, workshops and programmes that we conduct? In our efforts to strive towards a sustainable food system and agricultural practices that will adequately feed the seven billion people on Earth, we often need to re-align our thinking. But perhaps we also need to take it further than Einstein suggests; it's not only about altering our consciousness, but about changing **behaviour**.

So, what is behaviour change and why is it important? Human behaviour is both the problem and the solution for many issues affecting us today. Our choices, actions and conduct have broad impacts affecting a range of social, economical and environmental aspects of life. Yet these choices and behaviours can also have hugely positive influences and effects across a number of issues. Changing behaviour is therefore key for FAO to achieve its goals. And that means your work too. So why don't you sit back a moment, put everything out of your mind for a minute and ask yourself: ultimately what is the impact that your activities should achieve and, for this to happen, how do behaviours need to change? Who needs to change behaviour? What are the main barriers for this change to happen? Then you can ask if you are really utilizing the best techniques and procedures to bring about that change? Are you providing the information/training/or other inputs to your audience in the best manner? How are you measuring your impact?

Changing behaviour can be a tough and complex process, often requiring persistence over a period of time. Despite these challenges, research has shown a number of ways that you can be more effective in promoting and motivating behavioural change. For the Youth and United Nations Global Alliance's (YUNGA) educational work with young people on climate change and other sustainability issues, we have identified a set of tried and tested ways



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to promote and encourage the long-term impacts of behaviour change. These include the need to:

focus on specific, achievable behavioural changes – e.g. asking people to ‘use public transport to travel to work or school’ rather than simply saying ‘reduce greenhouse gas emissions’.

encourage action planning and empowerment – empower your audience/stakeholders to identify and take responsibility for their own targets, goals and behaviour change processes.

evaluate and challenge current systems/behaviour – why and how do we use current behaviour systems? What are the consequences of these behaviours?

identify and tackle barriers to action – e.g. lack of time, lack of money, not knowing what to do...the list goes on. Voicing and understanding these excuses or barriers will help to identify and explore strategies to overcome them. For example, The TravelSmart programme in Western Australia used ‘personalised marketing’ to reduce car use. People were given tailored timetables, walking or cycling maps and information about public transport specific to that individual’s journey. Results suggest that there has been a 15-20% reduction in car journeys among the 15,000 households targeted.

develop and practise relevant action skills – If not knowing what to do is a barrier to action, then having the opportunity to practise the relevant behaviour (with resources available to support and offer advice) is an important step.

promote public commitment to taking action – several studies have shown that if people make a verbal or written commitment in front of witnesses they are more likely to follow through with that behaviour change. This draws on the fact that feelings of guilt and personal responsibility for an issue are important predictors of behaviour. For example, a study in Oregon, USA found that those who were asked to make either a written or verbal commitment recycled more and for longer than groups who received information only.

encourage dissemination within communities or social networks – The social norm is an incredibly important predictor of behaviour. Peer pressure and the desire to conform drive both sustainable and unsustainable behaviour. For example, in a study in Nova Scotia, people who were already composting were encouraged to put a sign on their bin to make it more visible and talk to their neighbours to dispel myths about it. Seven months later the non-composters were re-interviewed and 80% had begun to compost their waste.

monitor behaviour change and celebrate success – Behaviour change is hard work and without monitoring and prompting most people will quickly revert to their old habits. Achieving sustained behaviour change needs on-

going monitoring, reminders and prompts. Monitoring and rewarding provides the incentive to continue with the desired behaviour change until it becomes habit.

It is also important to have a strategy in place to assess the impacts and follow-up on behaviour changes, in order to effectively sustain the successful process. How will you monitor the outputs of your work? It is important that you have good communication channels and a clear system to measure and assess the changes in behaviour amongst your stakeholders.

Here in the Natural Resources Department at FAO, YUNGA has been using a number of these techniques to help ensure effective behaviour change. YUNGA is developing a series of 'Challenge Badges' for youth on a number of sustainability topics such as biodiversity, climate change, nutrition, etc. To achieve the biggest impact, YUNGA works with the key stakeholders and especially the end users in the development of the educational materials. Drafts are pilot tested in different regions of the world to help optimize their use, and the curriculum is structured to promote a behavioural change response (for example, action orientated and local community projects are the main components of the programme). This process not only creates an effective product which teachers and youth leaders want, but it can easily be used and accessed through the active participation of a large network of partners all over the world: literally thousands of young people are now undertaking the challenge badges.

FAO/YUNGA is working closely with other United Nations agencies to try to motivate effective and sustained behaviour change amongst youth around the world. This work is part of the Article 6 Alliance launched by UNFCCC to 'educate, train and create public awareness', working closely with governments to promote meaningful, effective, result-orientated international cooperation on climate change education and public participation.

So, we hope we have convinced you that behaviour change is one of the key solutions to addressing a range of issues that we face as a global society. We each have a part to play – whose behaviour are you going to change next?



For more information on YUNGA, please contact Isabel.Sloman@fao.org or Reuben.Sessa@fao.org; or visit www.yunga.org.

FSC Caribbean Cultural Group donation to Espoir Anaise, an association working with Aids in Haiti

Letter of thanks

Chers amis d'Haiti,

En ce jour inoubliable qui ramene le troisieme anniversaire de la tragedie du 12 janvier 2010, nous ne pouvons nous empecher d'avoir une pensee toute speciale pour tout ce qui, dans un elan d'entre aide et de fraternite ont fait montre de compassion vis a vis des nombreux sinistres et victimes du terrible tremblement de terre en Haiti.

Aussi, nous saisissons cette occasion pour remercier chacun des donateurs en particulier pour avoir contribue a faire parvenir a Espoir Anaise ce don de \$ 1243.50 US, qui a servi a l'achat d'un lot important d'article d'emballage tels que, sacs en plastique, sachets recipients et autres, pour la distributions des rations aux malades atteintent de VIH/SIDA et aux necessiteux.

En leur nom, Espoir Anaise prend plaisir a transmettre leurs sincereres remerciemnts a tous les donateurs, tout en formulant a leur intention leurs meilleurs voeux de bonheur, sante et de prosperite pour cette nouvelle annee 2013.

Gladys Lauture
Espoir Anaise

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COPERTURA MEDICA PER CHI NON HA O HA PERSO IL DIRITTO ALLA VAN BREDA

di Francesco Di Pancrazio e Giorgio Marraffa

Queste poche righe sono rivolte a quei colleghi che ancora non conoscono il G.A.D.O.I..

Il G.A.D.O.I. (Gruppo Associativo Dipendenti Organizzazioni Internazionali), è nato nel 1996 con lo scopo di ridare la copertura medica ai figli dei dipendenti della FAO, WFP e IFAD, che avendo raggiunto l'età di 26 anni perdono il diritto all'assistenza medica della Van Breda.

Nella ricerca di una soluzione adeguata e soddisfacente per i nostri figli , abbiamo analizzato attentamente le proposte di contratto presentateci dalle più importanti Compagnie di Assicurazione operanti sulla piazza di Roma. Tra queste c'era la Compagnia di Assicurazioni SAI (oggi Fondiaria-SAI), che ci ha proposto un Contratto di Gruppo, valido in tutto il mondo, a condizioni particolarmente agevolate, e abbastanza simile a quello della Van Breda.

Abbiamo quindi dato vita a questa nostra Associazione, che è privata e del tutto indipendente da qualsiasi Organo Ufficiale della FAO, registrandone lo Statuto presso un Notaio di Roma e ottenendo quindi il riconoscimento ufficiale sul territorio nazionale e all'Estero.

Nello Statuto è precisato che il G.A.D.O.I. è un'Associazione senza fini di lucro e senza capitali ed opera nel campo assicurativo con lo scopo di ottenere dalle Compagnie Assicurative dei contratti vantaggiosi per i propri associati.

Dopo aver formato il Gruppo e creata l'Associazione, abbiamo stipulato una Convenzione con la SAI, che ci ha dato la possibilità di inserire nella Polizza di Gruppo anche familiari e conviventi. Inoltre ci ha proposto di stipulare qualsiasi altro tipo di contratto, sempre a condizioni vantaggiose; finora oltre all'Assicurazione Medica abbiamo stipulato delle Polizze a Capitalizzazione (Pensione Integrativa) ed abbiamo intenzione di allargare ancora il campo delle nostre attività.

I principali vantaggi ottenuti dalla Convenzione con la SAI per l'assistenza medica sono i seguenti:

- 1) Riduzione dei premi annui pagati per la Polizza di Gruppo del 35% rispetto a quelli normali.
- 2) Garanzie e coperture assicurative maggiori rispetto alle polizze individuali
- 3) Maggiore sicurezza riguardo al rinnovo dei contratti.
- 4) Rateizzazione del premio annuo senza aggiunta di costi
- 5) Mantenimento negli anni della classe di età per gli assicurati.

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Giorgio Marraffa, un collega pensionato che ha contribuito a fondare l' Associazione, gestisce questa attività fin dall'inizio ed è disponibile a fornire qualsiasi informazione sul contratto, chiamandolo allo 06 87182390 oppure al 360 428414; per parlargli di persona conviene invece chiamare la FAO Staff Coop, ext. 53142 e chiedere un appuntamento ■



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TODAY'S HEADLINES !!!!!

TERRORIST CELL DISCOVERED IN UMBRIA !!!!! POLICE APPREHEND SUSPECTED FOREIGN BOMB-MAKER FOR QUESTIONING !!!!!

CENTRE OF UMBERTIDE SEALED-OFF. PANIC IN THE STREETS !!!

Yesterday morning, as Lenny & Barbara were having their breakfast in their flat, the doorbell rang and when Lenny answered it he was confronted by the lady who delivers their post accompanied by two heavily armed carabinieri. Needless to say, at first he couldn't understand what they were "jabbering" about – but eventually realised that there was "a suspicious parcel" addressed to them. Lenny then asked if he could see it – thinking that it was in the back of their squad car – but before he knew what was happening or could let Barbara know what was going on, he found himself being bundled into the back of the Police car and driven to the Post Office which had been **evacuated of all staff**, who stood about outside shivering in the drizzle behind a cordon guarded by four more strapping heavily-armed carabinieri. He was then escorted through the cordon and taken upstairs to a room that was full of forensic experts dressed in white protective suits who were all tentatively prodding and poking at the suspect parcel, from which was leaking a yellowish-white powder. Lenny was not allowed to touch it – but could tell from the label that the parcel had been sent to them from Bristol by Barbara's best-friend, Julie – so when asked by the police what he thought the parcel contained, all he could think of was "cheddar cheese" which he knew that Barbara had requested. Unsurprisingly, this explanation did **not** seem to convince the Carabinieri. Then Lenny also remembered that Barbara had asked Julie for a couple of tins of Bird's Custard Powder – which Julie had decided to decant from their tins into some jiffy-bags rather than pay the £36 postage demanded by the Bristol Post Office – and obviously one of these bags must have burst in transit. However, this explanation also failed to satisfy, since no Italian has ever **heard** of custard powder (and certainly would never dream of using the stuff even if they had!) Lenny was then escorted back to the flat to collect his Identity Card – and fortunately remembered there was still a small amount of the wretched substance lurking at the bottom of a tin in their kitchen cupboard which he duly produced for inspection and comparison. Upon which, everyone shook hands and the carabinieri took their leave.

Talk about "being taken into **custardy**"! And as somebody else pointed out, it was a **trifle** fortunate that Julie's parcel didn't also contain **jellygnite** !!!!!



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"Being happy doesn't mean that everything is perfect. It means that you've decided to look beyond the imperfections".

~Unknown

happiness

Newsletter

CARACALLA

Terra e Cielo/Cavalleria Rusticana (opera)

02, 03, 04 July and 02, 07 August 2013 at 21.00 hrs

Carmen /L'Arlesienne (ballet)

Serata Roland Petit

Music - Georges Bizet

12, 13, 14, 17, 19 July 2013 at 21.00 hrs

Roberto Bolle and Friends (ballet)

From the American Ballet Theatre

21, 22 July 2013 at 21.00 hrs

Tosca (opera)

Music Giacomo Puccini

01, 03, 04, 06 August 2013 at 21.00 hrs

	Full Price	Coop Members Price
Poltronissime	€ 135,00	€ 124,00
Section "A"	€ 85,00	€ 78,50
Section "B"	€ 60,00	€ 56,00
Section "C"	€ 25,00	€ 23,50

“Serata” with G. Proietti

06, 07 July 2013 at 21.30 hrs

“Concert” with Ennio Morricone

25 July 2013 at 21.00 hrs

	Full Price	Coop Members Price
Section “A”	€ 80,00	€ 74,00
Section “B”	€ 50,00	€ 47,00
Section “C”	€ 25,00	€ 23,50

“Bacio sul Cuore”

Women in Verdi’s life and opera - Michele Placido

09, 10 August 2013 at 21.30 hrs

	Full Price	Coop Members Price
Section “A”	€ 50,00	€ 47,00
Section “B”	€ 35,00	€ 33,00
Section “C”	€ 20,00	€ 19,00

Terme di Caracalla – Palestra Orientale

Dido and Aeneas

Music – Henry Purcell

13, 14, 15, 16 June 2013 at 21.00 hrs

Carlos Kleiber

16, 18 July 2013 at 21.00 hrs

Full Price	Coop Members Price
€ 30,00	€ 28,00

Please make your bookings and payment in advance.

FAO Staff Coop (E.016) Extn. 53142



**SLOVAK-CROATIAN
GLASS ART EXHIBITION INSPIRED BY NATURE**

**as a side event during 38th Session of FAO CONFERENCE
to be held on 15 - 22 June 2013**

**ON THE OCCASSION OF
20th ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE OF THE SLOVAK
REPUBLIC**

AND

ACCESSION OF CROATIA TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

UNDER AUSPICES OF

Ms RENÁTA ZMAJKOVIČOVÁ

**VICE-CHAIRPERSON
OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC**

GOLDEN MOON
Gordana Turuk
 18x24 cm, mixed media
 2013



PROJECT PRESENTATION

- The aim of the exhibition:** With the language of artworks inspired by nature celebrate and highlight two important occasions: 20 year of independence of the Slovak Republic and accession of Croatia to the European Union
- Duration of Exhibition:** 15 - 22 June 2013
- Under auspices of:** Ms Renáta Zmajkovičová Vice-Chairperson of the National Council of the Slovak republic
- Responsible authority:** Dr. Marieta Okenková, PhD.
 Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic to FAO and WFP
- Organizers:** Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Italy Embassy of Croatia in Italy
 AMYMON Ltd. represented by Acting Secretary Ms Ľudmila Pašková
- Place of the exhibition:** FAO Headquarters - David Lubin Library
 Via delle Terme di Caracalla, Rome, Italy
- Target groups:** High level delegations from all over the world, FAO staff and Slovaks and Croatians living in Rome.

The Author Gordana Turuk will expose, in special exhibition case, the special presents and trophies crafted by the Author on the occasion of different Slovak republic visits and for different political, cultural and sport purposes.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

Gordana Turuk



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SHORT-INTRO ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gordana Turuk will not deny her Croatian origin. She combines her love for the sea and life, into a “cold”, and at the same time, so fragile thing such as glass is. In her view it is not only glass that is fragile but human beings as well. To her art is not only the creativity with the glass, art means also the willingness to help others. Therefore together with her friend she has founded “Foundation Arte Bene” – Art Of Goodness.



Gordana Turuk was born on 5 March 1974 in Mannheim, Germany. In the period of 1992- 1994 she studied textile design at Zahreb University and was taught to paint privately by the academic artist Josip Marinkovic.

Between 1994 and 1998 she studied fashion design at the private Callegari School of Fashion Design in Pescara. She lives in Bratislava and since 1999 has devoted her creativity to glass, specialising in the laid glass technique, which involves placing colour pigments, lustres or air bubbles into molten glass, producing colour and structural effects with minimum disruption of the surface finish. Her creation stands on the border between the abstract and the specific. She finds her inspiration in the underwater world of sea animals and plants. Thus she focuses on designing of furniture and furnishings, as well as hanging glass pictures, space objects and free standing glass sculptures.

Awards:

Exhibition Penati Club, Bratislava

Forum Design, Nitra

Galleria Modena. Modena, Italy

IX International Art Festival San Crispino – Italy (gained the first prize of the jury and prestigious cup)

Art Festival in Italy (gained international art award “Perla Adrië” and the most

Prestigious festival award – special jury award)

Moddon, Design interior Bratislava

Index Dubai 2088



CONTACT DETAILS

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Embassy of the Slovak republic in Italy

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e-mail: marieta.okenkova@mzv.sk

Presentation of the new catalog of Ms Gordana Turuk by Jakšu Muljačidom the Ambassador of Croatia to Slovakia

Letter from Melbourne #5: Appreciating History

by Peter Steele

Newcomers always see things differently from those who may already live in a place and, with the passing of time, those first impressions become mixed into that new way of life. Memories are unfathomable, and usually unreliable. Australia is an old continent with the ancient heritage of its original people, but you have to go looking for the remnants of these times given the impact of 200 years of European settlement. Even these later periods are rapidly being overtaken by the developments of the modern day, and it is sometimes difficult to find this more recent heritage. Fortunately, there are sufficient people here who continue to appreciate these earlier contributions. The challenge, of course, is one of encouraging continuity in a rapidly changing world.



Rippon Lea house. Seen from the main lawn where you can still enjoy a game of croquet, sit on the grass and share a picnic or, should the move take you, organize a wedding. And, if it's just too far away from where you are, take a virtual tour of the house and grounds at: www.ripponleaestate.com.au

An artist's view of Melbourne

The National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) is located just south of the Central Business District opposite the Queen Victoria Gardens and a five minute walk across the St Kilda's Road Bridge from the main metro terminal Flinders Station (*which is itself a gem of Edwardian architecture that dates back to 1909 – and it remains central to the life of the city handling >1,500 trains and >85,000 passengers each day*). Mid-summer and the trams that travel St Kilda's Road in front of the dour grey walls of the

NGV were a patchwork of bright sunshine and dark shadow, with the brilliant green of the plane trees that shaded the roads and filled the gardens. Established 150 years ago and just 10 years after the creation of Victoria as a self-governing British Colony (and 40 years *before* the establishment of the Australian Commonwealth), the NGV reflects the period of wealth that followed the investments of the gold rush era of the mid-late Nineteenth century which made Victoria and Melbourne, respectively, the richest colony in the British Empire and the



National Gallery Victoria. Stark, grey monolith of a building – representing images of fortresses or castle walls – with a dainty fountain outside and the entrance through the archway. The famous waterfall in the entrance-way was not working at the time of the visit – it had sprung a leak – so the apologetic hand-written sign said.

largest city in Australia. The 70,000 works of art that resulted testify to the determination of those early settlers to create their lives in the images of where they had come from – and this was not just the British but the Irish, Germans, Italians and many others. And, apart from the relatively small numbers of Chinese who followed the discovery of gold in Victoria, it would be another 100 years before the peoples of Asia were welcome here in numbers.

But the NGV as much as the other civic institutions, livelihoods, social values, languages, religions, flora, fauna and just about everything else here represented (and, to some extent, continues to do so) that shift from Europe for the majority settlers, and the redevelopment of the new lands into a facsimile of where they had come from. This included their cultural, artistic and traditional values – no matter that the continent with its incredible diversity of natural resources, quirky climate and space – unimaginable space when compared to Europe – made this no easy choice.

The artistic collection that resulted represents some of the best of the international masters available worldwide supported by an Australian collection that highlights the best available in the country – aboriginal, colonial, impressionist, 20th century and contemporary. The NGV was fortunate too with the enthusiasm of the early colonial painters mainly centred upon Melbourne city – heavily influenced by the imported European impressionist style – who painted the landscapes and seascapes of the day. You can, should you enjoy walking the suburban bayside and riverside walks, capture a glimpse of those times by following the trails that lead from point-to-point; comparing the paintings with the reality of their modern images - reading the inscriptions and the potted history of the painters and their times from the boards provided.

Neo-impressionists

However, we knew the NGV from earlier visits – can't come to Melbourne without catching up on the latest exhibitions – and this time we had caught a superb introduction to the neo-impressionists (i.e. 'new' impressionists) and the movement that they came to represent as discoveries from 19th century science helped provide better understanding of the capabilities of the human eye with interpretation of colour. Founded by Georges Seurat as the result of his 'A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte' in 1884, it shifted one sector of popular art away from the French Impressionists of the day - exchanging the rapid brush strokes and roughness that captured the light, action and first 'impressions' of the scene with a more orderly and structured approach to painting. Changes of this kind were not taken kindly by the art world or the public of the day.

Crucially, instead of mixing the paints to create the colour required on the palette or canvas, Seurat and those who followed him, used patterns of different coloured dots to provide a sense of organization on the



Portrait of Alice Sethe. The NGV had a ban on taking photographs at the exhibition, but there is no copyright on this gorgeous Theo van Rysselberghe that was displayed. It shows the young Alice Sethe in her ballgown with smart black shoes. This blue and gold image from 1888 would become a turning point in the life of the Belgium painter.

canvas. The colours, are in effect, mixed by the eye – a sort of ‘optical mixture’ – but only when seen from a distance.

Seen up close the pictures are sometimes difficult to determine – abstract almost, but from 20 metres across the gallery the pictures take life and feature an intensity of light and colour that brings a measure of vibrancy to the images. Leastways, that’s the result of the lunchtime seminar ‘Pigments & prisms: light & colour in Neo-Impressionist portraits’ provided by the guest lecturer from the University of Melbourne the day of the visit – for we had struck lucky with our timing. Of the order 50 of us there that day, each with small stool

in hand, followed Vivien Gaston from picture to corner to gallery as she ad-libbed in a language that the layman could follow.

Frozen rats

Our free-bee edition of the Bayside & Melbourne East ‘Trader’ – a sort of ‘Wanted in Rome’ but without the articles – is a mine of information on local people and their possessions; the way people chose to live. Want a refrigerator, car, dog, exercise machine or a pressure washer – here are the lists of people offering them for sale or (in the case of the pet dog) for give-away with all the panache of those key selling words that will make anything look good ... but ‘frozen rats’? That was a new one. Last week the trader carried the following advertisement:

‘Frozen rats for sale. Pinkies 1.00, fuzzies 2.00, weaners 3.00, sub-adults 4.00 & adults 5.00. Call after 6pm mon-fri due to work & sat-sun any time. \$5 each. Phone Cranbourne West’.

Now quite apart from working out the costs for each category of frozen rats (and how the \$5 each fits in), the key issue is who would want to buy frozen rats? Of course, there’s an easy answer, but it’s not immediately apparent to newcomers – its people keeping pet snakes or those raising snakes to sell as pets. Obvious when you ask a local. No, it is not worth exploring this one further, but it’s difficult not to do when Google is immediately available. Check out ‘frozen rats’ in the local market and there are many suppliers; offering foods for all kinds of creatures – reptiles, fish, birds and others. And the advert in the local trader was by no means the best deal in town; buy frozen rats in bulk and prices tumble. You can buy frozen mice too.

Rich flight – suburban estates

Our guide at Rippon Lea described the Melbourne of the late Nineteenth century by a popular name of the time – ‘Smellbourne’. The rapid growth of industry in the city, the squalor in which the majority

people lived and the sanitation of the day that relied upon 'earth closets', open drains and the disposal of sewage and urban effluent into the River Yarrow meant that rich and poor alike were dependent upon the prevailing winds to clear the polluted city air. The development of steam railways changed all that, however, and those who could afford it took flight into the bushlands that surrounded the city of the day, to establish their '*grand suburban estates*'.

The house and garden at Rippon Lea 20 minutes south of the city centre is one of two remaining into the Twentyfirst century, as a reminder of the elegance of the minority rich who took the designs, ideas and technologies of the Europe from where they had come and transformed an alien landscape. That ultimate loser, of course, is that landscape – but the legacy of the relative opulence of little more than 150 years ago and its impact upon the natural surroundings of this part of Victoria is one of gratitude to those who recognized the unique character of these few remaining estates and managed to protect them into the present day.

Rippon Lea country home

The six hectares of the modern day Rippon Lea is one small part of an estate that originally extended over >40 ha and, whilst you can capture the essence of the parklands with their mature trees, lake and waterfall, look-out tower and fernery – reputedly the largest of its kind in the world - you cannot escape the noise of the modern day. This impacts upon the visitor - the metro trains that runs along one side of the gardens, the fence that doesn't quite hide the broadcasting station next door (built on land expropriated from the estate in the 1960s) and, of course, road traffic everywhere and light aircraft that drone

overhead.

Built in the mid-1860s by the Sargood Family who had made their fortune on the basis of clothes manufactured for those flooding into the state as a result of the gold rush of the era, the simplicity of the first house was in marked contrast to the additions and changes made after the estate was sold. It passed quickly through the hands of the Premier of Victoria and became the home to the Nathan Family from 1910-on before coming under the care (and protection) of the National Trust upon the death of Louisa Jones the last surviving



Elegant entrances. The 'porte cochere' was added later to shelter (and impress) those arriving and leaving by coach, and provided that touch of Edwardian elegance with its wrought iron framework that compares and contrasts with the columns, arches and shaded balconies that represent the original design. At left is the conservatory with the plants immediately accessible to the main living room in the house.

member of that family. During >100 years or private ownership the house was remodelled with turrets, balconies, ballrooms, swim-pool, covered porch and more; and the interior underwent the changes that only fashion tied to money can make. So it is that Victoriana gave way to Art Nouveau/modernism and the elegance of the *Lombardic Romanesque* design of the original house became harder to appreciate behind the conservatoires, fernery and formal gardens. *Inside the house, everything was painted yellow – including the grand piano.*



Delight of classic wheels. Chevy, Ford, don't know and probably Holden – the Australian brand – the cars at the club meeting were a treasure of heavy steel plate and chromium trim representing as they once did, the opulence of design over practicalities of ownership and cost. The cars that helped create that American image of wealth and dreamland for much of the Twentieth century, before they lost their domestic markets to those Japanese and Korean brands which are, like refrigerators on wheels, instantly forgettable

That said, the house in its setting is a delight to the casual visitor for its breath of space, mature trees and wide open lawns that lead the eye into the perimeter of 'bush-lands' that shade the narrow trails that encircle and criss-cross the gardens. Hidden amongst the trees and outbuildings are the study trails that encourage and challenge the kids on school visits. At the time of our visit, there was a wedding ceremony underway to one side of the lawns and between the house and the lake. The weather was fine – bright, clear and sunny – but cool. Watching from a distance with one of the gardeners close by, she laughed from the memory of an earlier wedding that had been surprised by the automatic sprinklers

that had not been turned off in time – and which had caught the bridal group unawares.

In fact, the reality of watering a large estate in times of severe water control remains a constant challenge (and not just in Rippon Lea but across Australia) and one that had been taken into account at time of building 150 years ago. Rainwater and run-off collection based fills the lake that provides the basis for a reticulation system that supplies pumped water around the gardens. The capacity of the lake has been increased in recent

times – with levels raised 300 mm – which has resulted in damage to the artificial island with its grotto and waterfall. Repairs are underway.

Wheels of a more modern era

Ripponlea displayed two cars in the converted stables – a 1930s Morris 7 and a large 10-seater open car from the 1920s – a Chevrolet, Chrysler or similar – it was hidden to one side – that was charabanc/tourist design not gangster-style. But what local society has in abundance are cars of a 'classic era' – you name it there's a club here that caters for it. More later on this one, but we've followed meetings for 'Morris cars' and 'steel bumpers' – on the basis of adverts we've seen. The latter was all American, street muscle and early Australian wheels, and held at Hallam one Sunday. The meeting was described for 10.00-15.00. You have to be fast on your feet to catch these meetings, however, when the mid-day temperature is around 40degC. People were drifting away around mid-day as the area of shade decreased; it pays to get there early ■



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. After few months of break, salsa activity in FAO is back with a new format explained below: Instead of traditional rigid courses, participants to salsa activity will have a warm up followed by practices of salsa dancing in a relaxed and fun atmosphere where those who are a little bit advanced in salsa can help the ones below and complement each other. The coordinator of the salsa activity will ensure that no one is left behind and that everyone is having fun. Everyone from FAO/WFP/IFAD is welcome to join in. No partner is necessary and no previous knowledge of salsa dance is required!

FREE



Marlyn Manuel/Amit Kohli/JeremieMbairamadji

Time: Thursdays 18:00hrs-19:00hrs

Place: FAO, Gym B (Bldg E)

For further information about salsa activity, please contact Jeremie by email: jeremie.mbairamadji@fao.org

Participants to salsa activity should be Coop members and current FAO/WFP/IFAD staff members. A medical certificate is required, for details ask at Coop Office, ext. 54112/53142

UN SABOR DE TRADICIÓN VENEZOLANA !!!

por *Silvio Alejandro R. Catalano*

La carne mechada (res) es una preparación especial para todos los venezolanos, parte de una historia gastronómica muy antigua y característica, es parte de nuestro tradicional pabellón criollo. Pero la podemos saborear en arepas y empanadas, acompañando arroz, en pastelitos. La receta que les propongo a continuación es la forma como originalmente se obtenía una carne mechada suave y agradablemente sazonada, si bien ahora no cortamos tanto la carne, ni la golpeamos para suavizarla porque usando una olla de presión queda lista en un santiamén.

Ingredientes

- 1 kilo de falda o lagarto de reina, de res
- Aceite de maíz
- 1 cucharada de salsa inglesa
- 2 dientes de ajo machacados
- Sal y Pimienta negra al gusto
- 1/4 de cucharadita de comino molido
- 2 tazas de cebolla picadita y 1 cebolla finamente picada
- 1/2 taza de pimentón rojo picadito
- 2 tazas de tomate picadito, sin piel y sin semillas



Preparación

Limpie la carne y con un cuchillo ábrala haciéndole cortes sucesivos hasta ponerla de unos dos centímetros de espesor y reserve. Prepare un adobo mezclando una cucharada de aceite, salsa inglesa, la cebolla rayada, el ajo, la sal, pimienta y el comino; con esa mezcla se frota bien la carne. Se deja marinar por una media hora. Pasado este tiempo se coloca la carne sobre una bandeja de metal para hornear se lleva al horno unos 10 a 12 minutos por lado o se precalienta una plancha o un budare y se frie en el budare con muy poca grasa hasta dorar por ambos lados, unos siete minutos por lado. Deje enfriar la carne y con un mazo se golpea hasta dejarla de un centímetro de espesor. Se divide en hebras o se cortas en pedacitos de 1 cm por lado, se obtienen unas cuatro tazas de carne mechada. Entretanto en un caldero se calienta 1/2 taza de aceite, se añade la cebolla y se cocina hasta dorar, 3-4 minutos. Se agregan el pimentón y el tomate, se cocina unos cinco minutos y se agrega la sal, la pimienta y la salsa inglesa restantes y el adobo que quedó aparte. Se cocina 4-5 minutos. Se agrega la carne, se cocina unos minutos, se pone a fuego lento y se cocina revolviendo de vez en cuando hasta que se seque un poco pero todavía húmeda, unos 10 a 15 minutos mas.



CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR GAZETTE

Dear Readers,

A new era has begun and as international civil servants our main concern is and will be to continuously fight with all our forces against hunger and poverty. We are one family, one body. However like the cells of a body we are scattered all over the world, we live different experiences in various parts of the globe. Space physically separates us, probably we will never meet but we have a means of communication to know each other, to share our hopes, our lives, our thoughts, our experiences; it is the “FAO Casa Gazette”. The Editorial Committee of the FAO Casa Gazette would really appreciate receiving from all of you articles (typewritten electronically), poems, short stories, pictures, drawings and paintings.

You do not need to be a journalist, you do not need to be a professional writer, you only need the goodwill and the desire to share an experience which could awake curiosity, emotions, minds, which could warm hearts, which could enrich each other. The “space” which separates us will continue to exist but for a little moment we will all feel closeness.

Is there anything that you would like to communicate? You may be living under difficult conditions but for sure you know and meet interesting and unique people. You have the opportunity to show us interesting places and lifestyles where probably the majority of us will never visit. If you feel you want to share an experience with your colleagues through the FAO Casa Gazette, we would only be too happy to publish it. Our only request is that your contribution should not contain offensive statements towards member countries or religious beliefs and cultures of any population(s), nor harsh criticism of our Organizations. This is because the FAO Staff Coop is a social, cultural and sports entity and not political.

We look forward to meeting you on the pages of the FAO Casa Gazette and extend to you and your families best wishes for 2013 ■

Editorial Committee
FAO Casa Gazette

