

Page 1

*Suncica Perisin-Tomljanovic is a Croatian born young artist. She recently graduated at St.Martin's School of Art and Design in London. Last month, the Croatian embassy exhibited some of her work. CIL caught up with her there.*

## This month: Interview with artist Suncica Perisin-Tomljanovic, recepie of the Month

Interview by Brian Gallagher

### Interview with artist Suncica Perisin-Tomljanovic



*Suncica Perisin-Tomljanovic*

#### *Tell us about the exhibition*

This is the first large exhibition after graduation. There was an exhibition in Italy, with a lot of installations, which got a lot of attention from the Italian art world. Since then, this is the first solid set of work..

The works are portraits of people within the art industry. All can be recognised!

The portraits are large and almost reference Soviet process - monumental and sculptural. The materials used are rare, because I've discovered a paper in France which no one exports. It's very dark wax brown paper, which is very light and yet it holds heavy colours, tar and enamel paints.

All the paints used are often used in functional situations - painting trains or covering roads. Here I use them to make fine art. It's fairly exciting.

#### **How are you inspired?**

I am inspired by characters I meet. Every character who is beautiful and striking I want to paint. I can't really choose, it happens when I meet them. It's a reaction of the moment.

I travel a lot to art fairs, that's a good context, you are surrounded by art. You know what not to do.

#### **Are you trying to say anything through art?**

I find, having been brought up in England, that British art of the last ten years was an aesthetic that was ugly and was supposed to touch something inside that was repulsive. I am going back to beauty, pure beautiful aesthetics. I work with colours, I invent combinations of colours which I find beautiful, they are not supposed to repulse or take you back to a conceptual point. These are understood on sight. There is no need of introduction to the works.



*Suncica with one of her favourite paintings*

#### **How has the art world responded to your work?**

So far, really good. I am surprised because in the three places I have held the works, people have said they have been to the last three shows and I haven't held that many!

#### **How did the London exhibition come about?**

Having helped at previous events (at the embassy) I knew everyone, especially Flora Turner (Croatian cultural attaché) and she thought it was time my work should be shown. So, after seeing my graduation exhibition she offered me the show.

#### **You are based in Italy?**

I am based in Rome and London. And holidays in Split.

#### **Do you hope to exhibit in Croatia?**

I very much hope to exhibit in Croatia, seeing that it's my roots. Not just my roots, I am a Croat rather than anything else. I am looking forward to the opportunity for someone asking for a show. Despite the fact that I was not educated in Croatia, my work is very relevant to the contemporary scene - and I am a young, contemporary Croatian artist. It would only be right to go back home.

Page 2

*January's Recipe of the Month from Mladen Marusic*



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Dear Readers,

*This month I have prepared a simple, yet creative recipe for a dish which can be served as a warm starter or even as a main meal - Cuttlefish Black Risotto. Black risotto is a characteristic of its appearance and taste. You will either love it or hate it. It is a really attractive and unusual dish and can decorate your table as well as giving your guests an opportunity to try something different and new. It is one of the most challenging deep sea dishes. Why not give it a try?*

Mladen Marusic

*Mladen was born in Zagreb in 1970. He attended 4 years of catering college in Zagreb and read theology for 4 years at University. He worked as a chief chef for a few years in Zagreb, specialising in vegetarian and macrobiotic food. He completed a one year course in cookery specialisation and presently works as a tutor at the catering college in Zagreb.*



## Cuttlefish Black Risotto

### Ingredients

1kg cuttlefish  
300g (risotto) rice  
200g chopped onion  
100ml olive oil  
3 chopped garlic cloves  
Sprig of fresh parsley (finely chopped)  
100ml white wine  
Bay leaf  
500g butter  
500g parmesan cheese  
Salt and pepper according to taste

Remove the bone from the cuttlefish and clean and rinse the cuttlefish thoroughly under the cold tap. Be careful not to tear the ink sack. Place the ink sack to one side. (If you will not be using the ink sack for a couple of days, place it in a container and add some olive oil to it so that it doesn't dry out.)

Cut the cuttlefish into squares of 1cm x 1cm or into strips. Pour the olive oil into a pan to heat up (being careful not to let it burn) and then add the finely chopped onion. Cook until the onion softens ensuring the colour stays light. When the onion is ready, add the finely chopped garlic and briefly fry on a high heat, being careful not to burn the garlic and make it bitter. Add the cuttlefish strips to the onion and garlic. Cook for about 20 minutes until the cuttlefish softens. Add the white wine, finely chopped parsley, cuttlefish ink, salt, pepper and the bay leaf. To the thus prepared cuttlefish, add a little fish stock or fish soup. (If you don't have fish stock, you can use vegetable stock or ordinary water with seasoning.) Allow all the ingredients to cook through.

Then add half cooked risotto rice. Add some liquid if required. Risotto must not be allowed to become dry like ordinary cooked rice, it must be more moist. The rice must be soft, but mustn't be allowed to have totally disintegrated or become gluey. At the end, add the butter and stir in so that the risotto has a lovely glossy sheen to it. Serve and sprinkle with grated parmesan cheese.

This risotto can be made with squid, crustaceans, crab, and other fruits of the sea with the addition of the ink. Today it is possible to buy from shops pre-prepared squid or cuttlefish ink to simplify the preparation of this dish.

I hope that you and your guests will enjoy this delicacy.

### Useful Information

#### Embassy of the Republic of Croatia in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Ambassador: Josip Paro  
Address: 21 Conway Street, London W1T 6BN  
Tel No: 020 7387 2022; Fax No: 020 7387 0310  
Email: croemb.london@mvp.hr

Consular Dept:  
Tel No: 020 7387 1144; Fax No: 020 7387 0936  
Email: consular.dept.london@mvp.hr  
Working hours: Monday - Friday 9.00-17.00  
Working hours (with clients): Monday - Thursday 11.00-14.00 Fridays 10.00-12.00

#### Croatian Students and Young Professionals Network

Website: www.csypn.org.uk  
Email: info@csypn.org.uk  
Address: PO Box 36126, London SW7 2RH

#### Croatian Catholic Mission

Father Drago Berisic, 17 Boutflower Road, SW11  
Tel: 020 7223 3530  
Sunday service at 4 pm:  
Church of Sacred Heart, Horseferry Road, SW1P 2EF

