



The printing of the leaflet and mounting of the exhibition was financially assisted by The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Independent Department for International Cultural Cooperation

Exhibition »Milka Ternina in London«, organised by the Zagreb City Museum is shown at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden from September 2006 and will run until January 20, 2007.

The exhibition is organised by the Zagreb City Museum and the Embassy of the Republic of Croatia

Leaflet design: Miljenko Gregl

Typeset and printed by LASER plus & tiskara Denona

Copyright 2006. Zagreb City Museum

A Tribute to Milka Ternina



Paintings by Ljerka Njerš

In the exhibition *A Tribute to Milka Ternina*, Ljerka Njerš pays her respects to one of the world's greatest opera divas and shows admiration for her costumes. Milka Ternina (Dolnji Sip, 1863 – Zagreb, 1941) has brought world renown to her homeland, Croatia, appearing more than 1200 times on the most prestigious world stages.



In the permanent display of the Zagreb City Museum, the well-known Croatian artist Ljerka Njerš discovered the opulent costumes that were designed for Milka Ternina by the British costume designer Percy Anderson. For Ljerka Njerš, these costumes were an incentive and inspiration for a new cycle of paintings. These paintings contributed to the awareness and therefore care for the Croatian cultural heritage.



Ljerka's ladies in their brilliant costumes exude a theatrical atmosphere. Her rich and vibrant palette and the numerous background details create ever-new colour schemes. The clay monotypes are one-off works that the artist paints on a wet clay plate. She applies conventional artist's and special ceramic paints, incises the drawing with different implements and enriches the background by applying plants or textiles. The contour drawings incised into the clay are printed as a white line, and have a soft linocut-like effect. Ternina's characters ranging from Tosca to Brünnhilde and Isolde, are created directly on the clay plate, which enhances the freshness of the visual experience. High quality paper and its ability to absorb the paint is very important in the creation of the clay monotype. The impressions are made by hand by the artist herself. She runs off her monotypes on to the paper with the use of a roller, subsequently finishing them with drawings in Indian ink and paint.



Ljerka's free flowing imagination, inspired by the past, has come to life in this innovative series of clay monotypes.

Nada Premerl

Biography:



Ljerka Njerš trained in Zagreb, first as a potter and ceramicist at the School of Applied Arts and then as a painter at the Academy of Fine Arts, graduating in 1961. Ever since, Ljerka has worked as a professional artist, exhibiting regularly on her own and with others, at home and abroad. Her interest and passion for both media continue to this day in equal measure, they complement each other and are undivided.

In Britain, Ljerka came to notice after her major exhibition in LEIGHTON HOUSE in 1984, which was supported by the VISITING ARTS OF GREAT BRITAIN. Her work was seen and recognized by the pioneer of studio pottery Cyrill Frankel, and has been included in numerous

auctions of Contemporary Ceramics at Christie's and Bonham's. In 1987, Ljerka was artist in residence at the SANTANA Stoneware Factory in Lisbon.

She worked with Stanley Jones at CURWEN STUDIO in London and Cambridge and one of her litographs »Blue Flowers in Yellow«, was subsequently shown at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in London.

At home, Ljerka began her close collaboration with the ZAGREB CITY MUSEUM in 1988, finding inspiration in their rich collections, which resulted in several important exhibitions.

Ljerka is a member of the Society of Croatian Artists (HDLU) and the Society of Croatian Applied Arts Artists (ULUPUH). Since 1992 she has been involved with the charitable work of The Order of St Lazarus. Several short documentary films have been made about her work, including »The Art of Clay and Fire« in 1984 and »The Art of Ljerka Njerš« in 2000, directed by Ernest Gregl. She has won a number of professional and public awards and commendations, among them the prestigious CITY OF ZAGREB AWARD in 1994 and »Danica«, the Croatian Order of Merit for her contribution to art and culture.

She has illustrated and designed books, magazines and newspaper articles.

Ljerka is a member of the Society of Designer Craftsmen in Britain.