



International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance

Alianza Internacional para la Gestión del Agua de Lluvia (IRHA)
Alliance Internationale pour la Gestion de l'Eau de Pluie (IRHA)

bRAINstorming

NEWSLETTER N°. 24 - MARCH 2009

Our newsletter focuses on the activities in Rainwater Harvesting, field of the International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance (IRHA) and its partners.

Topic of this issue: RAIN IN ART

Editorial

Dear Rainwater Harvesters, Readers, the IRHA Members and Friends,

In its aim to promote rainwater harvesting as a water resource and as a tool for climate changes adaptation, the International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance (IRHA) works constantly to sensitize the world population, often insufficiently informed, towards the benefits that rainwater provides for humans as well as for nature. You, our readers, know already that one of the many means through which we fulfil this aim is art. Not only have we taken the habit of sharing poems and proverbs related to the celestial resource with you, but we have also organized a world art competition.

A basic research on the representation of rain in art has led us to think that it is tightly related to how rain is considered in each society. While rain played and still plays a central role in the art and rites of traditional societies, either to provoke it or on the contrary to avoid flood, with modernization and particularly with urbanization, it seems to have been progressively considered as something necessary to get rid of and packed away. Thus, while in traditional societies people could dance of joy in the rain because they saw a guarantee for crops and life in it, nowadays Gene Kelly in the most classic *Singin' in the rain* is shown as a happy but eccentric individual. But however rain is represented in modern and contemporary art, be it related to joy and love, or as a source of melancholy and depression, it would seem that rain is rarely shown as a natural resource.

In some way, this absence indicates to us how we have dissociated the image of rain from its fundamental role in the cycle which governs our lives. Now, the representation of the rain in art is related to our feelings when it interferes in our urban life rather than as an essential factor to satisfy our vital needs. This is why the IRHA has called artists and amateurs around the world to let rain express its natural qualities through art. Our Video Film competition planned for next fall is indeed intended to demonstrate the advantages of catching and using rainwater (see page 3).

But in the meantime, we would like to open a new dossier in our bRAINstorming Newsletter, intended to disseminate those works of art which have contributed to raise awareness of the crucial importance of rainwater in the vital cycle of the earth and human life. We therefore invite Rainwater Harvesters, the IRHA Members, our readers and friends to participate in this research on the representation of rain in art, either by contributing with art works, or simply by enjoying or even spreading our findings related to that. In one way or another, the main beneficiary will always be rainwater harvesting, a timeless major art in itself.

Gladys Ambort

A poem on Rain

As a way to start this trip through the representation of rainwater as a natural resource in art, we have no alternative but to reintroduce to you the poem by the American poet Walt Whitman (1819-1892) we published already in our last issue. Apart from its deep and eternal beauty, this poem, printed for the first time in 1885, recognizes and gives the rain its very essence back.

This poem was later added to Whitman's anthology, published under the title of *Leaves of Grass* (1888), in which the poet proves to be a pioneer in his way of looking at nature, at a time in which nobody spoke about ecology yet.

The Voice of the Rain

by Walt Whitman



And who art thou? said I to the soft-falling shower,
Which, strange to tell, gave me an answer, as here translated:
I am the Poem of Earth, said the voice of the rain,
Eternal I rise impalpable out of the land and the bottomless sea,
Upward to heaven, whence, vaguely form'd, altogether changed, and
yet the same,
I descend to lave the drouths, atomies, dust-layers of the globe,
And all that in them without me were seeds only, latent, unborn;
And forever, by day and night, I give back life to my own origin,
and make pure and beautify it;
(For song, issuing from its birth-place, after fulfillment, wandering,
Reck'd or unreck'd, duly with love returns.)

A video on Rainwater Harvesting

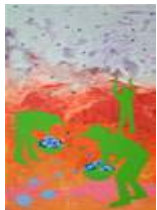
We would also like to recommend our readers to watch the video in www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWnhYIIKYOU. The umbrella, omnipresent in works of art, either paintings, films, songs or poems, as an object supposed to protect from rain, is here inverted and used to collect it. In a very simple and touching way, it shows how rainwater belongs to everybody and how, by harvesting it, it could solve many problems in a country suffering from scarcity of water.

A Dance

Dance has always been the artistic manifestation the most related to rain and most frequently practiced within traditional societies. Abundance, richness and fertility have been narrowly related to rainfall, which on its turn has influenced their dances.

We invite our readers to visit <http://video.webindia123.com/dance/tribalfolkdance/performance2/index.htm> where they will be able to appreciate a rain dance performed by the African Paliyan tribe, whose origin is a beautiful legend related to hunger, thirst and, of course, rain.

From the Competition Geneva Raindrops Award 2007



Among the different manifestations of art, graphics present the advantage of addressing everybody: they can speak to the public without necessarily using a verbal language. Therefore, they can overcome any kind of national or linguistic barrier.

This is why we have pleasure in introducing one of the posters presented in the first edition of the art competition we launched in 2007 - the Geneva Raindrops Award. This poster was created by Dodd

Holsappl, from USA.

The drawing is most interesting since it shows graphically how rainwater and crop harvesting go together, both of them with the intervention of men and therefore within their reach.

Geneva Raindrops Award: WARNING!!



The Geneva Raindrops Award 2009 Contest has been extended!

Art and development: In search of creative minds!

Due to the immeasurably amount of activities the IRHA is faced to, it has been forced to extend its competition deadline for the final submission of the Video Films to the **17th November, 2009**.

Demonstrate to the world how talented you are, at the same time contributing to save the planet and ensuring a better future for humanity. Please visit our website, where you will find the rules of our

Geneva Raindrops Award 2009 contest. [Read Rules of the Competition](#)

The IRHA Secretariat Projects - Blue Schools Programmes



In the bucket

This section is dedicated to the IRHA projects which are ongoing, or already implemented.



Blue Schools project in Kumasi, Ghana

A new project will soon take place in an **Awiankwanta Orphanage** and **Awiankwanta SDA Primary School**, situated around **Kumasi City**, in **Ashanti Region, Ghana**. [Read more](#)

The Blue Schools program in the region of Koulikoro, Mali, has been executed



In February 2009, the IRHA and its local partner, HIC-Mali, completed the project « Blue Schools in Mali ». [Read more](#)

You can appreciate the different aspects of the already executed project in the Video we have inserted in [our website](#).



In the pipeline

This section is dedicated to the IRHA projects which are under formulation or in a process of fundraising



Blue Schools in Benin and Togo

There is a new Blue School project ready to be launched in Togo and in Benin. [Read more](#)

Events

Towards a sustainable management of the rainwater in the urban areas

Our member, Mr Arturo Gleason, from Mexico, addressed us to spread out that an interesting colloquium-workshop was organized by the University of Guadalajara in the city of Guadalajara, Mexico, from the 26th to the 28th of March, 2009. Different dissertations related to a better management of rainwater in the city were presented. For further information:

http://www.udg.mx/content.php?id_articulo=1413&tipo=evento

CAWST Workshop to be held next July

The Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology (CAWST) is a Canadian humanitarian organization that provides training, education and technical consulting in water and sanitation to organizations working in developing countries throughout the world.

CAWST's workshop offers instruction on the concept and technology of rainwater harvesting for domestic use as an option to be considered when planning an improved water supply system within a community.

The upcoming workshop will be held in Ndola, Zambia between the 13th and the 17th of July, 2009. [Read more](#)

ARCSA offers Rainwater Harvesting Accreditation Program

The ARCSA "Professional Accreditation" program aims at accrediting those individuals who have some knowledge and experience in rainwater harvesting. Should you be interested in this program, please, [click here](#).

Logical Framework Analysis for Development Project Design

Sambodhi Research and Communications Pvt. Ltd. is organizing an **International Training Programme on Logical Framework Analysis for Development Project Design**. This is to be held at **New Delhi between the 20th and the 24th April, 2009**. For further information, please, visit <http://www.sambodhi.co.in> or <http://www.excellaorbit.com>

Upcoming newsletter

The next issue of the IRHA "bRAINstorming" e-newsletter will deal with the 5th World Water Forum in Istanbul.

IRHA will be asking you, our newsletter readers, to contribute to the writing of our future issues. Please send your articles, photos or comments linked to the topic announced. We thank you in advance for taking the time to making your e-newsletter and helping the IRHA focus on your needs.

The editor of the IRHA newsletter online

We are happy to confirm that we are able to keep our promise and that our newsletter online is available in its three versions, English, French and Spanish. Our editor, Ms Gladys Ambort, would be pleased to reply to you whenever necessary: secretariat@irha-h2o.org

Become a member

The IRHA members benefit from our extensive network and contribute to increasing rainwater harvesting in the world.

Become a member online (choose one of these):

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