

# LA CAJA BLANCA

BMI Baby Magazine  
12 - 2006

*"Brave New Girls"*

Sally Howard



**Mallorca isn't all picture-postcard perfect. A new art scene in which women wield the brush is painting a brasher, more modern portrait of the island, as Sally Howard discovers.**

"You can almost taste the excitement in the air here," says art curator Eva Shakouri Torreadrado, her brown eyes glinting. "Mallorca's healthy economy is attracting entrepreneurs and artists from across the world. There's a melting pot of different ethnic groups, from Latino to Arab, Northern European to Russian." And it's a group of bold women in particular who have given the Mallorcan art world a new kind of energy.

Young and female, Eva personifies the hip new scene. Iranian-Spanish and schooled in England, she boasts enviable globe-trotting credentials. Eighteen months ago, she and her brother Amir set up La Caja Blanca, a cutting-edge modern art gallery on Palma de Mallorca's gallery strip, Calle Veri.

This spring, La Caja Blanca brings its first travelling exhibition to the UK, featuring the work of Mallorca's most confident artists. Among them are Teresa Matas, Amparo Sard, Monica Fuster and Marian Moratinos. Is it coincidence that they are all women? "Perhaps not," smiles Eva.

"We were looking for artists who offered a raw, uncensored insight into Mallorcan life," she says. Artists who weren't afraid to combine old and new cultural influences in their work. The results aren't always what you might expect from a traditional little island in the Med.

So what can we expect from the new darlings of the Mallorcan art scene? in short, new-wave art is always thought-provoking - and often fun.

Diana Coca, a 28-year-old Mallorcan who studied in Brighton, uses kinky humour in her pieces. Monica Fuster works in Perspex and LED lights to create dream-like forests inhabited by bizarre characters. Teresa Matas - who at 47 is making her mark later in life - bases her art on the religious icons drummed into her during an upbringing under Franco.

It's no surprise that much of the work on the walls of at La Caja Blanca explores attitudes towards modern womanhood. In her own words, Maria Uribe's work conveys

# LA CAJA BLANCA

an "unfashionable comment on the domestic bliss of being a housewife" - in the form of confetti-stuffed teddy bears!

"We're in a unique time and place," says Eva. "This is the kind of vibrant cultural scene you only get when economic wealth mingles with intellectual hunger and cultural baggage from four corners of the globe. All this in our small, bustling little space in the middle of the Mediterranean!"

And with picture-perfect scenery and warm, sunny days, there's never been a better excuse to put on your culture hat and jet off to see the scene for yourself. Read on for yeahbaby's low-down on Mallorca's leading ladies, and log on to La Caja Blanca's website for more information. [www.lacajablanca.com](http://www.lacajablanca.com)

## Leading Ladies

### **Diana Coca, 28**

Her Style: Quirky and kinky. A typical work: ¿Por qué las mujeres tardan tanto en el baño? (why do women take so long in the toilet).

On Mallorca: "Mallorca has a gorgeous landscape and the rhythm of life is slow, so it gives us peace to create."

Her Mallorca must-sees: "The more avant-garde galleries: La Caja Blanca gallery, La Resistencia del Arte and La Fabrica de Licors."

### **Marifé Gonzáles, 43**

Her Style: Startling white installations overlaid with geometric shapes in bright colours.

On Mallorca: "Mallorca's artists are incredibly diverse, and there are some huge talents here. It's taking off for collectors too, because it's so easy to reach from mainland Europe, and the standard of the work is phenomenal."

Her Mallorca must-see: "The art museum Es Baluard - an architectural masterpiece itself. Its café is the place to be."

### **Marian Moratinos, 33**

Her Style: Fragmented images created from digital photography, silkscreen, painting and drawing that make a twisted comment on city living, influenced by her time in New York.

On Mallorca: "Mallorca's artists are always interesting. Miquel Barceló is the most famous Mallorcan artist of the moment, and he's quite traditional but still has a definable Mallorcan spirit."

Her Mallorca must-see: "Fundación March, for its exquisite collection of contemporary Spanish art."

### **Teresa Matas, 47**

Her Style: Beautiful sculptures that take their influence from everyday domestic objects, from quilts to cups and embroidery.

On Mallorca: "Mallorca has great light, and that traditionally attracted artists. I love the tranquillity though, and the vibrant cultural scene."

Her Mallorca must-see: "We have some amazing exhibition spaces. My favourite is Casal Solleric - it's baroque and it dates from 1763."

# LA CAJA BLANCA

## Where to see them... in mallorca

**1 ABA Art Contemporani: 21 Plaza Porta Santa Catalina, Palma +34 971717835**

[www.abaart.com](http://www.abaart.com)

Crisp and modern gallery set up by 29-year-old twins Alejandra and Maribel Bordoy, in the shadow of the groundbreaking Es Baluard gallery.

**2 Can Marques: 2ª C/ Zanglada, Palma +34 971716247**

[www.canmarques.net](http://www.canmarques.net)

Modern art exhibitions in a sumptuously restored 14th-century mansion in central Palma.

**3 La Caja Blanca: Calle Verí 9, Palma +34 971722364**

[www.lacajablanca.com](http://www.lacajablanca.com)

Pristine space set up by Spanish/Iranian brother and sister team who curate challenging exhibitions informed by their travels overseas.

**Guide Nicole Fraysee runs bespoke art tours of Mallorca - for more information and bookings, email her at: [nicolefraysee@telefonica.net](mailto:nicolefraysee@telefonica.net)**