



Maltese e-Newsletter

The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora



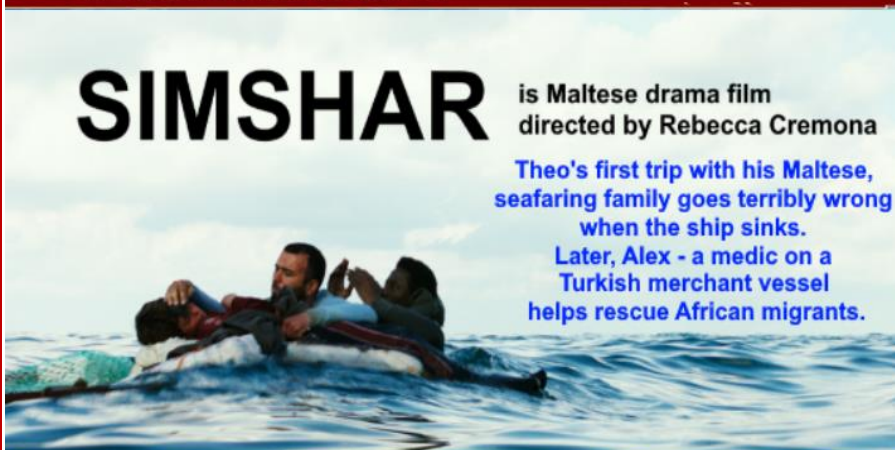
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SIMSHAR

is Maltese drama film directed by Rebecca Cremona

Theo's first trip with his Maltese, seafaring family goes terribly wrong when the ship sinks. Later, Alex - a medic on a Turkish merchant vessel helps rescue African migrants.



Australian Open Tennis Champion
SOFIA KENIN (USA)
Rocks Maltese-Australian Designer's Dress
with Maltese Crosses

IL-KAPPILLAN TA' MALTA Nicholas Monsarrat



Traduzzjoni ta'
Wistin Born

I've been given a platform
not to make my own
voice heard,
but to be a mouthpiece
of God,
and to raise the voice of the
people of God.
Be a champion, be a saint!

ROB GALEA
Maltese/Australian

EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN:
ALBERT MARSHALL



CONNECTING
MALTESE LIVING
ABROAD

Create2020 and beyond



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Published on Wednesday 22 January 2020



Director of Funding and Strategy, Arts Council Malta, Mary Ann Cauchi, glances at the Create2020 Strategy and what's in store to continue achieving high levels of excellence and develop Malta's creative sector. The creative vision of the Create2020 Strategy implemented through nine strategic tools which included:

- funding programmes supporting various projects in the creative industries;
- creative brokerage serving as the first point of reference for difficulties and assistance;
- educational and training initiatives focusing on artistic practice requirements;
- a community cultural exchange developing a rich and varied artistic and innovative life;
- nurturing of business development;
- promotion of the development of a sustainable creative economy;
- internationalisation placing Malta's international cultural profile on global platforms beyond Europe;
- research providing a stronger knowledge base;
- communication allowing knowledge transfer with various stakeholders.

Throughout this past year in my role as Director of Funding and Strategy, it has been a great pleasure meeting a diverse range of people and understanding their needs through various processes such as focus groups, one-to-one or group meetings, workshops, networking or information sessions. In fact, gaining valuable first-hand information straight from the source is one of my favourite elements of the job. 2020 is a pivotal year for the creative sector and for Arts Council Malta, both internally and externally, an evaluation of the progress covered to date and consultation for the next strategy 2021-2025 will take place.

It is forecasted that the new strategy will continue to place the arts and creativity at the heart of Malta's future and making sure to engage a wider audience. Malta's upcoming national cultural policy and the government's electoral programme will be at the top of Arts Council Malta's agenda.

Furthermore, it will keep strengthening internationalisation, education, and the community. Motivational sources will include [UNESCO's Sustainable Development Goals](#) which address quality of life and well-being, climate change and the environment, entrepreneurship and sustainability. More tangible ways of measuring the impacts and effects of the cultural sector to reflect EU-wide policies and visions.

To me, it is of utmost importance that we practice what we preach, hence why the strategy will not only be implemented externally but also internally at Arts Council Malta, with greener initiatives such as going paperless, a focus on sustainability and a greater sense of personal and professional well-being.

Heritage Malta has 150 planned activities this year to bring people closer to Malta's history

During this year Heritage Malta has planned 150 events aimed at bringing people closer to Malta's history.

Heritage Malta CEO, Noel Zammit, said that as a result of this programme it is expected to bring people closer to the country's historical heritage. He said the Agency which is responsible for the country's museums, conservation and historical patrimony, has changed the concepts of museums and today they do not only reflect the country's history but are spaces mounting events that are attractive to all. The activities planned include the opening of sites that are not normally open to the public, workshops and trips around Filfla.

Minister Jose' Herrera stressed the importance that Government is giving this sector and as a result of the Government Cabinet reshuffle the nation's heritage is now a designated Ministry item with a mandate that also includes the Maltese language, the national archives and restoration works.



Total number of licensed vehicles nears 400,000 – NSO

whereas newly licensed 'used' motor vehicles totalled 3,635 or 59.1 per cent. An average of 67 vehicles per day were newly licensed during the quarter under review.

Vehicles under restriction During the fourth quarter of 2019, 6,941 vehicles were taken off the road due to a restriction. Out of these, 35.0 per cent were garaged, 34.2 per cent were put up for resale, while scrapped vehicles amounted to 28.8 per cent of the total. Vehicles that had their restriction ending during the quarter under review totalled 3,401. The majority were recorded as being resold (67.2 per cent) or garaged (32.1 per cent).

As at the end of December 2019, 236,892 vehicles or 59.6 per cent of the total had petrol-powered engines. Diesel-powered vehicles reached 154,459 or 38.9 per cent of the total. Electric and hybrid vehicles accounted for 1.1 per cent of the entire stock, with a total of 4,493 vehicles. When compared to the same period of 2018, increases of 147.6 per cent, 64.7 per cent and 52.4 per cent were registered in the electric, hybrid/diesel and hybrid/petrol-powered vehicles.

In the fourth quarter of 2019, the stock of licensed motor vehicles increased by 12,182 vehicles or 3.2 per cent over the same quarter in 2018, the NSO said today.

At the end of December 2019, the stock of licensed motor vehicles stood at 397,508. Out of this total, 77.3 per cent were passenger cars, 13.7 per cent were commercial vehicles, 7.9 per cent were motorcycles/ quadricycles and All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs), while buses and minibuses amounted to less than one per cent. During the quarter under review, the stock of licensed motor vehicles increased at a net average rate of 28 vehicles per day. Newly licensed vehicles put on the road during the period under review amounted to 6,154. The majority of the newly licensed vehicles, 4,167 or 67.7 per cent of the total, were passenger cars, followed by motorcycles with 996 or 16.2 per cent. Newly licensed 'new' motor vehicles amounted to 2,519 or 40.9 per cent of the total,



Australian Open Tennis Champion Rocks Maltese-Australian Designer's Dress

Maltese-Australian award-winning fashion designer is making clothes fit for a champion, after the latest winner of the Australian Open rocking a piece from his collection at a trophy presentation.

After beating former Wimbledon and Roland Garros winner Garbine Muguruz in the final at Melbourne Park to win her first-ever grand slam, Sofia 'Sonya' Kenin showed off in Jason Grech's dress as she posed for photographers with the prestigious trophy, with the traditional Maltese cross plastered all over the garment!

The 21-year-old American stormed through the first grand slam of the year, beating World Number One and hometown favourite Ashleigh Barty on route to the final.

The future's bright for the young sensation, and we're sure Grech's hoping there are more trophies to come! <https://lovinmalta.com>.

JASONGRECH is a multiple award winning Melbourne couture brand synonymous with pure luxury, specialising in wedding dresses and red carpet gowns of the very highest quality. With talent and expertise crafted over

20 years in the fashion industry, Jason Grech is one of the most highly recognised and awarded names in Australian couture fashion today.



Jason Grech's parents and all 10 siblings are Maltese and migrated to Australia in 1973. Jason was born in Australia and grew up in the very Maltese rich suburb of St.Albans. He travelled to Malta many (eight) times as a child, and in my teens he spent long periods of time during summer with my parents. He is fluent in the Maltese language as they speak Maltese at his parents' home, and he has started to learn how to read it. He grew up going to festas in Malta and Australia, so his upbringing was very similar to any Maltese child, but lived abroad. His grandfather, Maestro Ġużeppi Busuttil, composed a multitude of marches with the most celebrated being *Tal-Qalba* – which is played in Malta to this day

Gozo's two-week Feast of Love for Valentine's – Inhobbok



This year's two-week Feast of Love – #Inhobbok (I Love You) has been launched by Minister for Gozo Clint Camilleri.

So why not spend Valentine's in Gozo, where love is always in the air. Starting this Sunday, the 2nd of February, there is a varied programme of events and activities all around the theme of love and romance.

Some of the activities include films and a drive-in movie, craft fairs, art exhibition and concerts, with the highlight of

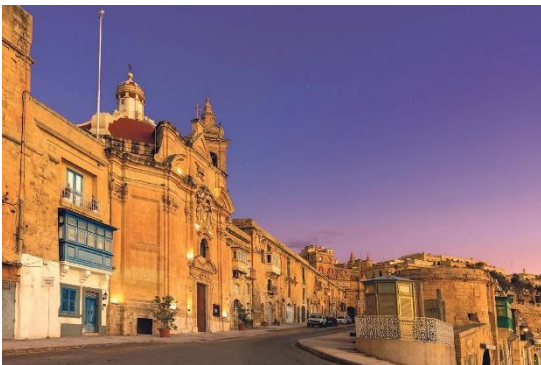
the two-week St Valentine's feast, being Ghawdex Inhobbok Concert 2020, on Saturday, the 15th of February, from 8.30pm to 1.30am.

Following on from the success of last year, the Ministry for Gozo, in collaboration with Fevasi, will be hosting a series of live acts, artists and DJs for a spectacular night with a difference in Independence Square, Victoria.

For this year's concert, there will be a full 20-piece orchestra of Versatile Brass, with special guests Ivan Grech, Cash & Band, and a closing set by DJ Ant.

Photograph: MGOZ/ Joseph Mercieca

Book unveils legend, history of Valletta Ta' Liesse church



The church of Our Lady of Ta' Liesse on the road leading to Valletta from the Ta' Liesse marina. Photos: Daniel Cilia Walking uphill towards Victoria Gate in Valletta one cannot help but notice a small, baroque church on the left-hand side of the road.

The church's cupola from the inside.

Most will know that the area is known as Ta' Liesse, especially due to national events that take place in this particular spot, but not all will be aware that the church is actually dedicated to Our Lady of Ta' Liesse or that it

is tied to a legend.

How many would have actually entered the church to admire its artistic treasures or ever considered its historical significance?

All of these aspects and more are tackled in a new book titled Ta' Liesse, Malta's Waterfront Shrine for Mariners, which was launched last week.

In its introduction, Judge Emeritus Giovanni Bonello, who is the book's general editor, says that despite its physical dimensions, the church has a "massive history" and is more than just a place of worship.

Good morning and a Challenging and Healthy 2020.

Many thanks of the wealth of information you give us in every edition of your Maltese Journal. In your Journal 304, it is interesting to read as our brother Henry Mifsud came in 1952 as a welfare officer to these supposedly orphans! It is of great interest that these British and the Irish children were very well represented to express their concerns in regards to their treatment, yet very little next to nothing was done by the Maltese Government! SAD! Thanks and keep up your good work. Very well appreciated! Helena and Carmen Mifsud Take care and God bless.



“It is also a unique time capsule of tradition, defiant spirituality, ancient legend, art, ritual, continuity and survival. Like antique centres of worship, a memorial to faith, hope and charity,” he writes.

The hardbound 256-page book provides evidence of this.

It includes a collection of essays by 11 contributors who write in detail about different topics, such as the development of the Hospitaller cult in Malta, the maritime spaces, archaeology and urban harbours, the paintings of the Lieszse legend cycle, the campanological legacy of the church and the significance, conservation and restoration of the titular painting representing Our Lady of Ta' Lieszse.

The painting, the work of Enrico Arnaud (1692-1764), offers an interpretation of the legend of three knights Hospitaller, members of the noble house of Eppes, who were freed from Saracen captivity in

Egypt through the miraculous intervention of the Blessed Mother.

A detail from a 17th century painting showing Ta' Lieszse church and the chapel of San Salvatore between the warehouses. This painting belongs to a private collection.

All funds from the book, which is complemented by over 370 images, will be going towards the restoration of the rest of the church's paintings, which include an anonymous work depicting St Louis, King of France and Giulio Cassarino's St Maurus Healing a Sick Child (1623).

Among the precious artworks also found in the church is a statue of Our Lady, traditionally believed to be a copy of the original one belonging to the sanctuary Lieszse-NotreDame in the Picardie region, France. This statue is particularly important as the original one, which was venerated for centuries, was destroyed during the French revolution.

Devotion to Our Lady is also expressed through another statue at the Valletta church and an important number of cycles depicting the Ta' Lieszse legend.

The oil on canvas painting St Maurus Healing a Sick Child by Giulio Cassarino, signed and dated 1623, is the first artwork that will undergo restoration once the necessary funds are collected.



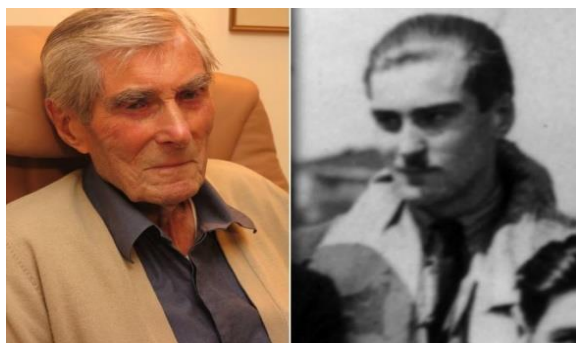
One of the book's essays goes into detail about this cycle of paintings, while another essay looks into the devotion to the Madonna Ta' Lieszse in France.

The scholars contributing to the publication are Dr Bonello, Kenneth Cauchi, Roger De Gaetano, Carmen Depasquale,

Nicholas Joseph Doublet, Eric Fenech Sevasta, Thomas Freller, Christian Mifsud, Amy Sciberras, Mevrick Spiteri and Theresa Vella. Raymond Miller is the copy editor while photography and design is by Daniel Cilia.

The book is published by Miller Distributors Ltd and is supported by the Grand Harbour maritime companies. Its launch, held last Thursday, was chaired by Archbishop Charles Scicluna.

The church was on the main road leading from the Grand Harbour to Valletta. Many Gozitans arriving by boat would pass and presumably enter it on their way to and from the city. The 19th century images is from a private collection.



Wing Commander Paul Farnes defended Malta in March and April 1942

Gordon Watson

One of the 'Few', Wing Commander Paul Farnes pictured in his later days and during time as a Hurricane Pilot. Credit: The Battle of Britain Memorial Trust

One of the fighter pilots who defended Malta in the Second World War after fighting in the Battle of Britain, has died aged 101. Wing Commander Paul Farnes who died on Tuesday morning, fought over Malta in March and April 1942, at the height of the siege of Malta.

Malta at the time was a strategically important island to launch air and sea attacks on Axis shipping taking supplies and men to the North African front lines.

Farnes served with No.229 Squadron at RAF Hal Far, flying Hurricane aircraft. During his sorties,

Fighter ace who defended Malta dies aged 101

he is said to have damaged a German Junker JU88 bomber on April 2 along with damaging two unidentified enemy aircraft on April 4 and 6.

On May 6, he damaged another JU88 and three days later damaged a German BF109 fighter plane. The Squadron was then disbanded and Farnes and his fellow airmen from 229, were moved to Egypt in May.

Prior to his involvement in the Mediterranean campaign, Wing Cdr Farnes received the accolade of Ace after shooting down six enemy aircraft in the Battle of Britain. He also damaged another six.

He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal (DFM) in October 1940 and then commissioned as an officer. Mr Farnes had started his career with the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve back in 1938 before moving into the regular RAF with the 501 Squadron during the Battle of France in 1940.

The centenarian retired from the RAF in 1958 and was the only surviving airman last year to take part in the ceremonies marking 'The Few' of the Battle of Britain.

From one of our readers

A snapshot of my life in the 1950s in Australia

by Venny Spiteri, Adelaide, Australia

As a young lad in the 1950s the best part of school holidays were the adventures that I embarked upon. My best friend and I would often pack our lunch, which usually consisted of two slices of Opies pipe loaf bread with fritz and sauce and tuck that inside our shirt. We would ride our bikes straight into the hangar at the airport, talk and have lunch with the maintenance guys, then sit inside a plane that happened to be there and read the magazines from the back of the seats.

Other times we would go down into the creek at Cowandilla that snaked along all the way to West Beach. When we reached the outer of the airport we would climb out of the creek, walk across the field and into the hangar. Security was not something that was an issue. Whilst walking in the creek we would come across all sorts of bits and pieces, such as tennis balls and broken toys (which we took home to try to fix).

On one occasion I recall we came across a galah sitting on a branch. As my friend was quicker than me, he got to take the galah home. Life was so simple. We were never bored, we made our own fun. Regrettably those days are long gone.



The 'Agius' surname ... on the Internet

The 'Agius' surname in the past.

There were reportedly a dozen 'Agius' listed in the rolls of the militia in the island of Malta at the beginning of the 15th century, approximately doubling towards the end of that century (Wettinger G 1968). In the late sixteenth century, one of the 'Giurati' of the 'Universita' (civilian representatives in the then capital Citta Notabile or Mdina) was called Michele Agius (Giovanni Antonio Vassallo. Storia di Malta. 1890. p516).

There are references to clerics bearing the surname Agius in Malta in the 17th and 18th centuries. The oldest known substantive written account published by a person bearing the surname 'Agius' were from the linguist and historian Canon Gian P.F. Agius de Soldanis.

Probably his most famous work was that published by him in Rome in 1750. A copy of the frontispiece of this book is shown alongside. In it Agius describes the grammar of the Maltese language and presents his hypothesis as to the origins of the language from the Punic language of the Etruscans. (Incidentally the hypothesis was incorrect - but at least he raised interest in the subject!)

The surname 'Agius' appears frequently at the time of the French Occupation of Malta (1798 - 1800). Thus one of the four physicians dealing with public health in the capital city Valletta and in the 'Three Cities' was Giovanni Agius. Amongst the soldiers fighting against the French occupation were Major Fredric Agius (who had been adjutant of the Valletta militia), Captain Guzeppi Agius, and Sergeant Felic Agius. The liberated portions of the Maltese islands elected representatives to a 'National Congress' - the chairman of the assembly was Judge Dr Luigi Agius, while one of the secretaries was Giovanni Battista Agius. (C.J.Boffa 1998). Earlier still, in Wettinger's account of the Militia List of 1419-1420, the surname may have been listed as Haiuz.

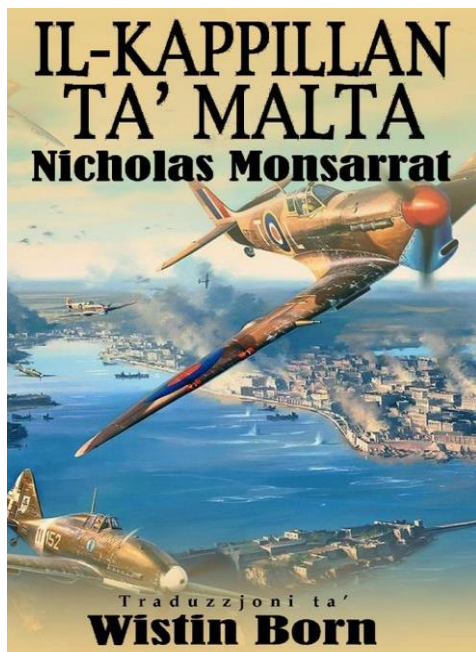
An eminent cleric by the name of Agius was the prelate Archbishop Ambrosio Agius, titular archbishop of Palmira who was assigned papal legate to the Philippines in 1901, by Pope Leo XIII. He had been a member of the Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino.

The crest of the 'Agius' surname.



The image below shows the Agius crest (painted by [Thomas](#) when he was younger) and consisting of a crowned griffin (griffon, gryphon), standing on its hind legs holding a sword, climbing on a triple mound, and with a star. In heraldic terms, the blazon of arms has been described as: *'Azure; upon a mountain of three, argent, a griffin salient or, crowned of the same and holding in pale a sword of the second with crosspiece and grip of the third and in chief dexter a mullet of six points or'*.

Good morning dear Frank. Thanks a lot for your commitment to serve the Maltese community. Let us keep in touch Hon. Evarist Bartolo – Minister for Foreign and European Affairs



The Kappillan of Malta - World's Bestseller

The Kappillan of Malta – [Wistin Born's translation](#) into Maltese of Nicholas Monsarrat's world bestseller.

It was in San Lawrence village in Gozo, where he had lived for the last ten years of his life, that Monsarrat wrote the famous novel in 1972/73.

The Monsarrat's original four-page manuscript of the plot of The Kappillan of Malta was donated to the Local Council by Monsarrat's widow.

The translation into Maltese by Born came less than a year later and was eventually read on Rediffusion by Charles Arrigo in 1974/75.

Born's manuscript of the translation has been kept archived for the last 50 years. He is the author of well-known novel Is-Salib tal-Fidda. The Kappillan of Malta is a kaleidoscopic



masterpiece of epic proportions. Situated during the worse years of World War II in Malta and Gozo, it spans the entire history of the Maltese Islands.

Against all odds, a simple yet conscientious priest bears the fire and brimstone of Fascist air-raids and the hunger, demoralisation and hardships close to the common people he loves and to whom he dedicates his life. He is unable to hate, yet his love is taxed beyond the point of endurance.



Photo: Chris Sant Fournier.
Photo: Chris Sant Fournier.

Honouring the Maltese people imprisoned in concentration camps during WWII

Very little was known about their fate before this documentary aired on local TV

Caroline Curmi

THIS MONTH marks the 75th anniversary from the day Auschwitz, one of the Nazi's most terrifying concentration camps, was liberated with 7,000 frail prisoners freed. Despite the World War II being



close to a century old, new horror stories keep emerging and the world remains shocked and

repelled by the atrocities that took place during one of modern Europe's darkest hours.

WW2 Malta also suffered greatly during this time through the Axis's incessant bombing, but what many might not know is that a large number of Maltese citizens found themselves imprisoned in Italian concentration camps.

At the time an Italian colony, Libya was home to many Maltese, who were rounded up and made to renounce their British passports (Malta was a British colony). Their unwavering loyalty saw

them refuse, an act which raised suspicions among the Italians. Branded British spies, a total of 2,000 Maltese were consequently sent to Italy in three separate shipments shortly before Benito Mussolini's infamous declaration of war on France and Britain. Children and pregnant women were among those sent to Italian concentration camps, where prisoners suffered through starvation, beatings and even rape by German troops.

This revelation was unearthed through Mario Xuereb's three-part 2018 documentary *Maltin Internati fl-Italja – Storja Vera* (Maltese Internees in Italy – A True Story), where he explored the fates of various Maltese families through first-hand narrations about their experiences. The historian and TVM journalist collaborated with Italian researchers, who were looking into the history of two major Italian concentration camps.

After the War, most survivors returned to Tripoli only to find that they had lost everything, while others opted to rebuild their lives in Australia or Canada, with the former being the more popular choice.

RIP to all victims of the Holocaust.



Written by Caroline Curmi

When she's not having a quarter-life crisis, Caroline is either drawing in a café, frittering her salary on sushi or swearing at traffic in full-on Gozitan. There is also the occasional daytime drink somewhere in the equation. Or two. A creative must be allowed at least one vice.



Veteran bowler won silver in singles event earlier this week

[|Valhmor Camilleri|0](#)

Sue Abela poses with her gold and silver medal at the European Seniors Championships in Vienna.

Malta's veteran bowler Sue Abela added another prestigious title to her already star-studded career after winning the gold medal in the women's All Event at the European Seniors

Championships which are currently being held in Vienna, Austria on Friday.

Abela, Malta's most successful tenpin bowler of all time, topped the standings when she amassed a total of 3,738 pins following the Doubles, Team and Singles competition.

The Maltese veteran finished ahead of Italy's Elga di Benedetto who took silver with 3,681 while England's Kim Oakley posted a score of 3,659.

For Abela, her victory in the All Events was sweet revenge over Italian bowler Di Benedetto who had beaten the Maltese bowler in the singles competition.

In fact, Di Benedetto and Abela contested the gold medal of the singles event after defeating Oakley and French bowler Fely Wisniewski, respectively, in the semi-finals.

In the final Di Benedetto had edged Abela 203-188 with the Maltese bowler forced to settle with the silver medal.

Laura Falzon flutist

Biography

"Exuberance with poise. Your flute's voice seems to come from your heart while empowered by the mastery of performance."
Halim El Dabh



Flutist Laura Falzon has featured as soloist during recitals and concerts across Europe, Asia and the USA with performances in France, Portugal, Finland, England, Scotland, the Channel Islands, Malta, Greece, the US and India. In New York, Falzon has performed in venues including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Symphony Space, (Le) Poisson Rouge, The Tank, Tenri and the DiMenna Center. A graduate of Columbia University, she studied in England with Royal Academy professor and principal flutist of the London Sinfonietta Sebastian Bell, with Kim McCormick in the United States and with flautists Susan Milan and Julius Baker.

An ardent advocate and passionate performer of contemporary music, Laura Falzon has collaborated with composers from around the world on new works for flute in a variety of combinations, ranging from the conventional flute solo, flute & piano, and flute & orchestra, to works with electroacoustics as well as non-western instruments like the zheng, sitar, tabla, yoruba drums and tanpura. Praised by the Musical Times for her "versatile technique", and hailed for being "fearless in tackling and promoting" challenging new works (*PAN Magazine*, *British Flute Society*), Dr. Falzon has commissioned and premiered many flute works including *Padma Phool* by the Anglo-Indian composer John Mayer (mostly known as the founder of Indo-Jazz Fusion and, in the flute world, for his flute Concerto for Sir James Galway), and many other works by composers including Eddie McGuire, Theodore Wiprud, Mohammed Fairouz, Shirish Korde, Charles Camilleri, Akin Euba, Carlos Jose Castro, Bushra El-Turk, Halim El-Dabh, Nickos Harizanos, Alice Shields, Dai Fujikura, Pamela Sklar and Geoff Poole.

The recipient of numerous awards, grants received include ones from The British Arts Council (UK), the Scottish Arts Council (UK), The Rockefeller Foundation (US), Hope Scott Trust (UK), Jersey Arts Trust

(UK), Warwick Arts Festival (UK), The Centre for Intercultural Musicology, Churchill College, Cambridge University (UK), Rotary Foundation International (USA/UK), Sparkplug foundation (US), New York Women composers (US) & Columbia University (US).

Born in Canada of Maltese parents, she holds a Doctorate and Masters in Music & Education from Columbia University, a Master of Music in flute Performance from the University of South Florida and is an Associate, Licentiate and a Fellow of the London College of Music. Before 2004, she was based in the UK, previous to which she was co-principal flute with Malta's National Orchestra, then known as the *Manoel Theatre Orchestra*. Dr. Falzon has done residencies through the Rockefeller Foundation and was also a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar representing the UK in the US. She is a founding member and artistic director of *Id-Dinja* ensemble and *ISSA Sonus* ensemble. As well as maintaining an active concert schedule, she is a Music Professor at Columbia University Teachers College (since 2006) and at NYU (New York University). Other universities she has taught at include The City College of New York at the City University of New York (CUNY) and Yeshiva College, Yeshiva University.
<https://www.laurafalzon.com>

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN MALTA -2020

Malta hosts an incredible plethora of events throughout the year that cater to all ages and tastes. Malta's rich event calendar offers performances, festivals, exhibitions, and feasts from local and international entertainers and exhibitors all year round. Malta welcomes, every year, multiple international contemporary, classical and jazz artists hosting various concerts and festivals throughout the year.

Malta plays a host to multiple sporting events, on the land, sea and in the air and its art scene offers a range of theatre, dance performances, pantomimes, plays and more. Explore some of Malta's events taking place this year below.

Six times per year, Fort St. Elmo gives you a very special impression of Malta's history. **THE "HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT GROUP OF MALTA"** reconstructs in loving detail the onslaught of the French under Napoleon (1798-1800). In a 50-minute play, the arrival of the French, the Maltese rebellion and the arrival of the English who helped beat the French, is being re-enacted in original costumes and with contemporary requisites. Cheap tickets are available at the Fort's entry.

CHANGING OF THE GUARDS

Every last Friday of the month at 10.30 am a parade commences in St George's Square in Valletta. The Armed Forces of Malta Band march down republic street to acknowledge the replacement of the Main Guard from The Palace Valletta. It is a traditional and spectacular display to see.

THE SALUTING BATTERY, one of the most important historical events in Malta, takes place every day between 12 pm and 4 pm at the highest point of the island. Soldiers traditionally fire heavy cannons. Visitors typically watch this historical event from the Grand Harbour. A must-see for anyone visiting Malta!

international audience. One of the main stages of the festival is Teatru Manoel, the oldest working theatre in the world, St. John's Co-Cathedral, and the Valletta Archaeological Museum are just a few of the fascinating venues you can visit. The Valletta International Baroque Festival gives its audience a feast of music with its magnificent music performances ranging from Bach to Vivaldi and much more.

CARNIVAL, 21ST TO 25TH FEBRUARY 2020

Spring is the time for carnivals, and if you are up for a good party, then this celebration weekend will not disappoint you. The centre of festivities is Valletta, but there are similar parties in smaller towns. All over the island, you will find people in colourful costumes looking forward to the great parade. The party continues well into the night in Paceville! Don't miss this colourful side of Malta!

EASTER WEEK, 12TH TO 18TH APRIL 2020

Easter is a big celebration in Malta. Churches are lavishly decorated and are beautifully lit up in the evenings. You shouldn't miss the magnificent Easter church parades on Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Two famous parades take place on Good Friday in Qormi and on Good Friday and Easter Sunday in Vittoriosa. Many Maltese participate and re-enact Biblical scenes in costumes. On Easter Sunday in particular, a happy and exuberant atmosphere covers the island.

MALTA INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL 2020, TBC

The European Foundation for Support of Culture (EUFSC) in conjunction with the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, as part of the Valletta 2018 - Capital of Culture will offer the opportunity for patrons to attend a range of events. Expect classical music in many varied forms, such as solo recitals, chamber concerts and grand orchestral concerts featuring world acclaimed artists, rising stars and incredible new talent.



In a statement, the Curia said that applications for the vacant places are being accepted online until February 14, and in specific centres between February 3 and 5.

In November, applications according to the first criteria were accepted. These include children from Church homes, children of Church school employees, siblings of students in Church schools, and students in Church schools without continuity. The number of these applications was 798. As a result, for the scholastic year 2020-2021, out of a total of 1,528 vacant places, 730 places are now available for 'Other Applicants'.

For First Year Kindergarten, 45 applications for boys and 41 applications for girls were received. For boys, out of a total of 63 places, 18 places remain vacant. For girls, out of a total of 69 places, 28 places remain vacant.

For Second Year Kindergarten, 41 applications for boys and 113 applications for girls were received. For boys, out of a total of 114 places, 73 places remain vacant. Out of a total of 349 places, 236 places for girls remain vacant.

For First Year Primary, 231 applications for boys and 128 applications for girls were received. For

Church school applications open - 730 places available 798 early applications already accepted

boys, out of a total of 365 places, 134 places remain vacant. For girls, out of a total of 244 places, 116 places remain vacant. For First Year Secondary, 170 applications for boys and 29 applications for girls received. For boys, out of a total of 255 places, 85 places remain vacant. For girls, out of a total of 85 places, 40 places remain vacant.

St Albert the Great College will be opening a new kindergarten in Fgura. It will accept 24 pupils in first-year kindergarten and 24 pupils in second-year kindergarten. In the coming days, applications will be accepted from employees of St Albert the Great and from siblings of students attending St Albert the Great College. The remaining vacant places will be added to the rest.

The Secretariat for Catholic Education said there was the possibility of a new kindergarten of St Francis school in Santa Lucija, which will replace the kindergarten of the same school in Luqa and Siggiewi.

If this happens, the places offered in the kindergarten of Luqa and Siggiewi will be offered in Santa Lucija. The Church Schools admission process determines admission at first year and second-year kindergarten, first-year primary and first-year secondary.

The list of required documents, application dates and other information is provided in the Regulations for Admission into Church Schools which are available on www.church.mt.

MALTESE PRIEST'S BOOK IS BEING ADAPTED INTO A HOLLYWOOD MOVIE

Fr Robert Galea is an ordained Catholic Priest and is currently serving in Shepparton, Australia after moving to Australia in 2007 from Malta, his home country. He's a singer song writer, and author of *Breakthrough*, a journey from desperation to hope.

Breakthrough is the story of Rob Galea's journey from troubled teen to Catholic priest in the Sandhurst Diocese in Victoria, Australia.

Now this priest really is something else. He even tried his luck on the Australian X Factor contestant, back in 2015. He made it through to Boot Camp but voluntarily left after Boot Camp due to parish commitments. Rob might possibly be the coolest priest that Malta, and the world for that matter, has ever seen.

Singer song/writer by day, serving sermons by night. And can you imagine how lit his sermons are? He's even got some bangers with Ivan Diaz and Malta's very own Ira Losco... I mean, this guy is the definition of lit.

Fr Rob announced on his Facebook page that his book, *Breakthrough*, is being adapted into a Hollywood



Rob's Family
in Malta

movie, and we simply cannot wait!

In *Breakthrough*, Galea shares his journey from scared teenager to passionate priest and invites you to learn more about the Catholic faith.

The story tells a tale of Fr Rob himself, a lonely, miserable teenager. He wanted to feel like he belonged, so he joined a gang. He went clubbing. He drank. He stole things. He lied. His reckless lifestyle ultimately led him to hide in fear for his life from other gang members. He was so desperate in those days spent in his dark bedroom that he contemplated ending his life.

In *Breakthrough*, Galea takes you on his journey to seminary, the move from his home country of Malta to Australia, and the development of his ministry as a priest, speaker, singer/songwriter, and recording artist... and now, all of this is being adapted into a Hollywood movie!



**Share it with others
send it to us**

CULTURE TRIP TO MALTA

<https://theculturetrip.com>

The majority of products in Malta are imported, which is not surprising for such a small island. There's certainly no shortage in choice when it comes to shopping, with well-known brands available in most outlets. However, there are some items that are produced in Malta and are difficult to find elsewhere. So seek them out while on your trip to Malta, for a unique experience.



REFRESHING MALTESE BEVERAGES

As Malta enjoys warm weather for the majority of the year, there is demand for refreshing, cool drinks. For something a little different, try Cisk lager or the fizzy drink Kinnie. Drinks producer Farsons brought Kinnie to the market in 1952 and it was a welcome alternative to the many different colas available on the island, following the Second World War. A bittersweet orange flavour mixed with aromatic herbs, Kinnie is an acquired taste, but it's worth a try! Farsons also produces Cisk lager, which has a full hop aroma and golden colour, and is still made to the same recipe as when it was launched in 1929.

Maltese beverages © tpholand/Flickr

TRADITIONAL CRAFTS: GANUTELL WIRE FLOWERS

If you have the opportunity to visit a craft fair during your visit to Malta, keep a look out for stalls selling Ganutell. A traditional skill passed down from generation to generation, the creation of intricate flower-making using fine wires is as interesting to watch as it is to see the finished product. As pieces are often commissioned and also used to decorate churches, these beautiful pieces are not usually found in shops.



DELICIOUS PRICKLY PEAR products

Growing on farmland, along the roadsides and even on wasteground, Malta is awash with prickly pear cacti. Best picked early morning or at dusk when the spikes on their skin retract, once peeled, the pears have a distinct taste with a melon-like scent to them. The best way to enjoy these summer fruits is in the form of one of the products they are made into. Browse local shops for delicious prickly pear liquors, jams and conserves. A taste of Malta to take home! *Prickly pears © Peter Grima/Flickr*

TASTY BIGILLA DIP

Made from mashed tic beans, brown beans or broad beans, this dip is available in most Maltese restaurants and from delicatessens around the island. The perfect accompaniment to freshly baked Maltese bread, *bigilla* is often served as a complimentary *hors d'oeuvre* in eateries while choosing from the menu. While recipes can vary slightly, the main ingredients remain the same: beans, olive oil,



herbs, seasoning and lashings of garlic. Don't forget a packet of mints for freshening up afterwards!

BEAUTIFUL MDINA GLASS

Mdina Glass first opened its doors in 1968 as the first glass company in Malta. Producers of stunning items to furnish your home such as candle holders, vases and centrepieces, each piece is unique as it is produced by artisans who not only blow the glass but shape it by hand, too. All glassware is made to a high standard and their outlet in Ta' Qali craft village, allows visitors to enter the workshop to see items being made first-hand.



THE FASCINATING 'SLEEPING LADY'

Recovered from Ħal Saflieni Hypogeum, the only prehistoric underground temple in the world said to date back to circa 4,000 BC, the 'sleeping lady' figurine is now housed at Malta's Museum of Archaeology. Carved out of stone, this 5,000-year-old lady lying on her side in a natural sleeping position has replicas available in many gift shops. She is an icon you will only find in Malta with a great history behind it.

Ħal Saflieni Hypogeum, Triq Ic Cimiterju, Raġal Ġdid, Paola, Malta, +356 2180 5019



BEAUTIFUL LACE: BIZZILLA

Not to be confused with *bigilla*, the savoury Maltese dip, *bizzilla* is a form of lace-making using techniques dating back to the time of the Knights of St John, when ornamental lace was a much sought-after fashion accessory. Fascinating to watch being made, wooden bobbins are used with various thickness of threads. Deft in their skills, it is not uncommon to see ladies sitting in their doorways on warm summer days, creating these works of art. A Maltese cross is entwined within *bizzilla* making it traditionally Maltese.

Lace making in Malta © Cherry Blossom in Japan/Flickr

FASCINATING FILIGREE

Originating in ancient Greece and Rome, and seen in many countries worldwide today, it is safe to say that Malta is not the only home of filigree, but these ornate pieces of jewellery and ornaments, made of delicately thin gold or silver wires, is a speciality of Malta and its quality is second to none. Handmade by artisans across the island, most jewellery and gift shops stock some sort of filigree, but the best ones to look out for are those made bearing the eight-pointed Maltese cross.



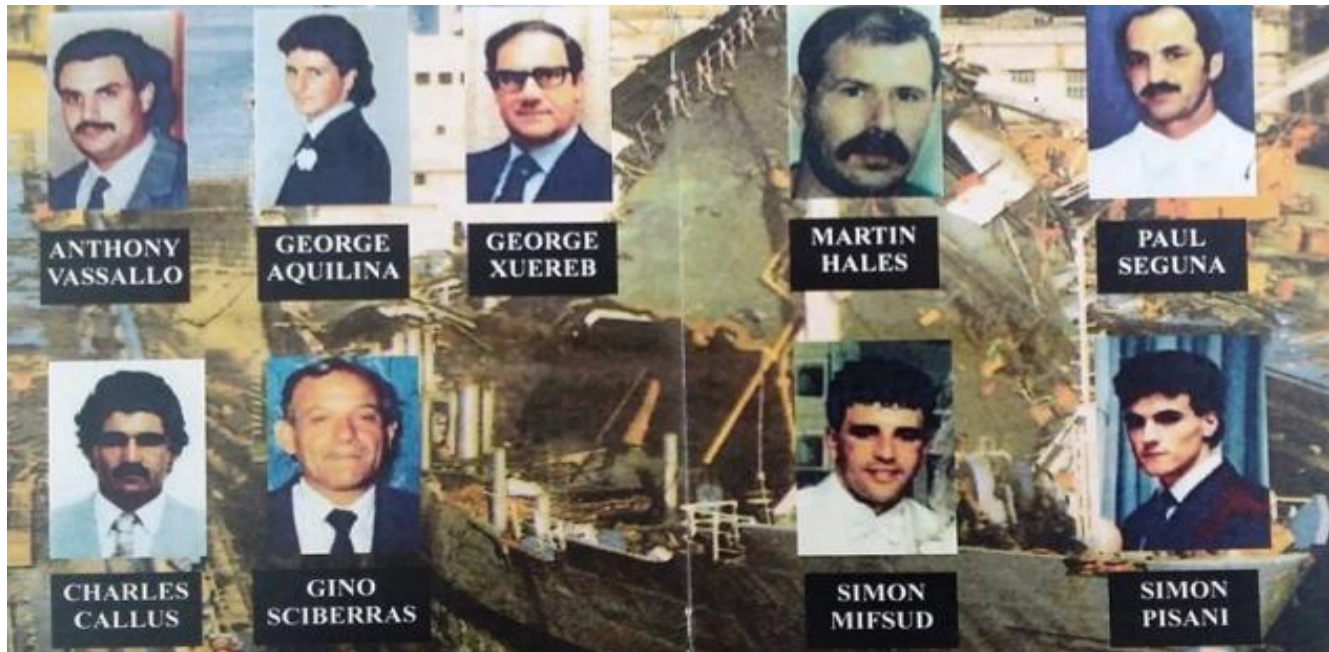
MORE-ISH GOZO CHEESE

Malta's sister island of Gozo, measuring a mere 67km square, has a popular product you'll find in Malta too – *Ġbejniet*, delectable round cheese made from unpasteurised sheep's or goat's milk. It's available plain or you'll find it with local flavours added, such as garlic, sun-dried tomatoes and chilli pepper. Eaten as is, drizzled with olive oil on salads or added to soups or as a pizza topping, these popular cheese circles, made by family-run businesses, are always in high demand.

HEAD-COVERINGS, KNOWN AS GHONELLA

Probably the most well-known garment when it comes to traditional clothing of Malta is the *Għonella*, also known as *Faldetta*. This headdress with a shawl incorporated, was made from cotton or silk and usually black in colour but in the 16th century, *għonella* worn in bright colours was a status symbol for wealthier ladies. Framing the head and face in a protective arch shape, the arch was formed from cardboard, cane or even whale bone, while the material of silk or cotton covering it was starched to help keep its shape. Worn during all seasons, the *għonella* provided protection from the sun during the scorching summer months and sheltered the wearer from rain and wind during the cooler months. The long sides could be wrapped around the body for extra warmth or tightly held in the hands to keep it sturdy during inclement weather.

25 years ago: the *Um el Faroud* tragedy



During the night of 3 February 1995 an explosion occurred in No.3 centre tank, killing nine shipyard workers. This tragedy happened 25 years ago, on small Libyan tanker in the Drydocks, Malta.

On that day, the Malta Financial Services Centre building at Mriehel was being inaugurated, but all of a sudden the top authorities were hurriedly called out and rushed to the Dockyard. The victims were all working on the Libyan state-owned Um El Faroud tanker in Dock No. 3 when, at around 10:15pm, an explosion on board ripped the tanker's central section. Seven of the workers- George Aquilina, 24, of Qormi, Charles Callus, 46, of Valletta, Mario Hales, 39, of Mqabba, Simon Mifsud, 26, of Birgu, Simon Pisani, 22, of Msida, Angelo Sciberras, 51, of Zabbar, and Anthony Vassallo, 29 of Dingli- died instantly.

The other two- Paul Seguna, 37, of Zebbug and George Xuereb, 58, of Qormi suffered grievous injuries, and later died at St Luke's Hospital. While in the ambulance, Xuereb reportedly asked the medical staff what had happened to his co-workers. In 1998, when the inquiry was concluded, the ship was towed out to sea by Wied iz-Zurrieq for usage as an artificial shipwreck and a diving attraction. A brass plaque was stuck to the ship as a memorial to the nine workers. The national wound of Malta's biggest ever dockyard tragedy will never be forgotten. The Council of Cospicua remembered this tragedy with relatives of the nine victims in a ceremony at the El Faroud memorial at the entrance of the Three Cities

KEEP ON SENDING YOUR ARTICLES, COMMENTS AND EMAILS
BE PART OF THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF MALTESE CULTURE

THANK YOU - GRAZZI





The People of Malta is in Cospicua.

<https://www.facebook.com/thepeopleofmalta/>

"This is the Maltese boat that has been used for more than 500 years. It is known as 'Id-dghajsa tal-Pass'. I care for them and sail them. Lately I restored a 190 year old one.

I have no formal schooling. All I know is how to write my name. But I learnt how to fix and mend boats because I used to watch my father and his boss. I was born with these boats and shall never

leave them for as long as I live. By the time I was 11 years old I was already riding them. My brother and I have a boatmen cooperative. These vessels need a lot of work and we have persevered because we are so passionate about them. Tourists really appreciate them and use them because they are unique. Rain or shine we are always on the sea. I suffer from air-sickness not sea-sickness!"



MALTESE CENTER in New York City, NEW YORK

Address: 2720 Hoyt Ave S, Astoria, NY 11102, United States

Phone: +1 718-728-9883

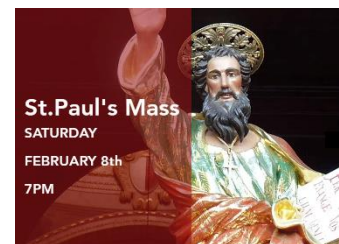
Maltese Center membership isn't a gym membership
You don't value it on how much you're going to use it.

The value is preserving a place that we can call ours - *id-dar tagħna!*

Join us to celebrate mass in the lower hall on Saturday February 8th 7pm. All are welcome.

- St. Paul is the patron saint of Malta
- Always celebrated on February 10th in Malta
- Also known as 'In-Nawfragu ta' San Pawl' (Feast of St. Paul's Shipwreck)

It is a public holiday in Malta



Sunday February 9th 2pm lower hall

Coffee, tea and pastries will be served

Kinnie, drinks and pastizzi and other savory snacks available at the concession



Did you know the Maltese Center:

- Operates through a budget from membership dues and event attendance.
- Run entirely by volunteers who donate their time and skills.
- There are no employees.
- It is the only Maltese community center in the US Northeast and US Southeast

A yearly membership is equivalent to \$10 a month

<https://www.facebook.com/thepeopleofmalta/>



'Gnien tal-Mall' monument commemorates teachers

Report: Fiorella Pace

An artistic bronze monument, which was recently inaugurated, prevails among the rest of the monuments at the 'Gnien tal-Mall' in Floriana. While the other nine monuments represent historic personalities, this latest monument commemorates the 100 anniversary of the Malta Union of Teachers.

The monument is the work of artist Chris Ebejer who throughout his life studied arts and sculpture and is now

dedicated to works of monuments in bronze.

The MUT monument is entitled 'Education opens new doors and transforms the person'.

"The whole work on the monument was done in Italy, that is even all the sculpture – at a Lucca studio. Then the work was transferred to a foundry to finish the whole process together with an Italian team. Its technique is a bit small compared with other systems....even the butterflies, for example, were sculptured one by one; it was a meticulous technique.

As a sculptor and artist, Ebejer uses other materials apart from bronze, however he says that there is a reason for his decision on the Mall Garden monument in bronze.

"When I decided on drafting my design, I considered the environment in the garden. Here, there are a lot of bronze monuments with a white marble base...so I decided that this monument reflects the artistic tradition and material present in the garden".

Chris Ebejer said that the base of a monument is important as it forms the design for a sculpture work leaning to a three-dimensional aspect, resembling the sculpture he made which he described as a form of realistic art.



Wow! Another amazing spread of Guido Stilon's photos in this week's Times of Malta!

Make sure you visit the exhibition Malta in Transition: a collection of photographs by Guido Stilon, open from 11 February 2020 at Malta Postal Museum & Arts Hub.

Thanks to APS Bank for their support, and Arts Council Malta - Project Support Grant.



Mistra fatality - Family raising funds to travel from Australia for funeral

Funds have already reached the halfway point

Gordon Watson

A collage of pictures of Mark Camilleri with his children Nicole and Nathan and grandchildren. Credit: Nicole Camilleri.

The children of a motorcyclist who died in a collision on Saturday afternoon, have started a fundraising campaign to cover their family's travel costs from Australia to Malta, for his funeral.

The campaign, on the fundraising website GoFundMe, aims to raise money to cover the travel costs and general expenses for Mark Camilleri's grandchildren and daughter in law in Australia.

"His children Nicole and Nathan would love for his grandchildren and daughter in law to be able to be there with them for the funeral with our younger sister Lyra," the fundraiser's organiser Nicole Camilleri explained. The campaign has received 88 donations so far and has managed to raise \$4,188 (€2526) almost half of its \$10,000 (€6033) donation target.

"Any donation is appreciated. We love and miss our father dearly and would appreciate nothing more than to all be together one last time before we say our final goodbyes," Ms Camilleri added.

The fundraiser appeared hours after the tragic accident on the Mistra Bridge in Xemxija in which the motorcycle Mr Camilleri was riding was involved in collision with a car.

The 46-year-old motorcyclist was pronounced dead at the scene. The car was driven by a 49-year-old Lithuanian woman who was hospitalised for shock.

Donors on the webpage have expressed their support for the family and have donated sums of between \$20 (€12) and \$500 (€301) Australian dollars.

One commented, "Most loving family and most devoted father! Couldn't think of any other way to help!"



helloworld
TRAVEL
THE TRAVEL PROFESSIONALS

Maltese Achiever in Australia - NATHAN MICALLEF

Congratulations to Nathan Micallef, Part Owner/Manager of Hello World, Travel Agency, Melton Victoria.

Nathan has been in the business for the last 22 years.

On 1 February 2020 he was awarded:

- Evergreen 1st Place - Top Consultant - Nationally.
- Evergreen 1st Place - Travel Agency Victoria/Tasmania.

Nathan has been a Qantas Holiday Global Achiever for the last ten years (top 100 consultants Australia/New Zealand).

In 2019 his Agency also won:

- Evergreen 1st Place - Travel Agency Victoria/Tasmania.
- Trafalgar Tours Acclaim Agency – Globally.

The Agency's 80% of their customers are repeat clientele and referral guests from over the years. They specialise in tailored packages and group departures.

Nathan claims, "We pride ourselves on our service and are proud of being a locally owned and operated franchise"

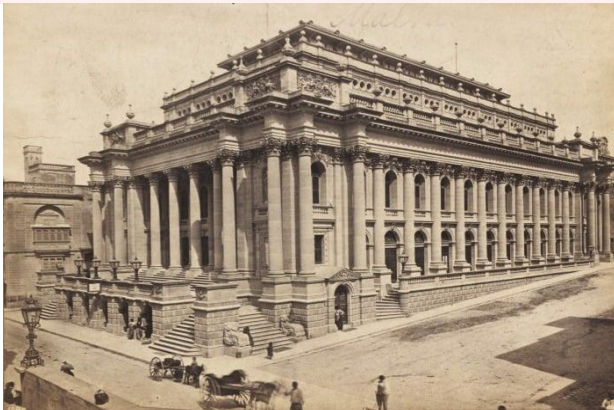


MEM[O]RJA
oral, sound and visual archive

ARKIVJI NAZZJONALI TA' MALTA

29 September 1958. A police motorcade at Customs House in Valletta, waiting for the arrival of Cardinal Francis Spellman.

Photo donated by Joseph Zammit, third from left on M.P.67, to Memorja project within the National Archives of Malta



MALTESE MODELLER RECREATES VALLETTA'S 'LOST GEM'

With its stunning architecture, it was once one of the most beautiful buildings in Malta. Things changed in 1942, when the majestic Theatre Royal in Valletta was devastated during a wartime air raid. But now one of Malta's most talented model makers has recreated the iconic building's glory days in miniature.

Robert Zammit from Senglea spent several months working on his version of the Royal Opera House – and it's a brilliant work of art. He told Bay Retro: 'I've been working on this model for the past three years, although I started my first model around 30 years ago.'



'I then left it half-finished on a shelf because I was too busy doing other things.' The real Theatre Royal was originally built in Valletta in 1866.

Less than seven years later disaster struck when it was destroyed by fire before it was eventually rebuilt and re-opened in 1877.

Over the years the grand building on Kingsway hosted hundreds of concerts, dramas, comedy plays and musicals,

entertaining tens of thousands of people. Disaster struck a second time during the Second World War. On Tuesday 7 April 1941 the front half of the building was devastated by a bomb during an air raid by the Luftwaffe in 1942 during the Second World War. The site was eventually cleared and used as a car park until the late 1990s. The surviving original structure now hosts an open air theatre which was designed by the world-renowned architect Renzo Piano. <https://bay.com.mt/>

Italian student learns Maltese in three months – feels welcomed by her colleagues

Report: Glen Falzon

A total of 620 mixed students attend Birżebbuġa Primary, and a third of these are foreigners from 37 countries. The most recent addition to the school is a student from Venezuela. School head Jean Pierre Micallef told Television Malta that the school also caters for the children of refugees living in Hal Far.

11-year-old Miriam Labate is Italian and has managed to learn Maltese in just three months. "I like the Maltese letters, the way one speaks, the accent. I like it very much." Miriam is in her sixth year at Birżebbuġa Primary. She has made a lot of friends, and she feels very welcomed by fellow students. "I am told that I talk too much. So they tell me."

Miriam is eager to teach Maltese to her cousins. "We visit our grandparents in Sicily every year, the uncles and aunts and the whole family, and I try and teach my cousins a bit of Maltese."

Miriam Labate is among 200 foreign students at this school, who come from the four corners of the world. "The latest addition came from Venezuela. A 'first' for the school. We have students from Italy, Germany, Nigeria, Libya, Syria. Historically, we are the first school in Malta to have taken in refugees from Hal Far. We have 40 refugee

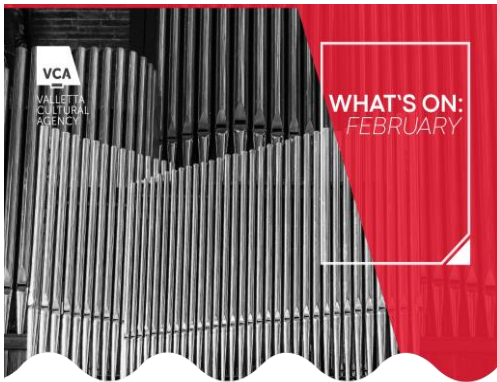
children." Mr Fenech adds that one class in the school has been transformed into a nurture room for students with social and behavioural problems.

"We have a special fund for these children, which covers their breakfast, lunch, outings and free uniforms, as well as stationery. Both Maltese and foreign students attend this nurture room."

A new concept has been introduced in one of the classes since last September. Traditional chairs and tables have been removed, and this has been welcomed by the students, who are now learning in more comfort. "The environment resembles a small household, a carpet on which to play, cushions, a big ball, and every day students use the sofa, the carpet or the cushions by rotation."

During a visit to the school, Education Minister Owen Bonnici expressed his eagerness to continue learning more about the education system with the aim of promoting ideas towards refinement for the benefit of both students and educators.





Organ and Voice

15 February, 19:30

St Paul's Anglican Pro-Cathedral, Valletta

For this evening characterised by the sound of the organ, maestro Joe Caruana will be accompanying soprano Rosabelle Pavia and tenor Alan Sciberras, delivering some well-known and much-loved pieces from Northern and Central Europe. *This event is part of the Valletta Cultural Agency's MusiCity programme.*



TNAX

This outdoor, photographic images that have left a mark on the local photographic landscape, one for each month of the year. February's photo features the Grand Harbour in Force 11 winds, shot by Kurt Arrigo. Check out TNAX in St John Street, opposite St John's Co-Cathedral. exhibition consists of 12 Maltese iconic

This project is curated by Joseph P. Smith, and created and produced by the Valletta Cultural Agency in collaboration with the Valletta Local Council.



Grazzi Dun Gorg

– is the title of a musical tribute to Mgr George Grima, the founder of The Missionary Movement Jesus in thy Neighbour in Victoria, who showed his great love towards poor children in less developed countries.

Organised by the Missionary, the musical is taking place this weekend, on Saturday, the 8th, at 7.30pm and Sunday the 9th of February, at 2.30pm, at the Oratory Don Bosco Theatre in Victoria, Gozo.

Lyrics are by Christian Abela, with the music of Mro. Joe Brown and Mariella Spiteri Cefai, and the musical will portray the life of the founder of this movement, and about

this Missionary Movement that today is recognised as an international one.

DCapitals Big Band under the direction of conductor Mro. George Apap will be providing the music with the participation of some of the best local talents.

The artistic direction is by Mr. Jamie Camilleri and vocals will be under the direction of Antonella Rapa. The organisers said that the entire profit will go towards continuing the projects that "dear Father George himself started, enabling the twenty-eight thousand children who can now enjoy a daily hot plate. Gozonews.com

Once again thank you for publishing such a great newsletter.

Last year we happened to visit Malta lake in Poland and it is amazing that you happen to mention it in the newsletter, we stayed at the camping site which is also called 'Camping Malta' Congratulations on achieving such success with the newsletter. Best regards. Godfrey Vella

The Origins of Maltese Statehood

A CASE STUDY OF DECOLONIZATION
IN THE MEDITERRANEAN



Henry Frendo

VINTAGE MALTA: THE GIANTS WHO FORGED THE NATION [Jessica](#)

[Arena](#) [timesofmalta.com](#)

**Vintage
archive of
post-war
photos
features
people
who
shaped
Malta**

By all
accounts,
post-war

While independence today is widely regarded as a success, the issue at the time divided the nation with its two protagonists, Mintoff and Borg Olivier, differing in everything from mannerism to foreign policy.

Stilon's photographs of the two prime ministers at various stages of their political life, as well as rallies showing supporters listening intently, capture only moments of the tension and turmoil that characterised that era of our history.

However, as measures were made to see new industry set up shop in Malta, the country made leaps and bounds in transitioning from a colony to a sovereign state, Prof. Frendo said, even experiencing return migration as the diverse workforce continued to grow. "The fact that the country was gaining momentum and recognition and accessibility as an independent state induced a number of big enterprises to start looking at Malta," he said.

"So, it was a big transition, definitely, but a successful one, because the prophecies of hunger doom and gloom and starvation, they were all proven to be unfounded in the end."

During this time, the influence and reach of the Catholic Church cannot be understated, particularly under the stewardship of Archbishop Mikiel Gonzi, who infamously interdicted members of the Labour Party.

"Gonzi was very paternalistic, he saw himself as the leader of the flock," Prof. Frendo said.

"And so because he saw himself in this pastoral role, any deviation, so to speak, from the rest of the flock was considered an act of disloyalty."

Much like in Ireland or Poland, the Church served as a rallying point for people against their colonisers and still commanded a lot of power. Independence could also spell doom for the scope of its influence, as well as Mintoff's at the time during a bold proposal to separate Church and State.

"For all intents and purposes, Gonzi and the Church were one and the same," Prof. Frendo said.

"Certainly, interdiction was used against those who deviated from the flock."

photographer Guido Stilon was largely apolitical, yet throughout his active years he attended numerous political activities spanning the range of the local spectrum.

While family and friends say Stilon had little appetite for the content of the political rallies, his instincts as a photographer drew him to the showmanship and theatrics of the political situation that was unfolding during his time.

Active between the 1950s and the 1970s, Stilon's prolific documentation of Malta also captured its formative years as a sovereign state and before that, the long road to independence.

In his book *The Origins of Maltese Statehood*, historian Henry Frendo features a newspaper cartoon that depicts Dom Mintoff and George Borg Olivier walking side by side and coming to a stop at a steep precipice. Below them, circling in the water, are two sharks.

One is called "qgħad" (unemployment) while the other is called "għaks" (poverty).

"Independence itself was a very tricky proposition," Prof. Frendo told *The Sunday Times of Malta*.

"Both Borg Olivier and Mintoff believed in it, but the smaller parties who were afraid of independence didn't.

"They reckoned Britain had afforded us security, defence and employment and that independence would put all those things at risk."

The Guido Stilon photography collection

Photographer Guido Stilon.

The Guido Stilon collection, which has been digitised by the Magna Żmien project, is a prolific archive that documents Malta between the 1950s and the mid-1970s.

Stilon's photography is the subject of the exhibition Malta in Transition, which will run at the Malta Postal Museum in Valletta from February 11 to March 7.



Former Prime Minister Dom Mintoff (centre) and his deputy Anton Buttigieg (left).



George Borg Olivier addressing a meeting.



Archbishop Michael Gonzi and Prime Minister George Olivier



Veteran broadcaster Victor Galdes



Former General Workers' Union general secretary Joe Attard Kingswell



Ghannej Mikiel Abela Il-Bambinu entertains the crowd.

George Cross Falcons Community Centre, Gringila, New South Wales



**Two more ambassadors
Emmanuel Vella and Victor Fenech**



**Charlie Camilleri will be at the Centre
Saturday 23 May 2020 to celebrate
the 15th anniversary**

**MONDAY CRINGILA!
ONLY \$7.00**

**TEA AND COFFEE AND CAKES
COOKED MEAL AND DESSERT
PLUS BREAD! AND 3 MEAT
TRAYS TO BE RAFFLED!**



**The Greenacres Group presented a certificate to the Centre for the commitment
and support! — with Louis Parnis and Mary Borg.**

**CONNECTING COMMUNITIES OF
MALTESE LIVING ABROAD**



Maltese emigrant suffers life-changing injuries in Canada

Campaign launched to help Matthew Mallia

start the long road to recovery Kristina Abela

Matthew and Tania Mallia with their daughters Sienna and Sophie.

A fund-raising campaign has been launched to help a 36-year-old Maltese man who suffered life-

changing injuries in a serious accident in Canada. Matthew Mallia, who emigrated to Canada together with his family when he was six, was taking his young daughters to a class when he was involved in a collision with a truck. As a result, the border officer from Ontario suffered a traumatic brain injury, a leg amputation above the knee, seven broken ribs and three broken thoracic vertebrae. Damage to a nerve has also left him unable to open his left eye, or see single vision, and, at this point, the prognosis for his vision is unknown.

His Malta-based cousin, who is in close contact with the family, said that while Matthew was in an enormous amount of pain, he was in stable condition and had already started rehabilitation. The biggest cause of concern is the brain injury, he told Times of Malta. A lot is unknown right now about his condition and what kind of support he will need in the coming months and years. "Although he doesn't have a problem recognising people, there are gaps in his memory and there is still a lot of uncertainty about how this injury will affect him in the future," he said.

Matthew's parents, Winston and Marija, who emigrated to Canada in 1989, are in shock, and have relocated temporarily to their son's hometown since they live over 100 miles away. The couple, originally from Fgura, wanted to be closer to their son and his family at this challenging time in their lives to offer all the support they could, Mr Mallia said.

Nine-year-old daughter is due to make a full recovery as her six-year-old sister was lucky to escape unharmed

"Matt's wife, Tanya, is showing enormous strength despite also being in shock," he added.

Their nine-year-old daughter, Sienna, who suffered internal injuries as a result of the accident, had to undergo surgery and is due to make a full recovery, while his other daughter, Sophie, who is six years old, was lucky to escape unharmed.

To help support the family during the long and hard road to recovery, a close friend has started a fundraiser and through social media has already raised \$78,000, out of a target of \$100,000.

"While this is impressive, it is a drop in the ocean. The family is going to need as much support as it can get for the months/years ahead in what has been a life changing accident," his cousin told Times of Malta.

Messages of support have poured in from Matthew Mallia's friends and strangers alike on the fundraiser page.

One of the donors, Bonnie Lucier, said: "I have always enjoyed Matt's positive, easy going way; it is a pleasure to have in the workplace. Having met Tanya this week, even in the heart of this, it was evident why the two of you are together and I am confident that the two of you will get through this stronger than ever!"

To help Matthew, go to: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/matt-mallia-and-family>.