



M.C.I. PROGRAMME

Malta Cultural Institute, "La Paloma",
16, St. Henry Street, Sliema, SLM 1321, Malta

Issue February 2010

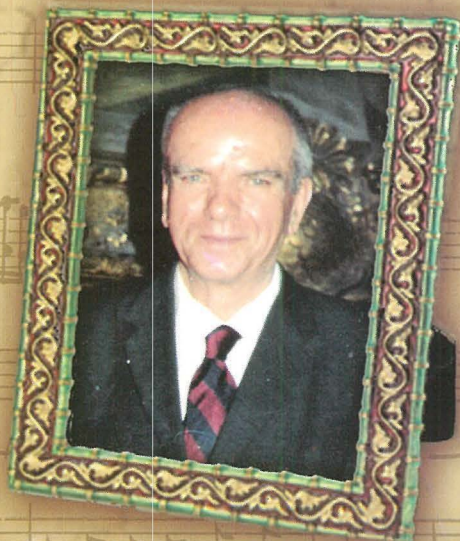
Malta Cultural Lentamente Institute

5th Concert of the
M.C.I. Season

*A Tribute to
Mrs. Frank Vassallo*

In the
**HOTEL LE MERIDIEN,
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Balluta Bay.**

**Monday
8th February 2010
@ 6.30pm**



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Dear Friends,

The February Concert will be dedicated entirely to the music of Mro Frank Vassallo. This is a very special event, as most of the music which we will be presenting is being premiered on the night. The musicians, Maria-Elena Farrugia, Massimo Borg, David Ellul, Miguel Rosales, Mark-Anthony Sammut, Laura Cioffi, Clara Galea, Kevin Azzopardi and Rita Paris have taken a special interest in studying the new music and have undertaken the difficult task of interpreting works which they had previously never heard. They have worked very hard to perfect their performances and they promise us a unique musical experience. We would like to thank the Principal of the University Junior College for allowing them once more to play for the MCI.

Singers Joan Camilleri, Rita Scicluna and Miriam Camilleri and Pianist Maria Scicluna have all known the Maestro during his lifetime and have performed in his presence and been encouraged by him.

Harpist Lydia Buttigieg feels specially privileged as she originally studied the Harp Sonata, which she will be playing, with Mro Vassallo himself and has been instructed by him as to the interpretation he wished. She has his notes on the original copy he gave her himself and may say that the work was written with her in mind.

Special thanks are due to Mro Manoel Pirotta, who undertook the task of assigning the music to the different musicians from the University Junior College Ensemble and supervising their rehearsals. His collaboration and energy have been invaluable to ensure the smooth preparation and success of the evening.

My brother, Dr. Pierre Vassallo, would like to join me to thank all the instrumentalists and singers who made this evening possible. Their efforts will never be forgotten. We would also like to thank all the MCI members and patrons who have promised to be there to support us, just as they have always unfailingly supported the MCI.

Marie Thérèse Vassallo.



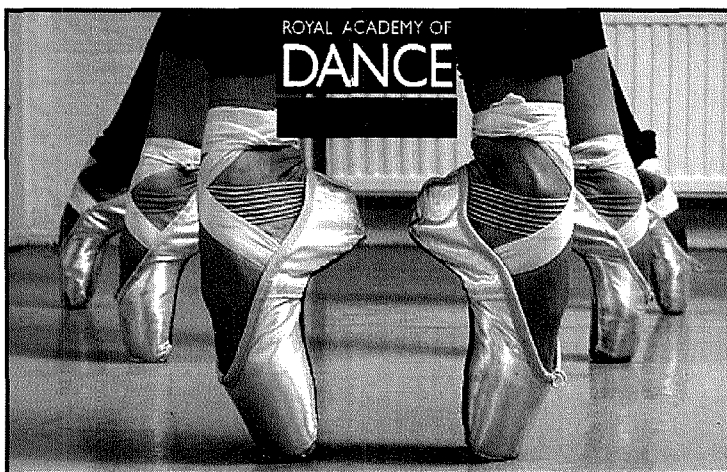
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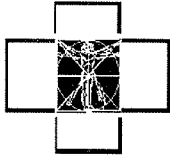
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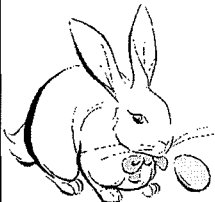
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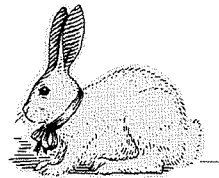
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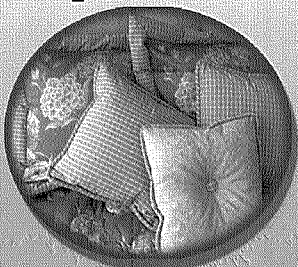


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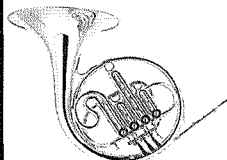


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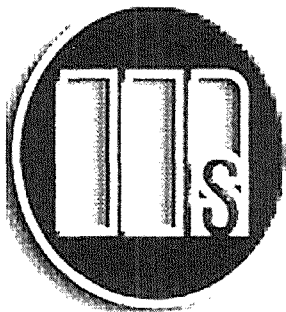
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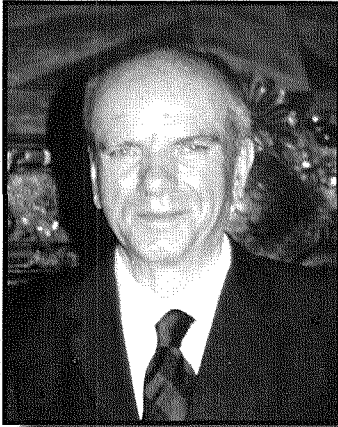
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MAESTRO FRANK VASSALLO (1924-2000)

FRANK VASSALLO was born in Sliema on the 3rd of July 1924 of Carmelo Vassallo and Theresa Doneo. His maternal grandfather was Carmelo Doneo, a Military Bandmaster throughout most of his life, who also helped to set up various Band Clubs in Malta, like La Vittoria Band Club in Mellicha and St. Joseph Band Club in Hamrun.

Frank Vassallo started his musical studies at the age of six years with his uncle Emidio Doneo, a renowned Flautist and Teacher, who taught him the fundamentals of Musical Theory and Instrumentation. He experimented with various musical instruments and at ten years of age he started Violin studies with Anthony Mamo, a renowned Virtuoso Violinist and Teacher.

On the 23rd May 1948 Frank Vassallo married Theresa Theuma and they had two children, Marie Therese and Pierre.

Among his many musical activities, Frank Vassallo's favourite occupations were always teaching and composition. He was an Associate Member of the Performing Right Society of London, as a Composer. He composed various works for String, Woodwind, Brass instruments, Pianoforte and Voices, as solo works and also in all kinds of combinations like Duets, Trios, Quartets, Quintets and Octets. He also composed Symphonies for both big and small orchestras, Chamber works, Oratorios, Songs about both Sacred and profane subjects, 2 Requiem Masses among several other Masses and other Sacred music. Among his other works are Divertimenti and Studies for various instruments. An outstanding work by Vassallo is his Sonata in G for Harp.

His works have been published in England, Italy, France and the USA. His composition "Such Sweet" was published by Lucia Publishing Co. in 1946. His song "Bit-Tlikki Tlikki" was published by Keith Prowse Publishing Co. Ltd., London, in 1967, and also in its Italian version as "Giorni d'Estate" by Peter Morris of Milan in the same year. His composition "Viva Maria" was published by EL BRIOS Publishing Co. of Firenze in 1971. Two of his songs "Con Gioco" and "Mon Amour Parisien" are performed regularly on French and Italian Television and Radio Stations. One of his Guitar books has been published by Charnwood Musical Publishing Co. of London and is used as part of the Syllabus of the Leicester School of Music in their examinations.

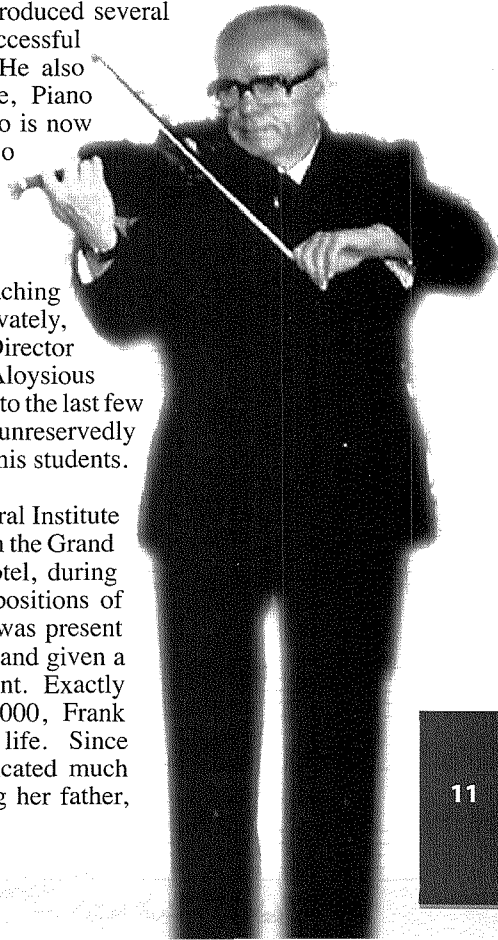


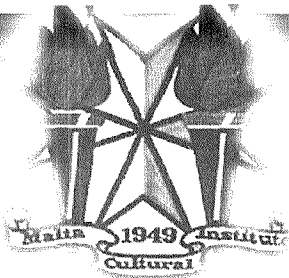
On the 23rd June 1974 a new Parish was established in Sliema, the Parish of Our Lady of Mount Carmel of Balluta and the first Parish Priest was Rev.Fr. Damian Cachia O.Carm. The new Parish Priest asked Mro.Frank Vassallo to compose a Hymn, which would be easily learnt by all the Parishioners and sung with the Bands every year for the Festa. The INNU MARCH LILL-MADONNA TAL-KARMNU was instantly a huge success. This March is still played by all the visiting Bands every year for the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and is sung every year on the eve of the Festa during the Band Concert which is held at Balluta Square. The Music of the INNU MARCH was composed by Mro.Frank Vassallo and the Lyrics by his daughter, Marie Therese Vassallo.

Frank Vassallo is the father of Mezzo-Soprano Marie Therese Vassallo, whom he started off in the field of music when she was only four years old. He was her teacher for Violin, Guitar and Vocal Studies and her trusted advisor and mentor throughout her career and her life. Frank and Marie Therese worked very closely together as Composer and Authoress, and produced several musical compositions, which were very successful and were published in Malta and abroad. He also taught his son, Pierre Vassallo, Piano, Piano Accordeon and Guitar. Dr. Pierre Vassallo is now a Consultant Radiologist, besides being also very interested in Music in his spare time. Both Marie Therese and Pierre have established International Careers.

Frank Vassallo spent most of his life teaching and composing music. Besides teaching privately, he was also a Music Teacher and Orchestra Director at St.Edward's College, Cottonera, and at St.Aloysius College, Birkirkara. He taught music right up to the last few days of his life, passing on his knowledge unreservedly and taking a personal interest in each one of his students.

On the 10th January 2000 the Malta Cultural Institute presented an evening dedicated to his music in the Grand Concert Hall of Le Meridien Phoenicia Hotel, during which various vocal and instrumental compositions of his were performed. Mro.Vassallo himself was present for the occasion and was presented on stage and given a standing ovation by the large audience present. Exactly four weeks later, on the 7th February 2000, Frank Vassallo passed away peacefully to eternal life. Since then his daughter, Marie Therese, has dedicated much time in her career preserving and presenting her father, Frank Vassallo's works.





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A Tribute to Mrs. Frank Vassallo

Nocturne in Eb

Pianoforte: Maria-Elena Farrugia

Sonata in G major for Bb Clarinet & Pianoforte (1st Movt.)

Bb Clarinet: Massimo Borg

Pianoforte: Maria-Elena Farrugia

Lil Missieri

Mezzo-Soprano: Rita Scicluna

Pianoforte: Maria Scicluna

Duet in G No:2 for 2 Violins (1st Movt.)

Violins: David Ellul

Miguel Rosales

Sonata in C major for Eb Contralto Saxophone & Pianoforte (1st. Movt.)

Saxophone: Mark-Anthony Sammut **Pianoforte:** Maria-Elena Farrugia

L-Ewwel Imhabba

Soprano: Joan Camilleri **Pianoforte:** Maria Scicluna

Trio in C minor for 3 Flutes (2nd & 3rd Movts.)

Flutes: Laura Cioffi

Clara Galea

Kevin Azzopardi

Quartette for 2 Flutes & 2 Violins (1st Movt.)

Violins: David Ellul, Miguel Rosales

Flutes: Laura Cioffi, Clara Galea, Kevin Azzopardi

INTERVAL

Sonata in G major for Harp in 3 movements

Harpist: Lydia Buttigieg

Bit-Tlikki Tlikki

Mezzo-Soprano: Miriam Camilleri

Pianoforte: Maria Scicluna

Ave Maria

Mezzo-Soprano: Marie Therese Vassallo

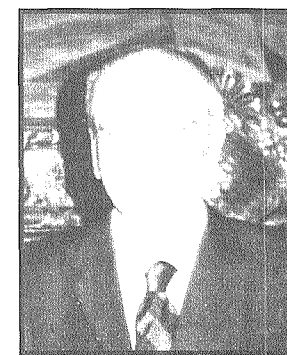
Pianoforte: Rita Paris

Pawlu F' Malta (Choir)

Pianoforte: Rita Paris

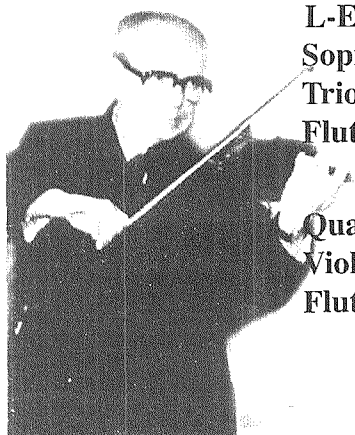
Choir: Marie Therese Vassallo Voice Studio

Choir Director: Marie Thérèse Vassallo



Programme Co-ordination & Presentation:

Marie Thérèse Vassallo





Meet The Artists

Maria-Elena Farrugia is currently pursuing her Pianoforte studies with Ingrid Calleja. She has won several prizes both in Malta and abroad. She won the EPTA competition and was sent to further her studies at the Liszt Academy in Budapest with Profs Balazs Szokolay. She placed 1st. in the 6th. Young Musicians Concert of the Malta Society of Arts, Manufacturing and Commerce, and 2nd. in the 11th. Bice Mizzi Vassallo music competition. Maria-Elena, who holds a DipABRSM and an ATCL in pianoforte playing, and is also a member of the University Junior College Ensemble.



Kevin Azzopardi studied flute with Natasha Chirchop and Robert Calleja. With the University Junior College Orchestra, he performed in various esteemed cultural activities in Malta, and abroad, including Heidelberg (Germany), Pisa and Assisi (Italy) and in Martigues, France. Kevin, who performs regularly at the MCI Monday Ovation Concerts, holds an A-level in music and is currently studying for his grade 8 in Flute practice

Massimo Borg studied the E flat clarinet with Carmelo Vella and David. He joined the Società Filarmonica Nazionale La Valette when still nine years old. He also travelled to Germany, France, and Italy with the University Junior College Orchestra. He also played with the Società Nazionale La Valette in Como, Italy (2006), and with the European Youth Band, also in Italy, under the direction of Mro. Ten. Col. Gedeon Jakab (2009). Massimo features regularly in the MCI Monday Ovations.



Laura Cioffi, studied flute with Silvio Zammit and holds a diploma in flute playing. She has attended Master classes in Malta, England and Italy. Laura is principal flutist with the University Junior College Orchestra. In 2009 she attended the European Union Youth Orchestra Summer School and played with the Orchestra in Graffenegg under the direction of Vladimir Ashkenazy and Andrew Litton. Laura is also a part-time member of the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra.

Miguel Rosales studied violin with Fiona Giambra and holds an ABRSM Grade 7 certificate in violin playing. Highlights include: highest distinction for Grade 3 violin playing in Malta (2003), finalist in the Lufthansa competition organised by James Grech and the Stradivarius Season (2004), member of the MNYO (2005-6). He is currently studying music at A-level under Mro Manoel Pirotta, and is a regular performer with the University Junior College Orchestra. He also studies voice under Brian Cefai and forms part of the Amadeus Chamber Choir.





David Ellul studied violin with Marcelle Abela Bartolo, James Grech, Romeo Giacomotto, and holds an L.L.C.M in violin playing. Took part in various masterclasses and workshops, both in Malta and abroad, and is currently leader of the University Junior College Orchestra. David also studies the violoncello with Simon Abdilla at the Johann Strauss School of Music.



Mark Anthony Sammut started playing the piano at a very young age with Maryanne Debono. He studied at the Akkademja tal-Muzika (St. Julian's Band Club), and holds a VCM Grade 7 and 8 in descant-recorder playing and theory respectively. He also holds an ABRSM Grade 7 in both soprano and alto saxophone playing. As a member of the University Junior College Orchestra, he traveled to Italy (2008) and France (2009). Mark Anthony, who plays with local band clubs, also took part in this year's Lasallian Nights which proved to be a huge success.



Clara Galea was born in 1993. She studied at the Johann Strauss School of Music and obtained Dip.ABRSM in Flute playing. She is a member of the University Junior College Orchestra, the Johann Strauss School of Music Orchestra and the Cantabile Flute Choir (Mro Silvio Zammit). She has played in several concerts like "Birgu by Candlelight", San Anton Palace Annual Concert and with various local bands and orchestras.

Manoel Pirotta DNESM (Lyon) [M.A.] Dip. CNR (Lyon) [B.A.] (Hons) LFIBA FTCL FLCM FNCM LTCL LMusLCM, composer, and pedagogue, graduated from the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Lyon (1994). He is a full-time lecturer at the University Junior College where he teaches the Matsec music programme. The Research and Advisory Board of the International Biographical Centre in Cambridge nominated him "International Musician of the year" for his outstanding musical achievements (2003). He is a life fellow of this association and contributes significantly to the standing of the IBA in the worldwide forum. Pirotta was awarded the Manoel Pirotta Trophy (2006) by the Victoria College of Music. The trophy will be presented each year to who is considered the most deserving music student for that year, will be kept by for one year, before it passes on to another meritorious Maltese student. He was also awarded the Grand Prix des Arts for music composition and conducting at the 8th. Malta International Art Biennale (2007). Pirotta conducted both the Catholic Institute Youth Orchestra (1987-9) and the Maltese Youth Orchestra (1994-6). He is musical director of the University Junior College Orchestra, and The Euro Academy Youth Orchestra since 1999 and 2002 respectively. His incidental music – Antony and Cleopatra won him an entry in the "Shakespeare Music Catalogue" issued by Victoria College, Canada. The work was revised and played by the orchestra Città di Ravenna (2005). His La Lyonnaise for solo piano features in Murray MacLachlan's CD Piano Music from Malta. Other works are also included in piano anthologies, among which, "Kinder Garden" and "A musical tribute to Mozart from Malta".





Soprano Joan Camilleri returns to the music scene with this MCI commemoration concert of Mro. Frank Vassallo following a seven year absence. The last MCI concert she sang in was 10 years ago; that concert was also held in honour of Mro Vassallo and he was present for the evening. This was unfortunately four weeks prior to his demise. Joan has sung both in Malta and abroad and has a versatile repertoire. She is making a come-back with a more mature and full voice and a poised approach to her performance. Joan is being tutored by Marie Therese Vassallo and her return is obviously with the Marie Therese Voice Studio.

Mezzo-Soprano Miriam Camilleri was born in Cospicua in 1957. She is married to Mro. Michael Camilleri and they have 4 children. She works as a State Registered Nurse, but has been involved in Music all her life. She started singing from a very early age with her father, who was a Tenor. She started Voice Studies with Marie Therese Vassallo in 1994 and has been a very active member of the Marie Therese Vassallo Voice Studio ever since. Miriam has sung with various Choirs and Orchestras as a Soloist and hopes to continue her musical studies and exams. Miriam is also a very successful Poet, having won various competitions both in Malta and abroad.



Mezzo-Soprano Rita Scicluna is a staff nurse at Mater Dei Hospital. Recently she achieved her M. Mus. from the University of Malta, after obtaining her PGCE in music education. Although she plays the clarinet, guitar, and piano, her favourite instrument is her voice. She has been a student of Marie Therese Vassallo for quite a number of years, and sings both as a soloist as well as with the choir. Her ambition is to give up nursing, a career which she held for the past twenty-seven years, and teach music in schools. Rita has a wide repertoire ranging from Sacred music to Operatic, Classical and Folk and she feels at ease singing in various languages and in different styles.

Pianist Maria Scicluna is a teacher by profession and works as an Assistant Headmistress in a Government school. In fact whenever the occasion arises at school, she likes to fulfil her role as a teacher even if it is just for one day or even one session. She tries to inculcate music and art into the curriculum whenever she can. At the moment she is reworking her own music compositions and preparing new ones for a performance this year. Mro Pawlu Grech is her teacher and mentor. With him she studies music composition and art. She is always pleased to accompany the Soloists from the Marie Therese Vassallo Voice Studio.





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Pianist Rita Paris started being interested in Music when she was 7 years old, while staying with her family in Rome. She took up piano studies in Malta with Sr. Annita Saliba and Mro. Carmelo Pace. She is the resident pianist with the "Marie Therese Vassallo Voice Studio" and resident organist for the "Kor Fjur tal-Karmelu" (the Balluta Parish Choir), both conducted by Marie Therese Vassallo. Her repertoire ranges from Sacred works to Operatic, Classical, Folk and Popular music, enjoying all

Lydia Buttigieg studied Pianoforte as her first instrument. She has various diplomas both in Pianoforte and Harp playing – LTCL, LLCM, ALCM, ATCL. She also has a Bachelor of Arts (Hons.) Degree, majoring in Pianoforte performance. She was awarded a scholarship by the Janatha Stubbs Foundation and is now in her final year reading for a PhD Degree in Musicology at Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland. She gives private tuition to Sixth Form and University students in advanced Piano technique and interpretation, advanced harmony and counterpoint, history of music and analysis.



Mezzo-Soprano Marie Therese Vassallo, who has been associated with the Malta Cultural Institute since 1990, first as Concert Organiser and since 2004 also as Director of the Institute, has a personal interest in the music being presented in the Concert "A Tribute to Mro Frank Vassallo", as the Maestro was her father, teacher and mentor. She also collaborated with him in quite a few of his compositions, writing the text to his music. She teaches and directs the "Marie Therese Vassallo Voice Studio" Choir and the "Kor Fjur Tal-Karmelu" and their repertoire includes various

works of Mro. Vassallo, which they include in many of their performances. They also sing his Sacred works during the Liturgical Services in Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish Church, Balluta, and whenever they are engaged to sing in the different churches all over Malta and Gozo. The Soloists and Choir will be including Vassallo's works in their repertoire in their performances in France, where they have been invited to sing in May 2010, in an International Festival of choirs coming from different countries. In fact, Ms. Vassallo makes it a point to include Maltese compositions in all the programmes she plans for herself and for her Soloists and Choristers.





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