

GOZO
INTERNATIONAL CELEBRATION
(GIC)



Christmas Edition
Official Programme

13th December 2009 - Qala Parish Church



How different would our lives be if we can put God in the centre of our living. The advertisers are at all times and through all the media harping the same message... buy to achieve joy... purchase to live comfortably... acquire to enjoy happiness... achieve to gain satisfaction. But at the end of the day if we sideline God we will never relish inner

'comfort and joy' because our heart was created for God and without Him we can never find real peace.

Can Dr Joseph Zammit

Magnificat Choir – Soprano Patricia Buttigieg

God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen – Traditional
Stille Nacht – Franz Gruber
O come all ye faithful – Traditional

The University Junior College Orchestra

Innu Studenti Universitarji – Carmelo Pace (1906-93)

It is the official hymn for the University Junior College. Written in 1944, it was awarded first prize in a National Competition organized by the University Students' Representative Council. Words are in Maltese by Albert M. Cassola.

The Sacred Hour (Reverie) - Albert W. Ketelbey (1875-1959)

A young priest plays the organ, the melody expressing his changing mood. The singing of the Ave Maria suddenly interrupts his thoughts. In an access of reverent emotion he resumes playing and almost imperceptibly adapts his melody to the words of the Ave Maria which is still being sung and rises to a grand climax of devotional fervour.

Archpriest's address

The University Junior College Orchestra

Christmas March – Manoel Pirota (1962-)

The work is cast in a typical march and makes use of two well known Christmas tunes, O come, all ye faithful for the main section, and alternating in form with one trio – Ejjew, la dduumux.

Ghawdex Handbell Ringers

O Little Town of Bethlehem – Traditional arranged by David Barker
Joy to the World – Lowell Mason arranged by David Barker

Soprano Ruth Portelli

When a child is born – Zacar

The University Junior College Orchestra

Cantique de Noël - Adolphe Adam (1803-56)

O Holy Night is a well-known Christmas carol to the French poem "Minuit, chrétiens" (Midnight, Christians) by Placide Cappeau (1808-1877), a wine merchant and poet. Cappeau was asked by a parish priest to write a Christmas poem. It has become a standard modern carol for solo performance with an operatic finish.

The Sleigh Ride (German dance K. 605/3) – W. A. Mozart (1756-91)

Mozart established more than anyone else the classical concerto form. He has an astounding output of over 600 works to his credit, among which, divertimentos, serenades and other such music for social events.

Bestowing of 'The Horace Mercieca Award'

The University Junior College Orchestra

Sanctuary of the Heart

(Meditation Religieuse) – Albert W. Ketelbey (1875-1959)

Although Ketelbey, a British composer and conductor nursed ambitions as a composer of more serious works, he became known for relatively lightweight, atmospheric compositions.

Te Deum - Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1643-1704)

Marc-Antoine Charpentier composed his grand polyphonic motet Te Deum (H. 146) in D major probably between 1688 and 1698, during his stay at the Jesuit Church of Saint-Louis in Paris, where he held the position of musical director. The work is written for the group of soloists, choir, and instrumental accompaniment.

Soprano Ruth Portelli

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas – Irving Berlin

Chorus Urbanus

While shepherds watched their flocks – Traditional
Away in a manger – Traditional
Ukrainian bell carol – Traditional

The University Junior College Orchestra

Anthem to Gozo – Joseph Vella (b. 1942-)

Innu lil Ghawdex was written by leading poet Gorg Pisani and set to music by Joseph Vella. It was inaugurated in the presence of the highest civil and ecclesiastical authorities of the Maltese islands on July 18, 1959.

Presentation of painting by Gozitan artist Denis Mompalao

The University Junior College Orchestra, Magnificat Choir and Chorus Urbanus

God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen – Traditional

God rest you merry, gentlemen is a traditional Christmas carol. The melody is in a minor key and is in common time or cut time. The composer is unknown.

The Parish “Magnificat Choir”

Established seventeen years ago, ‘Magnificat’ Choir has performed many concerts, delighted audiences at all the GIC’s and especially graced the Westminster Cathedral in London.



Manoel Pirotta DNESM (Lyon) [M.A.] Dip. CNR (Lyon) [B.A.] Hon. VCM CT,FVCM (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) to celebrate all his hard work in coordinating, organising and administering in Malta for ten years of music examinations by the Victoria College of Music, London. 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 **Ruth Portelli** was born on 2nd July, 1989 and resides in Qala, Gozo. She attended Qala Primary School and at the age of 11 she attended Agius de Soldanis secondary school. Ruth proceeded with her studies at Sir M.A. Refalo School before continuing her studies at the University of Malta following the course B.A. Maltese & Spanish Studies.

Ruth was recognized as a singer at the age of four during a prize day at school. From then onwards, she competed in various festivals in Gozo and even in Malta and won several of them. She took part in various concerts, namely, the editions of the Gozo International Celebration (GIC) in Qala, the Nadur Christmas Concert, the Qala International Folk Festival (QIFF), and had also accompanied the well-known tenor Aldo Busuttill as a guest singer during his concert last year.

Moreover, Ruth is a soprano soloist in the Chorus Urbanus choir. As the main singer of the Menhir Qala Folk Group, she had the opportunity to sing abroad in major countries such as Slovenia, Lanciano in Italy, Vrnjacka Banja in Serbia, and in Czech Republic. She has been awarded "The Horace Mercieca Award" at the GIC Easter Edition 2009.



Denis Mompalao was born on the 17th October 1977 in Victoria, Gozo. Mompalao comes from an artistic family. Ever since his childhood, Mompalao used to assist his father and thus it was inevitable that he would follow the steps of his father in the artistic field. From 1993 to 1996 Mompalao continued his studies at the Salvatore Dimech School of Arts at Targa Gap, Mosta specialising in Art and Design under the tutelage of Anton Calleja and Luciano

Micallef and attended evening classes specialising in nude studies at the said school. He also studied Figure Drawing, Technical Drawing, Graphic Design, Computer Graphics, Photography and other academic studies. He also obtained a diploma in Graphic Design. Apart from these, from 2005 to 2008, Mompalao furthered his studies at the Istituto Veneto per I Beni Culturali, Scuola Grande di S. Giovanni Evangelista in Venice where he obtained a diploma in corsi per Restauratore dei Beni Culturali.

Mompalao is a keen follower of classical artists such as Caravaggio, Menendez, Villavicencio and other famous artists. He continued to expand his knowledge by assisting the well-known Gozitan artist Paul Camilleri Cauchi in the decoration and artistic works in local Churches. His artistic talent inspired him to get closer to the theatre being the set artist and set designer of several theatrical productions produced at the Aurora Opera House although in the past operatic productions he used to give a helping hand in the preparations of the sets. Mompalao also participated in various art exhibitions. He also produced several portraits, differing in sizes, which were later sold in private homes. In fact he is one of the jewels on Gozo's crown.



Chorus Urbanus. Under the direction of Mro John Galea the Choir entered into an advanced phase of elaborate and rather demanding singing. The Chorus Urbanus started participating in quality concerts throughout Malta and Gozo and continued improving its already good reputation. Under John Galea's direction, the choir sang four times abroad giving concerts in Italy, England, Bulgaria, Hungary and

Austria. The Choir issued three CD's, becoming the first Gozitan choir ever to issue a CD.

During these last ten years, the Choir had the privilege to sing in special concerts organised in honour of four Presidents of Malta. These concerts were held in Verdala Palace (19.08.90) in honour of H.E Dr Vincent Tabone, in The Russian Chapel in San Anton Palace, the President's Official Residence in honour of H.E. Dr Ugo Mifsud Bonnici (23.02.97), in the private gardens of San Anton Palace in honour of H.E. Dr Guido de Marco (18.06.2000) and once again in the Russian Chapel in honour H.E. Dr. George Abela (08.06.2009).

The Chorus Urbanus, during its years of existence, promoted the musical art in Malta through its singing, with such a deep sense of dedication and commitment, a commitment which earned the Choir satisfaction and success



Ghawdex Handbell Ringers was formed by a group of 6 Gharb English residents in the summer of 2006 primarily to ring Christmas carols and songs during the festive season. Following our first performance at Christmas of that year our popularity and numbers grew and we now have members from all over the island and from different Christian faiths. We have performed at private functions as well as

Ecumenical services and several times at the Gozo International Celebration at Qala. We are delighted to be performing for you again. The members of the group playing this evening are Heather Hayward, Brenda Hodgkinson, Steve Haddon, Brenda Pegg, Pieter Gussenhoven, and Margaret Thomas. If you are interested in learning more about handbells, please speak to one of the team after the Celebration or telephone Margaret on 21563695.



The University Junior College Orchestra was set up soon after the Junior College was established in 1995. It performed in Christmas Concerts and in the Students' soir e, besides other college occasions. Important venues

abroad include the *Teatro L. Mercantini* of Ripatransone, Italy (2001). Another important venue was held at Bolzano Fiera (Messe Bozen) as part of the Fieralingue (2005). The recital, *Musiche dal repertorio folkloristico maltese e recitazione di poesie in italiano di poeti maltesi* took place at the Congress Center Hotel Sheraton. In 2004-5, the Junior College Music Department embarked on similar music ventures in Hamburg, Germany, where the Maltese students attended masterclasses at *The Hamburger Konservatorium* and the *Musikschule Rissen*. The year 2007 saw the orchestra giving a series of instrumental and vocal concerts in Heidelberg at Eichersheim Castle Gardens Festival and two vocational schools of Wiesloch and Schwetzingen.

In 2008 the University Junior College Orchestra gave a *Concerto vocale e strumentale di musica sacra e classica* at Chiesa di San Nicola (PISA) and Chiesa di Sta. Ubaldesca (CALCINAIA). The two concerts formed part of a cultural exchange between the *Istituto Magistrale Statale "G. Carducci" (Liceo Pedagogico Linguistico e Scienze Sociali Sperimentale)*, and the University of Malta Junior College music department. In May, a group of 9 budding musicians all hailing from the University Junior College Orchestra left Malta for Martigues, France, participated in the 16th edition of *Printemps des Lyc ens et des Apprentis* and were awarded the *Dipl me d'honneur*. In December the orchestra toured to Italy to give two concerts – one in the *Teatro del Convitto del Liceo Scientifico – Principe di Napoli* (ASSISI), and the other in the *Teatro Comunale 'Ettore Thesoreri* (CANNARA). In May 2009, nine members of the orchestra participated in the 17th edition of *Printemps des Lyc ens et des Apprentis* in FREJUS.

In Malta, performances include St. John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta, the *Casino Maltese* and the Phoenicia Ballroom, as part of the MCI's Monday Ovations, the foyer of The Chamber of Commerce & Enterprise (*Notte Magica* 2007), the Salesian Theatre in Sliema, Dolmen Resort Hotel, Qawra, the Auditorium *Peter Serracino Inglott* at the Junior College, and the Gozo Spiritual See of the Sovereign Military Order of St. John the Baptist – Rotunda Church, Xewkija. It also participated in festivals including Festa Nicec at Zebbug, Gozo, and the Christmas Village at Ta' Qali.

Major recent and forthcoming events include: *Notte Bianca* in Valletta 3.10.09, MCI Monday Ovation at Hotel *Le Meridien* 2.11.09, World Children's Day at the President's Palace 22.11.09, Gozo International Celebration in Qala, Gozo 13.12.09, *Milied Flimkien* at St. John's Co-Cathedral 16.12.09, and Christmas Village at Ta' Qali 20.12.09.