

the physician responsible for Valletta and Inspector of Dispensaries. In the early decades of the nineteenth century [14th April 1832], the administration instituted the first public dispensary *Farmacia dei poveri* at the *Auberge d'Italie* at Valletta with the aim of screening admission to the Civil Hospitals. This was staffed by two physicians and two surgeons who offered their services without payment, and a paid apothecary. It subsequently started being referred to as *albergo dei poveri* abridged as *berga*.^{17, 18}

Today the only health-related services that remain in Valletta are limited to the Ministry of Health building at Castella Palace which houses also the offices of the Department of Health. In 2012, Valletta was declared European Capital of Culture (ECoC) for 2018 with a partner Dutch city, Leeuwarden. In order to commemorate and honour Valletta, the Malta Medical School journals will feature front covers with artworks that are in some way related to Valletta, commencing with this very issue.

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Editorial note

For the December 2017 issues and for all of 2018, the *Malta Medical Journal* and the *Malta Medical School Gazette* will feature front covers that depict Valletta. This is in honour of Valletta 2018, wherein Valletta will be the European Capital of Culture, with all attendant programmes. The editorial board sincerely hopes that you will appreciate these covers as much as the actual contents.

Prof. Victor Grech

Cover Picture:

'Valletta'

Oil on canvas with palette knife

By Victor Grech

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