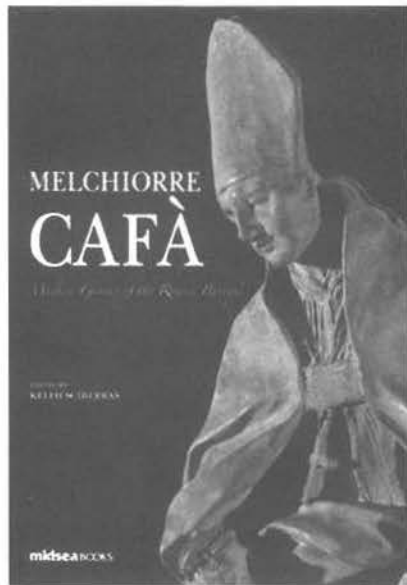


# Melchiorre Cafà: Maltese Genius of the Roman Baroque

Melchiorre Cafà must be counted as one of the most talented Maltese artists of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, honoured to have been recognised as a great sculptor by the brilliant Gianlorenzo Bernini himself, who worked in Rome as his contemporary. This volume is a worthy tribute to an artist of exceptional talent. It is the first full-scale study dedicated to this artist, well-illustrated and finely produced, edited by Keith Sciberras of the University of Malta with contributions by an eminent group of international scholars working in the field of Baroque art. These include the art critic Jennifer Montagu, who was instrumental in forming this team of researchers together with Keith Sciberras, Maria Giulia Barberini and Elena Bianca di Gioia. The other contributors are Angela Cipriani, Gerhard Bissell, Alessandra Anselmi, John Azzopardi, Tomaso Montanari, Louise Rise, Tuccio Sante Guido and Tony Sigel. Apart from the articles themselves, the comprehensive bibliography and list of known works by Cafà that are included at the end of the volume will surely prove to be an indispensable tool for future research.



Keith Sciberras (ed), *Melchiorre Cafà: Maltese Genius of the Roman Baroque*. Midsea Books, Malta: 2006.

## Notes

### Seminar on Valletta

An international seminar 'Valletta: Town, Architecture and Construction between Faith and War', was held at the Embassy of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta in Valletta on 1-3 June 2006.

### Exhibition - 'Albrecht Dürer and Italy'

10 March - 9 June 2007

In the Spring of this year, the *Scuderie del Quirinale* in Rome hosted an important exhibition featuring one of the great personalities in European art history, Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528). The exhibition featured over 200 works by Dürer, and analysed the relationship between Dürer and Italy, highlighting his receptiveness to and influence on Italian art.

### Exhibition - 'The Urban Development of Valletta'

In an extensively researched project exhibited at the *Istituto Italiano di Cultura* in Valletta in 2006, the students of the Faculty of Architecture of the *Politecnico di Bari*, Italy, conducted a study of the urban fabric of Valletta, focusing on its historical development. The project was titled: '*Il processo formative della città di La Valletta: lettura e progetto*'. The project was carried out under the supervision of Professor Giuseppe Strappa and Architect Matteo Ieva of Bari, supported by the International Institute for Baroque Studies of the University of Malta. Architect Grazia Nanna coordinated the setting up of the exhibition in Malta. The exhibits included an extensive ground floor plan of the urban spaces and buildings of Valletta, and numerous plans of individual buildings and sections of the city. The project studied both domestic buildings and monumental or public buildings, mainly the auberges and churches of Valletta. To achieve this wide vision, the project employed a methodology that focused on the formative development of urban spaces, following similar research already carried out on Italian cities such as Venice, Rome, Florence and Como.

### Exhibition - 'Caravaggio: l'immagine del Divino'

30 September - 30 November 2007

Organised by Heritage Malta and Romartificio Eventi at the National Museum of Archaeology, Valletta.

### Exhibition - 'Caravaggio and Paintings of Realism in Malta'

11 October - 16 December 2007

Organised by the St John's Co-Cathedral Foundation at the St John's Co-Cathedral Annex, Valletta.

### Lectures on Alessandro Algardi

On 7-9 March 2007, Dr Jennifer Montagu gave a series of lectures on the sculptor Alessandro Algardi to History of Art students and the general public at the University of Malta, as part of the course ART2010 Roman Baroque Sculpture. The 3 lectures were titled "Early Years in Bologna, Mantua and Rome", "Maturity and Pamphili Patronage", and "Reliefs, Portraits and Smaller Works". Dr Montagu (The Warburg Institute, University College, London) is a leading authority in the field of Roman Baroque sculpture. She has published extensively on the subject, curated major exhibitions and is the recipient of numerous prestigious awards and fellowships. Dr Montagu acted as External Post-Graduate Examiner for the History of Art Programme at the University of Malta.

### Conference on the reconstruction of fortified towns

In October 2006, an international conference on the reconstruction of fortified towns in Sicily, Dalmatia and Malta, was hosted by the research doctorate in the History of Architecture and Conservation of Architectural Assets programme of the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Palermo.

The conference was inaugurated by the Rector of Palermo University, Prof Giuseppe Silvestri, in the grand hall of the medieval Palazzo Chiaramonte, a magnificent building close to the port of Palermo. The conference was held in the Caracciolo hall of Palazzo Landeria, and was attended by leading researchers from the universities of Palermo, Catania, Calabria, Chieti-Pescara, Madrid, Coimbra, Malta, Berkeley, the Heckscher Museum of Art in New York, and the ICCU in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

In their presentations, due to be published shortly, all the participants communicated updated information, based on primary source research, on a variety of subjects related to the theme of the conference.

Among the contributions there were five papers which directly concerned Malta - *Il Progetto di Floriani per le fortificazioni di Malta* by Prof Tommaso Scalesse; *Residenze fortificate in Sicilia e Malta tra cinquecento e seicento* by Fulvia Scaduto; *Don Carlos de Grunenbergh tra Sicilia e Malta* by Prof Gabriella Cianciolo Cosentino; *Fortificazioni delle città costiere nel Regno di Sicilia: l'opera dell'ingegnere Pietro Antonio Tomasello da Padova al tempo del vicere Monteleone* by Dr Maurizio Vesco, and *Alcuni riflessi sulla ricostruzione del luogo forte di Mdina a Malta* by Prof Denis De Lucca.

As a follow-up to the Palermo conference, a group of 30 conference participants, mainly post-graduate students from the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Palermo, visited various sites in Malta, mainly in Valletta and Mdina. The group was introduced to the post-1693 earthquake military and civil architecture of Malta as seen in its local and European context. This 5-day visit was organised by the University of Palermo in collaboration with the International Institute for Baroque Studies at the University of Malta.



*St. Paul, by Melchiorre Cafà,  
Church of St Paul Shipwrecked, Valletta. Detail.*



*Charity of St. Thomas of Villanova, by Melchiorre Cafà, National  
Museum of Fine Arts, Valletta :*

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Holly Knowles, *Baroque Cinema*

Yvette Sciberras Mifsud, *Rosario Gagliardi and Ecclesiastical Buildings in Sicilian Towns*

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Nicholas Aquilina, *The Auberges of Valletta*

Anthony David Brincat, *The Baroque Palace and Gardens of Villa D'Aurel in Gudja*

Jeremy Cachia, *The Iconography of St Catherine of Alexandria in Painting during the Baroque Era in Malta*

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