

International Conference on the Baroque Heritage

'*La Rinascita del Barocco*' was the title of a two-day international conference recently organised by the International Institute for Baroque Studies at the University of Malta in association with the *Associazione Prorestauro Italia* which incorporates several experts in the fields of restoration, based in Turin. The well-attended conference, which was held on 14-15 November 2009 in the Grand Ballroom of the Hotel Phoenicia, was supported by the Italian Embassy and was held under the patronage of the Italian ministries of Foreign Affairs and Economic Development. The aims of the event was to focus on ways and means to conserve the Baroque architectural heritage and to exchange views about the Italian and Maltese experiences in this important field of study and operation.

The conference was inaugurated by the Hon. Dr Mario De Marco, Parliamentary Secretary for Tourism who stressed the importance of the Baroque architectural heritage in attracting quality tourism to Malta. Other speeches were delivered by H.E. the Italian ambassador Paolo Andrea Trabalza, the Pro-Rector for Academic Affairs at the University of Malta, Professor Alfred Vella, the President of Prorestauro Italia, Dott. Carlo Enrico Terzano and by the Director of the International Institute for Baroque Studies, Professor Denis De Lucca, who also co-ordinated the conference proceedings.

and gave a talk on the architects and archetypes of Malta's Baroque architectural heritage. In his opening address, Professor De Lucca stressed the need of restoring and exhibiting the unique Baroque *Chapelle Ardente* of St. John's co-Cathedral, designed by the architect Romano Carapicchia for the funeral rites of the Portuguese Grand Master Manoel de Vilhena.

Other lectures were delivered by Professor Stefano Bertocci of the University of Florence, Professors Paolo Marconi and Giorgio Croci of the University of Rome, Professor Mauro Strada of the University of Venice and Professor Francesco Scoppola. Professors Alex Torpiano and Joann Cassar from the Faculty of the Built Environment at the University of Malta spoke about the restoration project of Fort Manoel and the qualities of Maltese limestone while Dr Stephen Spiteri gave an illustrated explanation of the development of Baroque fortifications in Malta. Architect Hermann Bonnici discussed the restoration of Baroque buildings in Malta focusing on the chapel of Sarria. Professor Salvatore Tringali from the University of Catania gave an interesting talk about the reconstruction of the Cathedral of S. Corrado in Noto. The proceedings were closed by Dott. Riccardo Guariglia of the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

