

PUBLIC LECTURES OUTREACH PROGRAMME - 2015/16

As part of its outreach programme, the International Institute for Baroque Studies organized a series of public lectures in 2015, each held at a different venue off campus. Dr. Stephen C. Spiteri delivered an illustrated talk on Fort Manoel's designers and Builders - De Tigne', Mondion and Marandon, on 24 March 2015, at the Fortress Builders, Fortifications Interpretation Centre, St. Mark Street, Valletta. The lecture focused on the different roles of various military engineers and architects in the planning and execution of a major work of fortification in Hospitaller Malta during the early eighteenth century. Although it has often been assumed that Fort Manoel was designed by the Order's resident military engineer, Charles François de Mondion, the author's research work has shown that the design process was more nuanced than often generally portrayed, with various other architects contributing to different aspects of this fortification project.



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE
FOR BAROQUE STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

Public Lecture

FORT MANOEL'S DESIGNERS
AND BUILDERS: DE TIGNÉ,
MONDION AND MARANDON

by Dr. Stephen C. Spiteri Ph.D.

Venue: Fortifications Interpretation
Centre, St Mark Street, Valletta
Date: Tuesday 24 March
Time: 5.30 pm

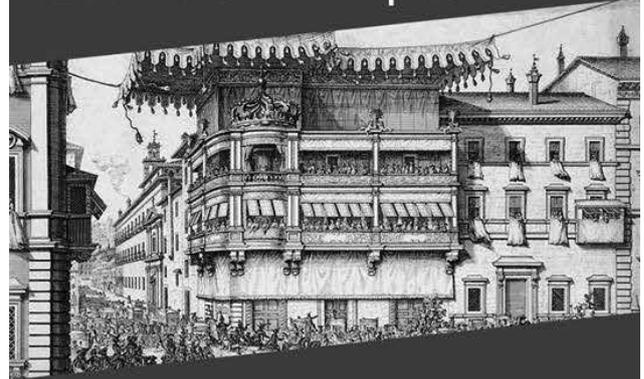
2015

Please note that owing to limited seating capacity,
attendance is by booking only - kindly send e-mail to fi.myl@gov.mt



Visiting Professor Marcello Fagiolo from the *Accademia dei Lincei* in Rome, gave two public lectures in May 2015. The first, entitled '*Il gran teatro del barocco: l'immagine del potere e la festa delle arti*' was held on 11 May 2015 at the 'Le Roi Soleil' lecture room at the International Institute for Baroque Studies, University of Malta. The second lecture, entitled, '*Roma barocca: la festa della Chiesa trionfante da Pietro da Cortona a Bernini e Pozzo*', was delivered on 13 May 2015 at the Italian Cultural Institute, Palace Square, Valletta.

Events on Campus



Il Gran Teatro del Barocco l'Immagine del potere e la Festa delle Arti

Prof. Marcello Fagiolo

Accademia dei Lincei, Rome

Monday, 11 May

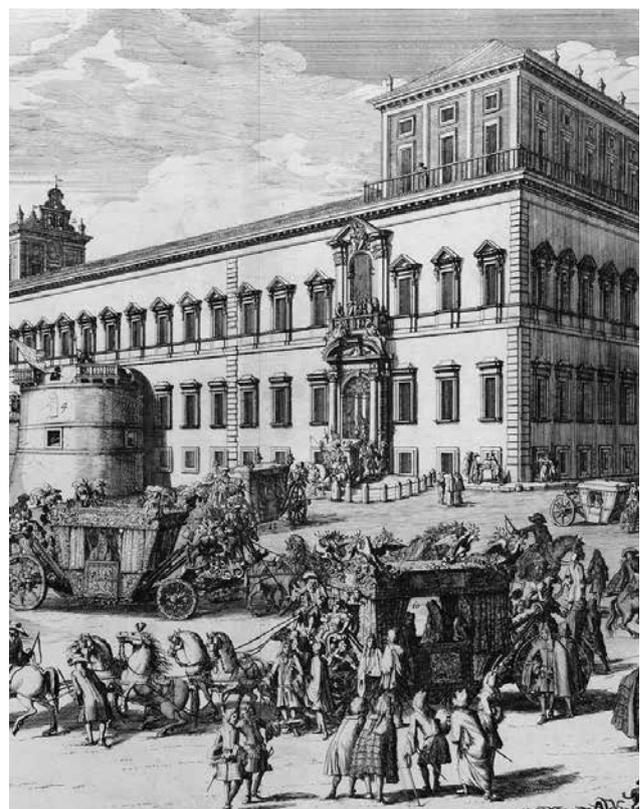
1300-1500hrs

Le Roi Soleil Lecture Room

International Institute for Baroque Studies
Faculty for the Built Environment building



UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
International Institute
for Baroque Studies





INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE
FOR BAROQUE STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

Public Lecture

L'ARCHITECTURE
DÉFENSIVE FRANÇAISE
SOUS LOUIS XIV

by Prof Michèle Virol

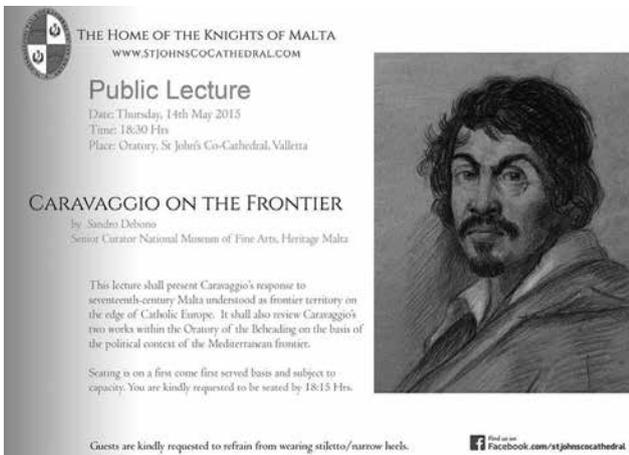
Organized in collaboration with the
Alliance française Malte-Méditerranée
and Fondation de Malte
under the auspices of the
Ambassador of France

Venue: Fortifications Interpretation Centre
St Mark's Str., Valletta
Date: Friday 29 May
Time: 6.30 pm

The lecture will be delivered in French

Visiting Lecturer Prof. Michèle Virol gave a public lecture on 29 May 2015, entitled '*L'Architecture Défensive Française sous Louis XIV*' at the Fortifications Interpretation Centre, St. Mark Street, Valletta.

This lecture was organized jointly with the *Alliance Française Malte Méditerranée*. The lecture focused on Marshal Sebastien le Prestre de Vauban's contribution to French military architecture and fortification in the second half of the eighteenth century.



THE HOME OF THE KNIGHTS OF MALTA
WWW.STJOHNSCOGATHEDRAL.COM

Public Lecture

Date: Thursday, 14th May 2015
Time: 18:30 Hrs
Place: Oratory, St John's Co-Cathedral, Valletta

CARAVAGGIO ON THE FRONTIER

by Sandro Debono
Senior Curator National Museum of Fine Arts, Heritage Malta

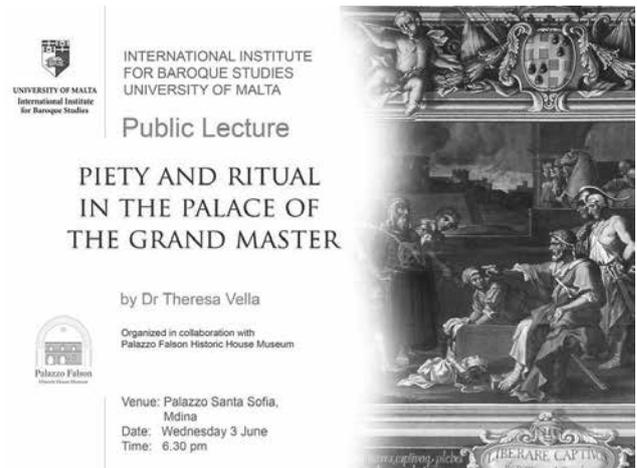
This lecture shall present Caravaggio's response to seventeenth-century Malta understood as frontier territory on the edge of Catholic Europe. It shall also review Caravaggio's two works within the Oratory of the Beheading on the basis of the political context of the Mediterranean frontier.

Seating is on a first come first served basis and subject to capacity. You are kindly requested to be seated by 18:15 Hrs.

Guests are kindly requested to refrain from wearing stiletto/narrow heels.

Facebook.com/stjohnscocathedral

Dr. Sandro Debono delivered a talk entitled '*Caravaggio on the Frontier*' on 14 May 2015 at St. John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta. This lecture presented Caravaggio's response to 17th-century Malta, understood as a frontier territory on the edge of Catholic Europe, and how this may have inspired, influenced or guided a response through his artworks. It also reviewed Caravaggio's *The Beheading of St John* on the basis of the political context of the Mediterranean frontier. The lecture was organised jointly with Heritage Malta.



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE
FOR BAROQUE STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

Public Lecture

PIETY AND RITUAL
IN THE PALACE OF
THE GRAND MASTER

by Dr Theresa Vella

Organized in collaboration with
Palazzo Falson Historic House Museum

Venue: Palazzo Santa Sofia,
Mdina
Date: Wednesday 3 June
Time: 6.30 pm

Dr. Theresa Vella's lecture, entitled '*Hospitaller Piety and Ritual in the Palace of the Grand Master*' was held on 3 June 2015 at the Palazzo Santa Sofia, in Mdina. This lecture was organised in collaboration with Palazzo Falson Historic House Museum. The lecture focused on the manner which the Hospitaller Knights' religious life formed an intrinsic part of the identity of the military and religious noblemen of the Order of St John. The Knights' practice of private religious devotion has received little academic attention. Dr. Theresa Vella presented her study on the private religious devotion of the Knights of St John, through an understanding of Hospitaller values of charity and mercy and through the works of art found in the art collections of Knights of the Order. She demonstrated how the art and architecture of the chapels in the Palace of the Grand Master afford a view of the expression of piety in the private life of the most eminent of Hospitaller Knights, and of public religious rituals expressed within the halls and chambers of the *piano nobile* of the Magistral Palace.





INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE
FOR BAROQUE STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

Public Lecture

Date: Thursday, 18th June 2015
Time: 18:30 Hrs
Place: St John's Co-Cathedral, Valletta

THE KNIGHTS AND THEIR SYMBOLS AT ST JOHN'S CO-CATHEDRAL DURING THE BAROQUE AGE

by Curator Cynthia De Giorgio

The Knights as their enthusiasm to record their devotion left behind a legacy of unique symbolism. Covered with shimmering gold, symbols were carved onto the walls, relief in tombstones, captured in paintings and frescoes. The interior of the church became a stunning composition of the Knight's symbolic language during the Baroque age.

With time the ability to interpret these symbols has diminished and today their meaning goes unnoticed.

Symbols an intriguing carrier of unspoken thought and this lecture will discuss the Knight's symbolic legacy, how it developed and the meaning behind the use of these symbols.



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Cynthia de Giorgio gave a public lecture entitled 'The Knights and their Symbols at St. John's Co-Cathedral during the Baroque Age' on 14 June 2015 at St John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta. This lecture was organised by the International Institute for Baroque Studies in collaboration with the St John's Co-Cathedral Foundation. The lecture examined the symbols used by the Knights of St John at St John's Co-Cathedral, in the walls, tombstones, paintings and sculptures which embellish the church. Unfortunately, the ability to interpret this symbolic language has diminished over time and the meanings of these symbols are therefore often not understood or go unnoticed by contemporary viewers. In this lecture Cynthia de Giorgio, who is a Ph.D. candidate at the Baroque Institute, explored the ideology which lies behind this symbolic language, enabling a fuller and deeper understanding of the symbols used at St John's during the Baroque age.



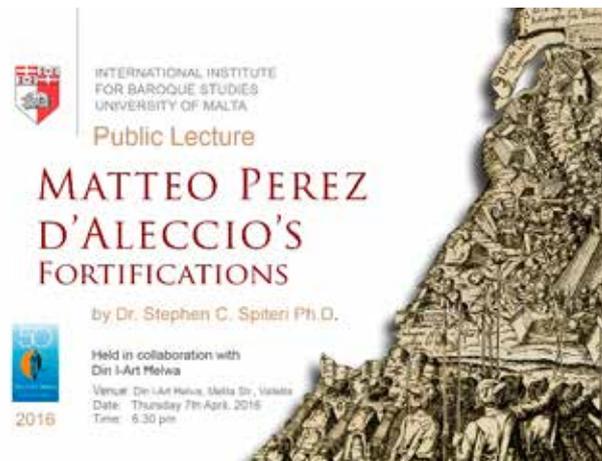
A one-day seminar entitled *Arte Barocca - Tra Fede e Stupore* was held on 28 May 2015, at the Italian Cultural Institute, Palace Square, Valletta.

This seminar focused on the significance and recent restoration of one of the most important artistic achievements of the Baroque age, the Bernini statue of the Ecstasy of St. Theresa of Avila in the Cornaro Chapel of the Church of Sta. Maria della Vittoria in Rome.

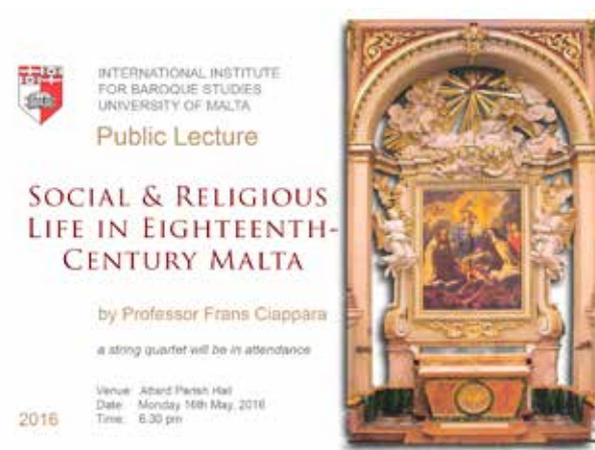
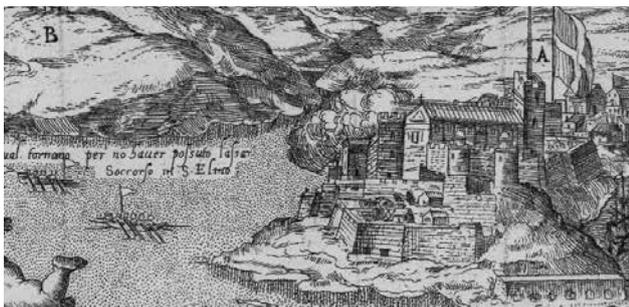
Professor Denis De Lucca introduced the event with an illustrated talk mentioning a hitherto unexplored connection between the building of the church of *Sta. Maria della Vittoria* in Rome, and the Hospitaller Order of Malta.

Other speakers at the seminar included Dr. Theresa Vella, Dott Sante Guido and Dott Giuseppe Mantella, who addressed critical issues about the significance, art appreciation and restoration of the recently restored Cornaro chapel of this church.

Gian Lorenzo Bernini's design of this magnificent chapel, which was commissioned by the Venetian Cornaro family, focuses attention on one of the greatest masterpieces of Baroque art, Bernini's 'Ecstasy of St. Theresa of Avila'.



Dr. Stephen C Spiteri gave a lecture entitled 'Matteo Perez d'Aleccio's Fortifications' at the Din I-Art Helwa premises at 133 Melita Street, in Valletta on Thursday 7th April 2016 at 6.30 pm. The lecture discussed Matteo Perez d'Aleccio's frescoes and prints which provide us with some of the first representations of the first generation of fortifications erected by the Hospitaller knights of St John in the period leading up to the Ottoman siege of Malta in 1565. Using these images as the basis of our understanding of this little known aspect of the Knights' early defensive works, however, presents students of Hospitaller fortifications with some difficulties. At the essence of the problem lies the question of how much of D'Aleccio's images comprise a faithful representation of the fortified structures and how much was based on his artistic imagination. In other words, how authentic are D'Aleccio's representation of the layout and details of the forts and bastioned enceintes? Were these drawings the product of D'Aleccio's efforts to reproduce things as directly seen, and if so, how much did he really understand what he was seeing and how was this, in turn, informed by his knowledge of the language of military architecture? This talk looked at the techniques (and their limitations) employed by D'Aleccio in his depiction of military architecture in the light of the artistic conventions of fortress drawings employed at the time, and the present knowledge of the state of Hospitaller defences and military architecture in the mid-sixteenth century.



Professor Frans Ciappara gave a talk entitled "Social and Religious Life in Eighteenth-Century Malta" on Monday 16th May 2016 at 6.30pm at the Attard Parish Hall. This talk attempted to recover the 'voice of the voiceless', the people who wrote neither diaries nor letters or family memoirs and left no written records of their thoughts and feelings. Their existence was ignored or taken for granted. It discussed social structure and employment, parish government and the role of the parish priest, solidarity among parishioners, mobility, marriage and the family, religion in the life of the people, and death. A string quartet performed pieces by Handel, Beethoven and Mozart. Members of the string quartet were Stefan Calleja (Violin), Sonia Borg (Violin), Joseph Mallia (Viola) and Desiree Quintano (Cello).

University of Malta Graduation Ceremony - November 2015

Three students graduated M.A. in Baroque Studies:

Christian Mifsud
Dissertation title: *A Historical Interpretation of Religious Architecture in Baroque Valletta*

Alexandra Mifsud Bonnici
Dissertation title: *Women in Eighteenth Century Malta: Legal and Social Aspects*

Josephine Cassar
Dissertation title: *Propaganda by the Lutheran and Catholic Churches: the Use of Music, Painting, Sculpture and Architecture to Draw the Faithful (16th – 18th Century)*