

# il-manifest taż-żmien

*a description*

Mario Cassar

*Il-manifest taż-żmien* is an art manifesto for the end of the millennium. Written shortly after I had finished my university studies, *il-manifest* is intended to promote discussion among artists, scholars and students and Maltese society in general on important issues. The latter are reflected in my art, which is mainly a result of my studies on the philosophy of art, my immediate environment and my contemplation of humanity, the universe and the absolute. The ideas contained in *il-manifest* are naturally reflected in my works, particularly those which will make up my November '99 exhibition.

## **The manifesto**

*Il-manifest*, which is written in Maltese, is divided into three sections: *umanita'*, *lill-pajjiż* and *lura lejn l-gheruq*.

*Umanita'* illustrates my anxieties about issues such as life termination, racism, intolerance, ethnic persecution, war the mutilation of creation in general. At the end of this century and the millennium, one can sum up some of the worst aspects of humanity. This is very useful to understand contemporary society. When the artist understands his present, from both a human and an artistic point of view, then he will start understanding his past.

*Lill-pajjiż*, which literally means 'to the country' represents my concern about the negative aspects of Malta's insularity. Apart from geographical limitations, such insularity can result in mental and cultural limitations. I share the view with other scholars that after having been dominated for thousands of years, Malta is still

trying to understand herself.

For me, there is an analogy between the search of a country and the search of oneself as a human being and as an artist. In *lura lejn l-gheruq*, which literally means "back to the roots", I invite the audience to discover its roots. My appreciation of Malta's prehistory, an aspect which is deeply rooted into my soul, can provide us with a new way of looking at primitivism, where the virginity of vision, design and creativity, can be the springboards for a better life in the new millennium. At the end of the day, the artist searches for a better future, and in order to find it, he has to know the past. This is why, the main challenge of the artist is to give meaning to his anxieties in the context of those of the whole humanity.

I would like to thank several scholars, artists and students who have shown keen interest and enthusiasm for *il-manifest taż-żmien*.

## **Il-Manifest taż-Żmien**

### *Umanita'*

1. *Naraw fil-Hajja l-milja shiha tal-bniedem. Ahna kontra kull tip ta' terminazzjoni tal-Hajja, fuq kollox kontra l-qtil tal-bniedem f'gufu. Kontra wkoll t-tbagħbis fl-embrijoni umani u ta' kreaturi oħra.*

2. *Inqisu l-qerda tal-bniedem u tan-natura bħala tradiment lill-umanita' u lill-hallieq. Infahhru l-hidma favur il-hajja mit-tobba u l-assistenti tagħhom, l-akbar ghassiesa tal-Hajja.*



3. *Niddisprezzaw il-gwerra, hu x'inhu l-motiv, filwaqt li naghtu g'ieh lill-mara, li g'gorr il-Ħajja.*

4 *Kontra kull tip ta' razzizmu, intolleranza u persekuzzjoni etnika li gabu l-mewt ta' muljuni ta' bnedmin.*

### *Lill-pajjiż*

5. *Bhall-bqija, pajjiżna hu parti mid-dinja u mill-univers. Niddisprezzaw l-insularita' tiegħu, li minkejja hi naturali, hi ta' ħsara għalih għax iġġegħlu jehda fiċ-ċuċati.*

6. *Inqisu l-Ħsieb bħala ikel b'zonnjuż għall-bniedem u bħala s-salvazzjoni ta' pajjiżna.*

### *Lura lejn l-għeruq*

7. *Immorru lejn l-għeruq, għax mill-passat nifhemu l-preżent u l-ġejjieni. Nammiraw iċ-ċivilta' preistorika ta' pajjiżna li hi innu lill-Ħajja:*

*is-sigra tal-Ħajja bħala għajn ta' immortalita', l-ispiral simbolu ta' eternita' u s-serp li mhux aktar simbolu tal-ħazen imma ta' reġenerazzjoni.*

8. *Naraw fit-tempji megalitiċi u fiċ-ċivilta' li bniethom eżempju ċar tar-rebħa fuq l-insularita'. Minkejja li f'art limitata bla riżorsi, l-artist ma tilifx il-viżjoni, id-disinn u l-kreattivitàa'. Naraw it-tempji huma spazji uniċi ta' l-umanita', mibnijin f'kuntest ta' ordni sesswali, politiku, soċjali u religjuż.*

[Mario Cassar was born in 1975 and lives in zebbug. He obtained a B.A. degree in Art at the University of Malta. He teaches Art and Design at Sir M.A.Refalo Centre for Further Studies and at the Wistin Camilleri School of Fine Arts.]