

THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONTEST

"VOTE A STAMP"

The "Madonna and Saints" Christmas 1976 10c + 2c stamp has been voted internationally as the most beautiful stamp issued by the Malta Post Office during 1976. This was announced on Monday 2nd May, 1977, by the Philatelic Society of Malta during its monthly meeting, held at the Catholic Institute, Floriana, when the votes in the International "Vote A Stamp" Contest were opened and registered.

The winning stamp attained 113 votes out of a total of 311 valid votes, an outright winner with 36%. Runner-up was the 5c + 1c stamp of the same Christmas Issue, showing the "Madonna and Child", with just over 10.6% of the votes.

The 1976 Christmas set, issued on November 23rd, 1976, consisted of four stamps, each with a surcharge in aid of Charitable Institutions; the top value, 10c + 2c, reproduced integrally a famous painting by Domenico de Michelino, showing the Madonna and various Saints. The same painting was also reproduced in three vertical sections, with the middle stamp, 5c + 1c, showing the "Madonna and Child". The painting is on permanent exhibition at the National Museum of Fine Arts.

Voted into third place was the £M2 stamp, issued late in January 1976 illustrating the new emblem of Malta, with 9.97% of the votes.

Votes in this contest were received from: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Columbia, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, W. Germany (55), Great Britain (63), the Netherlands, Eire, Israel, Italy (63), Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Malta (42), New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the U.S.A. (25).

Following the announcement of the results, three names were drawn by lot from among those who voted for the winning stamp: Miss G.M. Lewis of Cleveland, U.K.; Sig. Greatti Bruno of Udine, Italy; and Miss K. MacDormat of London, U.K. Each will receive a complete 1976 collection, including the £M2 definite stamp, of Malta, kindly donated by the Postmaster General, Mr. George W. Borg, who fully supported the enterprise.

Speaking at the close of the meeting, the President, Dr. J.H. Mercieca, thanked the Malta Post Office and other individuals who contributed to the great success of this year's contest, pointing out that the Malta stamp is still regarded with respect and attracts a very substantial number of collectors from all over the world.

The President continued by auguring more participation internationally and announced that the Philatelic Society of Malta is currently negotiating a week's holiday in Malta to a winning collector, participating in next year's contest.

EXCERPTS FROM COLLECTORS' LETTERS

- "Beauty of classic art and its excellent reproduction on the stamp".
J.D. Hamilton, Sliema, Malta.
- "The very perfected technique of printing and the reproduction of beautiful colours".
F. Manzini, Firenze, Italy.
- "The size of this stamp is much better than the size of the other stamps of the Christmas set".
A. Will, Andernach, W. Germany.
- "... a successful reproduction of a painting in normal stamp size".
E. Schnidler, Kre'eld, W. Germany.
- "To be honest I like the whole set especially the way that one stamp was split in three to make up the whole set but I can only pick one stamp and that would have to be it (10c + 2c)".
G. Pulis, Ont., Canada.
- "The picture can be divided into three parts to good effect; the country-name, value and occasion are put in a separate strip below the picture, and therefore do not interfere with it".
R. Wright, Leicester. U.K.
- "It is admirably restrained in colour, and is high in its quality of printing and reproduction".
T.A. Barnett, W'Shire, U.K.
- "Beautiful is defined in the English dictionary as pleasing to the eye, lovely, handsome, an assemblage of perfections through which an object is rendered, which I think best describes the stamp".
M.F.W. Taylor, Worcestershire, U.K.
- "The Christmas issues have always had that special something better than the normal sets printed to mark or to recall an event. This time you have surpassed the normal sets".
G. Sa'iba, G'zira, Malta.
- "The Stamp is not only functional, but pleasing in every way. Chev. E. Cremona has enhanced this beautiful work of Domenico de Michelino".
E. Go'ding, Northdane, S. Africa.
- "I like the fact that the painting belongs to Malta".
P. McCurdy, Ayrshire, U.K.
- "The delicacy and clearness of the figures is outstanding... I just wish that I could see the original. I have won a first prize for my exhibit of Christmas Malta Stamps and First Day Covers at a recent stamp exposition in Long Beach, California and am very proud of it".
Mrs. E. Brouevitch, Lakewood, Ca., U.S.A.
- "I hope Malta will continue with such great designs and printers".
A.J. Schoonhoven, Henge'o, Netherlands.
- "To single out one stamp from this array (18 stamps in 1976) is therefore similar to choosing the winner from the final line-up in a beauty contest. There is but little known about this artist, but his true name appears to have been Domenico di Francesco and he was called Michelino. He was of the Florentine School, born in 1417 and died in 1491. He was apprenticed to a cassone painter called Michelino and was afterwards, probably, in the studio of Fra Angelico. His only extant fully-documented work is the portrait of Dante in the Church of Santa Maria dei Fiori at Florence, which he painted in 1465-66, from a design by Baldovinetti".
W.L. Long, Essex, U.K.
- "Not only is this stamp a beautiful painting and a masterpiece of art, it also reminds people that 'Love and Peace' exist at least once a year...".
From 12-year-old Martin K. Herrod, Warwickshire, England.

THE FULL RESULTS

ISSUE	DESIGN	VALUE	VOTES
Definitive 28/1/76	New Emblem	£M2	31
Maltese Folklore 26/2/76	Village Feast Mnarja Carnival Good Friday	1c3 5c 7c5 10c	6 15 21 8
XXI Olympiad 28/4/76	Waterpolo Sailing Athletics	1c7 5c 30c	5 3 4
"Europa" 28/7/76	Lace-making Stone-carving	7c 15c	29 16
3 Cent. School of Anatomy and Surgery 14/9/76	GM N. Cottoner Anatomical Dr. Fra. G. Zammit Sacra Infermeria	2c 5c 7c 11c	2 10 4 7
Christmas 1976 23/11/76	St. John and St. Michael Madonna and Child St. Christopher and St. Nicholas" Madonna and Saints	1c + 5m 5c + 1c 7c + 1c5 10c + 2c	1 33 6 113
	Invalids — 12		Total 311

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