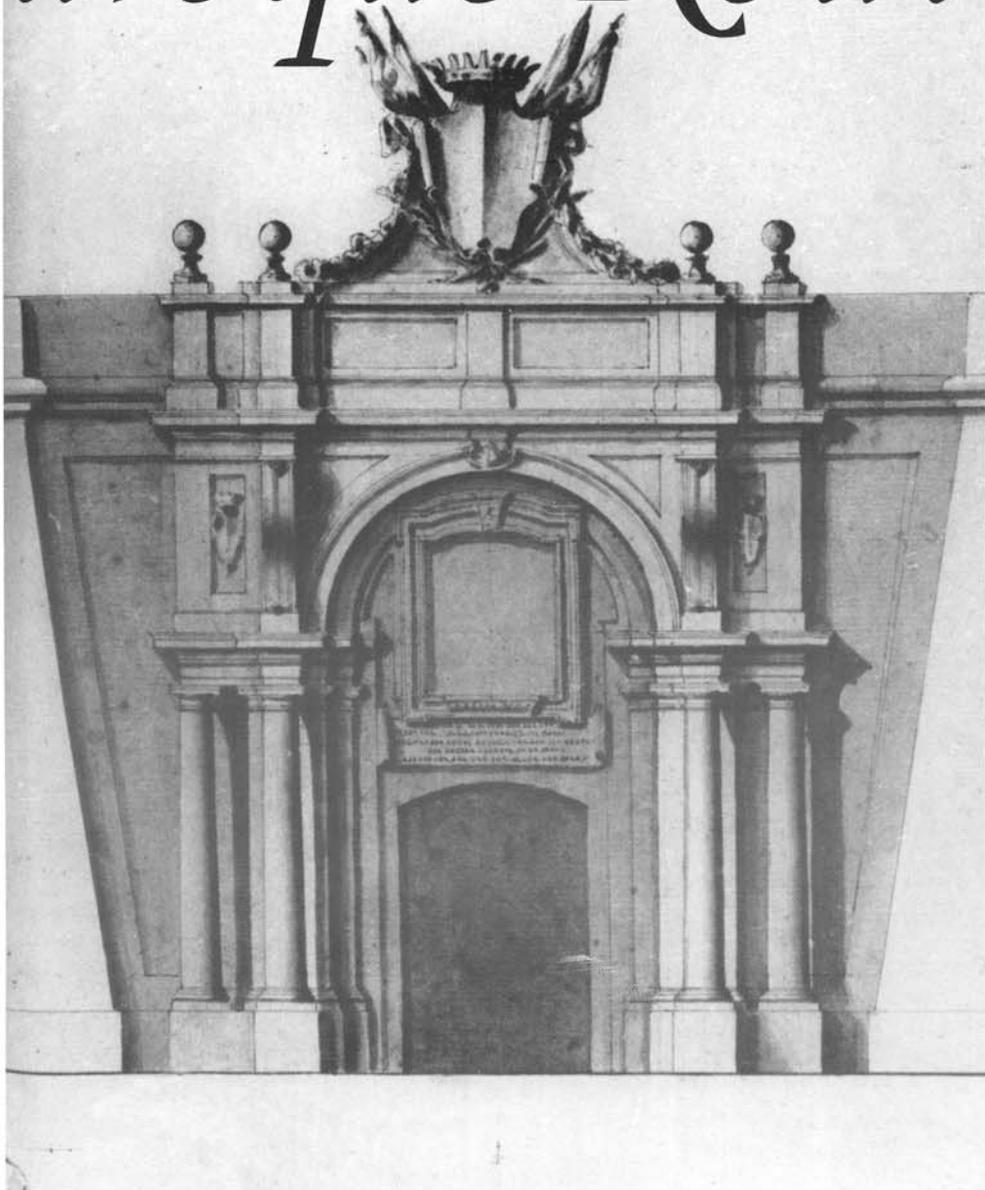




# *Baroque Routes*





**Baroque Routes Network Newsletter**

Issue No. 4 December 2002

Edited by Petra Bianchi

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Front Cover: Project for a Monumental Gate in Malta by Romano Carapecchia (early eighteenth century)

Above: *Testa di Medusa* by Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680)

# Foreword

The fourth issue of the Baroque Routes Network newsletter gives an overview of the more recent activities of the International Institute for Baroque Studies (IIBS) at the University of Malta, which takes important initiatives to focus interest on the Baroque culture of Europe, with particular emphasis on the central Mediterranean region. The Institute offers courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level, organises activities, and publishes books and publications dealing with various aspects of our Baroque heritage and covering a variety of subjects.

Among the principal events organised recently were a series of seminars and international conferences, described in this issue of the newsletter. An important activity of the Institute is its involvement in the forthcoming May 2003 Baroque Festival being held in Malta in conjunction with the Manoel Theatre.

The present issue of the Baroque Routes newsletter also contains information about the restoration of an important Baroque building – the Magisterial Palace in Mdina. This was

funded by the Gulbelkian Foundation. Three successful University study tours to Venice, Florence, and Noto were also held this year.

Two features are included in the newsletter – one about Carapacchia's first commission in Malta by Moira Pisani, an MA in Baroque Studies graduate of the Institute, and the other on the conservation of the Baroque heritage of Valletta by Architect Hermann Bonnici, who combines the role of senior architect of the Restoration Unit in the Works Division with that of a research assistant of the IIBS. The newsletter also provides information about the MA in Baroque Studies, the Diploma in Baroque Architecture, and the Certificate in Baroque Architecture, all run by the Institute.

Professor Denis De Lucca

*Director*

*International Institute for Baroque Studies*

The International Institute for Baroque Studies (IIBS) at the University of Malta was set up to promote the pursuit of interdisciplinary, academic studies on various aspects of Baroque culture. It organises symposiums, public lectures, exhibitions and other activities leading to a greater appreciation of Baroque culture, with particular reference to Malta, and networks with similar centres for Baroque studies overseas. It is currently engaged in research projects concerning Baroque art and architecture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Institute organises MA courses on Baroque studies and short courses on the Baroque heritage of Malta and its conservation, and is also engaged in giving assistance to various bodies concerned with the restoration of Baroque buildings and artefacts. It also organises a pre-tertiary Certificate course and a Diploma course in Baroque architecture.

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## RESTORATION PROJECT

## Vilhena Palace - Mdina



Top: President Guido de Marco being greeted by the Chairman of the Mdina Rehabilitation Committee, Professor Denis De Lucca.

Left: (L to R) Mr Ray Bondin, President Guido de Marco, Professor Denis De Lucca and the Hon. Dr. Francis Zammit Dimech.

In July 2002, the newly restored forecourt of Vilhena Palace in Mdina – one of the most important Baroque spaces in Malta – was inaugurated by President Guido de Marco and the Hon. Dr Francis Zammit Dimech, Minister for Resources and Infrastructure.

The project was carried out by the Mdina Rehabilitation Project in collaboration with the Mdina local council over a period of five months, with the financial support of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Portugal. Total expenses were in the region of Lm 46,000. The project was proposed and directed by Mdina Rehabilitation Project Co-ordinator Mr Ray Bondin.

From an area covered in concrete, with a neglected garden on one side and aquaria on the other, the forecourt of Vilhena Palace has been transformed into a dignified space, reflecting the architectural splendour of the building which dates back to 1726.

Two 250-year-old olive trees were donated to the project by the descendants of Manoel de Vilhena's family, and very effective use was made of Maltese hard stone together with Portuguese marble – reflecting the cultural and historical links between Portugal and Malta. The connection between the

Portuguese Foundation and Malta date back to the 1960s, when Calouste Gulbenkian donated Lm3,000 to the University of Malta.

The committee of the Mdina Rehabilitation Project, chaired by Professor Denis De Lucca, has also initiated a programme of collaboration with the Works Division and the University of Bologna to monitor and identify the nature and cost of repairing the damage to the back part of Vilhena Palace, which is built on a foundation of weak rock, Roman walls, medieval fortifications, and Grand Master L'Isle Adam's Palace.

During the inauguration, Professor De Lucca described the



Top: (L to R) Mr José Blanco, trustee of the Gulbenkian Foundation, President Guido de Marco, the Hon. Dr. Francis Zammit Dimech, Dona Luisa Axarujinha de Almeida Ribeiro (descendant of Grand Master de Vilhena), Professor Denis De Lucca, Mr Ray Bondin.



Palace forecourt as evoking the spirit of Baroque Europe, with its brilliant and typically Baroque reconciliation of two opposite elements – the mathematical precision of the forecourt quadrangle, now enhanced by Architect José Campos' paving design, and the sculptural fantasy of the enclosure plane, restored by the Sante Guido firm under the guidance of Dr Keith Sciberras.

The President of Malta Guido de Marco also addressed the gathering and called for a greater national conscience with

respect to Malta's heritage. Mementoes as a sign of gratitude for the intensive work and commitment put into the project were presented to Ray Bondin and Denis De Lucca, as well as Ray Caruana on behalf of the Kalaxlokk workers, Piju Fenech on behalf of the Works Division employees and Paul Ciantar, the chief technical officer.

Dr José Blanco, trustee of the Gulbenkian Foundation, also

gave an address during the event, which was attended by Dona Luisa Axarujinha de Almeida Ribeiro, a descendant of Grand Master de Vilhena. The Gulbenkian Choir performed during the evening. The Gulbenkian Foundation is based in the Portuguese capital Lisbon and was founded in 1956 according to the testament of Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian, a British citizen of American origin and a pioneer in the oil industry in the Middle East. The Foundation supports projects related to charity, art, education and science, and its international department supports specific projects related to the promotion of Portuguese culture in foreign countries.



Top: President Guido de Marco, the Hon. Dr. Louis Galea and other members of the audience listening to the Hon. Dr. Francis Zammit Dimech.

## The Council of Europe Cultural Routes

The Council of Europe Cultural Routes were created in order to highlight the common cultural heritage of all Europeans. The project was launched in 1987 by the Council for Cultural Cooperation (CDCC), following the Parliamentary Assembly's proposal to revive the famous routes along which innumerable pilgrims travelled in the Middle Ages from all over Europe to Santiago de Compostela. This mass movement gave the pilgrims a feeling of belonging to a family of nations, each distinct from the others, but all sharing the same basic values and linked by a common civilisation.

The Council of Europe and its member states quickly realised that it was an excellent idea to devise routes offering a tangible and visible illustration of both the overall unity and the inherent diversity of European culture.

This corresponded perfectly to the aims and ideals of strengthening European identity while respecting to the full the cultural heritage and beliefs of others, and was also likely to encourage cultural tourism.

The Council of Europe's Cultural Routes programme, of which the **Baroque Routes Network** forms a part, has become an instrument for understanding European values. It plays its part in European construction by drawing on the wealth of Europe's heritage in every sense.

The Cultural Policy and Action Division, under the supervision of the Culture Committee and the CDC, has therefore selected a number of themes relating to peoples, migrations and the spread of the major European currents of civilisation, such as to generate a range of proposals and initiatives reflecting the complex nature of the cultures and societies that have formed present-day Europe.

Various networks of individuals, institutions, organisations and structures are responsible for developing each theme. these networks

operate as intermediaries setting up long-term cooperation projects and establishing centres for exchange, information and the implementation of new initiatives.

In the last ten years some twenty themes have been selected, covering the whole of Europe and giving rise to initiatives for fruitful cooperation in the fields of research and development, enhancement of the memory, history and European heritage, cultural and educational exchanges of young European, contemporary cultural and artistic practice, as well as cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development.

The scope of this project has been widened through the adoption of a Committee of Ministers resolution setting criteria for selecting themes and approving networks.

The resolution also entrusts the European Institute of Cultural Routes, set up in Luxembourg in July 1997 on the joint initiative of the Luxembourg authorities and the Council of Europe, with responsibility for co-ordinating the networks and offering them technical assistance, examining proposals for routes and developing the Cultural Routes Resource and Documentation Centre by publicising the programme's achievements.

The competent bodies of the Council of Europe, assisted by an Advisory Committee comprising representatives of the Culture Committee and the Cultural Heritage Committee, are responsible for assessing the suitability and feasibility of new themes and routes, and awarding certification for routes.

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## FESTIVAL

## MANOEL BAROQUE FESTIVAL 2003

The Manoel Baroque Festival is a biannual event that was organised for the first time in May 2001. Following the success of the first festival, a second edition is now scheduled for May 2003.

The festival will take place over a period of 10 days, and consists of a selection of artistic events related to the Baroque period, including musical concerts, drama, a choir performance, an opera, vocal concerts, and walking tours of Baroque sites of interest.

Three cultural bodies have joined forces to organise these events - the Manoel Theatre, the International Institute for Baroque Studies at the University of Malta (IIBS), and the Koperativa Kulturali Universitarja (KKU), which is the cultural arm of the University of Malta. The festival is being planned and organised together with a committee that includes four official foreign representatives in Malta. Dr Petra Bianchi, research assistant at IIBS, is co-ordinating the project.

The festival theme in 2003 is 'Triumph over Death: a Baroque Celebration'. As part of the festival, IIBS is organising a one-day seminar on this topic on Monday 5 May at St James Cavalier Centre for Creativity in Valletta.

The Festival Programme is printed on page 19 of this newsletter.

## DRAMA

Play to be staged at the Manoel Theatre on 2,3 May 2003 performed by Theatre Anon (Malta) and directed by Jes Camilleri 'The Knight of Malta'

by Philip Massinger, John Fletcher & Nathaniel Field

Philip Massinger was one of the great British Jacobean dramatists, and a direct contemporary of William Shakespeare. The drama 'The Knight of Malta' was jointly written by Massinger, Fletcher & Field, and first appeared in print in 1646. 'The Knight of Malta' is set in Malta and centres around a fight between Grand Master Valette and the Turks. The plot is not based on real historical events, but instead adapted from Boccaccio's Filicolo to Hospitaller Malta. The hero of the drama is the young Knight Miranda, and the plot revolves around the theme of betrayal and a lady named Oriana - described as the sister of the Grand Master 'Valletta'.

## VOCAL CONCERT

Vocal Concert to take place at the Manoel Theatre on 5 May 2003 performed by the Ensemble Baroque de Nice (France)

"autour de la Mort de Didon"

Cantate de Michel Pignolet de MONTECLAIR (1667-1737)

Violon, flute, violoncelle, ou viole de gambe, theorbe, clavecin

Soliste: Claire Brua, mezzo-soprano

5 musiciens, 1 soloiste

Director: Gilbert Bezzina

## OPERA

Opera to be performed at the Manoel Theatre on 10,11 May 2003

Conductor: Petr Wagner (Czechoslovakia)

'Dido and Aeneas' by Henry Purcell (1659-95)

'Dido and Aeneas' was first produced in 1689 with a libretto by Nahum Tate, and is widely regarded as the greatest English opera to emerge from this period. It tells the story of a queen abandoned by her lover, and the superb score blends French-style music with Italian formal arias, as well as a recitative style drawing on English declamatory traditions. Dido's famous final lament follows the model for such compositions established by Monteverdi some 80 years earlier.

## CONCERT

Vocal Concert to be performed at the Manoel Theatre on 8 May 2003

Conductor: Petr Wagner (Czechoslovakia)

'Actus Tragicus'

Mourning cantatas by Johann Sebastian Bach

- Trauer-Ode 'Lass, Fürstin, lass noch einen Strahl' BWV 106
- Actus Tragicus 'Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit' BWV 198
- 'Der Herr denket an uns' BWV 106

Soprano, alt, tenor, bass

## VOCAL CONCERT

Vocal Concert to be performed at the Manoel Theatre on 4 May 2003 by the London Baroque Ensemble (UK), with Emma Kirkby

Henry Purcell (1658-1695)

Pavanne and Chaconne (Z 752, 730)

Francois Couperin (1668-1733)

Seconde Lecon de Tenebres pour le Mercedy

Saint pour soprane et basse continue

J.J. Froberger (1616-1667)

Tombeau (fait a Paris sur la Mort de Monsieur Blanchrocher)

G.F. Handel (1685-1759)

Coelestis dum spirat aura

Motet for soprano, two violins and basso

G.F. Handel (1685-1759)

Trio sonata in g (Dresden)

Andante - Allegro - Largo - Allegro

Marin Marais (1656-1728)

Tombeau pour Mr de Ste Colombe

Deuxieme Livre 1701

G.F. Handel (1685-1759)

Agrippina condotta a morte

Cantata for soprano and strings

## CONCERT

Organ Recital to be performed at the Mdina Cathedral on 6 May 2003

By Marco Fornaciari & Francesco Finotti (Italy)

3 Sonate di J.S. Bach

Concerto per Violino (Marco Fornaciari) e Clavicembalo (Francesco Finotti)

## THEATRE &amp; MUSIC

Staged Concert to be performed at the Manoel Theatre on 7 May 2003

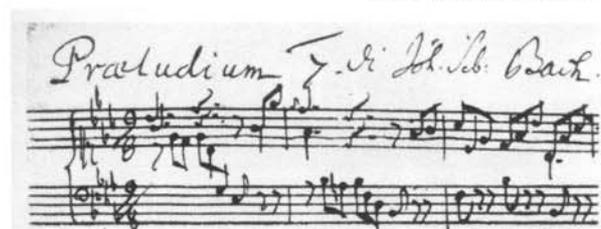
Directed by Guido Barbieri and Sandro Cappelletto (Italy)

'FARINELLI':

the life and song of Carlo Broschi

Admired and almost acclaimed as divine during his career ("one God, one Farinelli", enthused the English public), Farinelli is old and in poor health, surrounded by small objects, such as a snuff box and a letter, which remind him of the past. These memories evoke his Voice, which materialises by his side and sings the arias that gave him his greatest successes.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19



## STUDY TOURS

## VENICE &amp; FLORENCE

A successful study tour to Venice organised this year by the University of Malta aimed to familiarise students of architecture and Baroque studies with the unique architectural and urban space qualities of Venice – seen in the splendid and colourful architecture mirrored in the waters of the Grand Canal, in the concentration of magnificent churches and palaces expressing the spirit of Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque Europe, and the paintings of Tintoretto, Titian, Veronese and Tiepolo. Of particular interest to the students was the unusual system of foundation building using an impermeable stone supported on larchwood planks and timber piles sunk deep into the Caranto bedrock of sand and clay below water level.

Study tours provide a valuable opportunity for students to observe different concepts of spatial organisation, architectural beauty, and innovative building techniques. Architect Shirley Cefai was responsible for the excellent organisation and success of the trip, which was based on her first hand experience of the city when studying there. The 126 students went around Venice following an interesting and varied itinerary. Among the many places they visited were the Piazza and Basilica of S. Marco, the churches and environs of S. Zaccaria, SS. Giovanni e Paolo, S. Maria dei Miracoli and S. Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, the Rialto bridge, and the new and old Ghetto areas in Canneregio. The tour also included a traghetto trip on the famous Grand Canal, and visits to the magnificent Baroque and Gothic churches of the Scalzi and Madonna dell'Orto – containing the burial place and Last Judgement painting of the sixteenth-century Venetian painter Jacobo Tintoretto.

On-site lectures on the architectural and artistic history of Venice were given by Professor Denis De Lucca. At the end of this most successful tour, the students expressed their



*Views of Venice by Canaletto (1697-1768) Top: Venice - The Grand Canal from the Carità towards the Bacino. Below: A Regatta on the Grand Canal. Opp: Venice - Piazza San Marco.*

appreciation of this initiative, together with their wish that other similar tours will be held in the future. The tour was sponsored by Air Malta, HSBC Bank, Malta International Airport, Corinthia Group, and Master Wines.

The Department of Architecture and Urban Design and the IBS at the University of Malta also recently organised a very rewarding study tour to Florence, thanks to substantial sponsorships from HSBC Bank, Malta International Airport, the Corinthia Group of Companies, Vassallo Builders, Go Mobile, Ballut Blocks Ltd., Hardrocks Ltd., and the Ministry of Education.

The objective of the study tour, as outlined by Professor Denis De Lucca, Head of Department, was to familiarize architecture students with the main representative buildings of Medieval and Renaissance Florence, as reflected in a series of magnificent churches and palaces, in the beautiful works of art contained in them and in a rich urban texture mirroring the social and political changes that took place in Florence since its foundation as a Roman city built by Julius Caesar to accommodate veterans of his Gallic wars.

In the introduction to the tour programme, Professor De Lucca explained that study tours form an important component of an architect's education since they give students the opportunity to experience spaces and buildings explained to them during course lectures and tutorials. In view of the fact that Renaissance architecture had a profound influence on architectural thought and practice, a visit to the Renaissance capital of Italy constitutes an important teaching and learning experience.

Arch. Shirley Cefai, lecturer in



the Department, was responsible for the organisation of the study tour to Florence and made all the necessary arrangements to ensure that all went well during the trip. Among the places visited by the 120 students who participated in the study tour were the churches of S.S. Annunziata, S. Lorenzo, S. Maria Novella, S. Spirito, S. Croce, and S. Maria del Fiore, as well as the Medici Ricciardi, Strozzi and Rucellai palaces. The highlight of the study tour was a visit to the Palazzo Vecchio in Piazza della Signoria, the political centre of Florence during the rule of the Medicis. Here students experienced the magnificence of the Sala del Cinquecento and other splendidly adorned apartments in the Palace. Explanations on the architectural and art history of Florence were given by Professor De Lucca who, together with lecturers Vincent Buhagiar, Lino Bianco, Ruben Borg and Carmel Cacopardo, accompanied the students to Florence. The study tour was concluded with a visit to the Piazza dei Miracoli in the historic centre of Pisa.



## STUDY TOUR

# BAROQUE NOTO



*Noto. Churches of SS. Salvatore and S. Chiara*

Last March IIBS and the Department of Architecture and Urban Design (DAU) of the University of Catania once again jointly organised a study tour to the Baroque town of Noto in Sicily. Tour participants included 20 students following the Certificate in Baroque Architecture and MA in Baroque Studies courses currently run by the Institute.

The group visited various buildings, including the Cathedral - now being restored following the 1996 collapse of the dome - the churches of S. Francesco, S. Chiara, S. Carlo Borromeo and S. Domenico, as well as several palaces, collectively forming the impressive Baroque scenario of Noto as built after the earthquake of 1693.

Site lectures were delivered by Professor Denis De Lucca, Architect Hermann Bonnici, and lecturers from the University of Catania, who accompanied the students. The tour ended with a visit to the Baroque architecture of Catania concentrated in Via Etnea and Via dei Cruciferi. Here the students were given the opportunity to view the Buscoli Palace of the Princes of Paternò, which has one of the most impressive eighteenth-century interiors of Baroque Catania.

The study tour was made possible through the assistance of Arch. Vincent Cassar, Director General of the Works Division in Malta, and Professor Salvatore Barbera, DAU Director at the University of Catania.

## SEMINARS

# BAROQUE ARCHITECTURE & ITS CONSERVATION

In November 2001, Professor Salvatore Barbera from the University of Catania in Sicily, visited Malta and delivered a number of lectures on Baroque buildings erected in Catania after the earthquake of 1693. These public seminars were the first of a series organised by the IIBS in conjunction with the Works Division of the Ministry for the Environment focusing on Baroque architecture and various aspects of conservation.

Architect Hermann Bonnici co-ordinated the weeklong seminars given by local and foreign experts in the field. The talks aimed to outline the circumstances which led to the development of Baroque architecture throughout Europe and to provide insights into the construction techniques used. The seminars also discussed contemporary conservation methods and techniques.

All the lectures were open to the general public, and held in the new lecture hall in the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Malta.

Professor Barbera was appointed Professor of Architecture at the University of Catania in 1994, and is presently Director of its Architecture and Town-Planning Department. He has conducted extensive research on various aspects of building construction related to typology, bio-climate, and construction techniques. From 1985-98 he was actively involved in the rehabilitation of the Baroque historic centre of Catania, built after the earthquake of 1693.

Another series of lectures was delivered to students of IIBS between 11-15 March 2002 by Dr Vassilis Zafropoulos, who spoke mainly about laser technology applied to the cleaning and analysis of paintings, marble, stone and other materials. In May the guest lecturer was Professor Angelo di Tommaso from the *Istituto Universitario di Architettura* of the University of Venice, who is the author of over eighty papers on the mechanics of building structures. His research interests range from the study of traditional materials to the use of contemporary materials in the restoration of structural elements in Baroque buildings. His lectures focused on three main themes: the use of innovative composite materials for strengthening masonry constructions, domes and vaults, and the strengthening of complex Baroque buildings.

During his stay in Malta, Professor di Tommaso and Professor Denis De Lucca discussed possible forms of co-operation between IIBS and the University of Venice in the fields of research programmes and teaching activity. Professor di Tommaso also lectures at the Universities of Florence and Bologna and until 1997 he occupied the post of Director of the *Istituto di Scienza delle Costruzioni e del Laboratorio Sperimentale per la Resistenza dei Materiali* at the University of Bologna.

In May IIBS was also visited by Professor Richard Davies, Head of Post-Graduate Programmes of the Canterbury School of Fine Art at the Kent Institute of Art and Design. He gave a lecture entitled 'The Fall of the Monumental' to students of architecture at the University of Malta, and also tutored some final year architecture stream students working on their thesis projects. The Canterbury School of Fine Art shares a campus



St. Helen Gate, Bormla.

with a School of Architecture, and thus provides an innovative area for study and research in both disciplines – their M.A. courses are open to architects, artists, designers and theorists wishing to further develop their practice either as a single discipline or as a mixed range of disciplines. The lecture given by Professor Davies focused on a series of superbly produced graphic designs illustrating major historical events of the twentieth century.

Professor Davies was introduced to the audience by Professor De Lucca, who emphasised the demanding creative skills that were internationally expected in the training of tomorrow's architects and the great achievements of the Kent Institute of Art and Design in this field. Professor De Lucca pointed out that the prospectus of the Kent Institute states that its mission is to foster an environment in which the spirit and skill of the creative individual can thrive, research and scholarship flourish, and the educational, artistic and business needs of the national and international community are served.

## LECTURES

# SPANISH BAROQUE ART & ARCHITECTURE

Last February IIBS organised a series of lectures on Spanish Baroque art and architecture, given by Professor Mercedes Gomez-Ferrer of the Department of Art History of the University of Valencia. The talks were targeted primarily at students following the MA in Baroque Studies and Certificate in Baroque Architecture courses currently run by the Institute.

The Spanish scenario is characterised by an extremely decorative approach to building interiors and exteriors and offers

students a fascinating field of study. A good knowledge of Spanish Baroque architecture is essential to understanding contemporary developments in other European countries. Over the last two years, IIBS has attached great importance to including lectures on the subject in its teaching curriculum.

During the lectures, students were exposed to the principles of spatial investigation, collective values and communicative force that characterised Spanish Baroque architecture in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

## SEMINAR

## REGENERATION OF WALLED BAROQUE CITIES IN MALTA

A seminar on the theme 'Regeneration of Walled Baroque Cities in Malta' was organised in June by IIBS in conjunction with the Works Division and the University of Bologna. The event was held at the Italian Cultural Institute in Valletta and focused on the development of walled cities in Baroque Malta with special emphasis on the challenges encountered in their adaptation for contemporary use. The seminar was opened by Professor Denis De Lucca, who explained the role of IIBS in promoting a wide spectrum of specialist and inter-disciplinary knowledge on various aspects of European Baroque culture at both teaching and research levels. Architect Vincent Cassar, Director-General of the Works Division, described the close cooperation that exists between the IIBS, the Works Division, and the University of Bologna, which has resulted in new courses being held aimed at improving the quality and performance levels of Works Division employees.

Other speakers at the seminar included Mr Ray Bondin, Executive Co-ordinator of Rehabilitation Projects in the Ministry of Resources and Infrastructure, as well as Mr Stephen Spiteri, Superintendent of Fortifications and the author of numerous books and articles on fortifications, and Mr Hermann Bonnici, Research Assistant at IIBS and Senior Architect in the very active Restoration Unit.

Professor De Lucca, who is also the Chairman of the Mdina Rehabilitation Committee in the Ministry of Resources and Infrastructure, gave a lecture on the transformation of Mdina from a Medieval citadel to a Baroque city. Professor Giampiero Cuppini and Professor Carlo Monti of the University of Bologna spoke about the Italian experience in injecting new life into historic fortified towns. The proceedings of the seminar were co-ordinated by Architect Hermann Bonnici on behalf of IIBS, and the talks were concluded by the Hon. Francis

Zammit Dimech, Minister of Resources and Infrastructure who praised the initiatives being taken by IIBS and the Works Division regarding the conservation of the Maltese Baroque heritage. The Minister pointed out that over the last fifteen years since the inception of the Valletta Rehabilitation Project, around Lm 4.5 million had been invested in rehabilitation and restoration projects in the city. A third of the investment had been dedicated to St. John's Co-cathedral.

The proper conservation of the unique Maltese fortifications, Baroque churches and palaces built by the Knights of St. John in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries necessitates further widening of knowledge and careful research about their history and cultural context, which will ensure that all who are involved in any interventions fully understand the concepts and underlying spirit of this architecture.

# MDINA PROJECT DISCUSSED AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN BARLETTA, ITALY

In December 2001 the Chairman of the Mdina Rehabilitation Committee and Director of the IIBS, Professor Denis De Lucca, presented a paper on the rehabilitation of Mdina at a conference on cultural heritage management held in the Castle of Barletta in Italy.

The contents of the paper, entitled *'Il Restauro di Mdina, Malta'*, included a detailed history of Mdina in the light of research already carried out, as well as historical finds and an evaluation of the various projects initiated by the Mdina Rehabilitation Committee to preserve Mdina's architecture and embellish its urban space with proper paving, underground services and illumination at night. Professor De Lucca emphasised the need to adopt a proper management strategy based on a clear philosophy of conservation which took into consideration the past, present and future roles of Malta's oldest human settlement. He also emphasised the role of the IIBS in promoting research and conservation initiatives targeted at the Baroque heritage of Malta, including that of Mdina.

The Barletta conference was held under the auspices of the 'Herity' international certification programme for historic sites and the USUFI International Institute of the University of Lecce whose director, Professor A. Rizzo, a former Rector of that University, gave an interesting lecture about post-graduate studies aimed at producing the right professionals to deal with the multi-disciplinary problems of historic cities and landscapes. Other contributions were given by Mons. F. Marchisano, President of the Papal Commission for Sacred Archaeology and Church Heritage, by Professor L. Oosterbeck of the Polytechnic of Tomar, Portugal, by General R. Conforti, head of the Carabinieri department dealing with theft and vandalism, and by Professor H. Zemankova, Vice Rector of the Brno University of Technology, who talked about the conversion of abandoned

industrial buildings in the town of Zlin in the Czech Republic.

The event also included site sessions in a number of unique Romanesque buildings in Barletta and Trani, in the Swabian imperial Castel del Monte, and in the ruins of the medieval town of Cannes della Battaglia. It was supported by the European Commission office for Italy, the Italian ministries of Foreign Affairs and Culture, and the regional administration of Puglia, Italy. The many personalities who attended the conference included Dott. E. Triggiani, Vice President of the Province of Bari, Dott. F. Salerno, Mayor of Barletta, and the Consul of the Republic of Malta in Barletta, Dott. Matteo Bonadies.

One important result of the Barletta conference was the inclusion of Mdina in the Herity Register of certified sites which qualify for international certification as cultural heritage sites, based on the four criteria of perceived value, preservation capability, transmitted information, and the provision of all those services which foster the optimum appreciation of the value of the cultural site under consideration. It was agreed by all conference delegates that emphasis should be placed on transmitted information due to the need for University based institutions to promote a set of initiatives

encouraging the dissemination of knowledge and awareness of European heritage sites. The International Institute for Baroque Studies is actively promoting initiatives on both the national and international levels, mainly through research, publications, and post-graduate and certificate courses focusing on Baroque buildings and their conservation.



1. Cattedrale antico Palazzo di S. Pubbio.
2. Palazzo del Vescovo.
3. Seminario
4. Convento, e Chiesa del Carmine.
5. Casa del Magistrato.
6. Armeria.
7. Monastero di S. Pietro.
8. Palazzo del Principe.
9. Curia.

10. Grotta di S. Paolo
11. Ove il S. Apostolo predicava.
12. Tempio di Proserpina
13. Convento, e Chiesa di S. Agostino.
14. S. Francesco
15. Chiesa, e Convento di S.M. di Gesù
16. Convento, e Chiesa de PP. Domenicani
17. Sito dell' antico Tempio d' Apolline

Map of Rabat and Mdina, by Count Gian Antonio Ciantar (1772)

# St James Church – Carapecchia’s first commission in Malta – and the Municipal Palace, Valletta

**Moira Pisani**

The Church of St. James in Merchants Streets, Valletta, once belonged to the Langue of Castille. A marble inscription in the sacristy states that it was first built in 1612, mainly at the expense of the Grand Chancellor Fra Pietro Gonzales de Mendoza.<sup>1</sup>

Chevalier Francesco Antella’s drawing of Valletta which appears in Giacomo Bosio’s *Istoria della Sacra Religione di S. Giovanni Gerosolimitano* shows that a church dedicated to St. James already existed on the same site before that date.<sup>2</sup>

It was the first of the Order’s churches to be rebuilt in the eighteenth century and has been attributed to Romano Carapecchia.<sup>3</sup> The 1693 earthquake must have substantially damaged it because despite repairs it was still in very poor condition at the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>4</sup>

Rebuilding was completed in 1710 and this already makes it Carapecchia’s earliest dated work in Malta.<sup>5</sup> It is however interesting that the application for quarry stone made to the *Veneranda Commissione Munimentorum et bellica* is dated 12 June 1703<sup>6</sup> and the reply is dated 19 June.<sup>7</sup> The request states: “*I Com. Fr. D. Antonio Pas Procuratore del Ven. Priorato ha bisogno di tagliar pietre dentro il ristretto di detto V. Priorato in servizio della presente fabrica che si sta facendo nella veneranda Chiesa di detto Priorato; supplica per tanto a V.E. degnarsi aggratiarlo, all’effetto sudetto*”.

Later, on 13 August, the Langue of Castille requested a loan of 2,000 *scudi* from the Treasury to carry out repairs on St. James “*che minaccia rovina*”. They promised to pay back the loan at the rate of 100 *scudi* a year. This request was subsequently granted.<sup>8</sup>

This is four years before Carapecchia’s arrival in Malta and so it raises the question of how he was introduced to the local scene. Had the Order commissioned this work from him while he was still in Rome or had he visited Malta before his arrival in 1707?

Sciocluna states that in 1700 the Prior of the church, Fra Pietro Viani, brought Carapecchia to Malta where he was admitted to the Order as a Knight and at once appointed architect to the Order, but he does not substantiate this statement with references.<sup>9</sup>

Alternatively, still assuming that Carapecchia built this church, an attribution which has never been challenged, the work might have originally been commissioned to another architect, possibly local, but then discontinued for some unknown reason until Carapecchia’s arrival.

Documentary evidence has to date only been provided for two of Carapecchia’s churches in Malta, those of St. Catherine of Italy, the chapel of the Langue of Italy, and St. Catherine in Republic Street, Valletta. Yet strong stylistic similarities between these churches and that of St. James indicate Carapecchia as the architect.<sup>10</sup>

A letter from Grand Master Perellos to the Ambassador

to the Holy See, Marcello Sacchetti, throws interesting light on this commission. It is dated 5 November 1703, and states: “*Questi cavalieri del V. Priorato di Castiglia volendo rifabbricare la loro Chiesa di S. Giacomo hanno commesso al Pred. Scipione Costanzo Gesuita, che fa ritorno a cotesta sua Provincia di procurar loro un disegno e supplicatoci di ricercarci, come facciamo, a volergli prestare tutta quell’assistenza che bisogna a farlo abboccare con buoni Architetti, e risolvere ciò che loro parerà, doppo haver sentito detto Padre informato non meno del sito che della maniera di fabricare in quest’ Isola. Speriamo che lo farete e preghiamo.*”<sup>11</sup>

Thus it appears that it was this Jesuit priest who established contact with Carapecchia who was still in Rome and that his instructions included details of the site as well as of the buildings methods on the island. On 16 February 1704, Ambassador Marcello Sacchetti duly informed the Grand Master: “*Il Pred. Scipione Costanzo Gesuita pochi giorni prima di partire per Livorno, ove predica nella corrente quaresima, se portò da me col Disegno già da esso fatto fare, e stabilito pre la nuova fabrica della Chiesa di San Giacomo di codesta Ven. Priorato di Castiglia di V.E. e suppongo che detto Pred l’havra effettuato con buoni Architetti senza che habbia havuto bisogno della mia debole assistenza.*”<sup>12</sup>

Later on, in correspondence dated 29 March 1704<sup>13</sup>, the Grand Master wrote: “*Abbiamo sentito con gusto che sia terminata il disegno della nuova Chiesa di S. Giacomo del V. Priorato di Castiglia ma non vedendolo comparire, ci diamo a credere esser ciò seguito per non esser stati riconosciuti gl’ Architetti che lo formarono, e incarichiamo dunque di somministrare la spesa che sarà occorsa commetterla ne vostri conti in debito al Priorato predetto e mandare al medesimo il disegno quando all’ arrivo di questa non sia stato rimesso.*”

Thus although Ambassador Sacchetti had been urged to aid the Jesuit, Scipione seems to have carried the job through himself choosing the architect and liaising with him regarding the plan, without involving the Ambassador at all, a matter which seems to have caused him some annoyance. The architect is not mentioned by name but in addition to the stylistic evidence referred to above we know that by 1706 his work must have become known to the Order because in that year Grand Master Perellos went to some lengths to persuade Carapecchia to come to Malta, a request the architect hesitantly acceded to in 1707.<sup>14</sup>

On his arrival here he was invested as a serving brother, *armorum serviens* and appointed *Architetto della Sacra Religione* and *Fontaniere*, or water supply engineer and in this capacity he was attached to the staff of François de Mondion who became Chief Engineer in 1715.<sup>15</sup> He worked indefatigably for the Order until his death in 1738<sup>16</sup>, producing work that ranged from designs for fountains, tombstones and church furniture to some of our most beautiful church and civil buildings.<sup>17</sup>

Many of the attributions in Malta to Carapecchia are based on stylistic evidence. Documentary evidence has now been

discovered that confirms one such attribution. Between 1577 and 1721 the Valletta *Università* was housed in premises on the site of what is today known as the *Monte di Pietà*. These premises were exchanged with the Treasury for the house opposite on 30 July 1721.<sup>18</sup> This house had originally belonged to Dr. Gio. Batta. Piotto and had been acquired by the Treasury in 1665.

The premises had been let to a series of prominent personalities, the most distinguished being Comm. Fra Giovanni Francesco Ricasoli, the generous patron of Fort Ricasoli, who lived there between 1668 and 1673.<sup>19</sup> It also served as the premises for the *Consolato di Mare*, a commercial tribunal for maritime commerce that was set up by Grand Master Perellos in 1697.<sup>20</sup>

Following the exchange of the two sites the new Municipal Palace building was reconstructed and embellished by Grand Master Zondadari as borne out by the inscription in the centre of its façade, which states: “*Marcus Antonius Zondadarius M.M./ Has Aedes Commodiorem Formam Redactas/ Publicis Melitae Negotiis/ Et Publicae Pietati Aperuit/ Anno Dni. MDCCXXI*”.

The *Università* documents in the National Library reveal that the *architetto*, Sig. Fra Romano Carapечchia, was paid 140 *scudi* on 20 December 1721 for the design of the façade ...”*Al Sign. Fra Romano Carapечchia scudi cento quaranta per disegno dal medesimo fatto per la facciata della casa come per mandato*.”<sup>21</sup>

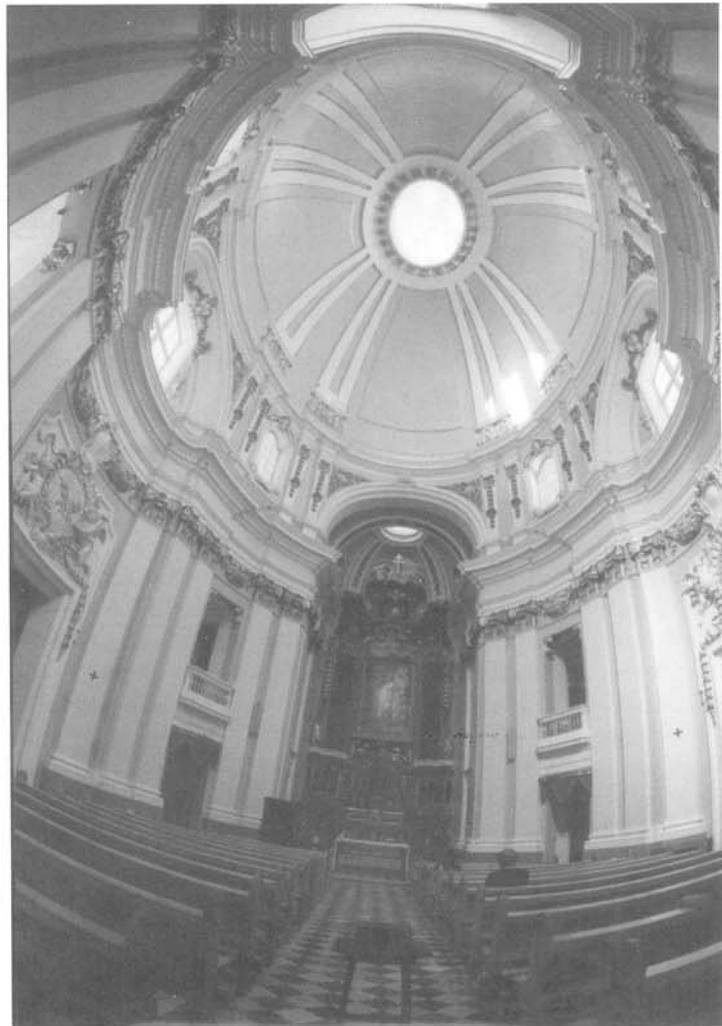
The use of the phrase “*della casa*” indicates that it was quite clear, to the writer and to eventual readers, which the house in question was. In other words we are not dealing with just any building that must be identified by specifying its location or previous ownership or tenant or whatever. No other building belonging to the *Università* is referred to in the records as being under construction.

On the other hand it is known that important work was undertaken in that period on the Municipal Palace. This would have merited the employment of an architect such as Carapечchia and so the payment must in all likelihood have been in connection with this project.

Other payments are recorded in connection with work on the façade. These were made to Mro. Giovanni Zammit, who must have been the builder and to Mro. Giuseppe Azzupard. The earliest payment regarding the building of the *facciata* is dated 14 September 1720<sup>22</sup> when Giuseppe Azzupard and Mro. Giuseppe Zammit were paid 150 *scudi* “*per comp ti tutta l’opera come per mandato*”.<sup>23</sup>

Azzupard might be the master carpenter who was engaged by Fr. Filippo Bonici to construct all the woodwork for Palazzo Bonici, in Old Theatre Street, Valletta, in 1736.<sup>24</sup> In the case of the Municipal Palace the records indicate that he was paid for work on the *Arme*. It thus appears that he was the sculptor of the coat-of-arms on the façade.

Less clear is the reference to his receipt of 20 *scudi* on 20 October 1721 as payment for a design. We are not told what the design was and indeed whether it had anything to do with work on the façade of the Municipal Palace. It is almost impossible to believe that the design for the coat-of-arms did



Interior of St. James Church, Valletta

not form an integral part of Carapечchia's design and in fact Giuseppe Azzupard was already being paid for work on the *Arma* on 18 May 1720 (30 *scudi*, “*a buon conto*”). This is more than a year earlier than the payment for the unspecified design.

The Municipal Palace is one of the most beautiful buildings in Valletta and was first attributed to Carapечchia by De Lucca.<sup>25</sup> In contrast to the older buildings of the capital its façade was enlivened through the use of elaborate details that produced striking *chiaroscuro* effects. Yet the architect also succeeded in introducing features that recalled Cassar's auberges and the Auberge de Provence (rebuilt in the first half of the seventeenth century) thereby harmonising it with its surroundings. This lesson was not lost on later architects and the Auberge de Castille (rebuilt 1741-44) illustrates features which had appeared earlier in the Municipal Palace.<sup>26</sup>

The process of integrating the baroque style into Valletta had begun in the mid-seventeenth century, mainly thanks to Francesco Buonamici and Mederico Blondel, who were, successively, the Order's resident engineers. Carapечchia was to accelerate the process of softening Valletta's original austere aspect with rich baroque touches in a fresh and different manner.

To return to St. James Church we may note that the façade is strikingly different from other earlier baroque church façades. In St. James, Carapечchia made full use of his repertoire of baroque ornament to cover the walls, crowning the ensemble with a magnificent cartouche and making use of false perspective to accentuate the depth of the central niche.

This evenly distributed decoration, combined with clustered pilasters contrasts with the blank wings, heavily moulded central bay and flattened pilasters of Blondel's churches or the uniformly straight, columnless and largely unornamented wall surfaces of Buonamici's facades. St. James in fact highlights the change that Carapечchia's designs would make to the architectural scene.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> AOM 1953, f.254 r. Archives of the Order, National Library, Valletta  
<sup>2</sup> L. Mahoney. *History of Maltese Architecture*. Malta: 1988: 266 n.34  
<sup>3</sup> D. De Lucca. *Architects Working in Malta during the Grand Mastership of Manoel de Vilhena*. B.Arch. Hons dissertation (typescript). University of Malta, 1975  
<sup>4</sup> G. Darmanin Demajo. 'Le Albergie delle Lingue Iberiche e le loro Chiese Nazionali'. *Archivio Storico di Malta*. Anno III vol iii, 1932: 88  
<sup>5</sup> AOM 1953, f.255 v, which states "Fu fabricata piu ampiamente e in miglior forma adornata, come si vede al presente nell'anno 1710 a spese del Vend. Priorato di Castiglia dal Emo. Signor Cardinale Avias e di molti altri signori del detto Vend. Priorato."  
<sup>6</sup> AOM 1016, new pagination 536; M. Pisani. *Serve per Abellire*. MA Baroque Studies thesis, University of Malta, 1999  
<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>8</sup> AOM 135, f. 31 r  
<sup>9</sup> H. Scicluna. *St John's Co-Cathedral*. Rome: 1955: 225. One is tempted to consider that Scicluna may have confused the Prior of St. John's Church, the Frenchman Fra Pietro Viany, with the Prior Antonio Viani, head of the illustrious Viani family,

who was probably closely involved in the final negotiations to bring Carapечchia to Malta. Fra Pietro Viany died on 18 November 1700 aged 68, having served as Prior of the Church for 34 years

- <sup>10</sup> D. De Lucca. *Carapечchia, Master of Baroque Architecture in Early Eighteenth-Century Malta*. Malta: 2000: 119; Mahoney. *Op.cit.*: 266 n.34  
<sup>11</sup> AOM 1464, f.144  
<sup>12</sup> AOM 1316, f.20 v  
<sup>13</sup> AOM 1464, f.48 r  
<sup>14</sup> D. De Lucca. *Carapечchia*: 107  
<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*: 108  
<sup>16</sup> G. Bonello. 'The Melancholy Death of Romano Carapечchia, Architect'. *Sunday Times of Malta*. 13 December 1998  
<sup>17</sup> For details of these works see D. De Lucca, *Carapечchia* and Mahoney, *History*  
<sup>18</sup> V. Denaro. *The Houses of Valletta*. Malta: 1967: 18-19  
<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* 25  
<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* 27  
<sup>21</sup> Univ.Lib.Maestro 258, f. 385  
<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* f.354  
<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* f.406  
<sup>24</sup> Records of Notary Tommaso Gatt, 16 April 1736. G. Bonello. 'Baroque Architect, industrialist, slave dealer and impresario, Andrea Belli'. *Sunday Times of Malta*, 14 April 1996  
<sup>25</sup> D. De Lucca. *Architects....* 1975  
<sup>26</sup> Mahoney. *Op. cit.* 282-84

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# The Conservation of the Baroque Heritage of Valletta

## Hermann Bonnici

The International Institute for Baroque Studies at the University of Malta promotes the baroque heritage, and one of its major roles is the conservation of baroque architecture. Age alone is seldom a sufficiently good reason for the retention of a building, and conservation for conservation's sake is an unsustainable argument. Quality and importance should be the primary factors, but even then individual buildings contribute little to the character of the city. This is determined more by the ordinary buildings that constitute the bulk of the built environment.

When conserving we are often led into the mistake of intervening on buildings isolated from their environment. We may carry out analysis on the fabric of that particular building, but completely ignore the impact of the surrounding environment on the building and vice versa.

Valletta is a World Heritage site. It lies within a densely populated urban conglomeration, characterised by industrial areas and heavy traffic. Valletta and Floriana are established office centres generating considerable vehicular traffic within the fortification network. Activities focused around the Grand Harbour should also not be undervalued. The central power station at Marsa, the Malta Drydocks and Shipbuilding, and a number of smaller industries within the Marsa and Corradino industrial areas, discharge harmful substances into the environment. Cruise liners and cargo ships, although on a much smaller scale, are also an important source of pollution. As a

peninsula, Valletta is constantly subjected to a salt-laden environment, while its siting on a promontory makes it more exposed to the prevailing winds.

Valletta is also inflicted with other problems. A daily influx of people concentrated within a small area of the capital city creates extensive pressures on the potential use of buildings within that quarter. They also imply a heavy demand on the infrastructure of the city, necessitating a constant upgrading of the systems.

These are in turn associated with civil engineering works, which together with other construction works, mostly related to the refurbishment of commercial outlets and the increasing trend of excavating larger and deeper basements, contribute to further pollution generation. In this case mostly in the form of vibrations, sound, and dust. Other activities, such as the traditional *karrozzin*, can also contribute to the generation of undesirable vibrations. Similarly to other major cities, Valletta is also a pigeon-breeding place.

These factors are undoubtedly not new. To date, however, little scientific information on these factors exists. It is high time that all entities concerned with the conservation of Valletta put their heads together and seriously embark on a scientific monitoring project intended to quantitatively assess these agents. The quality of air and rainwater, temperature cycles and humidity, need to be recorded and assessed. Similarly, well-



*Aerial photograph of Valletta*

coordinated surveys indicating vehicle flow into the city and emissions need to be carried out periodically.

There is also an urgent need for stocktaking of the buildings of Valletta. The fact that a significant number of the building stock is vacant or underused is acknowledged, however only sporadic information exists on this phenomenon. Similarly, no information on the general state and condition of the buildings in Valletta is available. Research on the ownership and history of particular buildings should also be recommended.

Buildings are constantly evolving, and once an intervention has taken place, what was altered or removed is lost forever. The recording and documentation of buildings in Valletta should thus be an ongoing activity. An inventory including a description of a building, the important dates in its history, and its location, need to be prepared. This would prove invaluable in the event of a natural disaster or other calamities. Satellite photographs, aerial photographs, as well as aerial and terrestrial photogrammetry are invaluable aids to forming an inventory.

The recording methods which could be effectively used are various, and their choice depends on the final objectives of the records. Simple methods using hand recording, rectified photography or video, to more elaborate systems including the use of electronic theodolites or stereo photogrammetry, could be used. The limiting factor is often dependent on the human and financial resources available, as well as on the objectives and utilisation of the records.

Although still in the initial stages, the Restoration Unit within the Works Division at the Ministry for the Environment has already begun the documentation of buildings and the gathering of information in this regard. Research in local and

foreign libraries is being conducted, and site investigations to assess the original methods of construction and the present state of the buildings has been initiated. These entail the use of sophisticated and expensive equipment, such as endoscopes and thermal cameras, which the Department has recently purchased. These systems have already been used for the church of Santa Caterina d'Italia in Valletta, and for the Ospizio in Floriana.

The Restoration Unit has also embarked on a laborious process of accurately documenting some buildings in Valletta. Various methods as deemed suitable for each particular case are being adopted in this exercise, and include the use of rectified photographs, digitally rectified photographs, surveying techniques, and photogrammetry. A series of aerial photographs of Valletta, Mdina, Cottonera and the Citadel in Gozo for the restitution of a detailed set of 1:500 scale survey sheets have also been commissioned.

The data generated will inevitably be phenomenal, and all efforts invested in this gathering of information would be futile if no efficient way of storing, retrieving, and analysing this information is adopted. It is also important that the information collected is made easily available. A Geographical Information System is the logical solution to this necessity. A GIS is a powerful tool developed for analysing spatial data. A GIS can be defined as "a powerful set of tools for storing, and retrieving at will, transforming, and displaying spatial data from the real world for a particular set of purposes" (Burrough, 1986: 6). It can also be defined as "an automated system for the capture, storage, retrieval, analysis, and display of spatial data" (Clarke, 1995: 13).

The importance of compatibility must be stressed. Databases should be designed to conform to international standards, and

all data should be stored in such a manner so as to permit maximum flexibility in its future use. The Restoration Unit within the Works Division is in the process of setting up a comprehensive database of Valletta, where all conservation related information will be filed. It is also earmarked that this database will be made accessible through the Internet.

We can only be confident to intervene on a building after having assimilated this information, and closely understood the agents influencing its deterioration.

The most common causes of building deterioration can be classified in three categories: physical, chemical, and biological. Physical damage is, in many cases, brought about by lack of sensitivity to the building fabric. Metal nails and pins are indiscriminately fixed into the building fabric. These rust and expand, creating stress within the stone. Being weak in tension, this will inevitably lead the stone to break.

Services are chased into the building fabric, in various cases even damaging mouldings. Vehicular traffic, particularly in narrow streets, can also cause irreversible damage to stonework. Settlement of building foundations will inevitably lead to a redistribution of loads, creating point loads, with the consequence that the masonry blocks will crack. During the past years, the practice of hacking extensive areas of facades has gained in popularity. Similar interventions are irreversible and negatively affect the aesthetic qualities of the building. They even contribute to further deterioration.

When analysing typical baroque buildings, the presence of chloride and sulphate salts normally predominates. Nitrates are usually found in much lesser quantities. Chlorides, as derived from sodium chloride, are more abundant in coastal regions, since they are mainly of maritime origin. They penetrate the structure either from the ground, or through marine aerosols transported by the wind. The most frequent sulphate salts occurring within normally deteriorated structures are calcium sulphate and sodium sulphate, found in different forms of hydration.

These salts usually originate from atmospheric pollution or seawater, which besides sodium chloride salts contains traces of magnesium sulphate. Cement, used sparingly in interventions, can also be considered an important source of sulphates. As a result of impurities introduction during the production of cement, several soluble or partially soluble salts, such as calcium hydroxide, sodium hydroxide, sodium sulphate, and calcium sulphate, are formed. In the presence of water, these salts are free to migrate into the pore structure of the limestone fabric, onto which the cement-based plaster has been applied.

In practice, water within the building fabric can owe its origins to a combination of capillary action from the ground, rainwater percolation, condensation, and seawater spray carried in the air as aerosols. Capillary rise increases with time, as soluble salts are carried by water into the masonry and become concentrated. These concentrated salts cause a greater affinity for water. Equilibrium is never reached, and the capillary rise of water increases with the structure's age. Condensation occurs when the air is damp, and the masonry surface is colder than the dew point of the air.

Condensation water has higher capabilities of dissolving suspended dirt and gaseous pollutants in the atmosphere, and can thus be more acidic than rain water. Liquid solutions containing free sulphuric acid then form on masonry surfaces in polluted atmospheres, and particles of carbon, iron oxide, calcium sulphate, and other substances are deposited. Stone

deterioration is generally the result of large internal stresses, which build up within the pore structure of the stone. These usually take place within a small distance from the surface, and because stone is very weak in tension they cause the failure of the same material. The mechanisms by which similar internal stresses originate vary, and range from extreme climatic conditions to smaller localised reactions occurring within the pore structure of the stone. When analysing buildings in Valletta, the deterioration of the limestone fabric is mainly due to the behaviour of various salts and their interaction with water.

It has long been debated whether biological growth instigates rock deterioration and soil formation. Living organisms such as lichens, algae, mosses, fungi and bacteria implanted on masonry surfaces produce visible colour effects.

Considering the relatively high levels of atmospheric pollution in Valletta, similar growths are unlikely. Yet plants flourishing from open joints, particularly around defective pipes, are a common phenomenon. This is always associated with the presence of water, and the cause of similar growths should be remedied without unnecessary delays. Although seemingly innocuous, plant roots, particularly those of a hardwood nature, can penetrate deep into the building fabric to find nutrients. In the process, the roots increase in thickness, displacing masonry blocks and encouraging further water penetration.

Deterioration processes in a building can be various, and the determination of their causes is complex. It is thus necessary that prior to any intervention, analysis on the building fabric is carried out. This may include the use of sophisticated equipment such as X-ray diffraction, and should primarily be aimed at establishing the porosity and chemical composition of the construction material, as well as a thorough analysis of the products of deterioration. Active vegetation and microorganisms should also be identified. In this respect, temperature and humidity surveys of the building, including daily and seasonal cycles, would be useful.

It is the current trend that a conservation intervention terminates with the dismantling of the scaffolding. This should not be the case. A restored building should be monitored, and inspections carried out periodically to assess the effectiveness of the interventions. It is essential that during this process all data gathered is stored in the database for future use. It is only thus that we can learn from our experiences and build on our past for the protection of our architectural heritage.

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*This paper was first delivered at a seminar on the Baroque Heritage of Valletta on 3 November 2002 at the National Museum of Archaeology, Valletta.*

## BOOKS

## SICILIAN BAROQUE ARCHITECTURE



Modica, Sicily. Chiesa di S. Giorgio

A new book entitled *Annali del Barocco in Sicilia – 'Capitali' europee del barocco tra cultura del progetto e cultura del cantiere* was recently published in Sicily by the Syracuse-based *Centro Internazionale di Studi sul Barocco*. Edited by Architect Lucia Trigilia, it contains a collection of research papers presented at a conference held in Syracuse.

Among the contributions are features on the Baroque palace and gardens of Buen Retiro in Madrid by Professor Antonio Bonet Correa, the Baroque architecture of Naples by Professor Gaetana Cantone, the Baroque form of Sessa Aurunca in Southern Italy by Francesco Divenuto, and the church of S. Annunziata at Avola, Sicily, by Professor Francesca Gungeri Pantano.

The volume also contains three essays on Baroque Malta. Professor Denis De Lucca's essay deals with the Baroque architectural expression in Valletta and Mdina; Lucia Trigilia writes about the reconstruction of buildings in Malta after the 1693 earthquake, and Dr David Mallia's contribution is concerned with the contents and conservation of Maltese archives.

The essays are beautifully illustrated and well referenced, and turn this volume into an important contribution to contemporary studies focusing on European Baroque culture during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

## BOOKS

## CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

*The Management of the Cultural Heritage* is the title of a recently published book containing the proceedings of the Sixth International Symposium on the subject, held in Barletta, Italy, in December 2001. The symposium was hosted by DRI-Ente Interregionale di Promozione Culturale e Turistica under the patronage of Italian President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi. This 285-pp. volume includes forty academic contributions covering various aspects of cultural heritage management, all focusing on applications and experiences gained in Italy, France, England, the Czech Republic, Sweden, Latvia, and Malta.

The symposium was introduced by the Rector of the University of Bari, Professor Giovanni Girone, who stressed that quality cultural heritage management should aim at achieving a fair balance between the need to conserve and the need for compatible and sustainable development, implying that institutions concerned with this theme should strive to foster a wide spectrum of knowledge, to encourage conservation efforts and to present the cultural heritage product in meaningful and enjoyable way.

This informative book contains a contribution by Professor

Denis De Lucca entitled *'Il Restauro di Mdina, Malta'*, which discusses the growth pattern of Mdina and the approach philosophy that is being implemented by the Mdina Rehabilitation Committee – of which he is the Chairman – the efficient rehabilitation of a unique human settlement which was rapidly transformed after the 1693 earthquake into a fine Baroque city resplendent with beautiful buildings and powerful fortifications. Once the rehabilitation works are concluded, Mdina should present itself as a candidate for inclusion in UNESCO's world heritage list.

Other papers published in the proceedings of the Barletta symposium include one by Archbishop Francesco Marchisano dealing with the immense cultural, social and religious value of the cultural heritage of the Roman Catholic Church; one by Professor Helena Zemankova concerning the conversion of abandoned industrial buildings in the town of Zlin; another by Professor Andreys Lomakins about the development problems of historic towns in Latvia, and one by Professor Lennart Runesson and Ms Guerilla Hallen of the University of Visby about the preservation of the historic town of Visby in Sweden.

## MANOEL BAROQUE FESTIVAL 2003

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

## CONCERT

Concert to be performed at St. John's Co-Cathedral on 7 May 2003

Conductor: Joseph Vella (Malta)

This concert of sacred music by Maltese composers spans the years 1600 to 1750, and includes representative works from the Early, Middle and High Baroque. The music is scored for a wide variety of vocal combinations – solos, duets, trios, quartets, chorus and double chorus – and is indicative of the high standard of music making existing in Malta at the time. It flourished mostly in the two most prestigious capellas on the Island – that of St. John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta (the seat of the Grandmasters) and that of St. Paul's Cathedral in Mdina (the seat of the Bishops).

Not surprisingly, the compositions betray a close affinity to contemporary Italian musical styles and ideals. At that time, not only were well-known Italian singers and musicians regularly 'imported' to give their services in either one of the afore-mentioned cappellas, but talented Maltese students were invariably sent to finish off their musical studies in Italy. During the Baroque period, Malta can almost be regarded as another centre of Italian music making, in the same way as Naples and Palermo.

- G. Balzano *Ego Ille* (Soloists, Choir & Ensemble)  
 G. Balzano *Adiuvo Vos* (Soloists, Choir & Ensemble)  
 G. Balzano *Jesu Redemptor Omnium* (Choir)  
 Anon *Curre ad Virginem* (Cantus Solo)  
 A. Mataron *Salve Regina* (Cantus, Altus, Tenor)  
 Anon *Jubila Propera Festina* (2 Cantus & Ensemble)  
 M.A. Vella *Salve Sancta Parens* (Choir)  
 P. Gristi *Kyrie* (Choir & Ensemble)  
 P. Gristi *Beatus Vir* (Bassus Solo, Choir & Ensemble)

## WALKING TOURS

Three walking tours are being organised during the festival by the International Institute for Baroque Studies:

- 'Mdina', on 6 May 2003
- 'Baroque Churches of Valletta', on 7 May 2003
- 'Baroque Gozo', on 9 May 2003



Left: Caricature of soprano-contralto 'Farinelli' (c. 1730)  
 Below: J. S. Bach at the organ in Leipzig



## MANOEL BAROQUE FESTIVAL 2003

## Programme

DATE	EVENT	VENUE
Fri 2 May 2003	Play: 'The Knight of Malta'	Teatru Manoel
Sat 3 May 2003	Play: 'The Knight of Malta'	Teatru Manoel
Sun 4 May 2003	Concert: London Baroque, UK	Teatru Manoel
Mon 5 May 2003	1. Symposium 2. Exhibition Opening 3. Ensemble Baroque de Nice	1. St James Cavalier 3. Teatru Manoel
Tues 6 May 2003	1. Walking Tour: 'Mdina' 2. Organ Recital: <i>Finotti &amp; Fomaciari</i>	2. Mdina Cathedral
Wed 7 May 2003	1. Walking Tour: 'Baroque Churches of Valletta' 2. Choir concert: Mro Joseph Vella 3. 'Farinelli'	2. St John's Co-Cathedral 3. Teatru Manoel
Thurs 8 May 2003	Concert: Petr Wagner	Teatru Manoel
Fri 9 May 2003	1. Walking Tour: 'Baroque Gozo' 2. Concert	2. Gharb Church, Gozo
Sat 10 May 2003	Opera: Purcell – 'Dido & Aeneas'	Teatru Manoel
Sun 11 May 2003	Opera: Purcell – 'Dido & Aeneas'	Teatru Manoel

# Pre-Tertiary Certificate Course and Diploma in Baroque Architecture

The IIBS, in conjunction with the Works Division of the Ministry for the Environment, offers a one-year part-time Pre-Tertiary Certificate Course in Baroque Architecture. The course is intended to provide a broad but thorough grounding of Baroque Architecture by reconciling the theoretical aspects with practical site work, allowing the participants to pursue their own specialisation or field of interest in greater depth through projects and hands on experience.

The idea behind this course is to create an awareness of our built environment by helping participants to develop the necessary skills to understand Baroque architecture and distinguish between different architectural styles. Course participants are expected to develop a clear understanding of how Baroque buildings are constructed, and how different materials within a building interact, with the aim of improving their manual skills.

The course is spread over two semesters. The objective of the first semester is to provide the participants with a complete theoretical background during which various historical issues, building construction practices, and structural principles are discussed. The teaching sessions of the second semester put the theoretical aspects discussed during the first semester into practice. Participants are made aware of the complexity of building structures and their nature as a whole rather than as a collection of individual elements.

Foreign lecturers are regularly invited to participate in the teaching of the various study areas of the course.

IIBS also offers a Diploma in Baroque Architecture – this is a one-year course on a full-time basis (or its equivalent in

part-time study). The course is divided between study-units making up a total of 19 credits, field experience making up 6 credits, and a long essay or projects giving another 5 credits.

## M.A. in Baroque Studies

The International Institute for Baroque Studies at the University of Malta offers a 15-month postgraduate course leading to the award of an M.A. in Baroque Studies.

This multi-disciplinary course syllabus is based on nine study units and a dissertation. The study units consist of *An Introduction to Baroque Europe: Political, Religious, Intellectual and Scientific Scenarios* (BST 401); *The Baroque Route 1: Fortification Building, City Planning and Landscape Design* (BST 402); *The Baroque Route 2: Architecture* (BST 403); *The Baroque Route 3: Sculpture* (BST 404); *The Baroque Route 4: Painting* (BST 405); *Baroque Theatre and Music* (BST 406); *Baroque Literature* (BST 407); *The Conservation of the Baroque Heritage 1: Conservation Philosophy* (BST 408); *The Conservation of the Baroque Heritage 2: Conservation and Recording Techniques* (BST 409).

The Conservation part of the course is supplemented by a number of practical sessions dealing with the conservation of Baroque architecture in Malta and Sicily, and includes study tours to various Baroque cities overseas. A number of guest lecturers from Italian universities specialising in the Baroque are regularly invited to participate in the teaching sessions of the course.



Santa Scholastica Monastery Church, Bormla.

Recent theses by students following the M.A. in Baroque Studies (Year of Entry 2000-2002) at the IIBS included:

Deborah Borg  
'The Santa Scholastica Monastery Church: a Case Study in the Conservation of Baroque Architecture'

Donald Camilleri  
'The Stone-Carved Altar Reredos in Seventeenth Century Malta'

Cynthia de Giorgio  
'The Visual Language of Triumphant Baroque Imagery of the Knights of Malta'

Dieter Falzon  
'The Colours of Baroque Culture'

Marina Felice  
'The Corridors of Power'

Marilyn Mangion  
'Baroque Banqueting'

Valeriano Schembri  
'The Great Light Metaphor'