



# BAROQUE

## Routes

issue 8 - 2011



### FEATURES:

article 1:  
Ephemeral  
Manifestations  
in Baroque Malta



article 2:  
Drawbridge for  
Baroque Gateway  
at Fort Manoel



newsletter

# Contents

## Events

Past Events in the World of Baroque \_\_\_\_\_ 4

Current Events in the World  
of Baroque \_\_\_\_\_ 6

## Features

Ephemeral Manifestations in  
Baroque Malta \_\_\_\_\_ 8

International Conference on the  
Baroque Heritage \_\_\_\_\_ 17

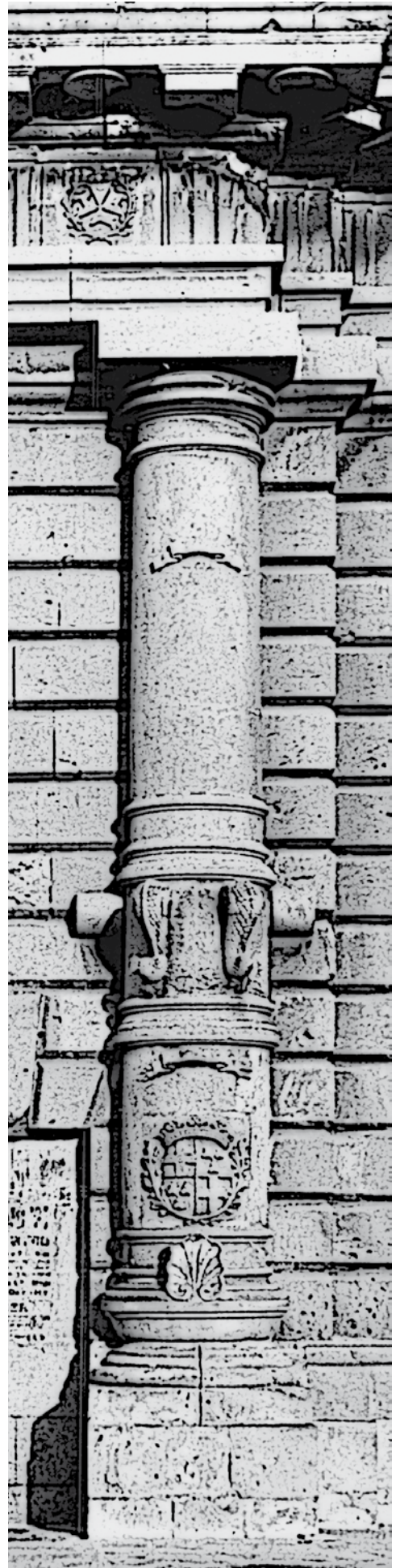
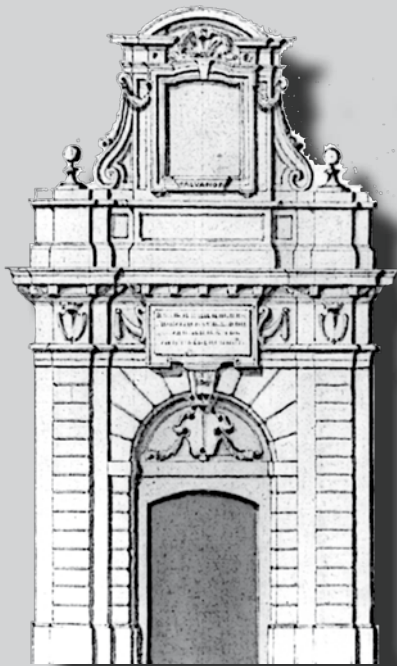
Jesuit Mathematics and Military  
Architecture \_\_\_\_\_ 18

Fort Manoel's Baroque Gateway  
gets a Reconstructed Drawbridge \_\_\_\_\_ 19

**Books** \_\_\_\_\_ 22

**Website** \_\_\_\_\_ 23

**Courses** \_\_\_\_\_ 24





# Foreword

I am pleased to present issue no. 8 of the Baroque Routes Newsletter which is published on a regular basis by the International Institute for Baroque Studies at the University of Malta on behalf of Baroque Routes Network of the Council of Europe. This publication comes at a time of growth when the Institute is promoting new teaching and research initiatives targeting at a wider dissemination of inter-disciplinary knowledge about the rich legacy of the Baroque age. A glance at the recently updated website of the 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 organizes symposiums, public lectures, exhibitions and other activities leading to a greater appreciation of Baroque culture, with particular reference to Malta, and the networks with similar centres for studies overseas. It is currently engaged in research projects concerning Baroque art and architecture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Institute organizes MA courses on Baroque studies and short courses on 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 organizes a pre-tertiary Certificate course and a Diploma course in Baroque architecture.

#### Contact Address

International Institute for Baroque Studies  
University of Malta  
Msida MSD 2080  
Tel / Fax: 00356 - 21333919/21316619

**Website:** [www.um.edu.mt/iibs](http://www.um.edu.mt/iibs)

**Director:** Professor Denis De Lucca

**Academic Staff:** Arch. Hermann Bonnici  
Dr. Stephen C. Spiteri

**Executive Officer:** Mr Jonathan Apap

- [www.um.edu.mt/iibs](http://www.um.edu.mt/iibs) - will reveal details of these recent initiatives.

The Institute will be this year again accepting applications for a Masters and Doctorate Programmes in Baroque Studies which will be starting in October 2011. The five-semester MA in Baroque Studies programme run by the International Institute for Baroque Studies includes an intensive four-semester taught component dealing with the political, religious, social, architectural, artistic and scientific (including medical) scenarios of the Baroque age as well as with the conservation of the Baroque heritage of mankind, which is concluded with the presentation of a dissertation. The PhD programme of studies is research-orientated and targeted at the investigation of some hitherto-unexplored field of Baroque Studies. In addition to these postgraduate programmes of study, the Institute, in conjunction with the Malta University Holdings Company (MUHC), is presently offering a series of one-week short courses on various topics, this year focused on the military and civil architecture of the Baroque age, as can be seen in the course catalogue which is being reproduced in this newsletter for ease of reference.

A series of books and contributions to peer-reviewed journals are also being prepared to enhance and disseminate the research profile of the International Institute for Baroque Studies on an international platform during the period 2011-2013. It is hoped that these initiatives will help to attract foreign students who are interested to pursue postgraduate studies on the Baroque age at the University of Malta.

*Professor Denis De Lucca*

*Director*

*International Institute for Baroque Studies  
University of Malta*

## Past Events in the World of Baroque

### EXHIBITIONS

#### **Saints and Sinners: Caravaggio and the Baroque Image**

*1 February 1999 to 24 May 1999*

*McMullen Museum of Art, Boston*

This exhibition explored the style, subject matter and social function of religious art in Italy circa 1580 to 1680. Some 30 Baroque paintings from both public and private collections were on display with the visual centerpiece provided by the rediscovered masterpiece by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, 'The Taking of Christ', painted in Rome in 1602, which had disappeared in the late eighteenth century. Two hundred years later, in 1993, it was rediscovered in the dining room of the Jesuit Fathers in Dublin. A group of scholars from diverse academic disciplines served as curators for this exhibition, including Guido Reni, Domenichino, Ludovico Carracci, and Pietro da Cortona.

#### **The Glory of Baroque Dresden**

*3 March 2004 to 6 September 2004*

*Mississippi Art Pavilion, USA*

This exhibition was the first major exhibition from Dresden in North America in 25 years when a similar exhibition appeared at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., at the California Legion of Honor in San Francisco, and at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. This new exhibition consists of more than 400 masterpieces from eight collections/museums of the State Art Collections Dresden and Moritzburg Castle. Among the highlights were Johann Vermeer's "The Procuress" and the 41-carat "Dresden Green Diamond." Other artworks include 27 Old Masters paintings by Rembrandt, Rubens, Titian, van Dyck, Veronese, Tintoretto, and Mantegna. On display were also Chinese, Japanese, and Meissen porcelain including the famous animal sculptures and the "Venus Tureen" from the Swan Service, together with prints and drawings by Michelangelo,

Rembrandt, Durer, and Correggio, arms and armor; coins and medals, decorative arts and sculpture.

#### **Tapestry in the Baroque: threads of splendour**

*17 October 2007 to 6 January 2008*

*Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York*

This international loan exhibition, conceived as a sequel to "Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence" (spring 2002), was the first comprehensive survey of high-quality seventeenth-century European tapestry. Drawing from collections in more than fifteen countries, it presents some 40 rare tapestries made in Brussels, Delft, Florence, London, Munich, Paris, and Rome between 1590 and 1720, along with approximately 25 drawings, engravings, and oil sketches. The exhibition investigated the stylistic and technical development of this figurative medium and explored the contributions of artists such as Rubens, Jordaens, Vouet, Le Brun, da Cortona, and Romanelli, as they responded to the challenges of the medium in unique and spectacular ways.

#### **Bernini and the Birth of Baroque Portrait Sculpture**

*5 August to 26 October 2008*

*The Getty Center*

This major international loan exhibition brought together nearly 60 works from both public and private collections, celebrating Baroque sculpture, paintings, and drawings, and is the first important exhibition on Bernini in North America. Bernini is frequently credited with inventing Baroque art and, throughout his long life, remained its greatest exponent.

#### **1620-1800 Baroque: Style in the Age of Magnificance**

*4 April - 19 July 2009*

*Victoria and Albert, London.*

The magnificence and splendour of Baroque, one of the most opulent styles of the 17th and 18th centuries, was the subject of the V&A's spring exhibition in 2009. The exhibition reflected the complexity and grandeur of the Baroque style, from the Rome of Borromini

and Bernini to the magnificence of Louis XIV's Versailles and the lavishness of Baroque theatre and performance. On display were religious paintings by Rubens and Tiepolo, and silver furniture, portraits, sculpture, a regal bed and court tapestries chosen to conjure up the opulence of a Baroque palace. The exhibition, which brought together around 200 objects, was the first to examine all the elements of the Baroque style and how, European power spread, this style reached other parts of the world.

### **On a Pedestal: From Renaissance Chopines to Baroque Heels**

*19 November 2009 to 20 September 2010*

*Bata Shoe Museum, Toronto, Canada.*

The exhibition explored two of the most extreme forms of footwear ever worn in Western fashion, the outrageous platform chopine and its eventual replacement, the high heel. It offered visitors a once in a lifetime opportunity to see exceptionally rare examples of Renaissance and Baroque footwear on loan from numerous renowned International museums including: Victoria and Albert Museum, Museo Bardini, (Florence); Castello Sforzesco (Milan); Livrustkammaren and Skoklosters Slott (Stockholm); Museo Palazzo Mocenigo and Museo Correr (Venice); Ambras Castle (Austria); Boston Museum of Fine Art, Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto as well as shoes from the Bata Shoe Museum's own collection.

### **Back to the Baroque**

*1 December 2009 to 11 April 2010*

*Capodimonte Museum, Naples.*

A lavish exhibition demonstrating how Caravaggio turned Naples into an artistic powerhouse.

### **The Repeating Image in Renaissance and Baroque Art**

*8 September 2010 to 17 February 2011*

*The Walters Museum, Baltimore.*

This exhibition explored the theme of artistic copying from a Renaissance and Baroque perspective. The exhibition, using examples in paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts, reconsidered the notion of copying as forgery, and invited visitors to consider the artistic

motivations behind the practice of copying during the 16th and 17th centuries.

### **Sciences and curiosities at the Court of Versailles**

*26 October 2010 to 27 February 2011*

*Palace of Versailles, France.*

This exhibition was organized by the *Etablissement public du château et du domaine national de Versailles* thanks to the sponsorship of the Alten group and Saint-Gobain.

### **Rome and Antiquity, Reality and Vision**

*30 November 2010 to 6 March 2011*

*Palazzo Sciarra, Rome.*

An exhibition by Fondazione Roma dedicated to the rediscovery of classical antiquity in Rome in the eighteenth century, curated by Carolina Brook and Valter Curzi. The exhibition gathered works of art and archaeological finds which highlighted the key factor behind Rome's rise to international renown in the eighteenth century. The exhibition featured a nucleus of 140 works and was organised in conjunction with Arthemisia group, and sprang from a partnership with the Capitoline Museums, the Vatican Museums, and the Accademia Nazionale di San Luca.

### **The Royal Opera at Versailles**

The Royal Opera at Versailles reopened its doors after 2 years of renovation work, the Royal Opera had reopened its doors on 21 September 2009. Closed since June 2007, the three-storey Opera house underwent major works to bring it up to safety standards. The building, an integral part of the Palace of Versailles, is the perfect example of a court theatre and is one of the remarkable elements of the estate of Versailles through its architectural, decorative, technical and theatrical arrangements. Open to the repertoires of classical and baroque art music, both French and foreign, as well as theatre and dance, the Palace of Versailles is welcoming the greatest names on the French and international scene to the Royal Opera since the 2009-2010 season.

## Italian Women Artists from Renaissance to Baroque

16 March to 15 July 2007

National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington DC, USA.

This exhibition was held to commemorate the 20th year of the National Museum of Women in the Arts. This exhibition brought together paintings, prints, drawings and sculpture by prominent women painters, including Artemisia Gentileschi, Lavinia Fontana, Sofonisba Anguissola, Giovanna Garzoni and Elisabetta Sirani and presented them within a historical context. It also examined the position of women artists as second-class citizens, the economics of art production, the cultural context both within Italy and beyond the country's borders, and the ways in which these artists overcame "the conditions of their sex," to leave behind a fascinating visual legacy.

owners' power and wealth. The exhibition features thirty-six splendid, virtuoso carvings impressively documenting the artisans' great skill, among them masterly executed statuettes, pitchers, goblets, tankards, and bowls of ivory, objects created for display in so-called cabinets of curiosities and not intended for any practical use. The show comprises works by the most famous ivory artists of the Baroque period, such as Adam Lenckhardt, Johann Caspar Schenck, and Matthias Steinl. The exhibition was prepared together with the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, whose world-renowned Cabinet of Wonders is closed for the time being because of comprehensive restoration measures.

## Thrones in Majesty

1 March to 19 June 2011

Grand Apartments, Palace of Versailles, France.

An exhibition on thrones from all civilizations

# Current Events in the World of Baroque

## SYMPOSIA

### Il Barocco Maltese: Storia e Restauro

31 March 2011

Salone del Restauro, Ferrara.

Illustrated presentation at the Salone del Restauro, Ferrara, by Prof. Denis De Lucca, Arch. H. Bonnici and Dr S.C. Spiteri from the International Institute of Baroque Studies at the University of Bologna.

## Neapolitan and Spanish Drawings from the Baroque

19 February to 15 May 2011

Christ Church, Oxford, UK.

This exhibition will introduce the least known group of old master drawings from Christ Church, which boasts a strong collection, especially of Italian art from the 14th to 18th centuries. The twenty nine drawings on display will offer a glimpse into the wide range of Neapolitan draughtsmanship, including works by Jusepe de Ribera, Salvator Rosa and Luca Giordano.

## Baroque Masterworks from the National Gallery of Canada

23 March to 3 June 2011

Winnipeg Art Gallery, Winnipeg, Canada.

The exhibition presents outstanding paintings from the collection of the National Gallery of Canada. Audiences will have the opportunity to view twelve of the nations' greatest treasures from 17th and early 18th century Italy, Spain, Holland, France, and Belgium.

## EXHIBITIONS

### Ivory. Baroque Splendor at the Court of Vienna

3 February to 26 June 2011

Liebieghaus Skulpturensammlung, Schaumainkai, Frankfurt.

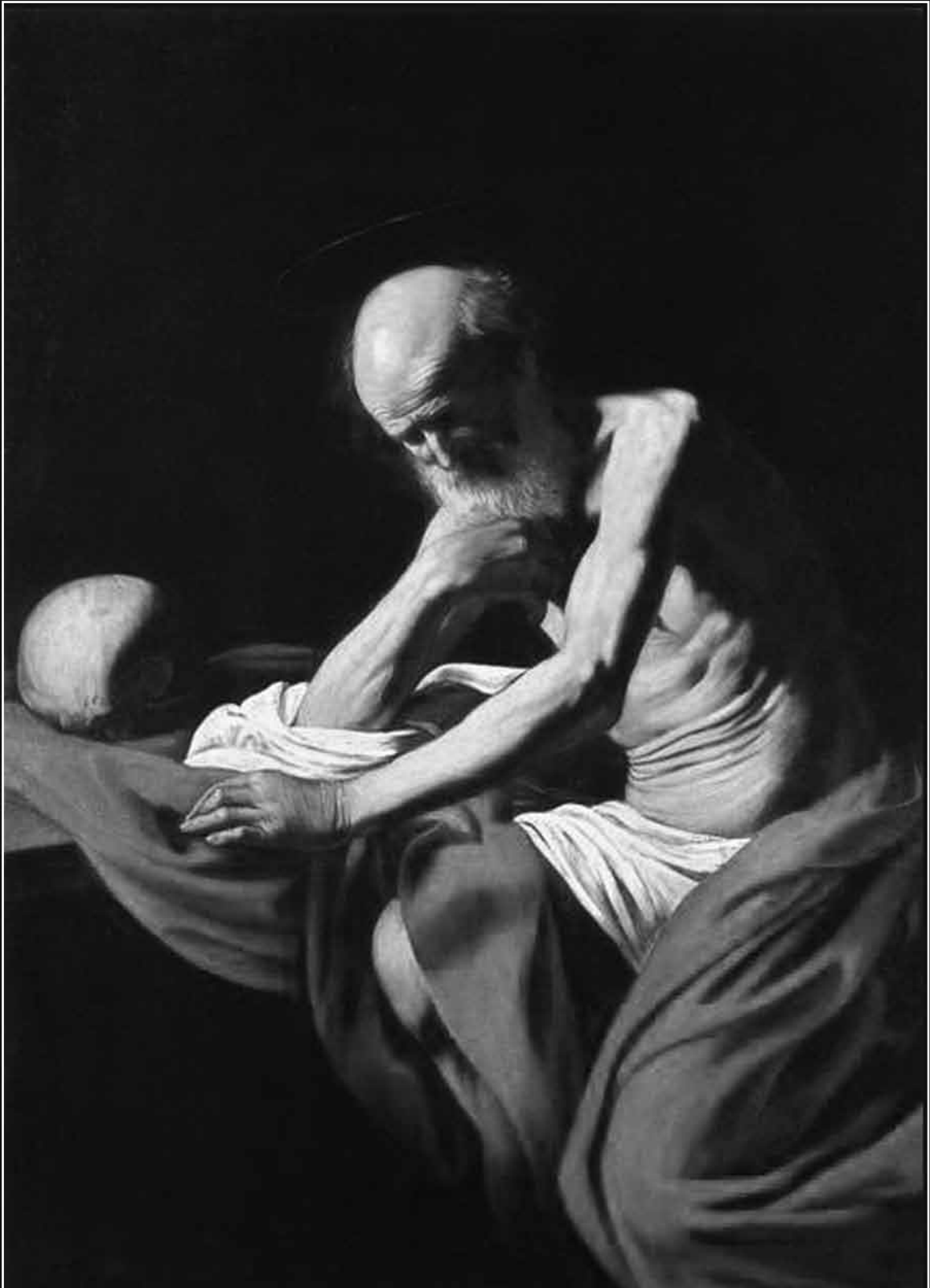
The Baroque era had an extraordinarily high demand for ivory. In the seventeenth century, ivory work reached its culmination in Vienna in the days of Prince Karl Eusebius of Liechtenstein and Emperor Leopold I. The shimmering appearance of the polished material served princely-imperial claims to prestige, as its possession testified to its

### An Artist looks at Old Masters

28 May to 4 September 2011

Christ Church, Oxford, UK.

The artist Jeff Clarke selects over thirty Old Master drawings from Christ Church's own collection to explore the principles of draughtsmanship which cut across centuries; the exhibition includes works by artists like Correggio, Carracci and Pisanello.



# Ephemeral Manifestations in Baroque Malta

Denis De Lucca

It was towards the end of the sixteenth century at the very beginning of the Baroque age, that Catholic Europe started commemorating the death of its important citizens by the construction of large ephemeral structures designed to publicly display a real or a mock coffin called a *representatio* (1). These catafalques as they were called, were normally assembled within a short period of time to stand in a prominent position in the Baroque church, either in the centre of the crossing under the dome or, alternatively, in the centre of the nave opposite the main altar, where they invariably formed the focal point of an elaborate funerary ritual involving solemn prayers, passionate orations, requiem masses and absolution rites, all part of an impressive *festa funebre* complete with incense and organ music. Recent studies of this remarkable Baroque phenomenon have revealed that the architectural form and elaborate ornamentation of catafalques in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were both devised to complement each other so as to produce an unusual and sophisticated symbol reflecting the importance of the deceased person. Designed by the best architects of the time and heavily decorated with allegorical figures or scenes, religious figures, antique motifs, coats-of-arms,

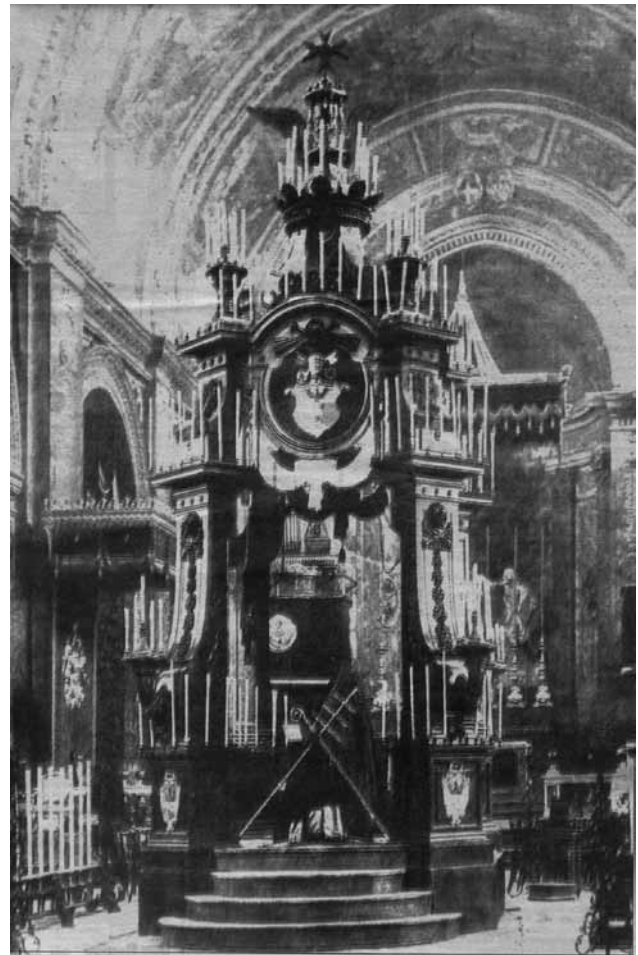
emblems, and other death symbols such as hour glasses and skeletons, Baroque catafalques invariably glorified the deeds, patronage and actions of the deceased and, from the point of view of the Catholic church, they justified and demonstrated the dead person's worthiness to be admitted to the kingdom of heaven. In certain countries, such as Spain, catafalques were also designed to glorify the triumphs of Spain, the invincibility of the Habsburg monarchy and the power of the Spanish Catholic church, if not by direct reference then by erudite allusion and allegory. In Malta, the magnificent catafalque designed in 1726 by the architect Romano Carapeccchia was also meant to glorify the splendid principate of the Portuguese Grand Master Fra Antonio Manoel de Vilhena (1722-1736), whose achievement was permanently commemorated by means of a monumental tomb by the Florentine artist Massimiliano Soldani-Benzi (1656-1740), certainly one of the most splendid funerary monuments in the Conventual church of the Knights in Valletta, outshining others associated with other great Grand Masters such as Fra Nicolas Cotoner (1663-1680), Fra Ramon Perellos (1697-1720) and Fra Marcantonio Zondadari (1720-1722). As a revival of ancient Roman forms, customs and iconography; as devout funerary



monuments very much concerned with the eminently Baroque themes of the Triumph over Death and Eternal Salvation, evoking Christ's Resurrection; as an expression of the Baroque love for theatrical scenography and power, it is now universally recognised that the design of Baroque catafalques shed much light on the *fiesta funebre* of the Baroque age, as explained in grand style in 1682 by the Jesuit priest C.F. Menestier who in that year published a monumental work entitled *Des Decorations Funebres ou v'il est amplement traite des tentures, des lumieres, des mausolees catafalques, inscriptions et autres ornemens funebres avec sont ce qui s'est fait de plus considerable de puis plus d'un siecle, pour les papes, empereurs, rois, reines, cardinaux, princes, prelates, scavans et personnes illustres en naissance, vertu e dignite* (2).

A superb example of the complexity of the problem involved in the design of catafalques in Baroque Malta, then ruled by the Hospitaller Order of St John the Baptist, was provided by Romano Carapeccchia in 1726 when he was commissioned to design a large ephemeral structure in wood, to be used in the *fiesta funebre* of Grand Master Antonio Manoel de Vilhena who died ten years later on 12 December 1736 (3). It was deemed fit that just as the principate of the Grand Master had been inaugurated by the construction of a magnificent ephemeral triumphal arch designed by the architect of the Mdina *Universitas*, Pietro Paolo Troisi (4), his death should be similarly celebrated by a grand catafalque standing in the nave of the Conventual church in Valletta.

The architect Romano Fortunato Carapeccchia had arrived in Malta in April 1707 (5) after having been introduced to Grand Master Fra Ramon Perellos y Rocafull (1697-1720) by Pope Clement XI Albani who on 27 November 1706 had sent a *breve pontificio* (6) to the Grand Master in Valletta praising the merits of his '*dilectus filius Romanus Carapeccchia Romanus*', whom he was sending out to Malta to help the Order transform Valletta into a truly Baroque capital city. Having studied at the Accademia di San Luca in Rome where he had managed to win a first prize for a *seconda classe* project



for a palace in 1681 (7), having worked in the studio of his teacher and mentor Carlo Fontana during the period c.1681-1691 (8) and having designed the church of S.Giovanni Calibita (9) and the Palazzina Vaini (10) in Rome in c.1700, Romano Carapeccchia's career in Malta before 1726 had been characterised by his successful completion of two studies in 1708 and 1723 concerning the water supply of the Grand Harbour cities (11) and by the design of several edifices in Valletta including the *Barriera* magazines (1707), the churches of St James (1710), St Catherine of the Langue of Italy (1713), St Catherine in Strada San Giorgio (1714) and St Maria del Pilar (1718) as well as the sacristy of the church of St Paul (1718) and the Municipal palace (1721) (12). Romano Carapeccchia was also well experienced in the design of theatres, having written a treatise (13) about the subject entitled *Pratica delle Machine de' Teatri* (1689), and in the design of ephemeral contraptions. Before coming to Malta, the architect had designed, on the occasion of the

1704 exposition of the Holy sacrament in the Jesuit *Collegio Romano*, a *nobile e vaga fantasia* (14) expressing the universal message of peace of the Catholic church. This huge allegorical apparatus, painted by Pietro Resina, was placed in the middle of the college courtyard and it is recorded that its design was based on a large globe representing the earth supporting the Papal coat-of-arms. On the right of this globe stood the archangel Michael ready to throw his javelin to unleash the furies of hell contained within the globe while above stood the white dove of Noah flying out from a church towards the clouds in the middle of a large rainbow. In 1691, Romano Carapeccchia had also collaborated with Mattia de' Rossi to design a magnificent funerary catafalque for Pope Alexander VIII Ottoboni (15).

In the summer of 1726, the architect was approached by the French Knight *Commandeur* Fra Joseph de Robins de Barbantane who requested him to design an unusual contraption.

Romano Carapeccchia's client was a prominent member of the noble French families of De Robins and De Barbantane, who had been born in Avignon in 1676 and joined the Order of Malta at the age of twenty, rising rapidly in its ranks to eventually become Grand Master Vilhena's sub-prefect of the Magisterial palace. It was precisely to demonstrate his special regard for the new Portuguese Grand Master that in 1726, the *Commandeur* decided to approach his friend Romano Carapeccchia with the aim of convincing him to design a *Chapelle Ardente* which was meant to stand in the centre of the the magnificent vaulted nave of the Conventual church of St. John the Baptist in Valletta, on the occasion of the frequent solemn requiems held in the church to commemorate the demise of Popes and important public figures associated with Catholic countries such as kings, queens and cardinals (16). Barbantane's wish was that the *Chapelle Ardente* would also be used to introduce a touch fo Baroque religious splendour to the hitherto austere funeral services of



deceased Grand Masters whose corpses had upto now been displayed to the mourning members of the Order on a raised platform having large candelabras at the four corners, of the type that had been in 1691 designed by Carapeccchia and Mattia de Rossi on the occasion of the demise of Pope Alexander VIII Ottoboni. In the opinion of *Commandeur* Barbantane, such contraptions did not live up to the desired ceremonial grandeur of eighteenth century state funerals, more so in the context of the magnificently adorned Conventual church with its unique tunnel vault, elaborately painted by the famous Mattia Preti in the previous century.

Needless to say, Romano Carapeccchia was quick to take up the new challenge. In view of his intention to use walnut and a variety of other rich imported woods for the construction of his *Chapelle Ardente*, he sought the help of the renowned Maltese carpenter Michele Camilleri, to translate his ideas into tangible form. It emerges from documentary sources (17) that Camilleri was the head carpenter of the Ordinance of the Order, who was credited with a long and distinguished service of not less than twenty five years. It was to Romano's advantage that Michele was also well know to Grand Master Vilhena who had in 1722 given him the facility of using two rooms belonging to the Order to accommodate his large family on a rent free basis (18). Understandably, a grateful Michele Camilleri needed little persuasion to become the third man of the *Chapelle Ardente* triumvirate, as is recorded on an inside panel of the completed object by the following words:

*'The Chapelle Ardente was completed on the first day of October 1726 by Signor Comm. Mag. Giuseppe Barbantane who commissed the work, the architect Cavaliere Carapeccchia Romano and the Capo Maestro del fianco, Michele Camilleri'*

When completed on 1 October 1726, the *Chapelle Ardente* was indeed a tribute to its designer. Having a base defined by projecting steps, a paraphernalia of curved wood features, several blank spaces for the attachment of escutcheons and inscriptions which could be changed according to the occasion and a royal crown symbolising the sovereign status of the Knights surmounted by the familiar eight

pointed cross of the Order, Carapeccchia's design of the large catafalque was indeed superb. This became increasingly obvious in the late evening when the two hundred and thirty candles fitted into prepared sconces were simultaneously lit so that the whole contraption was transformed into the imagery of a huge bonfire, particularly beautiful to behold in the context of the gilded and painted decorum of the Conventual church.

Although completed in 1726, the *Chapelle Ardente* remained unused for ten whole years since both Barbantane and Carapeccchia intended its first user to be their esteemed Grand Master Vilhena. It is recorded that on the latter's demise in 1736, the *Chapelle Ardente* took two whole days to erect and to adorn with rich draperies, velvet and gold cloth, besides inserting the appropriate escutcheons and inscriptions prepared by the painter Giuseppe Calaviti (19). This operation which was personally supervised by *Commandeur* Barbantane as master of ceremonies, marked the beginning of a magnificent *Festa Funebre*, the likes of which had never been seen in Malta before.

*'Fra Manoel de Vilhena, Grand Master of the Gerosolmitan Order who died in his Magisterial Palace on 12 December 1736, was on the fifteenth day of the same month transported in a splendid cortege, according to custom, from the Magisterial Palace to the Conventual church of St. John in the city of Valletta. As soon as the funeral procession arrived at St. John's the corpse of the Grand Master was placed in the Chapelle Ardente, raised from the church floor to a height of five steps, surrounded by innumerable candles. The Chapelle Ardente was erected opposite to the high altar; in the centre of the church. On the side facing the altar and on that facing the main entrance to the church, were placed the two coat of arms of the Grand Master; affixed on the upper side of the Chapelle Ardente. On the sides, were placed two inscriptions. Surrounding the Chapelle Ardente were forty eight torches, each with four wicks.'*(20)

Romano Carapeccchia's magnificent catafalque outlived the Grand Master for whom it was designed. In later times, it was repeatedly re-assembled and dismantled to commemorate the funeral services of Grand Masters Despuig, Pinto de Fonseca, Ximenes de Texada and De Rohan-Polduc. It was also re-used on the occasion of the demise of Pope Benedict XIV



Lambertini in 1758, King John V of Portugal in 1750, Queen Maria Barbara of Spain in 1750, Cardinal Joachim Portocarrero in 1760, Queen Maria Amalia of Spain in 1761, Emperor Francis I in 1765, the Dauphin of France in 1766 and Queen Maria Sofia of France in 1768. On these occasions, the place of the Grand Master's corpse in the *Chapelle Ardente* was occupied by a *representatio* consisting in a black velvet table with three pillars also of black velvet, on which were placed replicas of the symbols and decorations of the deceased, covered with a transparent crepe veil. According to contemporary protocol, these decorations consisted in the patriarchal cross, the triple crown and the crossed keys in the case of a pope; the imperial crown, the sword and the sceptre in the case of an emperor; the crown and the sceptre in the case of an empress; the royal crown, the sword and the sceptre in the case of a king and the crown and the sceptre in the case of a queen (21).

The importance of the *Chapelle Ardente* designed by Romano Carapecchia lies in the fact that it was the first example in Malta of a truly Baroque contraption using a magnificently designed display of candles

intended to instill an intense religious feeling of reverence and awe, eminently suited to the character of the architecture of the principal church of an illustrious Order of Knights. The spectacle created on funeral occasions, must have undoubtedly been closely related to the grand spectacles commonly held in Rome where the element of fire was then being used with increasing skill within the context of beautiful state settings designed by the architect Alessandro Specchi (1666-1729) (22). Designed 'to inflame the souls of the spectators, to enrich their thoughts and senses and to instill an awareness of a supernatural being who could give them strength and courage', these so called *Apparati architettonici per fuochi d'artificio* soon become part and parcel of the typically Baroque concern with theatrical displays and communicative force. It does not require much imagination to realize that the intended role of Romano Carapecchia's catafalque on the occasion of Vilhena's *Festa Funebre* was to transform the static nature of the nave of St. John's into a truly supernatural and dynamic experience where the celestial figures of Mattia Preti's vault above would be seen to come alive against a moving backdrop of ever changing architectural and decorative colourful forms, forming in the process a candlelight fantasia that was undoubtedly closely related to the contemporary theatrical experience. Considered from this viewpoint, and considered in the context of the several catafalques built in Rome during the course of the previous century, the *Chapelle Ardente* must have represented the summation of those creative skills of its architect which were later so much praised by Lione Pascoli (23). In this respect, it is understandable that a grateful Grand Prior of the Conventual church soon asked Romano Carapecchia to start thinking about possible extension and embellishment works involving this magnificent building. These interventions which included the affixing of two side annexes to the bland sides of the building and the design of some tombstones and the altarpiece of the Chapel of Italy, were all completed before Carapecchia's death in 1738. The architect was buried unceremoniously in the Bartolott crypt of the building for which he had designed Baroque Malta's finest ephemeral contraption.



The great interest of the Baroque Catholic church in the dogma of the Resurrection symbolising the ultimate triumph of life over death resulted in the fabrication in the Baroque age of several ephemeral artefacts of a different order which, however, called for as much imagination and creative energy as that required for the design of catafalques. One should perhaps mention at this stage, Girolamo Rainaldi's magnificent triumphal arches which had been in 1589 and 1592 put up in Piazza Navona in the heart of Rome to celebrate Christ's Resurrection amidst a colourful display of fireworks, to be followed in April 1650 by two other even more splendid ephemeral contraptions designed by Domenico's son, Carlo Rainaldi on the occasion of the same feast (24). In Baroque Rome, the Resurrection was celebrated as the greatest feast of the Catholic liturgy; it was in connection with this singular event which formed the very core of post-tridentine Catholic teaching, of those so-called altars of repose which were repeatedly assembled and dismantled during every Holy Week to remind everyone of the death of Christ prior to his miraculous resurrection on Easter Sunday.

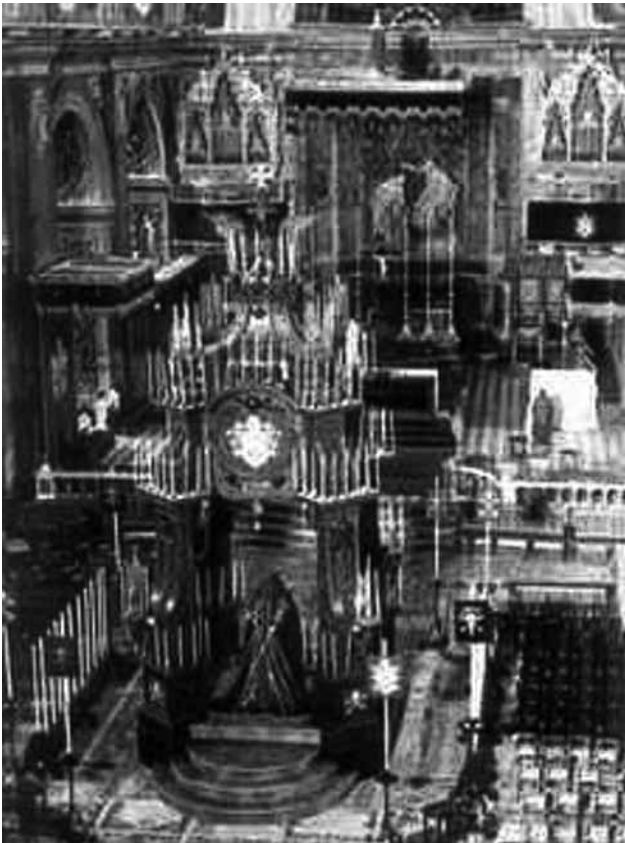
In 1727, the *Mastro Architetto dell'Illustrissimo Magistrato della Citta Notabile*, Pietro Paolo Troisi was approached by the Cathedral Chapter of Mdina to design a grand altar of repose for the recently completed new Baroque cathedral of the old capital city of Mdina which had replaced an old Romanesque building destroyed in the 1693 earthquake which had destroyed many towns in the Val di Noto in neighbouring Sicily. Pietro Paolo Troisi, the winner of the 1705 first prize in sculpture at the *Accademia di San Luca* (25) was no newcomer to the art of assembling and dismantling ephemeral artefacts. In 1720, he had in fact designed a beautiful triumphal arch to commemorate Grand Master Marc' Antonio Zondadari's ceremonial entrance to Mdina (26) and, besides, he had also introduced a special arts school in Valletta based on the study of the nude which had been set up, it was rumoured, at the personal expense of the Grand Master (27). It is said that before designing his altar of repose, Troisi had carefully studied the austere scenario of Lorenzo

Gafa's new cathedral. He eventually decided to contradict the sombre mood of the place by designing a rich and colourful ephemeral contraption based on a woodwork extravaganza of straight and twisted columns, arched forms and balustraded galleries with curvilinear projections, all focused on a silver tabernacle and overflowing very confidently on one of the nave arcades, producing in the process that type of intense three dimensional effect that could be experienced in other masterpieces of the same genre in contemporary Catholic churches. To mention an outstanding example in Rome, the Jesuit architect Andrea Pozzo had in 1685 designed a magnificent theatrical contraption to be set up in the church of Il Gesu in Rome for the Holy Week rituals (28).

The historical circumstances leading to the design and fabrication of Pietro Paolo Troisi's altar of repose are indeed fascinating. As already mentioned, in 1727 the Cathedral Chapter of Mdina had approached the architect through one of its members, Canon Gourgion, asking him to design for them an ephemeral contraption to be used for the liturgical rituals of Maundy Thursday. On 3 August of that same year, Gourgion reported back to his colleagues stating that Troisi had accepted the commission against a nominal fee of 5 *zecchini* (29). Pietro Paolo Troisi had made a name for himself in 1720 when he had designed Grand Master Zondadari's triumphal arch – a magnificent creation that had greatly impressed the people of the city. Records indicate that it had cost 310 *scudi* to build, of which 40 *scudi* were paid to its architect (30). The master carpenters had been Lorenzo Borg and Antonio and Giuseppe Fabri of Valletta (31). After being dismantled, the arch had been donated to the cloistered nuns of the nearby monastery of St Peter where it had remained unused for two years up to September 1722 when it was re-acquired by the Mdina *Universitas* for the sum of 42 *scudi* and transformed for re-utilisation on the occasion of the ceremonial entry into Mdina of the new Grand Master Antonio Manoel de Vilhena on 20 September 1722 (32). The necessary modifications were carried out by the master carpenter Andrea Camilleri and the painter Aloisio Buhagiar (33).

According to one source (34), the design of Troisi's altar of repose could have been also inspired by the altar reredos of the chapel of the Immaculate Conception in the church of the Friars Minor Conventual in Rabat, which had also been designed by Troisi in c. 1710. For an unknown reason however, Pietro Paolo Troisi's altar was then suddenly shelved for two decades so that it was not until 6 April 1643 that a committee met to discuss the matter (35). In a report submitted on 2 May 1751, this committee repropoed the fabrication of Troisi's design, appointing the painter Francesco Vincenzo Zahra as the new *architetto della machine* (36). There is some evidence that Zahra took some liberties with Troisi's project but he did manage to complete the altar of repose within nine months when the completed Baroque contraption fulfilled its original designer's aim of working upon the emotions of its eighteenth century spectators by its sparkling magnificence, illusionistic effects, flickering candles and incense saturated atmosphere, the likes of which had never been seen in Mdina before. The painter Francesco Vincenzo Zahra, assisted by a formidable team of craftsmen (37) who included Giuseppe Buhagiar, Giovanni

Antonio Mamo, Giovanni Monreale, Simone Gauci, Francesco Axisa, Giovanni Battista Giardina, Saverio Laferla, Giovanni Farrugia and Don Giuseppe Vella, worked on the project in his Valletta workshop during the first five months of the operation, paying occasional visits to Mdina, sometimes twice a week. As the work progressed, however, the need for Zahra's presence in Mdina became increasingly important so that he was offered lodging in the adjoining seminary building (38). After some litigation with the Cathedral Chapter, Zahra was paid 450 *scudi* for the job but he was compensated for reluctantly accepting this miserly payment when he was awarded the additional commission to paint the ceiling of the Chapter Hall of the Cathedral. Unlike Romano Carapecchia's *Chapelle Ardente* which is lying in a dismantled state in the crypt of the Conventual church of the Knights in Valletta, Pietro Paolo Troisi's altar of repose as executed by Francesco Vincenzo Zahra is still being regularly assembled in a side chapel of the Mdina Cathedral, providing a unique focal point of Catholic devotion and Baroque splendour in Malta during Holy Week.



#### References and Notes :

1. D. De Lucca, *The Festa Funebre of Baroque Europe* in *Journal of Baroque Studies*, Volume 1 (Malta, 2003) 7-38. This journal is published on an annual basis by the International Institute for Baroque Studies of the University of Malta.
2. D. De Lucca, *op.cit.*, 22 states that the Jesuit C.F. Menestier was the friend and adviser of the French decorator Jean Berain (1640-1711) who was one of the principal designers of Baroque catafalques in Paris.
3. Sir H. Scicluna, *The Church of St John in Valletta* (Rome, 1955) 225-227. See also V. Bonello, *Qualche inedito sulla Cappella Ardente di San Giovanni* in *Malta* (Malta, 1939); D. De Lucca, *Carapecchia: Master of Baroque Architecture in early eighteenth century Malta* (Malta, 1999) 177-182 and S. Cefai, *Romano Carapecchia's Chapelle Ardente* in *Journal of Baroque Studies*, Volume 1 (Malta, 2003) 79-95
4. D. De Lucca, *Mdina: A History of its Urban Space and Architecture* (Malta, 1995) 89. See also M. Buhagiar and S. Fiorini (ed.), *Mdina: The Cathedral City of Malta*, Volume II (Malta, 1996) 577-581 and D. De Lucca, *Medievale e Barocco a Mdina* in *Demetra*, Volume VI (Palermo, 1994) 8-16
5. D. De Lucca, 1999, 107
6. N(ational) L(ibrary) (in) V(alletta), A(rchives) (of) (the)





O(rder) (in) M(alta) 510, ff. 183v-184v.

7. Carapecchia's prize project for a palace is reproduced in D. De Lucca, 1999 by the kind permission of the Accademia di San Luca in Rome.

8. *Ibid.*, 30-67

9. *Ibid.*, 94-96

10. *Ibid.*, 76 and 87. See also E. Coudenhove-Erthal, *Carlo Fontana und die Architektur des Romischen Spätbarock* (Vienna, 1930) 112 and P. Portoghesi, *Roma Barocca* (Rome, 1968) 566.

11. N.L.V., A.O.M. 6551, ff. 80v-83v and N.L.V. Manuscript 195.

12. D. De Lucca, 1999 contains exhaustive details of Carapecchia's involvement in the design and execution of the mentioned buildings.

13. *Ibid.*, 56-62 and 253-261. See also E. Tamburini (ed.), *Scenotecnica Barocca* (Rome, 1994) 99-139 and L. Bartolini-Salimbeni, *Il taccuino di un apprendista nella Roma di fine seicento: Il 'compendio architettonico' di Romano Carapecchia* in *Architettura: Storia e Documenti* (Rome, 1990) 163

14. D. De Lucca, 1999, 103

15. *Ibid.*, 70-71

16. Sir H. Scicluna, *op.cit.*, 225-227

17. *Ibid.*, 225-227

18. N.L.V., A.O.M. 648, f.244

19. Sir H. Scicluna, *op.cit.*, 226

20. N.L.V., A.O.M. 145, ff. 265v-267r

21. Sir H. Scicluna, *op.cit.*, 227

22. M. Gori Sassoli, *Apparati architettonici per fuochi d'artificio a Roma nel settecento* (Milano, 1994) 81-94. See also C. Rizza, *Per una teoria del Barocco* (Milano, 1985) 83-92

23. L. Pascoli, *Vite de pittori, scultori ed architetti moderni* (Rome, 1730) 549

24. M. Fagiolo dell'Arco and S. Carandini, *L'Effimero Barocco – Struttura delle festa nella Roma del '600*

(Rome, 1977) 140 and 144-145.

25. L. Pirotta, *Contributo alla storia dell'Accademia Nazionale di San Luca: Alunni Stranieri delle scuole accademiche premiati nei vari concorsi* in *L'Urbe*, no.2 (March-April 1962).

26. N.L.V., Manuscript 1397, f.1

27. S. Zerafa, *Discorso sulla Storia Artistica di Malta* (Malta, 1850)

28. M. Fagiolo dell'Arco and S. Carandini, *op.cit.*, 298

29. M(dina) C(athedral) M(useum), A(rchives) C(athedral) M(useum), Reg. Deliberationum Capitularium, Volume 7, f. 24v

30. N.L.V, Univ. 89, Mandati (28.vi.1720)

31. *Ibid.*

32. N.L.V., Univ.89, Mandati (20.ix.1722)

33. D. De Lucca, 1995, 89

34. M. Buhagiar and S. Fiorini (ed.), *op.cit.*, 578

35. *Ibid.*, 581 mentions a 1986 publication by Mons. J. Azzopardi, former curator of the Mdina Cathedral archives who writes that the need to construct a new altar of repose was voiced by Canon Caspar Andrea Garsin and that the mentioned committee was composed of Canon Giovanni Maria Azopardi Castelletti representing the Cathedral Chapter and Canon Albino Portuguese representing the bishop of Malta.

36. *Ibid.*

37. *Ibid.*

38. *Ibid.*



# International Conference on the Baroque Heritage

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

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

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

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



# Jesuit Mathematics and Military Architecture

Professor Denis De Lucca, director of the International Institute for Baroque Studies at the University of Malta was recently invited to read a paper on the as yet unexplored contribution of the Collegium Melitense in Hospitaller Valletta to the dissemination of Jesuit knowledge on the fortification of Baroque cities, at an international conference recently held at the University of Palermo. The *Città Nuove fondate in Italia e in Europa dal medioevo al novecento* conference was organised by the Department of Urban Studies of the University of Palermo on 9-11 December when delegates from the universities of Palermo, Paris-Sorbonne, Coimbra, Lyon, Malta, Vienna, Dresden, Torino, Rome, Cagliari, Chieti-Pescara, Messina, Reggio Calabria, Valencia, Seville, Naples, Clermont-Ferrand and Munich were given the opportunity to present papers outlining their most recent research work on various subjects concerning the growth of fortified cities in history.

Professor De Lucca's paper provided new knowledge concerning the contents of a forgotten Jesuit manuscript on military architecture entitled *Trattato dell'Architettura Militare defensiva, et offensiva* - a manuscript which formed the basis of an extraordinary course of studies on military architecture and town planning run by a Sicilian Jesuit who was active at the Collegium Melitense in Valletta in the mid-seventeenth century. This military course was one of many other controversial initiatives taken by Jesuit mathematicians based in colleges spread all over Europe during the Baroque age, all intended to disseminate knowledge about the defence of cities using advanced techniques of fortification design so as to counteract the great peril posed by the Lutheran reformation and the Turks, this at a time of almost constant warfare appropriately described by the Italian military commander Fulvio Testi as "the century of the soldier". The full text of Professor De Lucca's paper, which also contains detailed biographical notes on the author of the indicated Jesuit manuscript will be published in the near future as part of the proceedings of the Palermo conference.



# A New Drawbridge for Fort Manoel's Baroque Gateway

Stephen C. Spiteri Ph.D.

Charles Francois de Mondion's Baroque main gateway at Fort Manoel, undeniably one of the most beautiful and refined eighteenth-century gateway designs in fortifications built by the knights of the Order of St John has been given a replica working wooden drawbridge. Authentic wooden features are rare in Maltese Hospitaller fortifications and of all such elements it is perhaps the absence of drawbridges with their *tavolature* (platforms) and lifting mechanisms that really detracts from a full and proper appreciation of the manner in which fortifications were meant to function.

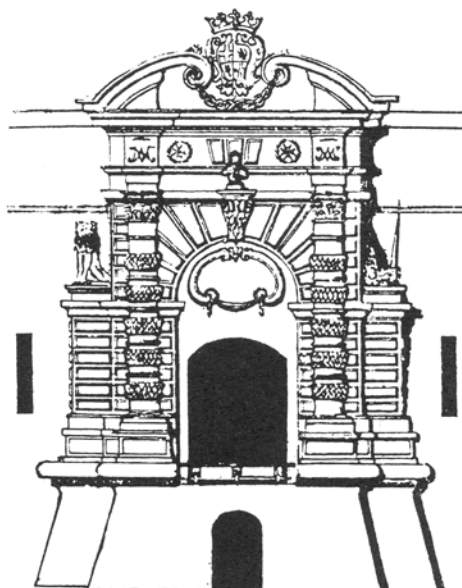
The recent reconstruction of a wooden drawbridge at Fort Manoel, therefore, is a welcome exercise. For one thing, this has given back a proper legibility to the fort's gateway by filling in the missing lacuna. Secondly, it will enable visitors to understand how the device actually functioned. The reconstruction of the drawbridges is part of the wide-ranging series of interventions which are being implemented by Midi plc in the restoration of Fort Manoel, one of the most imposing eighteenth century works of military architecture to be erected in the Maltese islands by the knights of the Order of St John. Named after Grand Master Antonio Manoel de Vilhena, who financed the work out of his own pocket, the fort was described in 1761 as being a '*modele du fortification fait avec soin*'.

## *Il Ponte Levatoio*

The drawbridge, or *ponte levatoio* (as it is referred to in Hospitaller documents) was an indispensable device in the defence of the approaches leading into

a fortress. By its very essence, the gateway, being virtually a hole in the ramparts, was the weakest element in the enceinte and, as such, required specially-designed devices to counter the handicap. One early solution with which military engineers sought to control the approaches and access points into a fortress was by fitting the gateway with a movable bridge that could be easily raised or lowered by the garrison to either prevent or accommodate entry into the fortress.

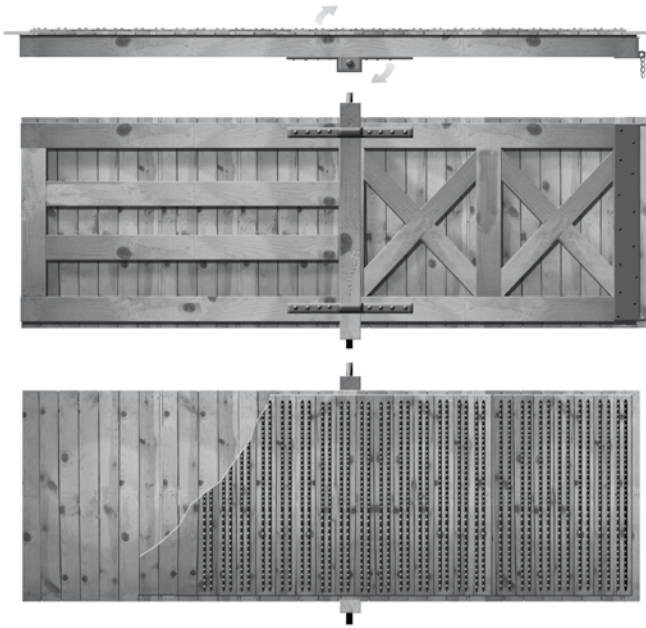
Technically called *bascules* from the French word for seesaw, drawbridges came in a variety of forms. That at Fort Manoel, designed by the Order's resident French military engineer was commonly referred to as '*a' la Vauban*' by virtue of its French design, a pattern which was then commonly in use





throughout France. Indeed, the gateways erected anew, or else rebuilt, by Mondion in the early decades of the 1700s were all constructed in this fashion. These included the three gateways of the fortress of Birgu, St Helen Gate at Bormla (Sta Margherita Lines), the two gates of Mdina (Sta Maria Gate & Greeks Gate), and Porta dei Cannoni (Porte des Bombes) in Floriana.

The ‘*a’ la Vauban*’ drawbridge was a relatively uncomplicated device. It consisted of a simple, counterbalanced platform (known as the *tavolatura*) which pivoted roughly about its middle. When raised (i.e., pulled up from the horizontal), it swung



*Author’s graphic reconstruction of a Hospitaller fortress drawbridge ‘alla Vauban’, based on the notes and sketches of Francesco Marandon, the Order’s resident military engineer during the mid-18th century.*

downwards inside the gateway’s passage and into an underground chamber, the so-called *cantina del ponte levatoio*. The *tavolatura* itself consisted of a stout timber framework which was covered over with wooden planks. The pivoting bar, which was made of iron, was nailed to the bottom of the framework and fitted into sockets carved out in the sidewalls along the entrance passage way. The original pivoting axle was actually uncovered *in situ* when the cantina of the drawbridge was excavated and cleared of the rubble that had been dumped into the pit by the British military in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The illustration below shows a typical ‘*a’ la Vauban*’ drawbridge as documented in the notes of Francesco Marandon, who served as the Order’s



resident engineer from 1727 to 1762. He began his career as Mondion’s assistant and worked with the latter in seeing to the execution of the design of Fort Manoel.

The photograph accompanying this article show the newly reconstructed drawbridge at Fort Manoel in the retracted vertical position. In such a position, it also served to shelter the wooden gateway itself. In its time, and for everyday use, the drawbridge would have only been retracted halfway up and left at angle of around 45 degrees. The inner half of the platform pivoted downwards into the *cantina*. This pit was reached through a small side doorway via a flight of steps leading down from the adjoining *corpo di guardia*. The platform was pulled down by hand by means of metal handles (reconstructed) which were fixed to the inner end of the *tavolatura* with heavy chains.

Despite the simplicity of the device, these rotating platforms did not prove to be very popular in Malta, for when not properly secured ( they had to be kept in place by a metal poles), they had a tendency to sink into the pit under the weight of those passing over the bridge. One such comic incident, much to the dismay of Grand Master Pinto, involved the Grand Master’s own carriage which sank into the pit at Porta dei Cannoni in 1744. As a result of this





Above, Contemporary print showing Grand Master Antoine Manoel de Vilhena and 'his' fort. Right, View of the gateway and the reconstructed drawbridge in the lifted closed position.



accident, the drawbridge was removed but was eventually reinstalled in July 1758. However, it appears that by the end of the eighteenth century, and certainly throughout the nineteenth century, most of the pits of these type of drawbridges had been roofed over with stone arches and paved. The drawbridge of the Birgu main gate is one such documented instance. After 16 years of service, its wooden platform had rotted away, making it quite dangerous to the heavy carriages travelling over it. The chosen solution, rather than having it replaced, was to support it from beneath with a vaulted arch.

The unpopularity of the *à la Vauban* drawbridge is best reflected by the fact that the last major bastioned fortress to be built in the Maltese islands, Fort Chambrai in Gozo, begun in 1749, was fitted out with the more archaic, but more reliable, type of drawbridge known as *à freccie e catene* that had been employed in Hospitaller fortifications prior to the arrival of the French military mission in 1715.

The only other drawbridge elements from the eighteenth century still to be found in Malta are the remains of the *tavolatura* of Porta Reale, Valletta,

the wooden *tamburi* mechanisms of the sally-ports at Fort St Angelo and Fort Ricasoli, and a single iron hinge which once supported the platform of the drawbridge that served the sally-port in the face of St Michael Demi-Bastion in Valletta, which was recently re-discovered by the Restoration Directorate during the restoration works currently underway at Valletta.

## BOOKS

### NEW BOOK ON PAINTING IN THE BAROQUE AGE

*Pittura tra Malta e Napoli nel segno del barocco* is the title of a lavishly illustrated new book that has just been published in Naples. Authored by architect Salvatore Costanzo who already has several publications on Baroque art and architecture to his credit, this new publication on Baroque art in Malta and Naples, 1650-1750, is introduced by Domenico Zinzi, president of the province of Caserta, Michele di Gianni, honorary consul of Malta in Naples and Professor Denis De Lucca, director of the International Institute for Baroque Studies at the University of Malta. In the words of the author, this book gathers together a mine of scattered information on artistic endeavour in Malta and Naples in the Baroque age, which developed within a complex artistic scenario characterized by innumerable stylistic cross-currents and overlaps, marked by the type of interactions between the great masters of the ilk of Mattia Preti (1613-1699) and Francesco Solimena (1657-1747) and a host of less known artists whose works are critically evaluated in this 475-page volume.

The book is divided into two sections. The first, entitled 'Malta', concerns itself with biographical sketches of a number of Maltese painters who were influenced by the lessons of Preti and, at a later stage, by the artistic moods of Solimena. Costanzo writes that the very Baroque decorative tendencies of Mattia Preti, evident in his work at the Conventual church of St John in Valletta, inspired one of his youngest followers, Raimondo De Dominici called "*Il Maltese*" to emigrate to Naples and there contribute to the exciting developments that were then happening in that city. Raimondo also fathered a son, Bernardo De Dominici, who later became the court painter of Aurora Sanseverino, the duchess of Laurenzano. The first section of the book also discusses the output of Preti's school: Gioacchino Caloriti, Pedro Nuñez de



Villavicencio, Giovanni Battista Caloriti and Gian Paolo Chiesa, all discussed in the context of the rival Neapolitan schools of painting which opposed Preti, championed by Stefano Erardi and Giuseppe d'Arena. Costanzo also analyses the influence of Preti, Chiesa and Solimena on the very successful Maltese Baroque painters Gian Nicola Buhagiar and Francesco Vincenzo Zahra.

The second section of the book, entitled '*Napoli*' focuses on the Neapolitan sojourn of Raimondo De Dominici who was here associated with the followers of the great Luca Giordano (1634-1705). Raimondo, according to Costanzo, was also influenced by several 'second-line' painters practicing in Naples at the time whose lives and works are critically examined in this book. His son, Bernardo, as court painter of the Duchess of Laurenzano, was in turn influenced by the German landscape painter Franz Joachim Beich and the Dutch painter Paul Ganses, who both dominated his formative years.

Considered in its wider context, the content of this book contributes a wealth of fresh ideas about the close contacts that existed between Hospitaller Valletta and Naples in the Baroque age, an indeed solid contribution to artistic knowledge that certainly provides much food for thought to students and scholars who would be interested in carrying out further research on some of the themes and paintings identified by the author. As happens in a gallery of beautiful paintings, the presentation and format of the volume evokes Corrado Rizza's definition of Baroque as '*un inno all'occhio e alla teoria della visione.*'



# NEW WEBSITE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR BAROQUE STUDIES

The International Institute for Baroque Studies has launched its new website on the University of Malta portal.

The new website, which can be accessed at [www.um.edu.mt/iibs](http://www.um.edu.mt/iibs) contains detailed information about the Institute aims and objectives, its members of staff as well as an overview of its past and on-going projects, programmes and courses.

The website also contains information on the seminars, study tours, research, consultancies undertaken by the Institute as well as information on the publications, dissertations, and long essays produced by the students who attended the IIBS courses.

Visitors to the website can now also download the various issues of the Baroque Routes Newsletter in PDF format directly from the site.

The new website also offers detailed information on the various postgraduate and undergraduate courses offered by the Institute and provides facilities for online applications.



[www.um.edu.mt/iibs](http://www.um.edu.mt/iibs)

# COURSES

## Rediscovering the Baroque Legacy

A series of short evening courses designed to introduce participants to the wealth of the Baroque heritage of mankind and its conservation.

The courses are organized by the International Institute for Baroque Studies, University of Malta in collaboration with Malta University Holding Company Ltd.

**COURSE 1 - The Art of War in the Baroque Age: Cannon, Fortification and Military Engineering Practice in Malta, 1530-1798**

**COURSE 2 - The Art and Science of Fortress Building in Baroque Malta**

**COURSE 3 - The French Connection: French Military Engineers in Baroque Malta**

**COURSE 4 - The Hospitaller War Machine in the Baroque Age**

**COURSE 5 - Warfare Scenarios in Baroque Art**

**COURSE 6 - Baroque Palaces, Churches and Gardens**

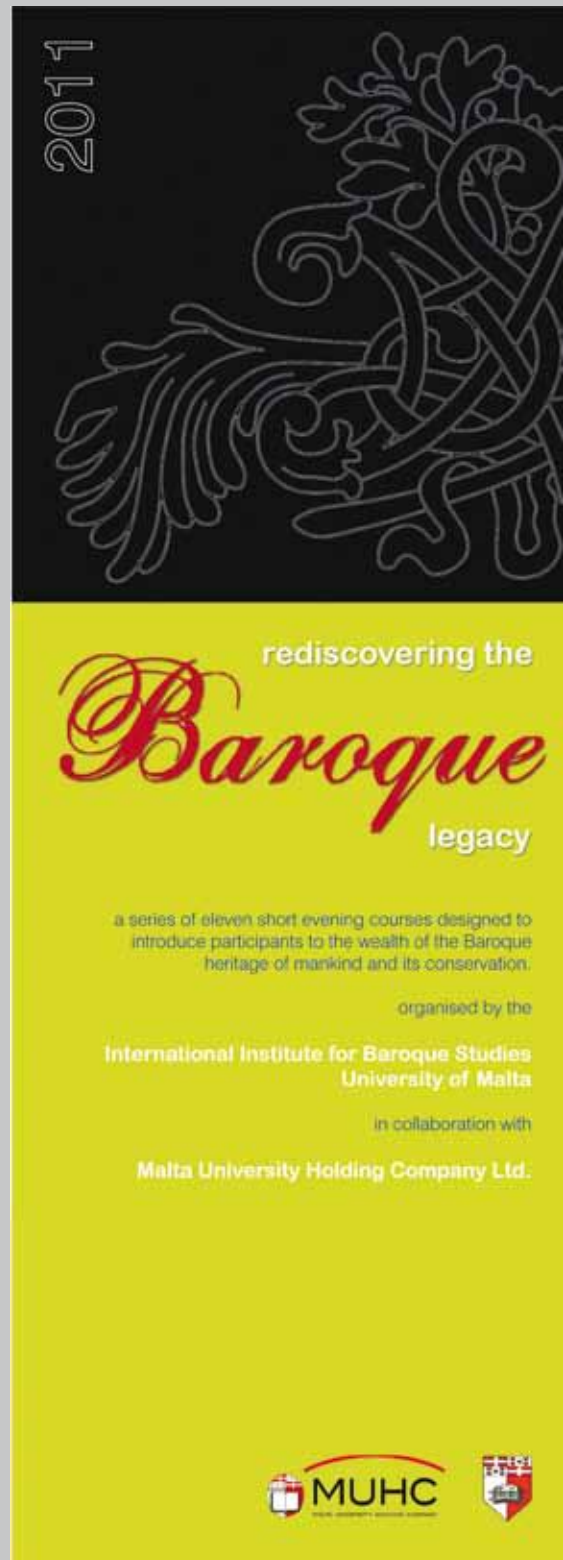
**COURSE 7 - The Documentation of Baroque Buildings and Monuments**

**COURSE 8 - Exploring the Stone Fabric of Baroque Buildings**

**COURSE 9 - Jesuits, Geometry, and Fortifications in the Baroque Age**

**COURSE 10 - The Conservation of the Baroque Architecture of the Maltese Islands**

**COURSE 11 - The Use of Lime Mortars in Baroque Buildings**



*Further information on time-tables, participation, and fees can be obtained via e-mail from Ms Marija Bugeja on [maria.bugeja@muhc.com.mt](mailto:maria.bugeja@muhc.com.mt) or by telephone on 21240746.*