

# FOCUS

Newsletter of the Malta Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce



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## Editorial

This is the first Newsletter we are issuing. The need was long felt for members to be kept informed of events that are planned by the Society and also to be advised about events that have taken place. Although the bulk of the Society's members are artists or are mainly interested in art, there are a sizeable number who are interested in various crafts. Through this newsletter we hope to reach all members, be it artists or otherwise.

We also would like contributions from members. These could take the form of articles on various areas of interest, or could be letters which would create debates on certain aspects, artistic, commercial or just informative. It is very important that the Society obtains its' members views and feedback. After all, it is the members who make the Society, without members there would be no Society.

As can be seen from the articles in this newsletter, the Society is quite active. This is not to say that we cannot be more active, and we will strive to do so. However, it is important that activities are supported by the members. This gives encouragement, not only to the Council but also to those members who regularly participate in the Society's activities.

## Zell Osborne wins 4<sup>th</sup> National Art Competition

Ms Zell Osborne won the 4<sup>th</sup> National Arts Competition which was sponsored by the Malta Trade Fairs Corporation. She won the competition with a ceramic sculpture 'Dino-helm'. Arja Nukarinen-Callus was the 1<sup>st</sup> Runner Up with her oil painting 'Two'. 2<sup>nd</sup> Runner Up was John Grima with an acrylic painting 'untitled'. Consolation Prizes were won by Martin Borg with an acrylic painting 'Rain and Reflections' and Rebecca Grima with a stone sculpture 'Divergence'.

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*Zell Osborne's Dino-Helm winning work.*

## Who is Zell Osborne?

Zell Osborne, with her sculpture, Dino-Helm, won first prize in the Society's 4<sup>th</sup> National Arts Competition. Who is Zell Osborne? Zell obtained a first class Degree in Ceramics in 1979 from Cardiff College of Art. She ran a pottery studio in Cornwall for some years. She then spent some time teaching and also was resident artist at Manchester Royal Infirmary.

Zell first exhibited in Malta in 1986 at the Museum of Fine Arts. She settled permanently in Malta and has since exhibited again at the Museum of Fine Arts, at the Cathedral Museum, at Gallerie 100, at the Foundation of International Studies, at the Mediterranean Conference Centre, at the Malta Labour Party, Zabbar Sanctuary Museum and at St James Cavalier.

She also designed various trophy's, including that for the National Tourism Authority of Malta, Malta Marketing Institute, Young Enterprise, Blue Dolphin of Malta and the Broadcasting Authority.

Zell also won various prizes, including three times in the International Biennale (Malta). The works of Ms Osborne are unique, featuring the idea of fossils, armour, marine life and microscopic creatures. One is reminded of a fantasy film such as Lord of the Rings, when viewing some of her sculptures. She also creates a very realistic aging effect in her works.

Zell lives in Sliema and teaches ceramics. She likes to travel and is keen to take part on projects with other artists both locally and internationally. She also enjoys restoring pieces and is undertaking some such voluntary work at the Zabbar Sanctuary Museum.



## Cultural Tour in Gozo for Society Students

68 students

attending the crafts courses organised by the Malta Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce took part in a full-day cultural tour in Gozo. The Tour was held on the 7th December 2005. Mr Salvatore Mousu guided the group which met at Floriana to travel and board the 9.00 ferry from Cirkewwa. On their arrival in Gozo, the group of students were taken to the Ghajnsielem Arts School. There they had the opportunity to visit various classes of crafts where Gozo Lace, Ganutell, Gilding, Weaving and Cane Crafts were being practised. Then the group was taken to visit the Ta' Pinu church to admire the artistic stone sculpture. The tour continued with visits to the Gharb Crafts Village and the Kercem Weaving Centre. After a lunch break in Victoria, the tour came to an end with a visit to the Qala Belvedere and return to Malta.

*Members of the group during their visit at the Gozo Art School while a Gozo Lace lesson was being held.*

## Prize-Giving for Students

The annual prize-giving was held at the Palazzo De La Salle for students attending various classes in arts, crafts and music on the 14<sup>th</sup> December. Following a speech by the Society's President the large audience present was entertained by students, Christanne Attard on the piano, Peter Paul Borg and Lukas Galea on the guitar and Rachel and Reuben Vella Baldacchino on the violin.



*The students and guests during the Prize Giving*

Following the prize-giving the audience was invited to view the many exhibits prepared by the various classes. The standard of several exhibits was quite high and many were impressed by the range of skills shown. The exhibition was open to the public on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> December.

*Ms Censina Saliba receiving the Prize from the President of the Society. She came first amongst the Malta Lace students of Mr Salvina Grch. Ms Saliba has been attending for the Malta Lace lessons for the last three years.*



*The guests admiring exhibits*

## Visit by Austrian Ambassador



*Art teacher, Mr Matthew Cassar is seen here accompanied by Mr Paul Ascik explaining to H.E. Dr Kehrler what his students are doing*

The Austrian Ambassador Dr Elizabeth Kehrler paid a visit to the Society on the 16<sup>th</sup> December. She was met by the President, Mr Paul Ascik, and members of the Council. She was shown round the premises, taking the opportunity of seeing the art, lace, parchment and beading classes in action. She was also shown the exhibition of works set up by the students and was quite impressed by the variety and quality of work displayed.

# Notes for your diary...

## **Meeting for Artists**

A meeting for all artists will be held on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2006. The objective of the meeting is for the Society's administrators to hear the views of artists as to what more can be done to further the interests of both artists and art in general. Artist members and non-members are urged to attend in order to express their views and ideas. The meeting will start at 6.30 pm.

## **Painting Holiday**

The Society is organizing a painting holiday in July. The holiday will consist of a week's stay on half-board basis at a farmhouse in Tuscany. Participants are guaranteed beautiful vistas, both in the countryside and in the unique and picturesque hilltop villages which surround the farmhouse.

Transport will be on hand to take the artists to various locations. Non-painting partners are also welcome and excursions can be arranged whilst the artists are painting. The cost would be approximately Lm445, which includes taxes, air ticket and all other travel. However discounts could apply depending on persons sharing a room and also as to early booking.

## **Silver Palette**

Artists are reminded of the Silver Palette Competition which has been advised separately to all member artists. Should any member not have received the relative circular he/she should inform the Society immediately. Closing date for applications is Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2006 and works are to be submitted by 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> April 2006. The works will be exhibited from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> April 2006. This competition is sponsored by VEE GEE BEE.

## **Annual General Meeting**

The Society will be holding its Annual General Meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2006. Members are asked to take note in their diaries. A circular will be sent closer to the date, calling for nominations and reminding members.

## **Annual Fund Raising Dinner**

The Society will be holding its Annual Fund Raising Dinner on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2006 at Villa Arrigo. More information will be issued in due course, but members are requested to keep that date free.

## **7<sup>th</sup> Young Musicians Contest 2006**

The finals of the 7<sup>th</sup> Young Musicians Contest 2006 will be held on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> May. The venue will be announced later. More information will be issued in due course.

## **Society's Web Page**

Member artists and musicians can publicize their services through our web page. Members also have the opportunity to set up a direct link with their own web page through our web site.

For more information contact the Society at [info@artsmalta.org](mailto:info@artsmalta.org) or phoning 21244339.

**Members are also reminded that their subscription fee of Lm2 has fallen due.**

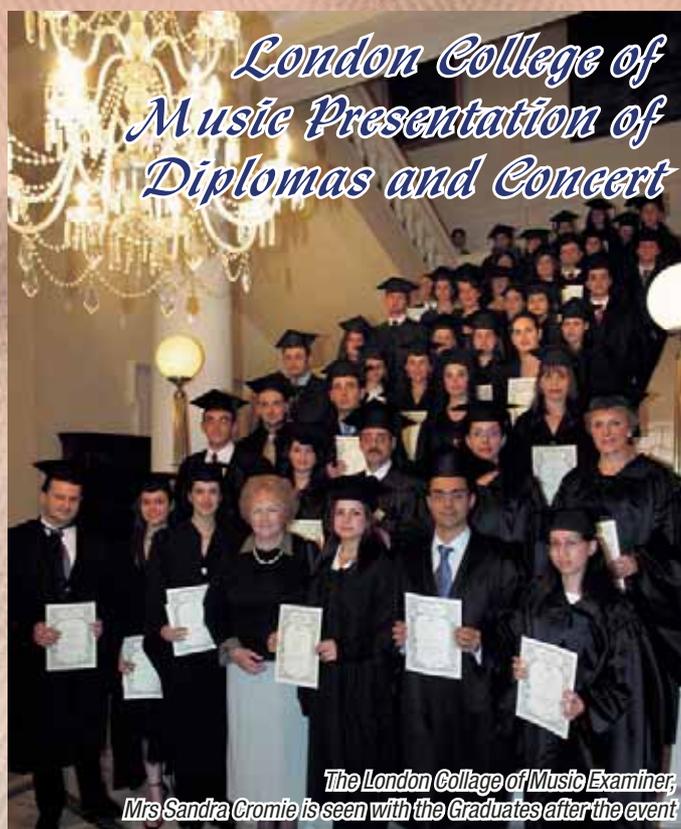
## The Society to participate in a project with ceramists and potters from Sciacca

The Society, together with other local partners, the Italo-Maltese Chamber of Commerce and the Parliamentary Secretariat for Small Business and Self-Employed is to participate with Italian partners in a project financed under Interreg IIIA Italia Malta, which is a regional scheme under the EU. Promoters for this scheme were Impetus Europe Consulting Group and the leading partners were Comune di Sciacca from Sicily.

The aim of the project is to create an unique product in ceramic or pottery which would reflect a common denominator between the style and practices of Sciacca work and that produced by Maltese artisans.

The project would involve groups of ceramists and potters from both Sciacca and Malta to interact, learning each other's skills and cultures. Sicilian artisans will be coming over to Malta and a group of Maltese artisans will travel to Sciacca. The end product they create would be a 'Mediterranean' line which would reflect both cultures. The project is to start in 2006 and should last eighteen months.

Ceramists and potters who would like to participate should contact the Society. However, it must be made clear that this project is aimed at those involved in the industry and not individual artists creating works of art on a part-time basis. The Society will also be contacting firms and artisans who it deems suitable for this project.



The Society held its Annual Concert at the prestigious hall of the Casino Maltese on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November. During the concert Mrs Sandra Cromie, who had spent a month examining College candidates at Palazzo De La Salle, presented diplomas of the London College of Music and Thames University. After a short speech by Mr Paul Ascjak, the Society's President, a number of successful candidates took part in a delightful programme of works by different composers to a packed audience. Following the presentation of Diplomas to 57 successful candidates, in her address to the audience Mrs Cronie praised both teachers and students for the achieved success and was very hopeful that next year's concert will also be as successful.

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'Two' by Arja Nukarinen-Callus, placed 2nd

The untitled work by John Grima, placed 3rd



At a reception held at the Trade Fair, following an opening speech by the President of the Society, Mr Paul Ascjak, prizes were presented by Mr Joseph J Mifsud, President of the Trade Fairs Corporation. The Minister for Tourism and Culture, Dr Francis Zammit Dimech, was also present and gave a short speech on the importance of art in Maltese society.

The competition was open to all artists residing in Malta and a total of 123 works of art were submitted by 74 artists. Works ranged from paintings in oil, acrylics, acrylic ink, watercolour, pastel, pencil and mixed media to other works in limestone, ceramics, metal, wood, stucco and paper clay. The Society was well satisfied both with the large number of artists participating and also average standard of the works submitted. Artists were restricted to submitting no more than two works of art.