



2018
Cultural Programme
Preview



**AS OUR EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF
CULTURE YEAR DRAWS NEAR, WE
INVITE YOU TO TAKE A SNEAK PEEK
AT THE EXCITING CULTURAL FESTA
THAT'S WAITING TO KICK OFF IN 2018.**

As per the Charter signed by all Local Councils in Malta and Gozo, Valletta's title of European Capital of Culture 2018 is an award shared amongst all localities on our Islands. Further information can be found at: <http://valletta2018.org/all-malta-gozo/>

**EXPECT SURPRISING
OUTDOOR
PERFORMANCES,
EXPERIMENTAL
EXHIBITIONS,
MULTI-DISCIPLINARY
THEATRICAL
PRODUCTIONS AND
OPERAS, MUSIC,
DANCE, AND ALL
SORTS OF INSPIRING
ACTIVITIES WHICH
BRING PEOPLE
TOGETHER ALL
OVER THE ISLANDS.**

VALLETTA 2018: AN ISLAND-WIDE *FESTA*

WHEN YOU LIVE ON AN ISLAND, THE HORIZON ALWAYS HOLDS THE PROMISE OF NEW AND EXCITING CONNECTIONS TO BE MADE, WHILE THE SHORE DRAWS YOU BACK HOME TO A WEALTH OF DETAIL THAT'S JUST WAITING TO BE EXPLORED.

Malta and Gozo can be likened to tiny but vibrant stages packed with drama, excess and exuberance constantly playing out in close quarters, amid tight-knit communities; all the while, these small island scenarios have co-existed with the comings and goings afforded by our harbours, and today they walk alongside ever-growing international connections.

The strategic geography of the Maltese Islands – which places them right between Europe and Africa – thus puts our communities in a unique position to host such a diverse cultural celebration as the European Capital of Culture. And our Mediterranean style is another valuable feature of the islands' identity, capable of reaching out to the varied and valuable perspectives that surround it.





HOW DO WE CELEBRATE ISLAND LIFE?

Maltese celebrations are best known for their brightness and exuberance. Since local tradition is steeped in passion, enthusiasm and flair, we're set to celebrate our European Capital of Culture year through the best festive language we know – that of the traditional Maltese *festa*, as experienced in the most present and contemporary sense.

For the Maltese, the village *festa* – or village feast – conjures up crowded streets lined with gold-leaf pillars, bright lights and banners, boisterous laughter, and the sight of fireworks as they fly up and unfurl against the sky. And while such exhilarating moments may be fleeting, the community celebrations and the spirit of the *festa* are bound to linger about a locality long after such sights, sounds and smells have faded into the night air.

The traditional Maltese *festa*, in short, is an event where people and families meet to celebrate and talk; it serves to infuse our localities with warmth, life and colour, while bringing the community together. And this is why we wish our European Capital of Culture year to look to this enduring celebration for inspiration.

Making our European Capital of Culture experience fruitful, inviting, living, breathing, surprising and delightful is no small feat. The great energy of the *festa* is held up by the active participation of different people and the meeting of ritual, passion, drama and community. Similarly, the success of Valletta 2018 requires the initiative, enthusiasm, talent and collaboration of people from all walks of life, who willingly give their time to contribute to our Cultural Programme. Any European Capital of Culture is therefore bound to flourish when valuable contributions from all communities come together to create a wonderful shared experience.

In 2018, our European Capital of Culture celebrations invite such close creative collaborations between people of different backgrounds on an Island-wide scale, as well as on a European, and even global, level. As we unite to bring a truly unique year of contemporary culture to our capital city, it's time to forge long-lasting friendships and new traditions that allow for open dialogue, creativity, innovation and collaboration all over our Island – and beyond – for generations to come.



valletta 2018 themes

THE THEMES AT PLAY IN OUR
CULTURAL PROGRAMME PAINT
A VIVID PICTURE OF ISLAND
LIFE – ITS SPIRIT, ITS SCENES, ITS
PEOPLE AND THEIR STORIES.

island stories

WHAT'S ISLAND LIFE REALLY LIKE, ANYWAY? WE MAY BE ABLE TO DRIVE ACROSS THE WHOLE OF MALTA OR GOZO IN A SINGLE MORNING, BUT IT DOESN'T MEAN WE'VE SEEN IT ALL. INDEED, A CLOSER LOOK AT ISLAND LIFE SOON REVEALS THAT THERE'S MORE THAN ONE NARRATIVE AT PLAY.

One side of the story goes that Malta and Gozo are small, loud, emotional islands where you can never escape your neighbour's gaze and where your family's always just around the corner bearing either good news, bad news, enough food for a week, or all three.

So living on our Islands is often seen as a domestic drama, with a dose of tragi-comedy that's hard to resist. The flip-side to that view is that Malta, the largest island in our archipelago, also happens to be one of the most densely populated countries in the world – a fact that brings to the fore issues of over-crowding and a growing concern over space and what to do with it.

How to explore and reconcile the various narratives that play out in Malta and Gozo is a question that's constantly evolving. Certainly, community spaces and the image of the open sea play a big role in our journey towards imagining better solutions – for when private spaces aren't easy to come by, islanders turn to community spaces for company, and to the sea for air to breathe.

The narratives that Island Stories seeks to draw out portray vivid, timely pictures of life on our shores. They are stories about its realities, its communities and the spaces they use, of how old spaces are – or could be – used for new things, and of how to create new spaces inside which one may appreciate tradition.



future baroque

FUTURE BAROQUE IS A WAY OF LIFE. IT'S AN EXTRAVAGANCE AND THEATRICALITY THAT'S PART AND PARCEL OF OUR DAILY RHYTHMS; IT MEANS COLOUR AND ORNAMENTATION, EXAGGERATED GESTURES AND ACTIONS. SPECTACLE IS THE CENTRAL PHILOSOPHY OF FUTURE BAROQUE.

Our capital city, Baroque at heart, and layered with a succession of diverse stylistic interventions across time, is a backdrop which tells stories about our history and culture even when the hustle and bustle of daily activity won't stop to listen.

Contemporary Valletta speaks the language of the Baroque as loudly as its architecture. Today, communities engage with the fabric of the city as it is developed and rethought across time, making it a stage where life and ideas are constantly evolving, settling and re-shaping themselves.

Future Baroque contains a kind of spirituality that's suspended somewhere between the traditional and the contemporary.

The backdrop of Valletta is enriched by the necessity of ritual; the colourful ornaments and banners that line the streets to celebrate our famous *karnival* and the capital's own *festi*, or feasts, may boast of material riches, but they also create spontaneous soundscapes of revelry and joy.

Behind the clinking of jewellery and the honking of new cars, and in the blasting of loud speakers and the chanting of prayers through the streets, might reside our plain and simple tendency to make noise. But beyond this is a newer, ever-growing need that's married to our old sense of spectacle – a need to make our voices heard over and above the noise of the city.

voyages

THANKS TO ITS HARBOURS, VALLETTA HAS ALWAYS BEEN A MELTING POT OF DIFFERENT CULTURES. MALTA'S ANCIENT HERITAGE, COMBINED WITH A STRATEGIC GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION THAT PLACES IT RIGHT BETWEEN EUROPE AND AFRICA, MAKE IT A UNIQUE CAPITAL CITY. IT'S A SPACE THAT'S ABLE TO HOST MEANINGFUL ENCOUNTERS WITH AND BETWEEN ITS CLOSE NEIGHBOURS, BOTH IN AND BEYOND THE MEDITERRANEAN.

Our capital is no stranger to surges of conflict and resistance: Valletta is a city surrounded by fortified bastions, built for warding off external attacks and for celebrating victory within. Even now, the city stands inside a wider global context that's marked by growing political instability, and which brings into sharp relief issues of violence, exile and migration.

Valletta 2018 is an opportunity to celebrate life and creativity in our capital while nurturing vital dialogue; it provides a space in which to challenge dominant perspectives, and extends a hand of friendship to all artists and creatives. An openness to different cultures is vital for a healthy community, and as we strive to recreate a sense of belonging in an age of cultural diversity, we have the power to give diverse communities a platform for expression and the necessary networks to support meaningful exchange.





c. Matthew Mirabelli

OUR CULTURAL PROGRAMME

INCLUSIVITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION ARE AT THE CORE OF OUR CULTURAL PROGRAMME. ALL OUR COMMUNITY AND PARTICIPATION-FOCUSED EVENTS ARE AN OPEN INVITATION TO A CELEBRATION THAT BEGINS IN THE SYMBOLIC HEART OF OUR PROGRAMME – THE CAPITAL CITY OF VALLETTA – AND GROWS EVER-OUTWARDS TOWARDS ALL TOWNS AND VILLAGES ALL OVER MALTA AND GOZO.



VALLETTA 2018 OPENING WEEKEND

OUR EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE YEAR (ECOC) OPENS ON THE 20TH OF JANUARY 2018 WITH AN OFFICIAL CEREMONY WHERE PREVIOUS ECOCs PASS THE TITLE ON TO VALLETTA 2018 AND ITS TWIN EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE IN THE NETHERLANDS, LEEUWARDEN- FRYSLÂN 2018.

In keeping with the spirit of the traditional Maltese *festa* , brightly adorned streets will set the scene for celebration in Valletta. First off, a programme of spectacular activities will kick off our European Capital of Culture year with extravagant outdoor performances taking place in Valletta, the symbolic heart of the Island. Various dynamic shows will take place at the Triton Fountain, Castille Square, St. John's Square and St. George's Square, under a canopy of ornate decorations and lighting effects.

This first step in our European Capital of Culture story will launch a year-long cultural celebration that promotes diversity, community, and traditions old and new. It's set to be a special space and time for local and international communities to bring all sorts of ingredients – collaboration, innovation, initiative and participation – to this festive mix. During this time, the title of European Capital of Culture encourages us to explore what such a year of open collaboration and diversity means for Malta, what celebration really means in a local context, and how our identity is expressed in the here and now.

VALLETTA 2018 MAJOR MULTI-SITE EXHIBITION

A THOUGHT-PROVOKING ART PROJECT THAT EXPLORES MALTA'S INTIMATE AND MULTI-FACETED RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SEA, THIS KEYSTONE ELEMENT OF OUR CULTURAL PROGRAMME WILL INAUGURATE VALLETTA'S EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE YEAR.

Internationally renowned curator Maren Richter and her team are working with a constellation of well-known international and local artists to intervene in a wide range of public and private spaces. Starting with a main event that's set to take place over the opening weekend, the project is a fluid and provocative multi-site work that branches out into several artistic pieces taking place in multiple venues all over the archipelago.

Encouraging and embracing a process that's fluid, inspired and searching, the exhibition promises a new perspective on the ever-present Mediterranean Sea – one which departs from its conventional associations and delivers a fresh take that's determined to investigate its resonance in contemporary Malta.





PARTICIPATION

OUR CULTURAL PROGRAMME REACHES OUT TO EVERYONE ON THE MALTESE ISLANDS – AND OUR INITIATIVES AND ACTIVITIES ARE ESPECIALLY DESIGNED TO MAKE TAKING PART THAT MUCH EASIER. WHETHER YOU'RE YOUNG OR OLD, WE INVITE YOU TO COME AND GET INVOLVED, THROUGH MUSIC, OPERA, GAMES, DANCE, OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES AND ALL SORTS OF ONGOING PROJECTS.

Inspired by the need for a new culture of movement, Shake It! encourages young people to be more active by transforming public city spaces into temporary playgrounds packed with fun activities that promote healthy social interaction. Meanwhile, Dance4All is a dance residency programme offered by *ŻfinMalta*, where dancers work to promote the joys of movement among the young and the young at heart in various communities.

The popular *Darba Waħda* series, meanwhile continues to draw children and the elderly together all over Malta and Gozo through various fun-filled creative activities.

Whether you're living on or off the Islands, there are many ways to participate in our programme; Latitude 36 collects and explores the emigration experiences of Maltese nationals living outside our shores, RIMA investigates the multi-faceted aspects of migration and exile, while *Ġewwa Barra* encourages the city's residents to play a more conscious cultural role and to participate in the dialogues taking place around our European Capital of Culture.

Other projects, the details of which may be found elsewhere in this publication, also invite you to engage with creative communities, discover new talents within yourself, uncover new ways of thinking, and to interact with enchanting and unusual performances.

PERFORMANCE

DRAWING INSPIRATION FROM CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL REALITIES TAKING PLACE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN CONTEXT, OUR CULTURAL PROGRAMME INCLUDES MULTI-DISCIPLINARY PERFORMANCES THAT FLUIDLY COMBINE DANCE AND THEATRE.

Our performance programme will explore new ways of making use of and re-inventing space in our communities – from the use of unpredictable outdoor spaces, to kindling new traditions around old, iconic landmarks, to making neglected or ‘invisible’ spaces stand out in the urban landscape.

The soul-searching *Kazin Barokk*, a play directed by Elli Papakonstantinou, is a hybrid performance where visuals and music intertwine with found text and interviews to form a “Baroque pastiche”. An exciting team of international dance choreographers also contribute to our programme: Costanza Macras trains non-professionals in the art of dance, to achieve

intriguing and surprising performances, while Hafiz Dhaou and Aïcha M’Barek specialize in creating and choreographing site-specific dance performances. Meanwhile, dramaturgs Ruud Gielens and Laila Soliman will develop a project dealing with the themes of Maltese identity, crisis and politics for the year 2018.

While expanding the scope and reach of cultural activities on the local scene, our Performance Programme also works with homegrown initiatives such as Teatru Malta and Teatru Manoel Youth Opera, and with grassroots programmes like *Get Your Act Together*, to provide valuable platforms for local practitioners.





VISUAL ARTS

OPEN TO EXPLORING ESTABLISHED AND EMERGING ARTISTIC FORMS, OUR VISUAL ARTS PROGRAMME ENCOURAGES DIVERSE PRACTICES TO TAKE ROOT IN VALLETTA'S SPACES AND PLACES.

Our Visual Arts programme houses a healthy mix of cultural exchanges, exhibitions and workshops that treat subjects such as the relationship between local and international practice, the workings behind the creative process, the critical value of art, and contemporary issues in curation.

Valletta 2018 paves the way for the curators of our future through the annual Curatorial School, an intensive programme of lectures and workshops devoted to the study of contemporary approaches to curation. Delivered by top international guest curators, this lecture and workshop-based platform for debate invites students, artists and practitioners to engage with curation as it stands in the here and now.

The theme of curation and exhibition runs through several projects developed under this strand of our Cultural Programme: *Transformer*, a border-crossing curatorial and artistic exchange curated by Blitz and project partners at Central Saint Martins (London), in partnership with Arts Council Malta, places emerging local artistic practices within an international cultural network; the innovative exhibition *Divergent Thinkers* – by Raphael Vella for *Aġenzija Zgħażaġh*, in collaboration with *Spazju Kreattiv* – explores the brainstorming processes which take place when artists search for creative and innovative ways to express concepts, leading to divergent and unexpected outcomes; and *Fragmenta Malta*, a challenging series of pop-up exhibitions curated by Bettina Hutschek, continues to engage with a diverse and complex array of contemporary issues across various locations on the archipelago.

MUSIC

VALLETTA 2018'S MUSIC PROGRAMME IS ON THE LOOKOUT FOR NEW PROJECTS, IDEAS, EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES THAT INVITE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND YOUTH INVOLVEMENT, AND WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO A GROWING NETWORK OF LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATORS.

Our music programme houses a diverse range of events for music professionals and enthusiasts alike, ranging from live music gigs, to community workshops in sound-making, support for incoming and outgoing music tours, and networking opportunities within the local community and the wider music industry. Modern Music Days is committed to promoting the performance and understanding of twentieth century repertoire and contemporary music in Malta, while supporting collaborations between local musicians and

international artists and institutions; in partnership with Arts Council Malta, the project titled The Mediterranean Dimension: Initiation and (re)creation is developing a EuroMed platform for the recruitment of talents, the exchange of ideas, and the production of innovative projects; Of Peace and Unrest is an initiative that works in partnership with Arts Council Malta – it empowers creatives and communities to celebrate cultural diversity by means of the performing arts and promotes global understanding, cultural integration and social wellbeing.





CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

VALLETTA 2018'S CULTURAL PROGRAMME FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PROVIDES EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CULTURAL PARTICIPATION THAT WILL ENGAGE CURIOUS MINDS BOTH INSIDE THE CLASSROOM AND OUT IN THE CITY.

Our educational projects supply schools with extra-curricular material that balances learning and creative practice: the fun workshop titled *Ohloq Kultura* promotes cultural awareness among school children under the guidance of More or Less Theatre; The Box is a drama workshop led by Studio 18, which seeks to introduce young people to devised theatre by exploring non-linear approaches to performance and the elements of theatre-making; *KantaKantun* is an innovative project that visits schools to promote an understanding of the relationship between sound and architecture; and Sounds Out Loud works with the healing value of music and sound to motivate children with different abilities to explore the joy of self-expression through music.

Under this strand of our programme, Valletta 2018 is also collaborating with MCAST to constantly develop educational and working opportunities for teenagers and youths – namely, creative outlets such as the digital projections on the façade of the Grandmaster's Palace and the exploration of collaborative projects to be undertaken with our twin European Capital of Culture, Leeuwarden-Fryslân 2018.

Encapsulating the spirit of all the projects taking place within this important part of our programme is the *Žigužajg* International Arts Festival for Children and Young People. Produced by *Fondazzjoni Kreattività*, which in 2018 will join forces with Valletta 2018, this festival offers a marvellous assortment of performances and workshops for children and youth that are set to take place in Malta and Gozo.



INFRASTRUCTURE & NETWORKS

TO KEEP CULTURAL ACTIVITY THRIVING LONG PAST OUR EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE YEAR, OUR CULTURAL PROGRAMME INCLUDES SEVERAL INITIATIVES FOCUSED ON BUILDING ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURES AND NETWORKS. SUCH INITIATIVES WILL ALLOW OUR ISLANDS TO GROW INTO A CREATIVE HUB IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

VALLETTA DESIGN CLUSTER PROGRAMME

THE VALLETTA DESIGN CLUSTER IS AN INITIATIVE AIMED AT ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF THE DESIGN SECTOR AND THE WIDER CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN MALTA, WITH A STRONG COMMUNITY DIMENSION AT ITS CORE.

The project engages in efforts geared towards the regeneration of Valletta and is working to become an integral part of the community fabric. The Cluster is devoted to providing support for creative industry start-ups and projects, as well as to students and individual design practitioners. Through its activities and collaborations, it aims to raise awareness about the advantages of urban design and technology, and works to cultivate and facilitate relationships with international collaborators and partners.

By tapping into contemporary design practices, the Valletta Design Cluster intends to channel holistic, multidisciplinary and inclusive processes that can be employed to enhance the experience of living in and visiting the city. During the coming years, it will be reaching out to students and to the general public through partnerships with the Malta Robotics Olympiad, a project run in collaboration with the Design and Technology Learning Centre (Ministry of Education), with Malta Design Week, a week-long designer's paradise, and via workshop sessions run by the urban development project Design4DCity.



MUŻA

ONE OF VALLETTA 2018'S FLAGSHIP PROJECTS WILL SEE THE TRANSITION OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS TO MUŻA, MALTA'S NEW NATIONAL COMMUNITY ART MUSEUM, LOCATED AT AUBERGE D'ITALIE.

MUŻA is the Maltese word for muse, or inspiration; conceived to promote greater participation in our communities through a narrative approach to artefacts, this new kind of museum empowers a broader range of access tools with which visitors can experience heritage and culture. At the same time, MUŻA is also an acronym for MUŻew Nazzjonali tal-Arti, which is the Maltese name of the current National Museum of Fine Arts; this new museum space therefore also strives to recognise the history of the collection of the Malta National Museum of Fine Arts, and the values which have shaped it over time.

To celebrate the museum's collaborative spirit, Heritage Malta's curatorial team for MUŻA, together with Valletta 2018, has also created Naqsam il-MUŻA, an innovative activity in community curation, where citizens are encouraged to browse through the national art collection, reflect upon their chosen piece, and share their thoughts with friends, family and the community at large. Chosen artworks are reproduced and displayed in various public spaces on the Island, where they may strike different chords with different people and encourage conversations based on personal and spontaneous reactions to works of art.

IS-SUQ TAL-BELT

AN ICONIC LANDMARK AT THE HEART OF OUR CAPITAL CITY, THE STRUCTURE LOCALLY KNOWN AS 'IS-SUQ TAL-BELT', OR 'VALLETTA'S MARKET', IS CURRENTLY UNDERGOING RESTORATION, WITH WORKS ON THE BUILDING PROJECTED FOR COMPLETION BY THIS AUTUMN.

The regeneration of this beautiful example of Victorian-era architecture will preserve the original character of the building, while re-imagining its potential for contemporary commercial and cultural use. The plan will see the market restored to its former function – a food market located amid the hustle and bustle of the city of Valletta, a place of exchange that preserves the venue's place in cultural memory while creating a new community space.



RESIDENCIES

TOGETHER WITH *SPAZJU KREATTIV* AND *BLITZ*, THE VALLETTA 2018 FOUNDATION IS DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE RESIDENCY PROGRAMMES DEVOTED TO IMPROVING WORKING AND NETWORKING CONDITIONS FOR ARTISTS IN THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION.

By the end of the European Capital of Culture year, Valletta 2018 will have hosted dozens of artists from as far afield as Australia and Jordan, who will have left their own distinctive mark on our Islands.

The main residency itself is based on the rural Island of Gozo, and hosts artists inside a close community environment which immerses them in local culture. Meanwhile, a diverse range of cultural initiatives encourage visits, exchanges and encounters that support close contact between artists and their communities,

and which work to ensure that art is something that's within the reach of our local communities too.

The scope of our residencies is constantly expanding to provide diverse projects with valuable support. Our residencies also include The Deep Shelter Project, an interdisciplinary residency based in the Psychological Support Services at Sir Anthony Mamo Oncology Centre (SAMOC), and various short-term dance residencies delivered by ŻfinMalta that bring dance enthusiasts of all levels together in various community environments.





VALLETTA 2018 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: SHARING THE LEGACY

FOR THE FIFTH YEAR RUNNING, THE ANNUAL VALLETTA 2018 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CONTINUES TO BUILD UPON THE VITAL DIALOGUE ESTABLISHED OVER ITS PREVIOUS EDITIONS, IDENTIFYING THE POSSIBLE LEGACY OF THE VALLETTA 2018 EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE (ECOC) TITLE LOCALLY AND ACROSS THE EUROPEAN SPECTRUM.

Since its launch, the Valletta 2018 conference has provided a platform through which communities can share knowledge and engage in critical thinking about issues surrounding the practices of ECOCs and the legacy of Valletta 2018.

Over three days, the conference will act as a platform to explore, discuss, share and communicate the legacy of Valletta 2018, ranging from the creation of a number of projects and events with active community participation to the regeneration of previously

abandoned areas in Valletta, all of which can foster a more vibrant and diverse city.

The conference is an invitation to assess and discuss the future of cultural activity in Valletta and the success of its cultural regeneration process over the medium and long term. These reflections will allow for a deeper understanding of the changing nature of the city in the wake of Valletta 2018, and the long-term residual impact of the cultural, social and economic regeneration that took place in the run-up to and throughout 2018.



CABINET OF FUTURES

HOW CAN WE IMAGINE ALTERNATIVE, PREFERABLE FUTURES, WHILE RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY TO CURRENT CHANGE? AND WHAT ARE OUR VISIONS OF SUCH PREFERRED FUTURES?

In a present which is widely perceived as offering increasingly challenging situations, searching for and finding possible answers to these questions is what Cabinet of Futures is all about. Through this project, the Austrian art and culture group Time's Up engages an interested public in playful and open-minded explorations of potential futures. This forward-thinking project and exhibition offers co-operative and participative spaces where all types of audiences – from internationally renowned futurists, to local experts and communities,

and everyday citizens – may share imaginative scenarios, dreams and fears, and communicate visions of both preferred and unlikely futures.

As we consider the pluralities of futures, Cabinet of Futures also asks us to accept the pluralities of the now; it asks us to reflect on the diversity of European communities in a way that lets us work with the idea that a multitude of futures may develop from one starting point – one here and now which moves forward whilst maintaining diversity.

STRADA STRETTA CONCEPT

OVER THE PAST DECADES, SEVERAL GIFTED MUSICIANS AND ARTISTS STARTED THEIR CAREER IN *STRADA STRETTA*, OR STRAIT STREET, AND THE AREA IS NOW DEVELOPING INTO ONE OF VALLETTA'S BEST-KNOWN SOCIAL AND CREATIVE HUBS.

The Strada Stretta Concept programme of events builds upon a cultural legacy that has grown throughout the ages. Even as restoration and regeneration works are underway, the street and its surroundings remain alive with a varied programme of quality cultural events and continuous activity that has been running since 2015. In anticipation of our European Capital of Culture year, a fresh round of performances has

already begun to roll out, including opera, music, theatre, literature, and a conference that brings scholarly and artistic communities together. Over the past months, the intimate setting of *Strada Stretta* and its venues have provided space for the proliferation of arts and culture on the Islands, with jam-packed events promising a more intense programme in 2018.





FESTIVALS & EVENTS

THE YEAR 2018 IS PACKED WITH A WIDE VARIETY OF FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENTS AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES THAT HOLD SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY. WITH INPUT FROM VALLETTA 2018, OUR FESTIVALS ARE ALSO DEVELOPING NEW AND EXCITING WORKSHOPS, MASTERCLASSES AND CREATIVE CONNECTIONS THAT ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF FUTURE COLLABORATIONS ON OUR ISLANDS.



VALLETTA PAGEANT OF THE SEAS

THE VALLETTA PAGEANT OF THE SEAS IS A SPECTACULAR EVENT SET AGAINST THE STRIKING BACKDROP OF THE GRAND HARBOUR, A HISTORICAL SITE WHICH HAS PLAYED A VITAL ROLE IN MALTA'S RICH HISTORY.

Many exciting activities are planned for the 2018 edition. *Tellieqa Telliqun* is a whacky harbour race in which various local councils, private companies and sailing enthusiasts construct their own boats and race each other across the Grand Harbour without the use of motors or traditional oars. At the same time, participants of the *Ghawma Toni Bajada* will swim across the harbour, in memory of local Great Siege hero, Toni Bajada. What's more, at nightfall, a programme of light, fire and magic will enthrall the crowds around the bastions with an hour-long programme of daring spectacles.

VALLETTA GREEN FESTIVAL

VALLETTA 2018 CREATED THE VALLETTA GREEN FESTIVAL TOGETHER WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL LANDSCAPE CONSORTIUM TO BRING A PROGRAMME FULL OF GREEN IDEAS AND EVENTS TO THE CAPITAL CITY.

Based in and around Pjazza San Ġorg, the festival takes as its central motif a huge carpet of 80,000 brightly-coloured flowers known as an *inforata*. Participants and visitors can expect a curious and interactive experience in the city, packed with unexpected urban interventions, artistic installations, fun workshops and children's activities, as well as intriguing urban exploration tours which seek to uncover some of Valletta's little-known gardens.

Through the joyful sight of the *inforata* at the heart of the capital, and the excitement brought about by the numerous green interventions taking place around the city, the Valletta Green Festival hopes to kick-start the move towards a well-balanced urban environment and better urban planning at a grassroots level.





MEWĠA MUŻIKA

AN EXCITING ACTIVITY TITLED *MEWĠA MUŻIKA*, OR WAVE OF MUSIC, IS COMING TO OUR SHORES COURTESY OF THE DYNAMIC PORTUGUESE GROUP ONDAMARELA, WHO SPECIALISE IN LARGE-SCALE MUSIC PROJECTS.

Ondamarela and Valletta 2018 invite local communities to participate in this unique project that unites thousands of people through music and sound, culminating in a vast performance directed by Tim Steiner.

Mewġa Mużika is open to everyone. You don't even need to play an instrument to participate in this inspirational celebration. Everyone is welcome: professionals and amateurs, young and old, beginners and novices, individuals, families and communities. Perhaps you are a bathroom singer, or a lapsed guitarist, a would-be

drummer, or a dad constantly driving your kids to band rehearsal. Maybe you are an accomplished performer but relish the idea of playing in the core of a huge ensemble. Whoever you are, *Mewġa Mużika* wants you!

The only thing that's required to take part in *Mewġa Mużika* is the willingness to be part of a large, shared musical experience, a desire to work with others, and a wish to create something new; its simple mission is to create a new performance that explores and celebrates the culture and people of Malta and Gozo.

ALTOFEST MALTA

ALTOFEST IS AN ALTERNATIVE FESTIVAL PROGRAMME THAT'S CONSTANTLY ON THE LOOKOUT FOR SPACES IN WHICH ARTISTS CAN DEVELOP AND EXHIBIT THEIR WORK.

This alternative festival programme, which has already established itself in Naples over the past six years, is now coming to our shores. Altofest welcomes all forms of contemporary live art, and seeks to host interdisciplinary projects in diverse spaces. This festival promotes the idea that any space – from private homes to community venues and public locations – can bring local and international artists together with their surrounding communities.

In departing from the conventional festival format, Altofest seeks to nurture creative spaces inside which different people come together to share practical and creative resources. By encouraging and promoting space sharing, and by creating an environment of constant exchange between residents, artists and audiences, the city can truly become a home for innovative and communal artistic practices.





MALTA CALLS

THIS 360-DEGREE DANCE EXPERIENCE TRANSFORMS THE ARCHITECTURAL LANDSCAPE OF ST. JULIAN'S INTO AN IMMERSIVE, KALEIDOSCOPIC EVENT FULL OF MUSIC AND SOUNDS, WHERE THE SITE BECOMES A MASSIVE, LIVING FILM SCREEN.

Inside this energetic dance arena, international superstar DJ Per QX mixes a thirty-minute set to remember, after which dancers from the *ZinMalta* Dance Ensemble perform a dramatic choreography by Mavin Khoo. This choreography will be enhanced by the projections of London-based artists Shaun Prickemage and Dan Strutt – who have collaborated with the likes of the Chemical Brothers and the English National Opera. The end of the performance marks the start of a dance party to be remembered.

This is a new kind of dance event that unites top music industry talent and showcases both professional dancers and young talent from dance workshops taking place on the Island; it's a call for all dynamic urban spirits to surrender to the rhythm of the moment.

OPERA SEASON

AFTER SUMMER, AN INTENSE RUN OF OPERAS WILL LIGHT UP OUR CULTURAL PROGRAMME WITH ADVENTUROUS PRODUCTIONS BY ESTABLISHED PROFESSIONALS AND A RANGE OF VALUABLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG THEATRICAL TALENT ON STAGE AND BEHIND THE SCENES.

Our opera season is a space for experimentation, where original and contemporary approaches to the operatic form are sure to enchant and surprise audiences.

Orfeo & Majnun is a theatre of emotions about love, loss and longing, and the power of music. An interdisciplinary, participatory music-theatre project in two parts connecting two myths from different cultures, it combines the Greek myth of Orfeo and Eurydice and the Middle Eastern legend of Leyla and Majnun. This is an enchanting production that uses multiple textures, including shadow puppet theatre, to express a new take on these well-known tales. The project extends into workshops and collaborations with local citizens of all generations and backgrounds, where students, choirs, musicians and artists participate in the process of co-creation. This fascinating piece builds up to

a powerful community experience that makes it one of the biggest participatory projects on our programme. Orfeo & Majnun is produced in partnership with La Monnaie in Brussels and Festival Aix en Provence in France.

Another great opera highlight is Aida, a contemporary reworking of the classic opera by Opera Spagna, in collaboration with Leeuwarden-Fryslân 2018 and students from MCAST and D'Drive. The season will see fresh local productions too, including *Ahna r-Refugjati*, an operatic work by young Maltese composer Mario Sammut that recounts the struggles of a family attempting to escape their war-torn country. As part of a long-running initiative to give young local opera singers a platform to develop their skills, Teatru Manoel Youth Opera will also produce a new opera for the Teatru Manoel season in September.





c. Therese Debono

2018 Cultural Programme Preview

PARTNERS

WITH THE SUPPORT OF ALL OUR PARTNERS
LARGE AND SMALL, WE'RE WORKING TO
ESTABLISH EXCITING CULTURAL PRACTICES SET
TO LAST WELL BEYOND THE YEAR 2018.



LEEWARDEN 2018 COLLABORATIONS

COLLABORATION AND SOLIDARITY FORM A KEY PART OF ANY EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE. TRUE TO THIS VISION, OUR CULTURAL PROGRAMME FEATURES UNIQUE PROJECTS THAT BUILD MEANINGFUL EXCHANGES WITH OUR TWIN EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE, LEEWARDEN-FRYSLÂN 2018.

On the education front, Valletta 2018 and MCAST are collaborating on a number of student mobility programmes which are set to take place between two colleges in the region, namely Friesland College and Roc Friese Poort. These exchanges are designed to help implement various student-run projects related to the culture and technology industries.

Meanwhile, Poetry in Potato Bags is based on an ongoing poetry exchange that nurtures a dialogue between Maltese and Dutch poets. The project represents the long-standing connection between Malta and the Netherlands, a geographical region which has shared agricultural ties with Malta via the city of Leeuwarden since 1850.

ARTS COUNCIL MALTA

ARTS COUNCIL MALTA'S VISION IS TO PLACE THE ARTS AND CREATIVITY AT THE HEART OF MALTA'S FUTURE. OUR JOURNEY TOWARDS THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE YEAR HAS BEEN GUIDED BY THIS VISION, SEEING MALTA INVEST CONSIDERABLY IN THE CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTORS.

Through the increased importance which Arts Council Malta (ACM) has given to the arts and culture, and via greater collaboration between public cultural entities and more targeted funding programmes, Malta's creative ecology will continue to develop and reach higher levels of excellence.

In line with ACM's Strategy 2020, the Valletta 2018 programme nurtures creative potential and

professional development while providing thousands of opportunities for people to engage with culture and creativity. The programme also links Maltese artists and audiences to international communities through exchanges, collaborations, and residencies.

ACM's support towards the Valletta 2018 project and the strong synergy between Cultural Programmes and policy will ensure a strong legacy that is felt long after 2018.





TAL-KULTURA VOLUNTEERS

SINCE ITS LAUNCH IN 2016, THE *TAL-KULTURA* PROGRAMME HAS GIVEN PEOPLE OF DIVERSE AGES, NATIONALITIES AND BACKGROUNDS THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES IN WAYS WHICH NURTURE A STRONGER SENSE OF CULTURAL OWNERSHIP.

As we look ahead towards our European Capital of Culture's legacy, Valletta 2018 together with SOS Malta aims to foster a strong sense of active citizenship and volunteering through *Tal-Kultura*, the volunteer programme for Valletta 2018.

Tal-Kultura invites anyone willing to give as much time as they can afford to the enrichment of our Cultural Programme, and to the experience of those who engage with it. Volunteers are a vital part of the Valletta 2018 team: in 2016 alone, they gave over 1,800 hours of their time to over 20 events and activities, ranging from events and festivals like the Malta Jazz Festival, conferences such as the Valletta 2018 annual conference, and ongoing projects like *Gewwa Barra*.

OUR PARTNERS

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



MEDIA PARTNER



EDUCATION PARTNERS



UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
L-Università ta' Malta



AIRLINE PARTNER



PUBLIC CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS



TEATRU MANOEL



PJAZZA TEATRU RJAL



Heritage Malta



MEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCE CENTRE

CORPORATE PARTNERS



The information in this booklet was correct at the time of going to print. Valletta 2018 reserves the right to amend dates and other event details at any time.



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