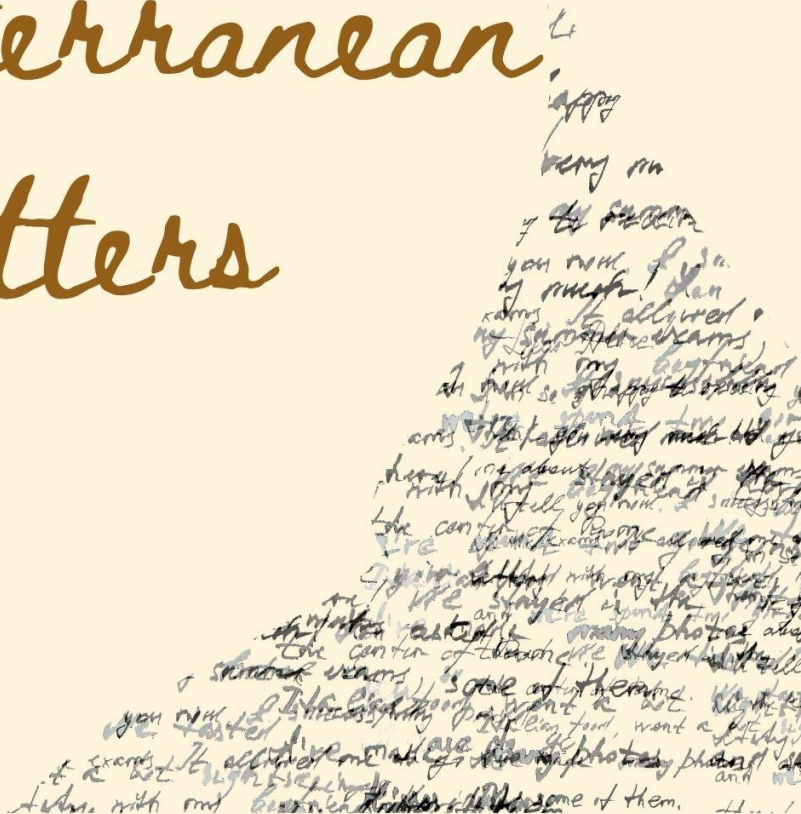



PJAZZA TEATRU RJAL

Mediterranean
Letters



Justyna Zanko violin
Julia Miller piano
Natalie Naudi actor

Honorary Patronage



EMBAJADA
DE ESPAÑA
EN MALTA

CARAVAGGIO
WINES OF MARSOVIN



Programme

Pablo Sarasate – Romanza Andaluza op.22

Federico García Lorca ‘Poema de la soleá’

Rosario Scalero – 3 Pieces for violin and piano op.17

I Gesang am Meeresstrand

II Nänie

III Bacchanal

Eugenio Montale ‘Mediterraneo’

Charles Camilleri – Three Folk Songs from Malta for violin and piano

I Il-Qarinza

II Takriba

III Il-Kapcipa

John Peter Portelli ‘Tistenna għalxejn’

Lily Michaelides ‘Mediterranean’

Mikis Theodorakis – Three Pieces for December for violin and piano

I March through the Night to Makrigiannis

II Prayer

III The Partisan’s Death

Antonio Machado ‘El mar triste’

Karol Szymanowski – La Fontaine d’Arethuse no. 1 from ‘Mythes’ Op. 30

Paul Verlaine ‘Claire de Lune’

Camille Saint-Saëns/Georges Bizet (transcription for violin and piano) –
Introduction et Rondo Capriccioso Op. 28

This evening would not be possible without the generous support of our sponsors.

We would like to heartfully thank Farsons Foundation, our main sponsor, supporting sponsor: The Embassy of Republic of Poland in Valletta, our Friends of the Project: The Embassy of Spain in Malta and Marsovin Wines, and the honorary patronage of the Istituto Italiano di Cultura di La Valletta. We appreciate your collaboration and financial support in cultivating poetry and music in Malta.

Performers



Justyna Ewa Zanko is a Polish concert violinist, soloist, and chamber musician, as well as the Artistic Director of VirtuClassic and President of the Virtuoso Music Foundation.

She is a graduate of the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in Warsaw, Poland (Master of Arts in Music – Faculty of Instrumental Studies) and the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire in the UK (Advanced Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Performance). Throughout her academic and masterclass training, she studied under renowned violin masters such as Rimma Sushanskaya (the last student of David Oistrakh), Igor Oistrakh, Zakhar Bron, Roman Lasocki, Antoni Cofalik, among others.

Her international career has taken her to some of the world's most prestigious stages, such as Carnegie Hall in New York, the Royal Albert Hall in London, Beethoven House in Bonn, Palais de Monaco in Paris, and Mozarteum in Salzburg. She is regularly invited to perform at international festivals and concert series, including the Wieniawski Brothers International Festival, Virtuoso Music Festival in Stratford-Upon-Avon (UK), TEDx Lublin and the Victoria International Arts Festival in Malta.

As a soloist, she has performed with the Lublin Philharmonic, Stratford Virtuosi Orchestra, and the Birmingham Conservatoire Symphony Orchestra, under the baton of Cheung Chau, Michael Seal, Rimma Sushanskaya and Piotr Wiatkowski.

Justyna Zanko is a winner of first prizes and recipient of special awards in numerous international competitions, including the Golden Classical Music Awards, Grand Prize Virtuoso, and the Bach International Music Competition.

Her musical interpretations are distinguished not only by technical precision and artistic maturity but above all by a unique sensitivity and delicacy — hallmarks of her distinctive artistic identity.



Polish-born pianist Julia Miller graduated from the Music Academy of Lodz in piano performance and chamber music under the tutelage of Prof. Anna Wesolowska- Firlej, Prof. Boguslaw Pikala and Prof. Cezary Sanecki, just to name the few. She was a finalist in several competitions and had her own trio that performed in the most prestigious

locations in Poland. Since then, she has carved for herself an international career both as a soloist and as a musical collaborator. She has performed at notable venues in the UK, Ireland, Italy, Poland, and Malta.

After a stint in Dublin, Ireland, Julia moved to Malta in 2012 and built herself a reputation as both an accompanist to vocalists as well as an accomplished pianist in her own right. She collaborated with the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, Kor Malta, the Manoel Theatre Youth Opera, Opera Nova. She has been present and is regularly invited to several festivals, including Malta Baroque Festival, Malta International Spring Festival, Gaultana Festival, Victoria International Arts Festival, TEDx Lublin and Festival Musicale delle Nazioni in Rome.

Since 2019, Julia Miller has also started a series of solo recitals titled 'Julia Miller Plays', playing a wide-ranging repertoire of classical piano pieces, especially from the Romantic Period. She is also a teacher at the Malta Visual and Performing Arts (MVPA) School and Malta School of Music where she works in piano and chamber music departments.

Currently, she is completing her DMus at the University of Malta under the supervision of Prof. Michael Laus and Dr Max Erwin where she is focusing on female composers from the end of 19th century from USA and Sweden.



Natalie Naudi studied Mathematics and Physics at University level and teaches Science in a Secondary School. She also studied Music Performance and Music Theory and has a diploma in both. The piano was her main instrument of study, but she also plays the guitar and ukulele, and is learning the tin whistle and bagpipes in her free time.

Natalie is a producer and presenter of various television programmes on TVM, namely 'Hxejjex u Hwawar', 'Annona: Ikel u Identità', 'Tessuti u Bizzilla' and 'Calendi'. She is currently producing and presenting the programme 'Etiquette: L-Istorja mill-Bidu Nett'.

Natalie had a role in a couple of theatre productions including two at the Manoel Theatre, 'Pagliacci' and 'La Boheme'. Furthermore, she had a small role in the local television productions 'The Women of the George Cross Island', 'Chalet' and 'Iż-Żmien Bejnietna'. More recently, she had a main part in the play 'L-Istatwa' at Spazju Kreattiv.

Composers

Pablo de Sarasate (1844–1908)



Sarasate, born in Pamplona, Navarre showcased his violin talent from a young age, studying first with his father and then under various prominent teachers. His potential was recognized early, leading to a significant patronage that allowed him to study in Madrid and later at the Paris Conservatoire. Despite personal tragedies, including the death of his mother, Sarasate excelled, winning the Conservatoire's highest honor. He debuted professionally in Paris in 1860 and became renowned for his pure tone and virtuosic technique, performing globally. His compositions, particularly the Zigeunerweisen and Carmen Fantasy, as well as his arrangements and Spanish Dances, reflect his unique style. Sarasate passed away in 1908 from chronic bronchitis and left behind a legacy celebrated by competitions and dedicated works from other composers. His instruments, including two Stradivarius violins, are preserved in his memory.

Book II of Spanish Dances with Romanza andaluza and Jota navarra, Op. 22, was composed in 1878 during a tour of Scandinavia and is dedicated to Moravian violinist Wilma Neruda.

Rosario Scalero (1870–1954)



As a young boy, he studied the violin in Turin and later with Camillo Sivori in Genoa, Paganini's pupil. He spent years performing across Europe, meeting notable composers like Gustav Mahler. After WWII, he joined the Mannes School of Music in New York, gaining recognition as a composition teacher and subsequently teaching at the Curtis Institute, where he guided students including Samuel Barber, Nino Rota, and Gian Carlo Menotti.

Charles Camilleri (1931–2009)



Camilleri was born in Ħamrun to musically inclined parents. He began piano lessons with his father and also played the accordion. During his teenage years, he composed works influenced by Maltese folk music and legends. He received further musical education from Joseph Abela Scolaro, Paul Nani, and Carmelo Pace. In 1959, he studied with John Weinzwieg at the University of Toronto for four years, during which he interacted with Stravinsky around April 1962.

Mikis Theodorakis (1925-2021)



Theodorakis was a prominent Greek composer and lyricist, known for over 1,000 works, including film scores for "Zorba the Greek," "Z," and "Serpico." He received multiple nominations and awards, including a BAFTA and a Lenin Peace Prize. Apart from his musical achievements, Theodorakis was politically active, associated with Greece's Communist Party and known for his leftist advocacy. He served in parliament and held ministerial roles, vigorously opposing the 1967-1974 junta. He is also recognized for composing the "Mauthausen Trilogy," acclaimed as a significant musical work about the Holocaust.

Three Pieces for December were composed around New Year's Eve of 1945/46. The thematic material used was inspired by the tragic events during the post-war turmoil in Greece where the composer played an active role. After its first performance at an event of the Greek-Soviet Association, this work fell into oblivion for the next 60 years, together with several other works of the composer's first, very productive period. Immediacy and courage reflected in these fascinating pieces regarding the musical language, resisting the use of modernistic exploration that reigned in those years, make these pieces a valuable addition to both Greek and the international repertoire.

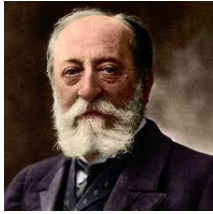
Karol Szymanowski (1882-1937)



Karol Maciej Szymanowski was a Polish composer, pianist, and writer known for his contributions to the modernist Young Poland movement. His early works were influenced by the late Romantic German school and Alexander Scriabin, while his later style became impressionistic and partially atonal. Notable compositions include his Third Symphony, Violin Concerto No. 1, and the ballet Harnasie, reflecting Polish folk music influences. His most famous opera, King Roger, was composed between 1918 and 1924. Szymanowski received several prestigious honors, including the Officer's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta and the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland.

Mythes, Op. 30 is a suite for violin and piano by Karol Szymanowski, composed in 1915 and premiered the following year by Paul Kochanski and the composer himself. Dedicated to Kochanski's wife, Zofia Kochańska, the suite includes three programmatic miniature tone poems influenced by Greek mythology, reflecting Szymanowski's travels in Sicily and North Africa, along with impressionist musical elements.

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)



Saint-Saëns was a French composer, organist, conductor, and pianist from the Romantic era, renowned for works such as *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, the *Second Piano Concerto*, and *The Carnival of the Animals*. A musical prodigy, he debuted at ten and served as a church organist before becoming a prominent freelance musician in Europe and the Americas. Saint-Saëns initially embraced contemporary music but primarily adhered to classical traditions, leading to later conflicts with impressionist and expressionist composers. His teaching brief at the *École Niedermeyer* in Paris influenced future musicians like Gabriel Fauré and Maurice Ravel, who regarded him as a genius.

The *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso in A minor*, Op. 28, is a 1863 composition for violin and orchestra by Camille Saint-Saëns, dedicated to violinist Pablo de Sarasate, who premiered it in April 1867. Initially conceived as the finale to Saint-Saëns' first violin concerto, its success led to its publication as a standalone work. The premiere occurred on April 4, 1867, at the Champs-Élysées. Various arrangements exist, including versions for violin and piano by Georges Bizet and two pianos by Claude Debussy.

Poets



Federico García Lorca (1898–1936), Spain

Federico García Lorca was a Spanish poet, playwright, and theatre director, renowned as a prominent figure of the Generation of '27, which blended European literary movements into Spanish literature.



Eugenio Montale (1896–1981), Italy

Eugenio Montale was an Italian poet, prose writer, editor, and translator, awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1975 for his distinctive poetry, which interpreted human values with artistic sensitivity and a realistic outlook on life.



John Peter Portelli, Malta

John P. Portelli is a Professor Emeritus in the Department of Social Justice Education at the University of Toronto. He has authored, co-authored, and co-edited 22 books, including four bilingual poetry collections, a collection of poems translated

into Greek, two short story collections, and a novel. His latest poetry collection is *Dar-Riħ Malizzjuż* (2021).



Lily Michaelides, Greece

Lily Michaelides is a poet, writer, and event organizer based in Nicosia, with six poetry collections and multiple prose works. Her notable poetry collections include "The Alchemy of Time" (2001), "Shapes and Roads in Relief..." (2003), and "Entrapped Silk" (2021). She has been involved with the Cyprus PEN Centre from 2013 to 2019 and co-founded Ideogramma in 2006, which organizes literary festivals. Michaelides has actively participated in various literary events, including "Synesthesia" and "Poetry into music," showcasing her commitment to promoting literature both locally and internationally.



Antonio Machado (1875–1939), Spain

Antonio Machado was a prominent Spanish poet associated with the Generation of '98. His literary style transitioned from modernism to a more intimate symbolism infused with romantic elements.



Paul Verlaine (1844–1896), France

Paul-Marie Verlaine was a notable French poet, writer, and critic linked to the Symbolist, Parnassianist, and Decadent movements, recognized as a leading figure of the fin de siècle in both French and global poetry.