

Grand Symphonic Band and Organ Concert

Metropolitan Cathedral, Mdina

Saturday 24th October 2009 at 08.00pm



Rosabelle Bianchi, Soprano

John Aquilina, Organist

Band of the Armed Forces of Malta

directed by Captain Ivan John Borg, AFM

(Courtesy of the Metropolitan Cathedral Chapel)

Programme
Rosabelle Bianchi, Soprano
John Aquilina, Organist
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Jeremiah Clarke 1674 – 1707
The Prince of Denmark's March "Trumpet Voluntary" from
Suite in D major (c.1669) - Band & Org

Ennio Morricone 1928 – 1986
Gabriel's Oboe (1986) - Band & Org

Louis Vierne 1870 – 1937
Carillon de Westminster from "Pièces de Fantaisie", Troisième
Suite, Op. 54 (1927) - Org solo

César Franck 1822 – 1890
Panis Angelicus (1872) - Sop, Band & Org

Pietro Mascagni 1863 – 1845
Intermezzo (1890) - Band & Org

Sigfrid Karg - Elert 1877 – 1933
Nun danket alle Gott /
Now thank we all our God (Marche Triomphale) from
Choral-Improvisationen für Orgel,
Op. 65 No. 59, (1906 – 1908) - Org solo

Charles Gounod 1818 - 1893
Ave Maria (1859) - Sop, Band & Org

William Francis McBeth 1933 -
Chant et Jubilo (1963) - Band solo

Charles- Marie Widor 1844 – 1937
Toccata from "Cinquième Symphonie pour Grand Orgue" en fa
mineur, Op. 42 No. 1 (1879) -Org solo

Traditional
Amazing Grace - Sop, Brass Quintet & Org

Miklos Rozsa 1907 – 1995
Overture from "Ben Hur" (1959) - Band solo

Georg Frideric Handel 1685 – 1759
"Hallelujah!" from "Messiah",
HWV 56 (1742) - Band & Org



Captain John Ivan Borg

Director of Music Armed Forces of Malta

Lieutenant John Ivan Borg was born at Hamrun on 23rd May 1964 in a family of musicians. The eldest amongst 3 brothers. Educated at St. Augustine's College.

At the age of 8, he started his musical tuition at The St. Joseph Band Club, Hamrun, studying elementary theory of music under the tutorship of an Ex Royal Malta Artillery Trumpet Major, Mrs. Eddie Suda, and Mrs. Horazio Cachia, whilst the Bb Euphonium under the tutorship of his father Mrs. Lawrence Borg FLCM, LCM (hons).

At the age of 10 was already a full time member with his village band and started his theory lessons under the tutorship of Professor Charles Zammit. He furthered his studies both in practical and theory of music with his father.

In 1984 he obtained the Licentiate in practical of the Royal Schools of Music (LRSM) and The Trinity College of London (LTCL) followed by the Fellowship of the London College of Music (FLCM) on the Bb Euphonium in 1985. Enlisted in the Armed Forces of Malta in Feb 1987 as a Gunner. That same year he obtained the Associate in Theory of the London College of Music. (AmusLCM).

In May 1989 was promoted to Lance Corporal and Corporal in January 1992. Attended 2 Bandmaster ship courses in 1994 and 1995, both held in Italy under the tuition of Mrs Antonio Saccone, former Naples's Orchestra Conductor and Mr. Fulvio Creux, Conductor of The RAI Orchestra respectively. Later in 1995, he conducted The Saint Helen Symphonic Band in The European Symphonic Band Contest held in Valencia, Spain, leading the Band to an honorable 3rd placing.

Lieutenant John Ivan Borg obtained the Fellowship in composition of the London College of Music (FLCM) in 1997.

January 2001 was promoted to Sergeant.

At the beginning of year 2002, he was nominated to attend a Band Leader Course in the United States of America. During his stay in the US, he was promoted to Staff Sergeant in August 2002 following a progress report sent by the Director of the School of Music in Norfolk, Virginia.

In January 2003 was promoted to Warrant Officer Class 1 and appointed Bandmaster of the Armed Forces of Malta Band.

Promoted to Lieutenant in June 2006 following the appointment of Director of Music. Awarded The Long Efficiency Service Medal in July of the same year.

January 2007 was appointed Officer Commanding AFM Band.

Captain John Ivan Borg is married to Rita nee' Muscat and have two children. Lisa Marie and Adrian.



John Aquilina (Organist)

John Aquilina is one of Malta's generation of young organists. A self-taught musician, John was the organist at both St. Nicholas' Church, Siggiewi and at St. Andrew's Scots Church, Valletta between 1988 and 2001. Since June 2001, he has been appointed the official Metropolitan Cathedral Organist at Mdina Cathedral, where he performs regularly on Sundays and Feasts and directs the Metropolitan Cathedral Choir.

John has been privileged to be mentored by Douglas Haas (Director of Music at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Kitchener, Canada), and Nicholas Zelle during their visits to Malta. John has also attended master classes with one of the world's greatest musicians, French organist and composer, Jean Guillou, during May 2009 in France.

He has given a number of solo concerts in Malta and his repertoire includes major organ works by Bach, Franck, Handel, Liszt, Mendelssohn, and Mozart. John's musical activities continue to combine the recreation of works in the organ repertoire (early music, baroque, romantic, and modern) with the spontaneity of improvisation. In fact, he was the first Maltese organist to give an entire concert of organ improvisation. Furthermore, John accompanies Maltese choirs in the execution of great choral works, such as Charpentier's Te Deum and Haydn's Little Organ Mass with 'The New Choral Singers' at Mdina Cathedral and St. John's Co-Cathedral.

He holds a B.Sc. in Computer Science and Mathematics and an M.B.A. (Henley Management College, UK). He is currently the Chief Executive Officer of the Management Efficiency Unit within the Office of the Prime Minister. He is married to Claire nee Dimech and have a son, Benjamin.



Rosabelle Bianchi started her voice studies at the Johann Strauss School of Music under the tuition of soprano Alice Horne and later with mezzo-soprano Claire Massa. Bianchi participated in a number of master-classes in voice organised by the British Kodaly Association in the United Kingdom where she studied voice with Hungarian soprano Paula Somoraj, other master classes in Vienna with Armenian – Austrian soprano Sona Ghazarian, with German baritone Thomas E. Bauer organized by Renaissance Cultural Foundation – Malta and with Canadian baritone Daniel Lichti organized by the Lions Club Sliema Arts Foundation.

She is much sought after as a recitalist and often performs in St. John's Cathedral, Mdina Cathedral, St. Paul's Anglican Cathedral, St. James Cavalier, Sala Isouard as well as the Manoel Theatre. In the summer of 2003 she participated in a one month vocal tour singing with the Mediterranean Youth Choir, touring Italy and France.

Her performances include the 'Ghost Jester' in 'The Maltese Cross' performed in St. Germaine de Pres Theatre in Paris, 'Elisabeth' in 'Elisabeth: or to be a Mann' also by Charles Camilleri and Fr. Peter Seracino Ingloft, Paquette in Bernstein's opera 'Candide', 'Dido' in Purcell's opera 'Dido and Aeneas', Mari in 'Il-Weghida' by Charles Camilleri and Joe Figgieri, the role of the second lady in Mozart's The Magic Flute, Messa de Morti A'4' Voci by F. Azzopardi, Christmas Oratorio by C. Saint-Saens, Te Deum by M. A. Charpentier, Litaniae Laurentanae Beatae Mariae Virginis KV 109, Missa Brevis in C major ("Orgelsolomesse") KV 263 by W. A. Mozart, Christmas Oratorio by J. S. Bach, Liebeslieder Walzer by J. Brahms, Missa Brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo – Mass No. 7 in B flat major by F. J. Haydn and Carlo Diacono's oratorio San Paolo evangelizza i Maltesi. In November 2006 Bianchi participated in 'Rencontres Musicales de Mediterranee' festival in an operatic concert held in the Municipal Theatre of Bastia, Corsica.

Rosabelle graduated from the University of Malta with a BA (Hons) in Music Studies and a PGCE in the teaching of music.

A Brief History of the Armed Forces of Malta Band



The Armed Forces of Malta Band, which was formerly known as the Royal Malta Artillery Band, was established many years ago. The Band had various commitments with British Regiments during their tours of duty in Malta. During the years 1939-1942, owing to war circumstances, the Band was put into suspended animation and its members served in support of the parent Regiment, the Royal Malta Artillery. The Band was reformed in 1943.

When the Royal Malta Artillery, along with the Royal Malta Artillery Band, ceased to form part of the British Army in September 1970, the Maltese Government assumed responsibility for both entities. The Band has a complement of fifty-two musicians under the baton of the Director of Music, Captain John Ivan Borg F.L.C.M., L.R.S.M., L.T.C.C. As a Military Band, its primary role is to fulfill a range of commitments in support of the Armed Forces of Malta on numerous ceremonial occasions. Its wide repertoire ranges from military marches to classic and popular music. For the benefit of the general public, the Band holds frequent displays and programmes in the Island's capital city, Valletta. Concerts are also held in hospitals and similar institutions as an education in music appreciation and to bring enjoyment to those who are otherwise unable to attend. The services of the Band are constantly sought by charitable and philanthropic institutions. The Band prides itself on past memorable performances rendered throughout the island and continues to strive to achieve the highest possible standard.

The Band had various opportunities to participate in massed-band displays with British Military Bands stationed or visiting the Island. Parades, displays and tattoos were the order of the day. In 1966 the Band was invited to participate in a Military Band Festival organized by the British Army of the Rhine at Munchengladbach, Germany, where bands from different nations took part. On other occasions the Band was invited to participate in band programmes in Cyprus and Sicily. More recently the AFM has participated in various editions of the 'Musikschau der Nationen' festival in Bremen, Germany, the 'Festival Intenazionale Banda Militari' in Modena, Italy and the 'International Military Tattoo' in Breda, Holland. It was also part of the International Tattoo, held in Brussels, marking the 30th Anniversary of the Rome Treaty, as well as part of the 12th International Tattoo marking the birthday of the beautiful city of St Petersburg, held in Russia. Lately, it has participated in Military Festival during the 40th Anniversary of the Libyan Revolution in Libya.

The Band President is Colonel Martin Bowdin and the Band Secretary is Captain Joseph Cachia. The Commander, Armed Forces of Malta is Brigadier Carmel Vassallo.

