

LITERATURE FROM MALTA

The title 'LITERATURE FROM MALTA' is rendered in a bold, white, sans-serif font, split across two lines. The text is set against a solid blue background. Interspersed among the letters are several decorative elements: orange and pink abstract shapes resembling stylized glasses or frames, and thin white outlines of similar shapes. These elements are layered over the text, creating a modern, graphic design.

FOREIGN RIGHTS CATALOGUE 2024

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THE NATIONAL BOOK COUNCIL MALTA

DEDICATED TO SERVING THE MALTESE BOOK INDUSTRY

Who we are | We are the National Book Council of Malta, a public autonomous entity operating under the Ministry for Education, dedicated to serving the Maltese book industry and providing essential services for authors, editors, illustrators, publishers and booksellers.

What we do | The National Book Council of Malta is actively involved in multiple activities, ranging from large-scale international and national events to smaller-scale initiatives. Our flagship events include the Malta Book Festival and the National Book Prize; we also organise various events such as the University Campus Book Festival. We administer public lending rights payments and handle ISBN & ISMN. We act as literary agents for authors and publishers at foreign book fairs, and facilitate translations and export projects.



www.ktieb.org.mt

The Maltese Book Industry | The Maltese publishing industry is characterised by several major players, which oversee the entire supply chain from publication to distribution. Supported by government initiatives and a vibrant community of literary professionals, the industry is committed to promoting diversity and supporting emerging talent, contributing to the cultural enrichment of the nation.

Despite being a small language community, Malta has implemented various support schemes aimed at promoting literary diversity, encouraging the creation of new Maltese literature, and ensuring access to a wide range of literary works.

The literature of Malta boasts a unique feature: since its earliest text in 1450, it has been written in no less than six languages. Although Maltese and English only became Malta's official languages in 1934, Maltese has transformed from an oral means of communication to a national written language in just over 80 years. Today, Maltese serves as a signifier of national pride, establishing a truly Maltese identity.

THE MALTESE LITERARY SYSTEM

The National Book Council plays a vital role in brokering publishing deals, providing translation funds, and facilitating direct-export funding, supporting authors and foreign publishers releasing translated Maltese literature.

State Support for Literature | The National Book Council provides direct and indirect support to various segments of the literary community, fostering innovation and equitable distribution of resources.

Support Schemes | Government-sponsored support schemes administered by entities like the National Book Council of Malta and Arts Council Malta provide grants to publishers, writers, editors, illustrators and translators, stimulating literary creation and supporting practitioners in their artistic endeavours.

Government-Sponsored Remuneration Schemes | The National Book Council implements remuneration schemes such as the Public Lending Right scheme, compensating authors and rights holders for the use of their works in public libraries, thereby supporting literary creation and ensuring fair compensation for creators. The National Book Council collaborates with Arts Council Malta, which supports cultural initiatives and allocates grants to practitioners across the country, fostering artistic innovation and promoting Maltese culture.

Literary Festivals | The Malta Book Festival serves as a premier platform for celebrating Maltese literature, showcasing the nation's vibrant literary scene, and highlighting diverse voices shaping cultural identity. The 2024 edition will take place on 6–10 November.

MALTA BOOK FUND

TO SUPPORT AND FINANCE BOOK PROJECTS

AT A GLANCE

Annual budget **€120,000**
Maximum grant per beneficiary **€5,000**
Closing Date **24 May 2024**
Results announcement **23 July 2024**

Scan the QR code for more information



Publishing Grants for New Books | For original works of fiction, poetry, drama, biographies, literary nonfiction, graphic novels, academic and scholarly books.

Budget **€50,000 annually**
Maximum grant per beneficiary **€5,000**
Closing Date **24 May 2024**
Results announcement **23 July 2024**

Publishing Grants for New Editions of Out-of-Print Works | To subsidise new editions of Maltese books that are out of print.

Budget **€10,000 annually**
Maximum grant per beneficiary **€5,000**

Translation Grants | To boost the export and international dissemination of Maltese publications. To support Maltese language translators in bringing international works to a Maltese-reading public.

FOREIGN MARKET – Translations of Maltese books into foreign languages

Budget **€40,000 annually**
Maximum grant per beneficiary **€5,000**

LOCAL MARKET – Translations into Maltese

Budget **€15,000 annually**
Maximum grant per beneficiary **€5,000**

Book Translation Pitch Grants | To support literary translators in their development as advocates for international literature and to pitch a sample of their work for publication abroad.

Budget **€5,000 annually**
Maximum grant per beneficiary **€500**



EDE BOOKS

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Ede Books is a Maltese publishing venture that produces short runs of books, chapbooks and periodical publications of predominantly visually-rich content, touching upon art, poetry, photography and urban culture.



VARJAZZJONIJIET TAS-SKIET (VARIATIONS OF SILENCE)

Nadia Mifsud

Genre **Poetry** | Publication Year **2021** | Pages **80**

Nadia Mifsud was born and raised in Malta, but has been living in France since 1998. She has published three poetry books, one chapbook, one novel and a collection of short stories. Two-time winner of the National Book Prize for poetry, she became Malta's third Poet Laureate in 2022.

Varjazzjonijiet tas-Skiet is a real tour de force in terms of imagery and its mastery of the Maltese language. This collection explores the different facets of silence in a voice that is unapologetically intimate. Written in free verse yet taut with emotion, these poems are a skilful account of love, longing/belonging, loss, fear and solitude. Many of the texts in this handbound collection read as a visual, sensory experience as Mifsud playfully experiments with typography and reversible poems.

This book is like *Four Quartets: Poetry in the Pandemic* by Kristina Marie Darling & Jeffrey Levine (Tupelo Press, 2020); *A Silence You Can Carry* by Hibbaq Osman (Out Spoken Press, 2015); *The Peace of Wild Things* by Wendell Berry (Penguin, 2018); *Shine, Darling* by Ella Frears (ORB, 2020).



Varjazzjonijiet tas-Skiet is Nadia Mifsud's third poetry collection, including texts written prior to and during the first Covid outbreak. Silence in these poems is multifaceted, multi-layered, intimate and collective. There are early morning silences and ones we inhabit late at night. There are soft, comfortable silences that bring us together, arresting any attempt to speak. There are silences we wrap ourselves in when everything becomes too much. Sometimes, silence seeps through us – thick, unwanted and without warning. No silence is like another.

★ *Varjazzjonijiet tas-Skiet* was awarded the National Book Prize for poetry in 2022.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



RIGHTS HOLDER AND CONTACT DETAILS

Name **Nadia Mifsud** | Email **fessuda76@yahoo.co.uk** | Phone **+336 28040800**

Rights Availability **Worldwide** | Excerpt in Maltese **Available**

Translated Excerpt in English **Available** | Translator **Miriam Calleja**

ERBGHIN JUM (FORTY DAYS)

Antoine Cassar

Genre **Poetry** | Publication Year **2021** | Pages **152**

Antoine Cassar is a London-born Maltese poet, translator and editor. He writes in Maltese and English, mostly about maps and borders, cities and language, walking and mental health. Antoine's poetry has featured on *Literary Hub*, RN Books & Arts (Australia), France 3 TV, Radio Nacional de España, SFR2 Kultur (Switzerland), and RTV Slovenija, among others. www.antoinecassar.net

Beyond the themes of walking and insomnia, the poetry of *Erbghin Jum* will resonate in particular with readers who may have experienced childhood trauma related to domestic violence. Launched in 2017 as a concert-reading, this book took many Maltese readers by surprise, for the author's "heart-wrenching account of pains from his youth resurfacing with a vengeance in his adulthood". Cassar's poetry has long been identified for its "creative energy, audacity and eclecticism, with the joys of poetic creation" (Adrian Grima, *Versopolis*). The English self-translation is edited by literary translator Albert Gatt.

This book is like *Way More Than Luck* by Ben Wilkinson (Seren Books, 2019); *Playing Monster: Seiche* by Diana Atherian (1913 Press, 2017); *Indictus* by Natalie Eilbert (Noemi Press, 2018).



In *Erbghin Jum* Antoine Cassar takes readers on a visceral journey through the primal act of walking. Each daytime chapter recounts a walk – real or metaphorical – exploring landscapes of reflection, physicality and sensory pleasure. Nighttime chapters delve into the shadows of childhood, wrestling with madness and paranoia. Through this poignant pilgrimage, Cassar unearths hope, healing and profound understanding.

★ Winner of National Book Prize 2018; shortlisted for European Poet of Freedom award 2020.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



RIGHTS HOLDER AND CONTACT DETAILS

Name **Antoine Cassar** | Email **antoinecassar@gmail.com** | Phone **+356 99713157**

Rights Availability **Worldwide except Poland** | Excerpt in Maltese **Available**

Translated Excerpt in English **Available** | Translator **Antoine Cassar**

BOOKS BY LORANNE VELLA

Brussels-based Maltese writer, translator and performer Lorraine Vella is the co-author of the award-winning fantasy novels *The Fiddien Trilogy*. She is the author of two eco-fiction novels – *MagnaTM Mater* and *Rokit* (winner of the National Book Prize, 2018) – and the short story collection *mill-bieb 'il gewwa* (published in English translation as *what will it take for me to leave*, Praspas Press, 2021). Besides *Marta Marta*, her most recent works include the Maltese translation of Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children*. She is co-founder and co-editor of the Maltese online literary journal *Aphroconfusio* (aphroconfusio.mt).

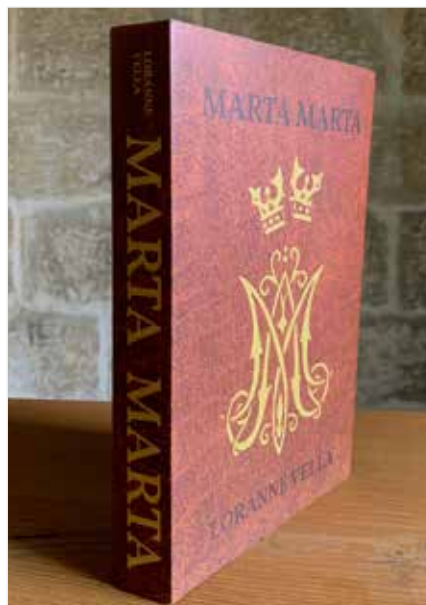
MARTA MARTA

Lorraine Vella

Genre **Novel / Literary Fiction**
Publication Year **2022** | Pages **380**

Marta Marta is an experimental novel in Maltese that symbolically addresses key themes and preoccupations in contemporary Maltese life, providing the groundwork for political and cultural discussion that enriches the discourse in Malta on topics such as abortion, feminism, gender identity and the prevalence of Catholic hegemony. The novel threads the line between the disorienting and the familiar, ensuring uniqueness and surprise while never dissolving into obscurity. It is a mythological space in which contemporary Maltese mores are allowed to take root and submit themselves for dissection and exploration.

This book is like *Ada's Realm* by Sharon Dodua Otoo, tr. Jon Cho-Polizzii (MacLehose Press, 2023); *The Days of Abandonment* by Elena Ferrante, tr. Ann Goldstein (Europa Editions, 2006); *Women Talking* by Miriam Toews (Faber, 2018).



Marta Marta is a novel about gender oppression, told in five voices. Maria Dolores and Immacolata Concetta, the owners of the House of Pleasure, assume the roles of Mothers to the young women who live there too. Damjan, the third voice, fluidly transitions from one gender to another, from the self-isolating Damjan to Jeanne, who harbours an ambition to become the next girl to crown the Virgin during the first of May ritual. Through the feminist Nathaline, we learn about the different waves of feminist activism in Belgium and France, and their complete absence in conservative Malta. The fifth voice belongs to the 400-year-old house itself. Through Nathaline, she understands that the time has come for her windows and doors to shatter wide open to reveal what's inside to the outside world.

★ Winner of Malta National Book Prize 2023

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



RIGHTS HOLDER AND CONTACT DETAILS

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Rights Availability **Worldwide** | Excerpt in Maltese **Available**
Translated Excerpt in English **Available** | Translator **Kat Storage**

MILL-BIEB 'IL ĠEWWA (WHAT WILL IT TAKE FOR ME TO LEAVE)

Lorraine Vella

Genre **Short Stories/Literary Fiction**
Publication Year **2019** | Pages **144**

Both the Maltese version (finalist for the National Book Prize 2020) and the English translation of this work (*what will it take for me to leave*, Praspas Press, 2021, shortlisted for the Society of Authors' TA First Translation Prize), are bestselling titles in Malta and the UK. This collection has demonstrated its potential for success and would be well-suited for other markets, particularly in Italy and France where books with similar qualities are in demand.

This book is like *Sweet Home* by Wendy Erskine (Stinging Fly Press, 2018).



The title of this collection is a Maltese expression which literally means 'from the front door inwards' and refers to the idea that what happens at home stays at home. Vella's stories open the front door a crack and invite outsiders to take a glimpse at several characters' secret realities. Here we encounter individuals who are busy brushing their teeth, taking a shower, drinking a cup of coffee or combing their hair while their mind is elsewhere. Elsewhere is at times a memory, at others it's a leap forward in time, or a comforting mental visit to some other place.

★ Lorraine Vella has won the National Book Prize seven times for her original writing and translation work. *Rokit* has won English PEN's flagship translation award for 2024.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR, PUBLISHED BY MERLIN PUBLISHERS

ROKIT (ROCKET)

Genre **Fantasy/Sci-fi/Eco-Fiction** | Publication Year **2017** | Pages **416**
Eco-fiction, speculative, photography, Maltese dystopia, timeless storytelling

This book is like *Greenwood* by Michael Christie (Scribe, 2019); *Gun Island* by Amitav Ghosh (John Murray, 2019); *Exit West* by Mohsin Hamid (Hamish Hamilton, 2017).

For more information, rights availability and excerpts, scan the QR code below.



RIGHTS HOLDER AND CONTACT DETAILS

Name **Lorraine Vella** | Email loranne.vella@gmail.com | Phone **+32 488480354**
World English Language Rights holder (translation rights)

Name **Praspas Press** | Email info@praspas.com

Rights Availability **All languages except for World English Language Rights (sub-rights can be licensed, ex. American version, translation rights, etc.)** | Excerpt in Maltese **Available**

Translated Excerpt in English **Available** | Translator EN **Kat Storage** | Translator IT **Virginia Monteforte**





FARAXA PUBLISHING

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www.faraxabooks.com

Faraxa Publishing house takes pride in publishing a variety of genres – children's books, academic works, biographies, poetry, novels, short stories, drama and translations with a particular focus on translating brilliant foreign works into Maltese.

11 | Faraxa Publishing

THE OBSCURE

Wesley Azzopardi

Genre **Novel/Adult Horror**

Publication Year **2023** | Pages **314**

Wesley Azzopardi is a student at the University of Malta, presently reading for a B.Sc. (Hons.) in Mathematics and Statistics & Operations Research. His interest in writing commenced when he won a short story competition organised by the primary school he attended. *The Obscure* is his first novel.

The Obscure is an adult horror novel by a young debut author, perfect for readers worldwide who love a thrilling read. Through its dual timeline, it explores the repercussions on an individual after society persists in harassing and shunning them. It is ultimately a villain origin story, which explores the emergence of a deadly monster determined to avenge himself against those who hurt him.

This book is like *The Silence of the Lambs* by Thomas Harris (Penguin, 1988); *The Alienist* by Caleb Carr (Random House, 1994); *Shine, Darling* by Ella Frears (ORB, 2020).



A diabolical teenager is on the loose in the heart of Ohio. Over the course of five years, the once paradisiacal Holmes County witnesses bloodshed, gore and mass slaughters that will change its history forever. Guilty of his own wrongdoings and having lived through a traumatic childhood, Orion Pittsburgh becomes the canonical definition of a cold-hearted, ruthless murderer, the worst of his kind. And nobody can ever collar the monster he's become.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



RIGHTS HOLDER AND CONTACT DETAILS

Name **Joanne Micallef** | Email faraxapublishing@gmail.com | Phone **+356 99820157**

Rights Availability **Worldwide** | Excerpt in English **Available**

RICHIE THE CASEWORKER

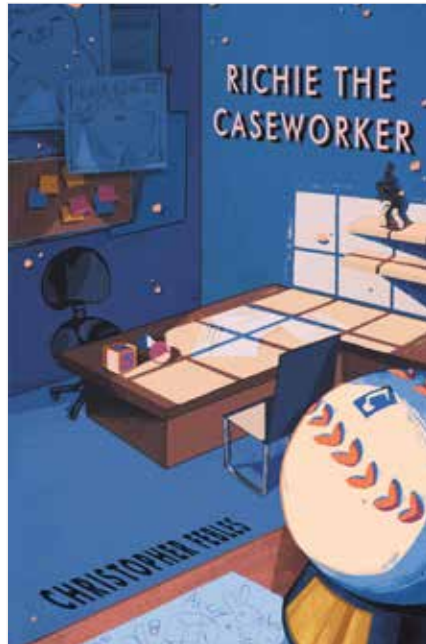
Christopher Febles

Genre **Novel/Literary Fiction**
Publication Year **2022** | Pages **400**

A Yankees fan through and through, Christopher Febles has been working in the social services industry for over thirty years. He lives in Brooklyn and is currently a guidance counsellor at Regis High School, among other things.

Richie the Caseworker is a poignant coming-of-age novel, perfect for anyone leaving college and still trying to find their place in the world. Christopher Febles's debut novel transcends continents with its ever-valuable message of hope.

This book is like *The Pursuit of Happiness* by Chris Gardner (Harper Collins, 2006); *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman (Sceptre Books, 2015).



Richie McGinn's life is as unglamorous as it gets. Working a dead-end job delivering pizzas in the streets of Yonkers, his only joy comes from watching baseball with his brother – whenever they can afford it. But when he goes out with a delivery to a homeless shelter, Richie starts to feel like maybe there might be other options out there for him. When Pizza Palace closes down, it turns out to be just what he needs to take the plunge. But becoming a caseworker ends up being a completely different ballgame, one he has no idea how to play.

KNOCKOUT SAM

Doris Schembri, Naomi Gatt (ill.)

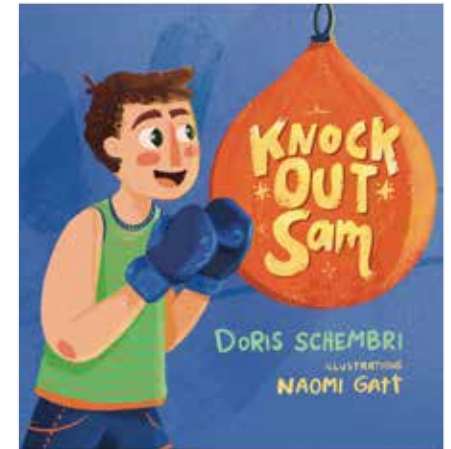
Genre **Children's Literature**
Publication Year **2022** | Pages **32**

Doris Schembri is the author of a number of children's books. After fourteen years of working in the kindergarten sector, she became a primary school teacher who fondly enjoys storytelling with children.

Naomi Gatt is a graphic designer and freelance illustrator, focusing on creating artwork for children's literature.

With a global increase in awareness regarding neurodivergence, *Knockout Sam* is a beautiful way to introduce both children and parents to the topic of ADHD, in a light-hearted and accessible format. Doris Schembri has crafted the perfect book for parents and children alike who might be coming to terms with a diagnosis.

This book is like *My Many Colored Days* by Dr. Seuss (Red Fox, 2001).



Knockout Sam is the story of how Sam finally managed to control his anger and express it constructively without hurting himself or others. This sing-song, rhyming story, illustrated with colourful pictures, describes young Sam's experience with ADHD. It is a book full of helpful ideas that may teach children how to positively express their thoughts and feelings when they feel upset, irritated or angry.

BY THE SAME ILLUSTRATOR

WARDA ŻŻUR LIL NANNITHA / WARDA VISITS HER GRANDMOTHER

Louise Chircop, Naomi Gatt (ill.)

Genre **Children's Literature** | Publication Year **2022** | Pages **64**

Multilingual journey, family bonds, cultural education, multiculturalism, ethnic identity

For more information, rights availability and excerpts, scan the QR code below.



To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



RIGHTS HOLDER AND CONTACT DETAILS

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Rights Availability **Worldwide** | Excerpt in English **Available**



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Rights Availability **Worldwide** | Excerpt in English **Available**

IN TUNE WITH CITY LIFE

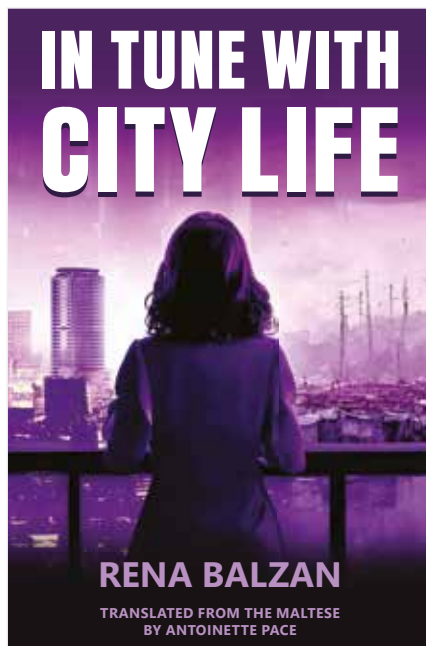
Rena Balzan

Genre **Novel/Literary Fiction**
Publication Year **2022** | Pages **340**

Rena Balzan is an author, poet and scientist. She has been described as "one of the first Maltese women to lead a successful career in scientific research", and has penned numerous psychological novels and poetry collections.

In Tune with City Life is a feminist novel with themes that will resonate with female readers anywhere. With an accessible writing style and topics that remain prevalent in Western societies to this day, *In Tune with City Life* is an empowering novel that emphasises the importance of following your heart and not letting societal standards stop you from reaching for the stars.

This book is like *Where'd You Go, Bernadette* by Maria Semple (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2012); *Little Fires Everywhere* by Celeste Ng (Little Brown, 2017).



Iris, a woman whose life is uprooted from relative conformity, plunges into life-changing experiences. Iris's reminiscing about her life reveals her stream of thoughts as she continually tries to adapt to changing circumstances. In this novel of contrasts, Iris navigates through two polar opposite cities, Alfa and Gamma. Despite the social differences in both cities, the gender issue is prevalent throughout the novel. As Iris progresses along the pathway to maturity and self-realisation, her emancipated consciousness is explored in terms of her expectations of the changing social role of women in the world today.

★ Rena Balzan was awarded the National Book Prize 2021 Lifetime Achievement Award.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



RIGHTS HOLDER AND CONTACT DETAILS

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Rights Availability **Worldwide** | Excerpt in English **Available**

THE UPBRINGING - FABLES FROM MIRAGASIA BOOK ONE

M. A. Fenech

Genre **YA Fantasy**
Publication Year **2019** | Pages **344**

Maryanne Pace, known by her pen name M. A. Fenech, is a lover of learning, writing and, of course, books. She has studied Linguistics and Italian at the University of Malta, and is also an avid sportsperson, with a particular interest in table tennis.

With the rise of BookTok and Bookstagram, the fantasy genre has become a favourite among many readers worldwide. Moreover, the continuing search for diverse tales from around the globe has also infiltrated this genre. For this reason, the magic system M. A. Fenech has created in the mystical world of Miragasia would interest many a reader looking to discover fiction from new countries, as it is linguistically unique, being imbued with the Maltese lexicon. M. A. Fenech presents a wonderful fantasy story in *The Upbringing*, perfect for today's youth.

This book is like The works of Kristin Cashore and Leigh Bardugo.



The Upbringing is the first book in the Fables from Miragasia, a young adult fantasy series. *The Upbringing* is set in a land of evil magical overlords where, imprisoned within the confines of a magical castle, young Ewl struggles to understand herself and those around her, as her strange powers try to emerge to the surface.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



RIGHTS HOLDER AND CONTACT DETAILS

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Rights Availability **Worldwide** | Excerpt in English **Available**

HORIZONS

HORIZONS

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Horizons has become one of the main book publishers on the island of Malta, winning the National Book Prize in different book categories over the years. They publish mainly novels, short stories, poetry, Melitensia and children's literature. They believe that through books and reading they are helping to create a space where independent thinking, free expression and creativity grow. In addition, they have a corporate social responsibility to extend their role beyond the books they publish. They build relationships with their authors. They are close to the readers and the market, and its challenges.

PASSPORT TO VICE

Matthew Vella

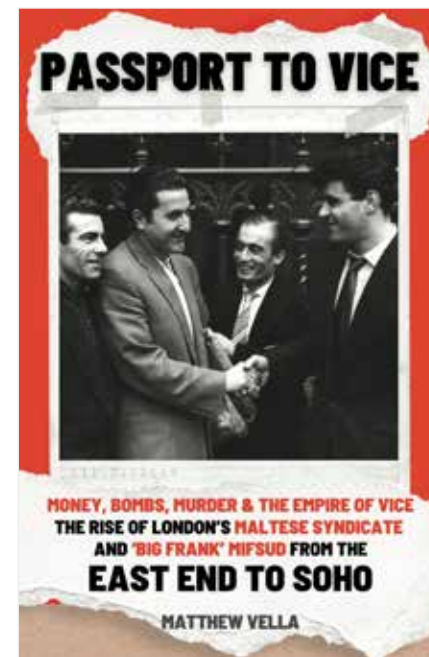
Genre **Nonfiction/True Crime**

Publication Year **2022** | Pages **300**

Matthew Vella is a journalist and a crime reporter who has spent twenty years in the journalistic trade. He is the former editor of the national newspaper *MaltaToday*.

Matthew Vella's detailed historical research unveils the Maltese Syndicate's world of prostitution, porn and gambling in the heart of London's Soho. With newly-released documents from the Maltese and British national archives, the police statements of the Syndicate men, confidential police memos, and the most extensive search of British newspapers from the mid-1930s right up to the 1980s, *Passport to Vice* sets out to be a feat in true crime.

This book is like *Underworld: the definitive history of Britain's organised crime* by Duncan Campbell (Ebury Press, 2020); *Gangland Soho* by James Morton (Piatkus, 2008); *Legacy: Gangsters, Corruption, and the London Olympics* by Michael Gillard (Bloomsbury, 2019).



In *Passport To Vice* crime reporter Matthew Vella uncovers the true history of the Maltese Syndicate, an ethnic 'mafia' which held sway in London's Soho red-light district for over 20 years, cornering the vice trade and forging alliances with top criminals of the 1950s and 1960s, until its rout by Scotland Yard.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



RIGHTS HOLDER AND CONTACT DETAILS

Name **Matthew Vella** | Email **matthewvella99@gmail.com**

Rights Availability **Global rights and digital prints available** | Excerpt in English **Available**

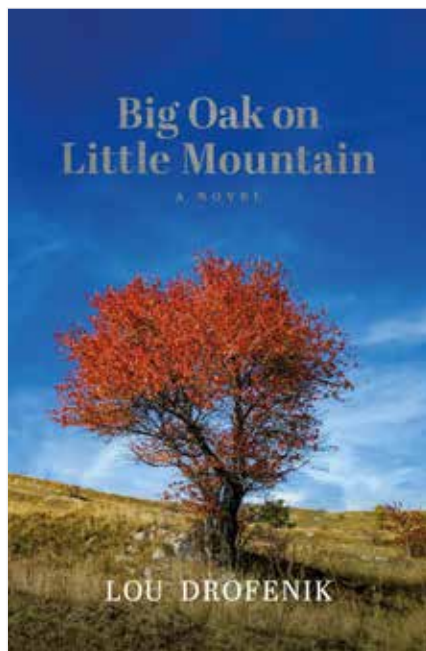
NOVELS IN ENGLISH BY HORIZONS

**BIG OAK ON
LITTLE MOUNTAIN****Lou Drofenik**Genre **Novel/Literary Fiction**
Publication Year **2021** | Pages **350**

Lou Drofenik is a Maltese–Australian author and historian. She is the author of 12 novels, short stories, poems and various academic papers. *Big Oak on Little Mountain* was shortlisted for the Malta National Book Prize 2022. Her work has been translated into Norwegian, Arabic and Chinese.

Big Oak on Little Mountain is a robust novel that explores the feelings of exile and the often fatal consequences of individual choices in times of conflict. The theme of yearning for one's place of birth is explored through multiple characters, particularly in relation to the central character, Eda Letnar, a fourteen-year-old Slovenian girl who is forced to live away from the mountain she loves. *Big Oak on Little Mountain* is a powerful and emotional novel, which depicts the lives of a people faced with an indomitable enemy determined to destroy them and their culture.

This book is like *Betty* by Tiffany McDaniel (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2021).



The central theme of *Big Oak on Little Mountain*, written by internationally published author Lou Drofenik, is the existential yearning for one's homeland in times of war and exile. Set during the rise of fascism and Nazism in Europe and the ensuing occupation of Slovenia by German and Italian armies, this novel tells the story of a people caught in the maelstrom of a brutal and bloody conflict.

★ Lou Drofenik was awarded the National Book Prize for Novels three times.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR codes.



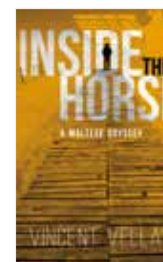
RIGHTS HOLDER AND CONTACT DETAILS

Name **Lou Drofenik** | Email **loudrof@hotmail.com** | Phone **+356 99070869**
Rights Availability **Global rights and digital prints available** | Excerpt in English **Available**

INSIDE THE HORSE**Vincent Vella**Genre **Novel/Historical Fiction**
Publication Year **2021** | Pages **162**

Vincent Vella, a distinguished writer in English and Maltese, boasts numerous accolades, including regional wins in the BBC World Service Radio Playwriting Competition. Vella's literary repertoire spans novels, plays and short stories, captivating audiences with his rich storytelling and profound insights into human nature. A number of his plays have been staged or broadcast in Malta and abroad. *Moving Mountains* (2018) was co-funded under the Creative Europe Programme as part of the European Showcase of Collective Plays Project. A collection of his short stories was published in Slovene (2008).

Step into the world of Vincent Vella's protagonist, a captivating embodiment of resilience and intrigue. *Inside the Horse* offers a fresh perspective on wartime espionage and the struggle for personal redemption, weaving a narrative that will leave readers on the edge of their seats. Experience the complexities of loyalty, disillusionment and survival in this gripping historical fiction masterpiece.



This book is like *The Harry Palmer* novels of Len Deighton; *Maurizio de Giovanni's* crime quartet.

Embark on a riveting journey alongside the protagonist, the son of a Malta aristocrat and a sergeant, turned party thug, soldier of fortune and spy. From Fascist Italy to the Spanish Civil War and an English political camp, witness his struggle to break free from his own web of Fascist ties. As a political chameleon, he adapts effortlessly, yet remains friendless, fascinated by power and becoming a willing agent for the Regime, spying on Malta. Throughout, he keenly observes people but struggles to form meaningful connections.



Name **Vincent Vella** | Email **vincentvella650@gmail.com / vincent.vella@um.edu.mt**
Rights Availability **Global rights and digital prints available** | Excerpt in English **Available**



Name **David Samuel Hudson** | Email **davidsamuelhudson@gmail.com** | Phone **+356 79919853**
Rights Availability **Global rights and digital prints available** | Excerpt (English and Maltese) **Available**
Translated Excerpt in English only **Available** | Translator **David Samuel Hudson**

M**David Samuel Hudson**Genre **Novel/Literary Fiction**
Publication Year **2024** | Pages **204**

David Samuel Hudson completed his MA in Creative Writing at Bath Spa University. His novel manuscript was shortlisted for the Janklow and Nesbit prizes. In 2018, he received the national journalism prize for his investigative work. A Book Prize adjudicator in 2020, he lectures on creative writing at the Malta Society of Arts and the University of Malta. His fiction has won prizes in the UK and the US, and featured in prestigious publications like *Chicago Review of Books*, *Business Weekly* and *Litro* among others.

M is an exploration of postcolonial identity, describing the aspirations of millennial artists in an island country seemingly isolated from the English-speaking world. *M* is the first novel of its kind in Malta since it examines a writer's life, including in terms of bilingualism and language.



This book is like *The Sense of an Ending* by Julian Barnes (Vintage, 2001); *Normal People* by Sally Rooney (Faber and Faber, 2019); *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*

M is a coming-of-age novella by award-winning writer David Samuel Hudson. Damian believes he is the best writer of his generation and on the cusp of completing the novel that truly defines his home country, Malta. He forms a group of like-minded writers with the sole purpose of sabotaging their work, only to end up falling in love with one of them. *M* is a literary work about identity, ambition and first loves.

by Stephen Chbosky (*Simon & Schuster*, 2009); *Eating People is Wrong* by Malcolm Bradbury (Picador, 2012).

EVERYONE BUT FAJZA

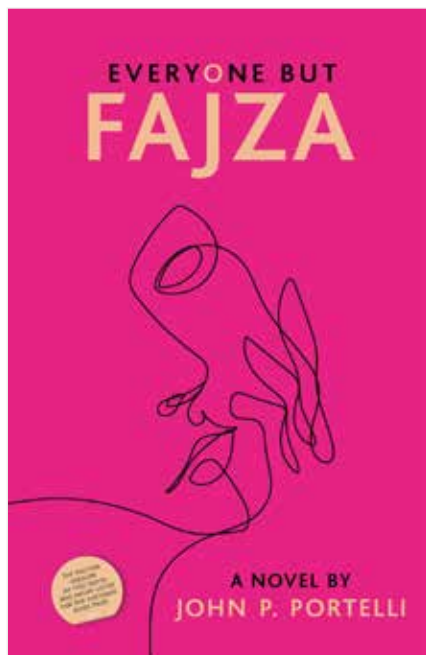
John P. Portelli

Genre **Novel/Literary Fiction**
Publication Year **2021** | Pages **158**

John Peter Portelli is a professor emeritus, University of Toronto. He is the author of 11 academic books, eight poetry collections, two collections of short stories and a novel. He has participated in literary festivals in Canada, Europe and North Africa. His work has been translated into nine languages. Six of his books have been shortlisted for awards.

Everyone But Fajza is a postmodern novel that explores migrant lives; aspects like racism, identity, multiculturalism and globalisation are at its heart. The short novel incorporates direct description with deep insight into the characters' states of mind. Having multiple interpretations and perspectives on the titular character, the novel becomes a series of multiple character studies. Although set in Canada and Malta, the topics dealt with have a universal attraction.

This book is like *In the Unlikely Event* by Judy Blume (Vintage, 2005); *The Godfather* by Mario Puzo (1969); *The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver (Faber, 1998).



Everyone But Fajza was originally published in Maltese (*Kulhadd Barra Fajza*) in 2018, and in English in 2021. It is a literary suspense thriller involving two immigrant Maltese families in Toronto. Fajza is in a serious accident that lands her in hospital. The novel is an exploration of perspective with eight characters each contributing a chapter and offering their own account of how they were somehow involved with Fajza. They each conclude that they are somewhat guilty of what happened to her. It is a novel that explores truth, identity, and nationhood as it meanders between the Canadian cosmopolis and Mediterranean roots.

BY THE SAME TRANSLATOR

IL-WIĊĊ L-IEHOR (THE OTHER FACE) Gorg Peresso

Genre **Novel/Literary Fiction** | Publication Year **2021** | Pages **162**
Subconscious journey, music and art, intrigue, award-winning Maltese novel

For more information, rights availability and excerpts, scan the QR code below.



RIGHTS HOLDER AND CONTACT DETAILS

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Rights Availability **Global rights and digital prints available**

Excerpt in English **Available** | Translator **Irene Mangion**

THABBAT XTAQTEK: DJARJU MILL: EREMITAĠĠ (I WISH YOU HAD KNOCKED: A HERMIT'S DIARY)

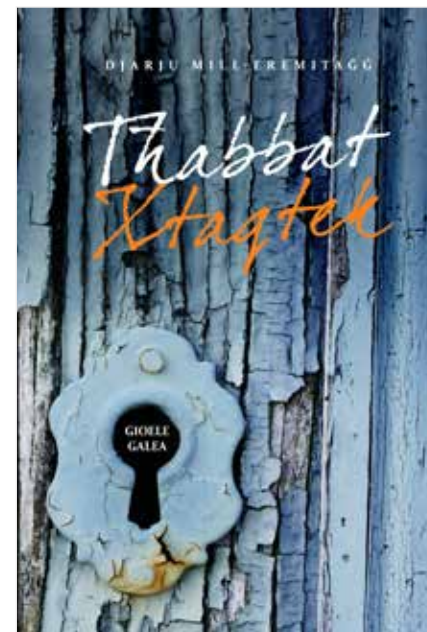
Gioele Galea

Genre **Nonfiction/Memoir**
Publication Year **2018** | Pages **246**

Gioele Galea is a Maltese novelist and poet. For fourteen years he led a solitary life in a hermitage. He has published seven collections of poetry and two prize-winning hybrid memoirs. In 2020 Galea released the prose follow-up to *Thabbat Xtaqtek*, titled *In-Nar Ghandu Isem: Noti minn Paġna Intima* (Horizons). Galea advocates for a revitalised Maltese literary scene focused on revision and renewal, considering it literature's ultimate goal.

This work is witness to an uncompromising journey towards depths where bareness is as overwhelming as much as it is essential. The prose of the memoir is more than diaristic; it is a subtle and elegant narrative depicting a persona in search of God, experiencing the despair of doubt. This is a genre-fluid, open-minded text that does not take refuge in the dogma of religion. It will be of interest to anyone seeking spiritual works that are simultaneously autobiographical and reflective, factual and contemplative.

This book is like *The Seven Storey Mountain* (1948) and *A Search for Solitude: Pursuing the Monk's True Life: The Journals of Thomas Merton* by Thomas Merton (HarperOne, 2009).



In this memoir the male narrator explores human complexity and spiritual yearning. Set in a remote Italian hermitage, his narrative reveals the struggle for faith amid solitude. Through evocative prose and elemental imagery, Galea offers a peek into the conflicted humanity of a soul devoted to prayer. This genre-bending text, devoid of religious dogma, presents a philosophical attempt at dialogue with the divine. It serves as a transformative meditation on the human condition.

★ Gioele Galea was awarded the National Book Prize 2018 Best Emergent Writer, and in 2021 he won in the novel category for *In-Nar Ghandu Isem: Noti minn Paġna Intima*.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



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Rights Availability **Global rights and digital prints available** | Excerpt in Maltese **Available**

Translated Excerpt in English **Available** | Translator **Aaron Aquilina**



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Kotba Calleja is a publisher and producer specialising in handmade books and paper products, reflecting a deep love for paper as a versatile material. Every product is meticulously crafted in Malta, showcasing unique qualities stemming from handmade processes. Their publications prioritise experimentation, offering fresh imagery and nuances that define contemporary Maltese prose and poetry, while representing both established and emerging writers.

23 | Kotba Calleja

THE BELL

Maria Grech Ganado

Genre **Poetry** | Publication Year **2023** | Pages **69**

Maria Grech Ganado, Malta's esteemed first Poet Laureate, has earned accolades for her literary contributions. Recognised by the National Book Prize for lifetime achievements and four of her seven poetry collections, she was Malta's first female full-time lecturer at the University of Malta. With her collection *Framed* (Merlin Publishers, 2018), Grech Ganado convinced one of Malta's most prominent publishing houses to release a poetry collection for the first time in its long history, setting a healthy precedent for a genre previously deemed 'unprofitable'. Her previous work has been translated into 12 languages. She was awarded the National Order of Merit in 2000, and in 2023 a doctorate Honoris Causa by the University of Malta for her contribution to Maltese Literature.

Maria Grech Ganado's *The Bell* presents a compelling fusion of contemporary Maltese literature and universal themes, ideal for international audiences seeking profound insights. Her collection offers a unique perspective on life's complexities, ensuring relevance and appeal across cultural boundaries. This is the latest work by Malta's first Poet Laureate and one of the foremost feminist writers emerging from the Maltese islands.

This book is like *To 2040* by Jorie Graham (Carcenet, 2023); *Dark Islands* by Tom Chivers (Test Centre, 2015); *Shine, Darling* by Ella Frears (ORB, 2020).



Maria Grech Ganado's *The Bell* offers a series of poems reflecting life's complexities, echoing the 'language question' of her upbringing and meditating on the great flux of life in all its darkness and light and, more pertinently, her personal frustration with words, which sometimes fail to communicate at all. This collection delves into darker, more fatalistic themes than her previous poetry, encapsulating the essence of time and humanity through poetic articulation. A testament to her literary prowess, the collection promises readers a journey into the depths of human existence, framed within the timeless symbol of the bell, summoning moods and imagery of love and loneliness, faith and celebration.

★ In 2015 Maria Grech Ganado was granted the National Book Prize Lifetime Achievement Award for her contribution to literature in the Maltese and English languages; in 2019 the title of Poet Laureate; and four National Book Prize Awards for poetry.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



RIGHTS HOLDER AND CONTACT DETAILS

Name **Kotba Calleja/Maria Grech Ganado** | Email info@kotbacalleja.net | Phone **+336 99236238**

Rights Availability **Worldwide** | Excerpt in English **Available**

TITA TMISS L-ART (TITA TOUCHES THE GROUND)

Clare Azzopardi, Glen Calleja,
Naomi Gatt (ill.)

Genre **Children's Literature**
Publication Year **2022** | Pages **36**

Clare Azzopardi is an award-winning Maltese author, educator and literary translator. Besides penning short stories, novels and plays, Azzopardi has become a household name among young readers, with works for children that marked a significant departure from the traditional form and content of the genre.

Glen Calleja is a writer, editor, book artist and cultural manager. His literary work and publications include various poetry projects, works of prose fiction as well as non-fiction work. He is co-founder of Fondazzjoni HELA and Studio Solipsis.

Naomi Gatt is a graphic designer and freelance illustrator, focusing on creating artwork for children's literature.

This book follows a group of children living in an adult-free world. They live on cranes and have never touched the ground. It is about rising water levels and unruly weather, and one girl's courage to do something about their dire situation. It's about the environment with an underlying narrative about empowerment and social solidarity.

This book is like *Floodland* by Marcus Sedgwick (ages 9–11, Orion, 2000).



Tita has never touched the ground. She lives on a crane with her brother and other children. She wishes she could touch the ground one day, and she also wishes that the rain could stop. But what could she do? Can she ever make the rain and the storms stop? This is a dystopian story for children between 8 and 10, who, together with Tita, will dive into deep waters and climb to the highest tip of the crane.

★ Clare Azzopardi won the National Book Prize over 15 times between 2006 and 2023 for original works for children and adults, and for her translation work.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



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Rights Availability **Worldwide** | Excerpt in Maltese **Available**

SAJF (SUMMER)

Ryan Falzon

Genre **Novel/Literary Fiction**
Publication Year **2022** | Pages **294**

Ryan Falzon is an emerging writer and visual artist from Malta. Since 2011, Falzon has published several short prose pieces in various publications, making his mark in local anthologies and actively participating in local literary circles.

Falzon's writing is fresh and irreverent, and the story unfolds from the point of view of a jaded working-class narrator, a vulnerable and sexist figure obsessed by vintage cars and the occasional escapade.

This book is like *Close to Home* by Michael Magee (Hamish Hamilton, 2023).



SAJF, the fast-paced debut novel by Ryan Falzon, takes readers on a captivating journey through a scorching summer filled with vintage cars, excessive drinking and the constant allure of adventure lurking around every corner. Published in 2022 by Kotba Calleja, *SAJF* stands as a literary testament to the millennial generation and the emerging Gen-Z era, providing a generational voice for those born between 1980 and late 90s.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



RIGHTS HOLDER AND CONTACT DETAILS

Name **Kotba Calleja** | Email info@kotbacalleja.net | Phone **+336 99236238**
Rights Availability **Worldwide** | Excerpt in Maltese **Available**
Translated Excerpt in Maltese **Available** | Translators **Ryan Falzon, Glen Calleja**

MAX-XATT TAT-TAMARISK (ALONG THE TAMARISK COAST)

Claudia Gauci

Genre **Poetry** | Publication Year **2022** | Pages **60**

Claudia Gauci lives in Malta and writes mainly poetry. She has published two collections of poetry and she is very much involved in the local literary scene. Gauci teaches Maltese literature at the Junior College, a post-secondary institution.

This poetry book is unique in format in that every poem tries to answer a question. It speaks of loss of place, people and objects. The voice is at times nostalgic and melancholic leaving space for a romantic and tragic beauty to shine through. This is in many ways a poetic feminist manifesto that starts from domestic situations and out onto the seaside promenade of Sliema, one of Malta's most densely populated towns.

This book is like *Multiple Choice* by Alejandro Zambra, tr. Megan McDowell (Granta, 2014).



Max-Xatt tat-Tamarisk is a series of questions and answers in poetic form. They offer reflections that can be at once nostalgic and hyper-local, while at the same time treading on the poet's struggle to articulate the beautiful moments that life and maturity offer from a distinctly female perspective.

★ Claudia Gauci is a National Book Prize winning translator.



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Set up in 1964, Merlin has grown into Malta's most innovative and exciting publisher. Home to most of Malta's key authors, Merlin prides itself on its backlist of Maltese literature, as well as on its nurturing of new authors with innovative styles and expression. Winner of the National Book Prize Best Book Production award for multiple years, Merlin has been at the forefront of production, design, packaging and marketing. Merlin's books have been exhibited at Frankfurt, London and Bologna Book Fairs.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



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Rights Availability **Worldwide** | Excerpt in Maltese **Available**

Translated Excerpt in Maltese **Available** | Translators **Albert Gatt**

BELTIN: STEJGER MINN NIES MINSIJA (BELTIN: TALES OF A FORGOTTEN PEOPLE)

Ramona Depares,
Moira Scicluna Zahra (ill.)

Genre **Nonfiction/Memoir**
Publication Year **2019** | Pages **128**

Originally a lawyer by profession, Ramona is an author and award-winning journalist whose works have been published on both local and international platforms. Her first two books, *Beltin* and *The Patient in Hospital Zero* (2021) were published by Merlin Publishers. Her third book, *Katya: Easy on the Tonic*, is an authorised biography of trans icon Katya Saunders, commissioned and published by MGRM. Ramona is the founder of a cultural blog – www.ramonadepares.com – dedicated to theatre, fashion, books and events in Malta. She is also the editor of culture magazine *Encore*.

Moira is an award-winning Maltese illustrator and children's book author whose work is typically influenced by people and their surroundings. Her visual style is versatile, ranging from playful compositions to more expressive artworks with elements of visual storytelling. Moira holds the position of senior lecturer and researcher at MCAST Institute for the Creative Arts and she is the founder of the Malta Community of Illustrators, a project that aims to document local illustration, to push the use of illustration as an effective communication tool, and to provide education on the subject.

Beltin is a very personal reading of Valletta, UNESCO World Heritage capital city of Malta, where the focus is the characters, and Valletta's idiosyncrasies and recent history as seen by a Valletta-born and bred author/journalist.



Beltin brings tales of a simpler lifestyle that is no more, juxtaposed against the dark underbelly of Malta's capital city. This quirky, first-hand account of life in Valletta up to the early 90s is written from the point of view of a young girl who grew up in the capital city before it was gentrified. Each anecdote shares a snippet about real life personalities and historical events – the playful, colloquial voice in stark contrast to the sometimes serious issues that are highlighted.

This book is like *Love in Colour: Mythical Tales from Around the World, Retold* by Bolu Babalola (William Morrow & Company, 2022); *Furies: Stories of the wicked, wild and untamed* by Margaret Atwood, Ali Smith et al. (Little, Brown, 2023); *Stories from the Tenants Downstairs* by Sidik Fofana (John Murray, 2023).

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



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Rights Availability **Worldwide** | Excerpt in Maltese **Available**
Translated Excerpt in English **Available** | Translator **Ramona Depares**

VESPRI (VESPERS)

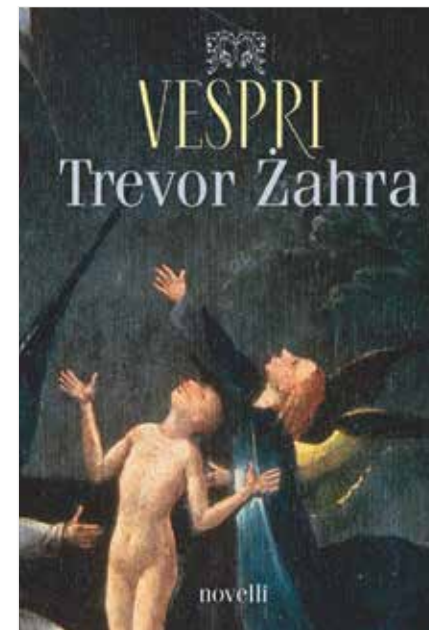
Trevor Żahra

Genre **Short Stories**
Publication Year **2019** | Pages **336**

Trevor Żahra started writing from a very young age. He's written everything: children's books, school textbooks, poetry, novels, novellas, plays, monologues. He is Malta's best-selling and best-loved author across generations, and his books, including backlist titles, are perennially in the top-selling charts. Żahra is also an accomplished illustrator. His books have been published in France, Russia and Norway.

Trevor Żahra is Malta's literary treasure – he has sold more copies of more books than any other Maltese author, and his works have been translated into various languages. *Vespri* is Żahra at his best, writing incisive, dark and delicious short stories.

This book is like *First Person Singular* by Haruki Murakami, tr. Philip Gabriel (Vintage, 2022); *Love in a Blue Time* by Hanif Kureishi (Faber, 2017).



A collection of stories in which reality blends with dreams, smiles merge with pain, normality is intertwined with the bizarre, and the past walks hand in hand with the present. His characters chant their evening prayers together, their vespers, before the night blows out the weak flame of the sun and darkness descends.

★ Trevor Żahra won the National Book Prize 23 times since 1998. In 2020 he was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award for his contribution to literature.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



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Translated Excerpt in English **Available** | Translator **Clare Vassallo**

KISSIRTU KULLIMKIEN (YOU'VE DESTROYED EVERYTHING)

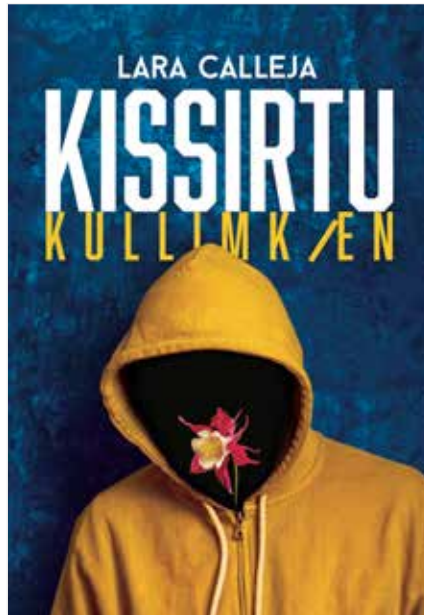
Lara Calleja

Genre **Short Stories**
Publication Year **2020** | Pages **160**

Lara Calleja was raised in Marsaskala, a once quaint seaside village in Malta that is now overshadowed by apartment blocks. Having graduated with honours in Near Eastern studies in 2010, Calleja worked for several years in tourism. Calleja worked as a part-time librarian for six years, finding an outlet for her love of books. She loved organising yearly literary events and she managed to upgrade the collection of the very small library that employed her, leading to an increase in readership at a time when the use of Malta's public libraries was diminishing. Having continued to write during this time, in January 2020, Lara left her full-time job in tourism to start her career as a freelance writer and translator.

Kissirtu Kullimkien won the European Union Prize for Literature in 2021, the first work by a Maltese woman to win this prestigious prize. This politically charged collection of short stories launched a scathing attack on the overdevelopment frenzy and its devastating effects on the tiny island of Malta. Searching for hope amid the rubble, the relevance of *Kissirtu Kullimkien* endures to this day.

This book is like *Why Visit America* by Matthew Baker (Bloomsbury, 2021); *Drown* by Junot Diaz (Faber, 2008).



In *Kissirtu Kullimkien*, Lara Calleja tackles the unbridled construction frenzy on the island, construed through the author's lens as an attack on the soul. From this cycle of construction and destruction however, friendships can bloom, and these stories search for hope amid the rubble, calm beyond the chaos, and change despite a rampant and asphyxiating uglification of rural and urban spaces. *Kissirtu Kullimkien* won the European Union Prize for Literature 2021 and has been published in translation in Italy, Greece and Serbia.

- ★ Lara Calleja won the National Book Prize 2020 Best Emergent Writer award. *Kissirtu Kullimkien* won the National Book Prize 2021 in the short stories category.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



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Rights Availability **Worldwide except Italy, Greece and Serbia** | Excerpt in Maltese **Available**
Translated Excerpt in English **Available** | Translator **Clare Vassallo**

L-INVENTARJU TAL- KAMRA L-KAHLA (YOU'VE DESTROYED EVERYTHING)

Leanne Ellul

Genre **Poetry** | Publication Year **2020** | Pages **176**

Leanne Ellul writes poetry and prose, and has published works for adults, young adults and children. Her works for children have garnered various Terramaxka awards. *L-Inventarju tal-Kamra l-Kahla*, her first poetry collection, was published in 2020. Her second collection, *Bjuda*, is part of an interdisciplinary project centred around the colour white. Her latest poetry collection is entitled *Il-Manifest tas-Sigar*. Ellul lectures in Maltese language and literature and is active in literary projects Inizjamed and HELA Foundation.

Leanne Ellul's poetry is at the forefront of Maltese poetic experimentation with style, and has resonated with audiences in festivals international and national. Hers is as personal as poetry gets – transgressive, irreverent, resisting categorisation.

This book is like *Bluets* by Maggie Nelson (Vintage, 2017); *Morning in the Burned House* by Margaret Atwood (Houghton Mifflin, 1995).



L-Inventarju tal-Kamra l-Kahla's poems trace the pain, the love, the loss that a lot of us go through in life. The poems speak of private and public spaces while relating to them through wordplay. The poems, presented in alphabetical order, are an invitation in themselves, an invitation to the blue room and all the objects and elements that characterise it, an invitation to poetry itself.

- ★ Leanne Ellul was named Best Emergent Writer in the National Book Prize 2016 and won the National Book Prize four times as a translator.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



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Rights Availability **Worldwide** | Excerpt in Maltese **Available**
Translated Excerpt in English **Available** | Translator **Albert Gatt**

MIKELIN

Sandra Hili Vassallo,
Susanna Rumiz (ill.)

Genre **Children's Literature**
Publication Year **2019** | Pages **24**

Sandra Hili Vassallo is Director (EU Affairs) within the Ministry for Culture by day and an author of children's books by night. She has written nine books for children and has published short stories for adults. She graduated as a lawyer from the University of Malta and specialised in family law, migration law and EU law. Sandra is fascinated by the dynamics of families and personal interrelationships which are very often the themes of her stories. Sandra also believes that life should be taken with a pinch (or a lot) of humour and enjoys sharing her books with her young readers.

Susanna Rumiz is a freelance illustrator based in Italy. Creating activity books and games for kids is her passion. For over a decade, Rumiz has been helping art directors create books and games that spark kids' curiosity and help them grow.

Children's book (ages 4–8) ideal for newly confident readers, in which an inquisitive boy who finds answers to his million and one questions in the most unexpected of places. A heartwarming story of a child in a single-parent family and his unlimited imagination.

This book is like *The Boy With the Big Big Questions* by Britney Winn Lee (Beaming Books, 2019).



Mikelin is a little boy who sounds very familiar. We have all, at some point, been asked questions by a young child, and Mikelin is one such little boy. He drives his father and his granny to distraction with his incessant curiosity, until one day he finds himself being helped to find the answers to all his questions by two unusual and unexpected friends, who may or may not have visited him in the middle of the night. *Mikelin* was published in Italian translation by Verbovolant.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



RIGHTS HOLDER AND CONTACT DETAILS

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Translated Excerpt in English **Available** | Translator **Sandra Hili Vassallo**

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Midsea Books Ltd is considered to be one of Malta's leading publishers. Set up in 1969 by Pawlu Mizzi, in 2021 it celebrated its 50th anniversary from the publishing of its first book *Il-Gaġġa* in 1971. Midsea Books with its subsidiaries Klabb Kotba Maltin and Heritage Books, have become a household name in producing children's titles, novels and fiction, reference and fine art books about Malta. A number of books published are award-winners or have been shortlisted for awards both in Malta and overseas.

TBAJJA' TAX-XEMX U STEJGER OHRA GHAD-DELL (SUNSPOTS AND OTHER STORIES IN THE SHADE)

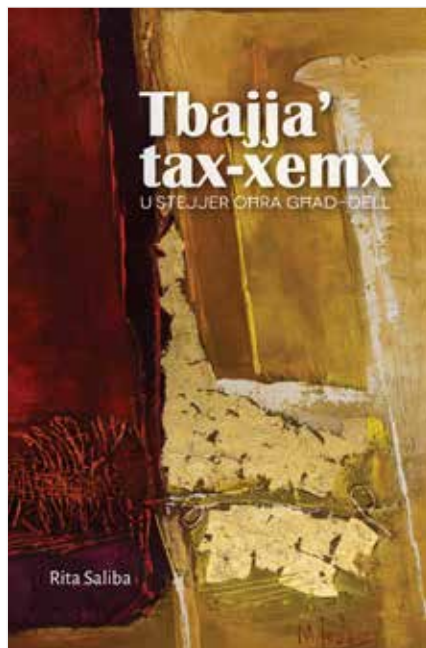
Rita Saliba

Genre **Short Stories**
Publication Year **2022** | Pages **114**

Rita Saliba is one of the most prolific authors in Malta. She has won various awards for her writing and has earned literary recognition. She has written books for children, but she is more known for her novels, short stories and her favourite genre: micro-fiction.

The book deals with universal themes on relations, love and other social issues.

This book is like *Ongoingness* by Sarah Manguso (Picador, 2019); *Palm-of-the-Hand Stories* by Yasunari Kawabata, tr. Lane Dunlop and J. Martin Holman (North Point Press, 1988); *Microfictions* by Ana María Shua (Bison Books, 2009).



In these stories everything happens quickly, in brief, like in a race against time. Sometimes the end of a story comes as a surprise to the reader, unexpectedly. In other stories it seems that there is no ending. In this fast life of ours we hardly notice the stories taking place around us, like the sound of a defective tap dripping into a sink at night. But in the morning, there are stories that are real and leave their mark on us, just like sun spots.

★ *Tbajja' tax-Xemx u Stejger Ohra ghad-Dell* won the National Book Prize 2023 in the short stories category.

BOOKS BY IMMANUEL MIFSUD

Immanuel Mifsud is a poet and writer. He is the recipient of a number of awards including the European Union Prize for Literature 2011. Various works by Mifsud have been translated and published in a number of languages. He holds a PhD from the University of Malta where he lectures in contemporary Maltese literature and theatre. His poem 'The Book' was commissioned by the Commonwealth Secretariat and read at Westminster Abbey in 2017.

JUTTA HEIM Immanuel Mifsud

Genre **Novel/Literary Fiction**
Publication Year **2014** | Pages **144**

Jutta Heim, a masterwork of Maltese literature, has earned widespread translation acclaim, paralleled only by Mifsud's seminal *In the Name of the Father*, translated into thirteen languages. The enduring significance of *Jutta Heim* lies in its poignant exploration of love and politics, transcending boundaries and resonating deeply with readers worldwide.

This book is like *Love in the Time of Cholera*, by Gabriel Garcia Marquez (Penguin, 2016); *Brooklyn* by Colm Tóibín (Vintage, 2009).



A renowned actor and womaniser lives his life obsessed with a woman he had a one-night stand with in former East Berlin. He sends her letters for years, which are never answered or returned. Now retired and with ailing health, he decides to make one last attempt to see the woman again and travels to a new Berlin, very different from the one he had visited years before. But the woman seems lost in mystery, and the adventure fails.

★ Immanuel Mifsud won the National Book Prize eight times in various categories. *Jutta Heim* won in 2015 in the novels category.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



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Rights Availability **UK, US, and rest of the world except Albania, Egypt, Greece, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia**
Excerpt in Maltese **Available** | Translated Excerpt in English **Available** | Translator **Albert Gatt**



BY THE SAME AUTHOR

FID-DLAM TAL-LEJL HARISNA (SLEEP, O SLEEP NOW)

Genre **Novel/Literary Fiction** | Publication Year **2016** | Pages **164**
Interconnected characters, experimental narrative, intertextuality, intriguing storytelling

For more information, rights availability and excerpts, scan the QR code below.

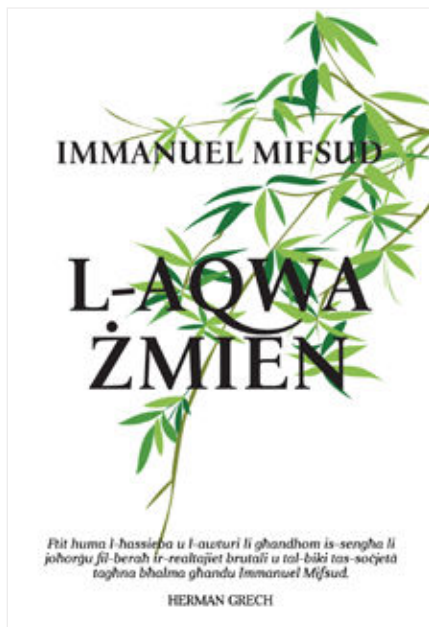
L-AQWA ŻMIEN (THE BEST OF TIMES)

Immanuel Mifsud

Genre **Short Stories**
Publication Year **2019** | Pages **119**

In 2017, the Maltese ruling party adopted 'The Best of Times' as its campaign slogan. Two years later, Mifsud's publication caused a stir by adopting the same title, aiming to debunk political falsehoods. Released amid a local political crisis, the stories tackle international issues such as racism, sexism, violence against women, poverty, and terrorism, resonating beyond Maltese borders. Translated editions are available in Albanian and Serbian.

This book is like *Perfidious Albion* by Sam Byers (Faber, 2019); *CivilWarLand in Bad Decline* by George Saunders (Vintage, 1996); *Life Without Children* by Roddy Doyle (Vintage, 2021).



Mifsud's collection of short stories slams the false ideology of neoliberal politics that people are living in the best of times. The collection recounts the stories of a single mother whose financial hardship constrains her and her child to live in a stuffy garage; the poor and lonely stripper who consents to being physically abused and humiliated to make ends meet; and the teenager who is forced to escape from her racist parents' home as she is in a relationship with an African refugee. Racism and violence are two recurring themes which transport the stories from their Maltese roots to an international reality.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



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Rights Availability **UK, US and rest of the world except Albania and Serbia**

Excerpt in Maltese **Available** | Translated Excerpt in English **Available** | Translators **Ruth Ward, Immanuel Mifsud**

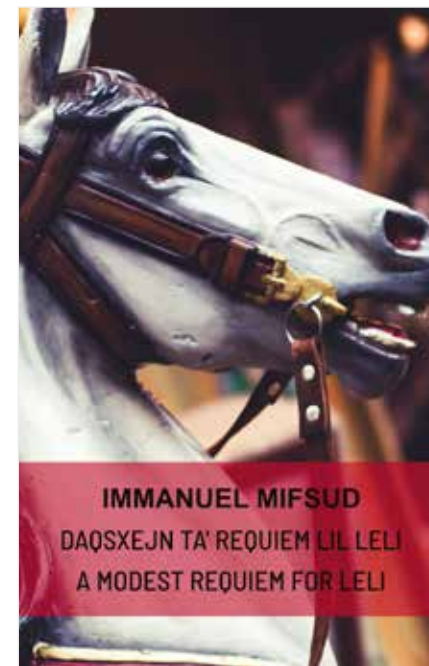
DAQSXEJN TA' REQUIEM LIL LELI (A MODEST REQUIEM FOR LELI)

Immanuel Mifsud

Genre **Poetry** | Publication Year **2016** | Pages **164**

This long poem, originally written in hendecasyllabic lines, is a meditation on life and death. The last moments of this man are marked by joy and nostalgia for a fulfilled life. The poem also marks a return to theatre written in verse, which also led to Mifsud being commissioned to write two other poetical pieces for stage, both produced in 2023. The text was also presented during two international conferences on death, at the University of Turku and in Prague.

This book is like *Sentenced to Life* by Clive James (Picador, 2016).



This long poem, which was turned into a mini opera, recounts the last moments of a dying man. In a comatose state, Leli experiences a series of flashbacks of his adventurous life, resurrecting memories of childhood joy at the funpark, his childhood crush on his female teacher, and the games he played with his peers among others. The requiem is inspired by the passing of one of the poet's own relatives, and Arnold Bocklin's *The Isle of the Dead*.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



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Rights Availability **UK, US, and rest of the world**

Excerpt in Maltese **Available** | Translated Excerpt in English **Available** | Translator **Albert Gatt**

BEJN MARA U QASSIS (THE WOMAN AND THE PRIEST)

Paul P. Borg

Genre **Novel/Historical Fiction**
Publication Year **1985** | Pages **115**

A creator, researcher, ethnographer, author and poet, Paul P. Borg has written numerous novels as well as articles on the environment and social change. There is a common thread in Borg's prolific literary and academic work, and that is the reminder that it is only love, of and for one another and Mother Nature, that will enable us to build the respect and empathy needed to rescue us from ourselves. His first publications were controversial in the way they probed the actions of humanity in dealing with self, sexuality, religion and the environment. Borg's work thrives on seeking to balance one's identity as affected by the forces of circumstance and society.

Paul P. Borg, a seasoned writer, embarked on his literary career with the compelling novel *Bejn Mara u Qassis*. This evocative tale transports readers to a vanished world, expertly depicting the captivating yet forceful female protagonist and the conflicted male protagonist. Set against a backdrop of societal upheaval in a peasant community plagued by superstition and adversity, the narrative sheds light on the harsh realities of economic, religious, social, and educational change prevalent in many Mediterranean countries.



Bejn Mara u Qassis is a beautifully written exposition of social injustice and human anguish. It tells the true story of a peasant mother who protests against her village priest, at a time when learning and formal education were considered a means to lose one's soul. The story develops into a crude love-hate, female-male relationship between the woman as a loving mother – determined to expose husband and offspring to better social conditions – and the local priest as a man and a carer of spiritual needs.

This book is like *The Secret Scripture* by Sebastian Barry (Faber, 2015); *Prophet Song* by Paul Lynch (Oneworld, 2023).

★ Many of Paul P. Borg's works have won literary awards, including the National Book Prize (1986, 1999, 2004).



BY THE SAME AUTHOR, PUBLISHED BY HORIZONS
BELGHA TE (A CUP OF TEA) Paul P. Borg

Genre **Novel/Literary Fiction** | Publication Year **2022** | Pages **482**
Fast-paced, harrowing true story, National Book Prize finalist

For more information, rights availability and excerpts, scan the QR code below.



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Rights Availability **Worldwide**

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SKS is a publishing house based in Malta specialising mainly in the genres of history, literature, political theory, culture and biography. SKS strives to inform and educate the general public by publishing high-quality books based on a liberal understanding of life, history and literature. It provides writers and researchers of a similar persuasion the opportunity to publish their works and aims to contribute towards social, cultural, intellectual and national enrichment.

BOOKS BY ALEKS FARRUGIA

Aleks Farrugia is a writer and historian, currently serving as Director of Culture within the Maltese Public Service. Additionally, he holds a position as a visiting lecturer at the University of Malta, where he teaches politics and critical theory. With seven years of experience as an editor at a prominent Maltese newspaper, Farrugia maintains occasional involvement in journalism.

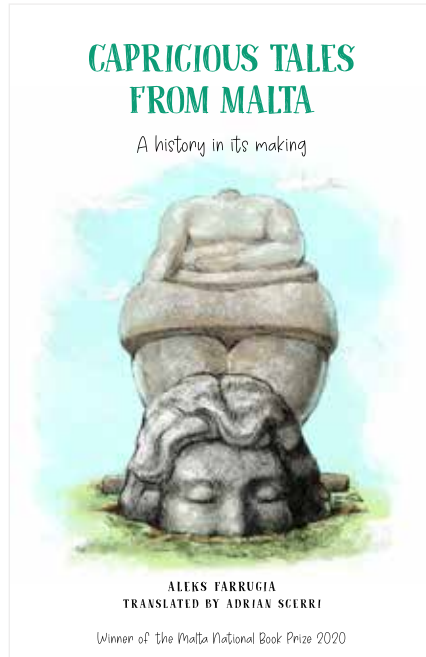
GHALL-GLORJA TAL-PATRIJA! (CAPRICIOUS TALES FROM MALTA)

Aleks Farrugia

Genre **Short Stories**Publication Year **2019** | Pages **296**

Published in English in 2023 for the Maltese market, *Ghall-Glorja tal-Patrija!* received critical acclaim for its vivid character portrayals, originality and thought-provoking narrative. Going beyond mere exploration of Maltese identity, the collection delves into profound questions about humanity, the nuanced use of history, and contemporary issues such as diversity, inclusion, traditional values, multiculturalism, war, forgiveness and redemption. Through a skilful blend of humour and drama, the collection offers an engaging read that leaves readers pondering the complexities of the world we inhabit.

This book is like *Mythos* by Stephen Fry (Michael Joseph, 2017); *A Little History of the World* by E. H. Gombrich (Yale University Press, 2008).



The original, award-winning collection of short stories titled *Ghall-Glorja tal-Patrija!* (published in English as *Capricious Tales from Malta: A History in its Making*) draws inspiration from various eras in Malta's history, delving into the myths surrounding national identity. It offers a blend of humour and irony presented with captivating simplicity, where characters share tales that convey deeper meanings. Organised in a broad chronological order, the stories span from the dawn of Mediterranean civilizations to a future dystopian society. Readers are prompted to ponder the blurred lines between fiction and history, as no facet of Malta's rich history and diverse people is left unexplored.

★ *Ghall-Glorja tal-Patrija* won the National Book Prize 2020 in the short stories category.

CAMERATA!

Aleks Farrugia

Genre **Novel/Literary Fiction**Publication Year **2021** | Pages **336**

Shortlisted for the National Book Prize, this novel defies categorization, encompassing elements of historical fiction, existential exploration, psychological thriller, socio-political critique and character study. Spanning three distinct timelines and narrative styles, it has been lauded by critics as a masterfully crafted work that captivates readers from start to finish. Delving into themes of self-discovery, existential purpose, power dynamics and unattainable love, it offers a rich and engaging exploration of the human experience.



This book is like *Wariight* by Michael Ondatjee (Vintage, 2019); *The Innocent* by Ian McEwan (Vintage, 1990).

The year is 1936, and as neighbouring fascist Italy plans an invasion of Malta, a chance discovery onboard a ship triggers a police investigation. Inspector Salvu Camilleri, a troubled young man haunted by demons from his past, finds himself unwittingly at the helm of the inquiry. Unaware of the ulterior motives behind his assignment, Camilleri soon realises that nothing is as it appears, with sinister connections lurking at every turn. Ultimately, he confronts the harsh reality of his isolation, realising that even his turbulent relationship with a prostitute cannot rescue him.

IR-RE BORG (KING BORG)

Aleks Farrugia

Genre **Novel/Literary Fiction**Publication Year **2022** | Pages **298**

Funny, anarchic and impactful, *Ir-Re Borg* is a novel of social and political satire that tackles the state of modern democratic politics. It exposes how the failures of mainstream political parties give rise to populist movements that inadvertently perpetuate the very maladies they aim to eradicate. Praised for its keen insight into the workings of media, politics and contemporary society, the novel delivers a scathing critique through humour and sharp characterisation. At its core, *Ir-Re Borg* explores the rise of a new political figure, a local grocer, who promises to abandon democracy for monarchy yet garners widespread adoration from the public.



This book is like *The Hundred-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out of the Window and Disappeared* by Jonas Jonasson, tr. Roy Bradbury (Little, Brown, 2015); *The Sellout* by Paul Beatty (Oneworld, 2017).

Democracy has failed. What Malta needs is monarchy. This bold declaration comes from none other than Mikiel Borg, the local grocer turned self-proclaimed king. *Ir-Re Borg* is a modern fairy tale that delves into themes of populism, the shortcomings of mainstream politics, the influence of social media and the manipulative tactics employed by behind-the-scenes consultants and advisers. At its heart, the novel is the story of a common man's rebellion against the machinery of the state and traditional party politics. Filled with anarchic humour, it navigates a path from comedy to tragedy, offering a poignant reflection on our society amidst turbulent times.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



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THE TAIL THAT WAGGED THE DOG

Mark Montebello

Genre **Nonfiction/Biography**
Publication Year **2021** | Pages **640**

Mark Montebello is a widely-published author renowned for his critical philosophy, analytical biographies, and historical accounts. Known for his no-nonsense attitude, Montebello is admired for his ability to cut to the chase, set the record straight, and call a spade a spade.

The Tail that Wagged the Dog breaks away from traditional biographies, offering a compelling personality study that explores the conscious and subconscious motivations behind Dom Mintoff's actions. Montebello's skilful writing not only immerses readers in the Mediterranean world of the 20th century, but also encourages introspection into one's own life motivations. Sprightly and engaging, this biography promises to captivate readers with its exploration of one of the era's most iconic personalities.

This book is like *Margaret Thatcher* by Charles Moore (Penguin, 2014); *Lenin: The Man, the Dictator, and the Master of Terror* by Victor Sebestyen (Pantheon, 2017).



The Tail that Wagged the Dog offers a vivacious and introspective biography of Malta's four-time maverick Prime Minister, Dom Mintoff (1916–2012), penned by the skilled hand of acclaimed writer Mark Montebello. Leaving no stone unturned, the biography delves into the complex formation of Mintoff's personality, capturing a decade during the 20th-century European political scene when the little Maltese island in the Mediterranean Sea commanded the attention of Cold War world leaders and everyday citizens alike. Against the backdrop of politics, the biography explores Mintoff's loves and fears.

★ Mark Montebello was awarded the National Book Prize twice for his books.

To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



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SALT PANS IN MALTA

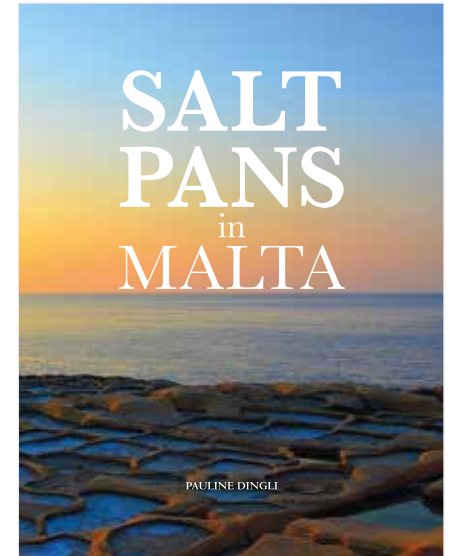
Pauline Dingli

Genre **Nonfiction/Coffee Table Book**
Publication Year **2019** | Pages **278**

Pauline Dingli, a University of Malta alumna, is the author of *Rabat: Discover Historic Treasures, Mystic Legends, Culture and Folklore* (2010), which delves into her hometown. Her second book, *Discover Rabat, Mdina and Exceptional Outskirts*, highlights the architectural and historic richness of Mdina and the natural beauty of rural Rabat.

Salt Pans in Malta provides readers with a unique insight into coastal landscapes often overlooked or unknown to many. Dingli's meticulous research reveals how these landscapes were hand-carved by owners or under commissions from the Knights of St John during their 18th-century stay in Malta. The book also uncovers archaeological pits dating back to the Roman Empire's rule over the islands, enriching the understanding of Malta's historical and environmental heritage.

This book is like *Mediterranean: A Cultural Landscape* by Predrag Matvejevic, tr. Michael Heim (University of California Press, 1999).



Salt Pans in Malta offers an in-depth exploration of all the salt pan sites along the shoreline of the Maltese archipelago. Author Pauline Dingli meticulously studied these sites, visiting each one during its operational period and interviewing the operators. Through these encounters, Dingli captures the operators' passion for their work, pride in their produce, and the historical and social significance of the salt pan sites. A finalist for the National Book Prize 2020 this book sheds light on often-overlooked coastal landscapes.

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GIUSEPPE DONATI AND UMBERTO CALOSSO

Giorgio Peresso

Genre **Nonfiction/Biography**
Publication Year **2015** | Pages **274**

Historian Giorgio Peresso was inspired by the plight of expatriate journalists such as Donati, Calosso and Giovanni Giglio. These individuals, deemed persona non grata during the Ethiopian War, fueled Peresso's research. The vibrant inter-war period in Malta mirrored the tumultuous events unfolding across Europe.

While numerous books and papers detail the saga of Giuseppe Donati, there is a notable scarcity of literature on Umberto Calosso, particularly in English. The author has delved into various archives, including private collections, unearthing documents quoted for the first time. The Malta connection provided Calosso with solace following the conflicts among anti-Fascist factions exiled in France. "Calosso's Saga" stands as the first comprehensive source on his life and exploits to be published in English.

This book is like *Exiles: Three Island Journeys* by William Atkins (Faber, 2022); *A Bold and Dangerous Family: The Rossellis and the Fight Against Mussolini* by Caroline Moorehead (Chatto and Windus, 2017).



Giuseppe Donati exposed Mussolini's role in the murder of socialist deputy Giacomo Matteotti before seeking exile in France and passing away following a stay in Malta. Umberto Calosso succeeded Donati in Malta, dedicating nine years to teaching and writing about Alessandro Manzoni. His time in Malta, except for a brief interruption during the Spanish Civil War, provided a peaceful respite before his continued anti-Fascist activism and eventual election to the Chamber of Deputies in Rome.

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FREDDIE FIASCO SERIES

Natalie Portelli,
Bruno Carnaghi (ill.)

Genre **Children's Literature**
Publication Year **2024** | Pages **N/A**

Natalie Portelli writes for ages 3–11 and boasts over 200 children's titles in print. She remains Malta's most popular children's author to date.

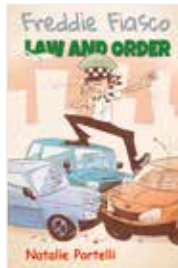
Bruno Carnaghi is a professional illustrator and graphic designer. He has illustrated many children's books published by Wise Owl, including the Freddie Fiasco series, *A Wish for a Pet* and various collections of fairy tales by Natalie Portelli.

The Freddie Fiasco books are an easy to read, delightful series with rib-tickling episodes that entice children to read on. The illustrations throughout the book make this pleasure even more thrilling.

This book is like *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* by Jeff Kinney (PRH Children's, 2008).



Freddie, a young school-leaver, finds himself jumping from one job to another, each offering a new adventure filled with a series of hilarious mishaps. These escapades make for brilliant and entertaining reading, keeping readers thoroughly engaged from start to finish.



To access excerpts of both the original book and its translation, scan the QR code below.



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A SELECTION OF MALTESE ILLUSTRATORS

The National Book Council has long championed illustrators, recognizing their often overlooked role in the Maltese industry. Previous initiatives include supporting the Malta Community of Illustrators (MCOI) Annual publication, collaborating with the Arts Council Malta for the *From Illustration to Book* exhibition, and featuring Maltese illustrators at international book fairs.



Daphne Bugeja
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Founder of Inka Studio, Daphne Bugeja immortalises architectural landmarks in her simple, freehand ink line drawings.



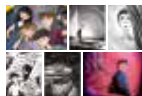
Jessica Cutajar
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Blending tradition with digital flair, Jessica's illustrations grace various publications, including *Songs of Motherhood* and *MCOI Illustrators Annual 2023*.



Sue Flask
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Sue Flask is a Maltese illustrator, teacher, and artist. With both traditional and digital techniques, she brings vibrant and colourful visuals to life.



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Francesca is a Maltese illustrator and picture book maker. She brings ideas and stories to life through whimsical illustrations.



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Experienced Maltese illustrator and designer based in London. Utilises a variety of mediums, including traditional and digital.



Kyle Cunningham
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Drawing from a love for storytelling, Kyle tends to jump between illustration and animation. Recent work focuses on children's book illustration and fantasy-driven works.



Kathleen Flask
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Known as Fox-From-Malta or Malta_Fox, Kathleen aims to pursue illustration, comic making and animation. She works in both digital and traditional mediums.



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Mel Grech is a graphic designer and illustrator. She enjoys bringing stories centred around animals and nature to life in her illustrations.



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Julian 'Julinu' Mallia is a multidisciplinary visual artist specialising in concept-driven work.



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Martina Mifsud is a Maltese illustrator and student at Mcast Arti Kreattivi.



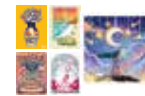
Denise Muscat
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Denise Muscat is an art educator with over 25 years of experience. She uses a wide range of media for her artwork.



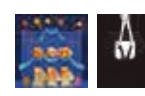
David Schembri
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David Schembri is an artist specialising in illustrations, typically starting with pen and paper sketches before finishing digitally.



Steffi Venturi
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Steffi Venturi is a Maltese freelance illustrator whose style is minimal and playful with elements of visual storytelling.



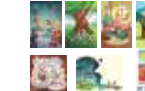
Kristina Zammit Endrich
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Kristina Zammit Endrich is a digital artist with work featured in various mediums.



Marietta Mifsud
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Marietta Mifsud is a freelance illustrator who works with a range of digital textures and materials.



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Mark Scicluna's work is inspired by pop culture, comics and obscure memorabilia typically with an added dose of grotesque humour.



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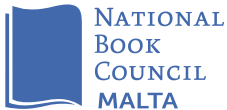
Moira Scicluna Zahra is an award-winning Maltese illustrator and children's book author.

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