

Malta and Australia: two islands brought together in an art exhibition

Rita Muscat Galea, a Maltese-Australian artist who lives in Melbourne, is presenting a collection of recent paintings on the theme, *Malta and Australia*, at San Anton Palace, Attard, from 14 June to 24 June, 2014, under the distinguished patronage of Her Excellency Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta.

Born in Qormi, Malta, to a baker and a housewife, Rita Muscat Galea was always unique and an individualist in her ways of being. She has expressed her creative side since early childhood, through music first by singing in festivals and competitions around Malta, learning the guitar, but also designing her own clothes.

Her love for oil painting began with her grandmother giving her an art kit at the age of 12. Her first paintings harnessed her connection to water and Malta's seascapes.

When she was 16, she emigrated with her family to Australia, which immediately reminded her of the connections she had with water and Malta's landscapes.

Now married to an Australian-born Maltese and having three children, she currently lives on a farm in the Melbourne suburb of Victoria. She never lost her desire to paint and opened her own art studio (Muscart Art Studio and Gallery) in 2008, where students are encouraged to experiment with various mediums, and both traditional and modern art.

Having previously exhibited her works in the Maltese Centre in Melbourne and at community fund-raisers, it is the first time she has shown her work in the land of her birth. Since she left, she has been back to Malta four times.

"I never cease to be amazed by the beautiful and variety of landscapes Malta offers. Every time I come here I take many photos that, when I return to my studio in Australia, help me to put to canvas what I had seen and felt over there," Rita said.

Malta and Australia is an intimately personal exhibition that sums up the attachment she has for the island where she was born and the one where she now lives. Consisting of 26 artworks, varying for still-lives and city-scapes to beach and harbour scenes of Valletta, Sydney and Melbourne, apart from the Australian Bush, many paintings are executed in *plein air*, enabling her to inspire people's hearts and imagination.

Made in various mediums, like oil on canvas, oil on boards and charcoals on paper, Rita Muscat Galea has always enjoyed the challenge of painting on different mediums and in different styles – from realism to impressionist, which enable her to explore life through her art and art in her life. Often the scenes of her paintings will reflect a mood or a frame of mind that enables her to externalise these strong emotions.

Once the *Malta and Australia* art exhibition over, Rita Muscat Galea envisions painting her autobiography in Malta over the coming years. The artist also intends to present a donation to the Malta Guide Dogs Foundation (MGDF) to help it in its mission to provide training and other assistance to visually impaired persons, such as in the use of the long cane, mobility and orientation skills, and guide dogs that will assist them to interact in their daily environment, enhance their individuality and gain independence in their everyday life.

Opening times for the exhibition are daily from 9.30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

– ENDS –

Caption:



Dghajjes in Marsalforn




Mountain view



Rita Muscat Galea


Malta and Australia



Art Exhibition
by
Maltese-Australian artist
Rita Muscat Galea

under the Distinguished Patronage of
Her Excellency Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta
at San Anton Palace

14 June-24 June, 2014
9.30 a.m.-6 p.m.
Entrance is free

Proceeds in aid of the:  **MALTA
GUIDE DOGS
FOUNDATION**