

# MALTA CHINA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY

马耳他·中国友好协会

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Malta China Friendship Society promotes cultural ties and friendship between Malta and China



## Musical Instruments and Chinese culture

During August and early September, the St. James Cavalier in Valletta was the venue of an extraordinary exhibition of Chinese Musical Instruments. The items on display are carefully-selected distinctive instruments of both ancient and modern China. They provided visitors with a comprehensive view of the brilliant Chinese instrumental culture.



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Musical instruments are solidified movements and a source of song. Chinese instruments not only show the brilliant and colourful Chinese culture but also the romantic charm of the east. They provide a medium for communicating feelings and expressions. The exhibition at the St James Cavalier in Valletta gave the public the opportunity to appreciate the Chinese instrumental culture originating since Neolithic times with artifact unearthed from the Henan Province dating back to more than 8000 years ago.



A selection of the public attending the inauguration of the exhibition

In the records and documents of the Shang and Zhou Dynasties, dating c 1600 -256 BC, over 70 kinds of ancient Chinese musical instruments are mentioned. Each of the 56 ethnic groups of China have a great multitude of distinctive music and instruments, each producing a variety of colourful and multifarious sounds and timbres.

Chinese musical instruments are different from western ones in terms of styles and features, nonetheless they are capable of playing western music, including symphony.

As stated by the Charge D'Affairs of the Chinese Embassy in Malta, Mr. Tang Youjing, in his inauguration speech, although China and Malta are far apart, geographically as well as in terms of historical background, cultural traditions, and level of development, both countries have been very active in cultural exchanges including in the field of music.

Mr. Tang Youjing referred to Renzo Spiteri, a famous Maltese percussionist, who went to Beijing last year to perform in cooperation with a Chinese musical team. Then the same team came back also in Malta to participate in the local jazz festival. The exchange of musicians, composers, artists and singers is instrumental in the enhancement of mutual understanding between the two cultures and the peoples of Malta and China.



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## Chinese Delegation visit the tomb of Xu Huizhong at the Adolorate Cemetery



The President of the MCFS Mr. Reno Calleja with Yao Yuan at the Addolorata Cemetery



Chinese Delegation at the Chinese Cultural Centre accompanied by Ms. Doreen Sammut (right) Secre-

In July, a Chinese delegation led by the well known Chinese artist Yao Yuan visited the Adolorata Cemetery to pay homage to Xu Huizhong, a Chinese worker who is buried there.



Xu Huizhong a Chinese lathe worker from Shanghai was accidentally killed on site during the building of the Red China Dock in the seventies.

The Chinese delegation visiting the Xu Huizhong tomb was accompanied by Mr Reno Calleja and Mrs. Doreen Sammut, the President and the Administrative Secretary of the Malta China Friendship Society. The Chi-

nese delegation and the representatives of the Malta China Friendship Society laid a wreath on the tomb of Xu Huizhong.

A monument in honour of Xu Huinzhong is now expected to be erected in a public garden in the seaside resort of Marsaskala. In this regard, the Malta China Friendship Society is in discussions with the Chinese artist who will be designing the monument in honour of Xu Huinzhong.



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## Chinese Sculpture for Marsaskala Garden

During the period - 11<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2007, a famous Chinese sculptor, composer and designer, Mr Yuan Wenyan, led a delegation of four persons for a visit to Malta . Mr Yuan is the Chairman of the Beijing Yaoyuan Cultural Exchange Co. Ltd.

Mr Yuan, popularly known in China as Yao Yuan, came to Malta at the request of the Malta China Friendship Society and the Marsaskala Local Council. He will be making a contribution to build a monument for a garden which will be built in this sea side resort in Marsaskala. His visit was made possible through the assistance of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) that sponsored and financed the visit of the delegation to Malta.



Mr Yao with the Marsaskala Mayor Mr. Mario Calleja



At the Azure Window in Gozo

He was accompanied by his wife Wang Xiaoping, by Fu Jingyun - the general manager of the Beijing Yaoyuan Cultural Exchange Co. Ltd., and by Mrs. Lu Yanxia - the deputy secretary general of the China-EU Association and Deputy Director of the European Department of the CPAFFC.

This story knows its beginning way back in 1979 when the then Prime Minister of Malta, Dom Mintoff, assigned Mr. Reno Calleja, who was a Labor M.P. to proceed to China and present the Medal of the Republic to the widow of Xu Huishong, the Chinese lathe workers who was accidentally killed on site during the building of the Red China Dock.

In September last year, after 27 years, Mr. Calleja, accompanied by the Mayor of Marsaskala, made an emotional re-union with the Xu family . This humane story hit the Chinese press. The Shanghai Daily printed a front page story on the event. Unfortunately, by then, the widow of Mr. Xu, Mrs. Yu Hin, had since died but his two children still lived in the same apartment. Interesting is the fact that the granddaughter of Mr. XU, Ms. Xu Cheng followed the family tradition and the professional footsteps of her grand father and became an engineer herself.



The Chinese delegation during discussions at the Marsaskala Local Council

During a subsequent visit to Beijing the Maltese delegation met Chen Hao Su, the President of the C.P.A.F.F.C. The delegation proposed that a monument in honour of Xu Huizhong should be set up in a square/garden that the Marsaskala Local Council was building. It was agreed that the CPAFFC would send an artist/engineer, sculpture for this purpose. Hence the visit of Mr. Yao Yuan in Malta during July 2007.

The Malta China Friendship Society would like to take this opportunity to thank the Malta Tourism Authority, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Marsaskala Local Council for their moral and financial support during the delegations visit to Malta.



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## Malta and Guangdong

**The cultural and friendship ties between the People of the Guangdong Province and the People of Malta have been the subject of greetings exchanges between the two Friendship Societies Presidents.**

**The following is a copy of the letter sent by the President of the Malta China Friendship Society, Mr. Reno Calleja, expressing warm greetings and congratulations to Mr. Fu Lang, the Director General of the Foreign Affairs Office of the Guangdong Province, on his recent appointment as the new President of the Guangdong People's Association of Friendship with Foreign Countries.**



20th August, 2007

Dear Mr. Fu Lang,

Thank you for your letter dated 10th August. I have forwarded your warm greetings and salutations to the Executive Committee of the Malta China Friendship Association

On behalf of me and the Executive Committee of the M.C.F.S., we would like to congratulate you on your appointment as President of the Guangdong People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for inviting a delegation from Malta to visit Guangdong between the 12th and 15th of September. I do hope you will soon lead a delegation to Malta where you will be given a warm and friendly welcome by the M.C.F.S.

We always had a close and warm relationship with your predecessor Mr Huang Ziqiang. Please extend my heartfelt thanks to him for his assistance during the past years.

I am sure you are aware that we have a special relationship with the G.P.A.F.F.C. **Indeed we have signed a cooperation** agreement between us about two years ago. Our friendship has been translated in concrete actions. We have together contributed to our main cause. To promote friendship between the people of China and Malta. We have always believed that the best way to promote the relationship between the Governments is through people.

This would not have been done were it not for the hard work of the staff of the G.P.A.F.F.C. Particularly Mr. Xu Yongzheng, who is a long time friend of our associating and who always goes out of his way to ensure the success of the various initiatives we have launched together

I am sure that under your leadership these relations will be further strengthened. I look forward to see you during my coming visit to Guangdong.

With warm regards and renewed thanks

Reno Calleja

President Malta China Friendship Society