

# 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



## Valetta Chinese Spring Festival 2008

By John Agius



### In this issue:

- > Valletta Chinese Spring Festival 2008 1
- > The Road To Civilisation — Featuring Malta on Chinese CTTV Television 2
- > Visit to Malta by the Guangdong Land & Resources Department
- > MCFS Events 3
- > Sketches from Home — European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008 4

**This year's activities marking the Valletta Chinese Spring festival were more pronounced. The activities, co-organised by the China Cultural Centre and the Valletta Local Council under the patronage of the Chinese Embassy in Malta – included an opening Gala with Lion dance, Acrobatics and Sichuan Opera in Freedom Square; a Street Parade of Chinese Acrobatics along the streets of Valletta; an evening of Chinese Acrobatics and Sichuan Opera and a Chinese New Year Concert at the Manoel Theatre as well as a Chinese Kite Exhibition between January 15 and February 15 at the St James Cavalier – Centre for Creativity.**



During the inauguration speech of the 2008 Chinese Spring Festival at Freedom Square Valletta HE Chai Xi, Ambassador of the Republic of China in Malta opined that, "Cultural activities of the kind of the Spring festival goes a long way towards fostering mutual understanding between the people of Malta and China".

The following is an extract from HE Chai Xi inauguration speech:

"The Chinese Spring Festival, also called the Chinese Lunar New Year, can trace back to ancient China 4000 years ago. In China, there is a popular saying "Yi Nian Zhi Ji Zai Yu Chun", meaning "a year's plan starts with Spring". The arrival of the Spring Festival means that ice and snow are going to melt, spring is around the corner and a new round of seeding comes. In China, at this time of the year, people are embracing the red-letter day in jubilant songs and dances. Spring Festival is a feast of happiness and auspiciousness and also a day of family reunion. People who have been away from home will go back to visit their parents, relatives and friends when the festival comes.

As the most important traditional festival of the Chinese nation, the Chinese Spring Festival represents the essence of the long-standing Chinese history, civilization, culture, arts and traditions. It not only reflects the colourful and diversified traditional culture and arts of China but also embodies the Chinese people's way of thinking, values and the philosophy of "cherishing harmony". Fine culture has no national boundary and belongs to the mankind. The very goal of presenting the Chinese Spring Festival events is to share with our Maltese friends the cream of traditional Chinese culture as well as the joy and blessings of the festival through the state-of-the-art performances and rich cultural activities."



HE Chai Xi expressed his conviction that activities of the kind of the Chinese Spring Festival lead fellow Maltese to understand and appreciate better Chinese Culture and traditions. HE added that such activities further enhance mutual understanding and friendship between the two peoples. He wished the people of Malta and China a brilliant future of peace, happiness and luckiness.



In his winding up, HE augured success to the 2008 Valletta Chinese Spring Festival. In conclusion HE extended, on behalf of the Chinese Embassy in Malta and on his own stead, the very best wishes for a happy New Year to all Chinese fellowmen living in Malta as well as happiness and good health to all the Maltese people.

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telephone numbers:  
79449975  
99487218  
79068072

Editorial Team:  
Jason Vella, Editor  
Reno Calleja, Consultant  
Joyce Guilliamier  
Alan Saliba  
John Agius



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Malta China Friendship Society  
St Christopher Street  
Valletta  
Malta  
E-mail: [info@maltachina.org](mailto:info@maltachina.org)

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Build Bridges  
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## "The Road To Civilisation"

### Featuring Malta on Chinese CTTV



A five-member crew from CTTV, Chinese Times TV, China's largest television network, was in Malta recently working on a documentary entitled "The Road to Civilisation". The documentary which will be featured on the Chinese television, aims to highlighting the importance of the Mediterranean on the road to civilisation.

The crew has been working on the documentary for the last three months. Apart from Malta they visited Italy, Spain, Morocco and Tunisia. The first part of the documentary is expected to be broadcast on China CTTV during the Beijing Olympics.

While in Malta, the CTTV crew interviewed Mr. Reno Calleja, the President of the Malta China Friendship Society. The MCFS President supported the work by the Chinese film crew and assisted the CTTV team during their stay on the Island.

In his interview, Mr Calleja suggested that Malta should have a museum dedicated to the Maltese fishing industry. He claimed that the fishing industry is part of the island's civilisation and has been contributing to local and Mediterranean civilisation for thousands of years.

Mr Calleja added that he agreed to be interviewed for the documentary to promote Malta to the hundreds of millions of people from around the world who will be viewing the documentary when screened.

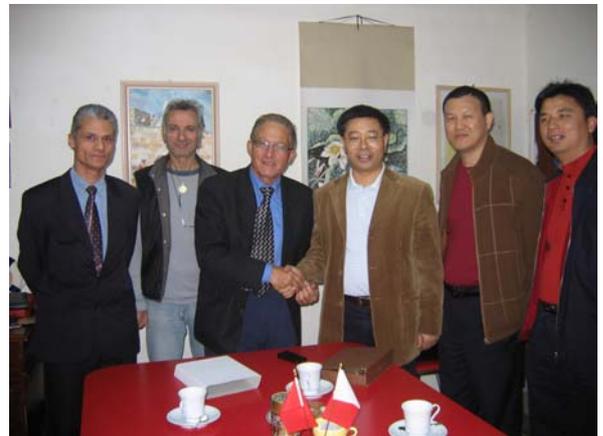
The handling arrangements for the film crew visit to Malta were made by Special Interest Travel, which is part of the Demajo Group of Companies.



### Guangdong Land & Resources Department

A delegation from the Guangdong "Land & Resources Department" visited Malta between the 4th & 7th January 2008. During their stay the delegation met a delegation from the Lands Department in Malta. On the 7th of January the delegation was guest of the MCFS Committee at the offices of the Society in Valletta.

*On the right, members of the Guangdong delegation are being greeted by the MCFS President and other committee members.*





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Malta China Friendship Society  
St Christopher Street  
Valletta  
Malta  
E-mail: [info@maltachina.org](mailto:info@maltachina.org)

## Malta China Friendship Society Events

### Presentation of Chinese Paintings to the President of Malta

17th December 2007



^ On the 17th of December 2007 a delegation from the MCFS presented a number of Chinese paintings to the President of Malta at the Palace in Valletta. The paintings by the famous Chinese artist Na Yuan were later sold at the New Year's Auction for the Community Chest fund. The artist, Na Yuan exhibited her paintings in Malta on many occasions.



The Chinese New Year Dinner was held at the Shangri La Restaurant in Bugibba on the 23rd February. The Dinner was very well attended by MCFS members and guests. H.E. the Chinese Ambassador Mr Chai Xi and his wife Madame Zhang Rufen and other diplomats from the Embassy were guests of honour. Also present from the Chinese Cultural Centre were The Director Mr Zheng Hao, Ms Lily Zhang and Mr Xu Ningbo.

« *New Year's Dinner*



^ The Malta Institute of Tourism, a Government institution run by the Ministry of Education that trains hundreds of Maltese and foreign students in the tourism and catering sector in Malta, organized an excellent dinner to commemorate the Chinese New Year. The dishes served were all prepared and cooked by the 18 Chinese students attending the institute.



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Valletta  
Malta  
E-mail: info@maltachina.org

## Sketches

from

## Home



**The Manoel Theatre** in Valletta, a charming 18<sup>th</sup> century historical structure and Malta's most prestigious theatre commemorate the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008. Through *Sketches from Home*, an exquisitely inspiring interplay of creative musical dialogue, the performance is a vibrant recital of intercultural dialogue of original music that spans from highly energetic to evocative and sensitive moments.

*Sketches from Home* exposes a geographical, musical and cultural mélange. Presented by three exceptional artists, Guo Yue, Renzo Spiteri and Ben Murray, *Sketches from Home* is a project initiated by Musicconnect (Malta) in partnership with the Malta Ministry of Tourism & Culture, Spar-kasse Bank Malta plc and the Ministry of Finance National Lotteries Good Causes Fund. Musicconnect (Malta) are a dynamic organisation that fosters intercultural and trans-national music and artistic collaborations that promote a diverse and global intercultural dialogue. The event is sponsored by Digital Magic, Impressions Limited and ChooseMalta.com.



*Manoel Theatre, Valletta—Malta*

The three performing artists were brought together by chance, in September 2006, during a Sori-WOMAD festival in The Republic of Korea.



**Guo Yue** has performed in music festivals, theatres and arts venues worldwide, collaborating with many musicians, singers and composers, and touching audiences both large and small with the eloquent beauty and descriptive power of his music and words. His bamboo flutes can be heard on the soundtracks of Bertollucci's Oscar-winning film *The Last Emperor* and the Emmy award-winning Channel Four documentary series *Beyond the Clouds*.

**Renzo Spiteri** is a versatile percussionist and creative artiste whose name has become synonymous with innovation and performances of outstanding artistic calibre. From Greenwich Village (New York City) to the Sahara Desert, from the National Concert Hall (Dublin) to Beijing (China), his concert schedules have taken him on a beautiful musical journey across the globe, collaborating with world-class musicians and using the universal language of music to bring different cultures together. Renzo is an internationally endorsed artiste for Toca Percussion, Paiste Cymbals and Gibraltar Hardware, and is supported by Olympus Music (Malta).



**Ben Murray** is well known as an accordion, piano and keyboard artist, with a sensitivity in his playing that is matched by the poetry of his voice. He was nominated for a Mercury Music award and two BBC Radio 2 folk awards (Best Original Song and Best Newcomer). He has recorded on Guo Yue's new album, *Music, Food and Love* (Real World Records, 2006), and has since performed with Yue in various international events, receiving acclaim for his emotive accompaniment and sensitive interpretation of Yue's music.