





A restaurant in the new-look Strada Street. Photo: Chris Sant Fournier

Valletta is named Capital of Culture

Kristina Chetcuti

The verdict on whether Valletta will be the culture capital of Europe in 2018 was announced against the backdrop of Caruoglu's masterpiece, the beheading of St John, and the tension could be cut with a knife.

"The jury has reached a unanimous decision," said Marcello Gauthier, chairman of the selection board. The suspense was palpable.

"There is the will, drive and ambition as well as the strongly

needed esteem to make Valletta European Capital of Culture in 2018."

A resounding, lengthy applause, echoed through St John's Oratory as camera lights - usually prohibited in the room - flashed across the room as Mr Gauthier and Culture Minister Mauro de Marco shook hands.

Taking note of Caruoglu's St Jerome behind them, Mr Gauthier remarked: "This is probably the most wonderful setting ever for a Culture City press conference."

It was a one-city race, really. Valletta had no competition from any other Maltese city. However, it was still not a straightforward win.

"It was a difficult decision because although there was only one city from Malta, it had been made clear during pre-selection that the standards and requirements still had to be met," said Mr Gauthier.

Nine months ago, the selection team came over to assess the bid and made recommendations to the V-18 team in charge of promoting the city.

Four members of the jury went round the city yesterday morning to assess whether the suggestions had been taken up. They walked, they saw and they were persuaded that Valletta deserved the prestigious title.

Despite the announcement, the V-18 team still cannot rest on their laurels, for a report will be drawn up highlighting the things that still need to be worked upon. "One of the issues is that Malta is a very small country at the periphery of

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Hospital owner says deal is valid

Ivan Camilleri

The owner of St Philip's, Frank Portelli, is insisting the Government should plough ahead and sign a €12 million deal for the lease of his Santa Venera hospital in spite of opposition from Labour and two Government backbenchers.

"Though I don't have any objection to the scrutiny of the PAC, we negotiated and agreed with the Government and not with the PAC. Therefore, we insist that we have a valid contract," Dr Portelli told The Times yesterday.

Surprised at recent criticism of the deal, the outspoken surgeon had strong words for those who he said are trying to undermine the agreement.

"Therefore, we insist that we have a valid contract"

"Jeffrey Pulizzino Orlando and Franco Debono are transferring their love towards Richard - Cachia Coruana onto me. They know I'm Richard's friend and so they want to punish me," he said.

Dr Portelli said he is even more surprised by Labour's reaction.

"Until a few weeks ago, Labour was giving me the impression that if they are to government, they will want to work with St Philip's through a Public Private Partnership. What happened to this and why are they changing their tune?" Dr Portelli said.

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V.I8 VALLETTA
CANDIDATE CITY
EUROPEAN CAPITAL
OF CULTURE 2018



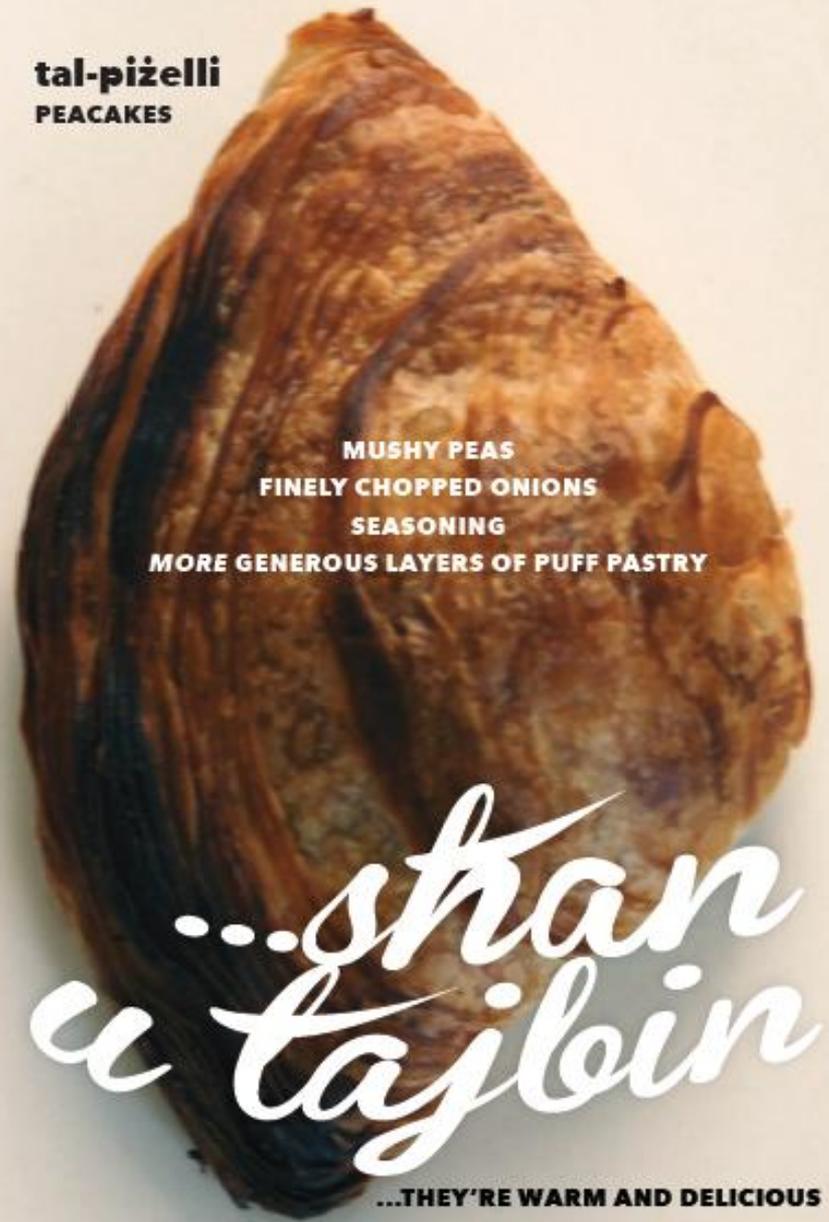


tal-irkotta
CHEESECAKES



RICOTTA
EGGS
SEASONING
GENEROUS LAYERS OF PUFF PASTRY

tal-pizelli
PEACAKES



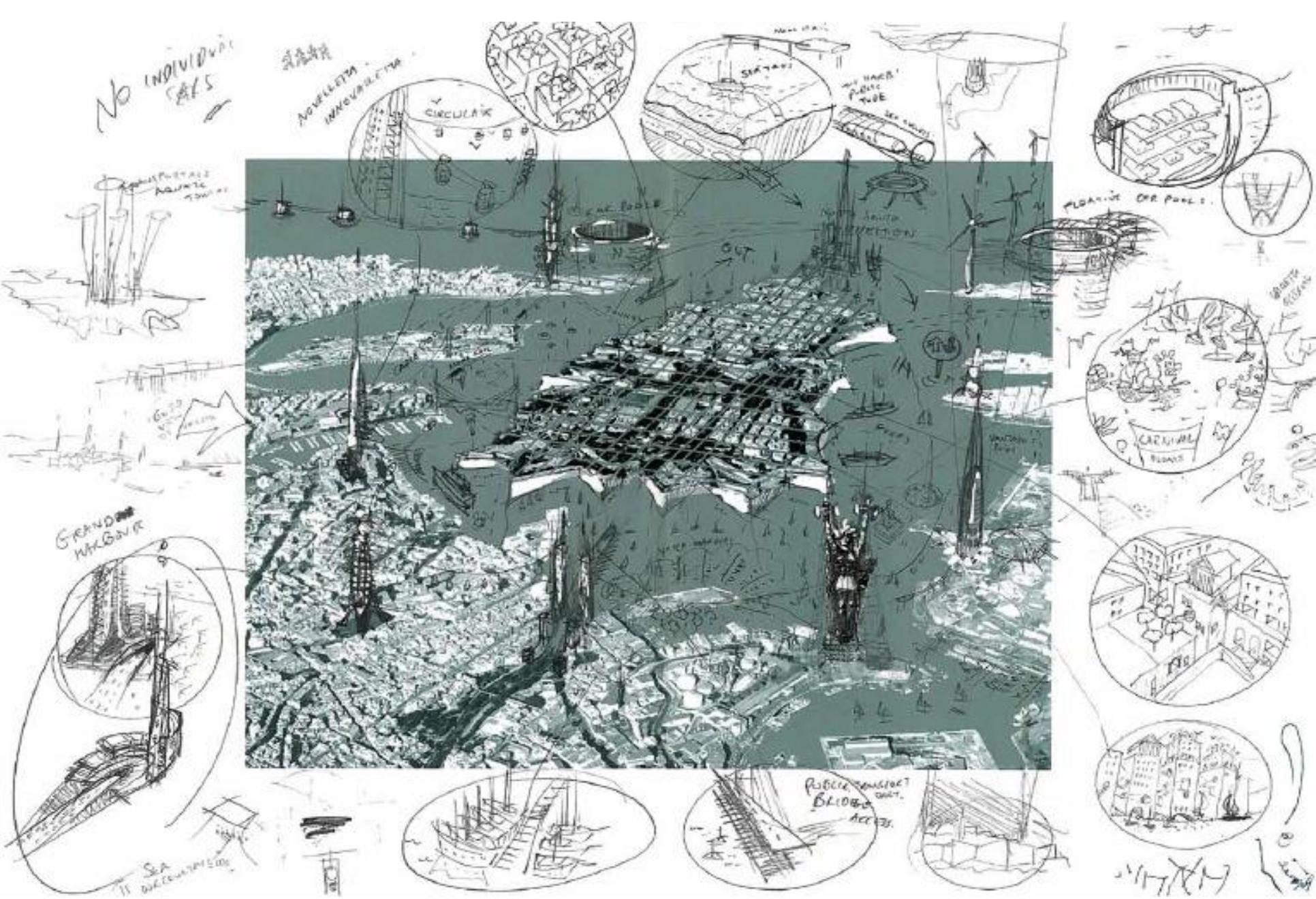
MUSHY PEAS
FINELY CHOPPED ONIONS
SEASONING
MORE GENEROUS LAYERS OF PUFF PASTRY

*...shan
u tajbein*

...THEY'RE WARM AND DELICIOUS

SCALE
1:1













Generations

Routes

Cities

Islands

Generations

Valletta cannot exist as a reenactment of its past. To empower all Valletta's present generations is to give Valletta, and all Malta, a future. Through engaging with younger generations, V.18 creates what is possibly its greatest and most lasting legacy as ECoC: that of giving our children and young people the right tools in order to live a life of inclusion and fulfillment by being direct players in culturally enriching activities.

However, these principles will not be focused on our young people alone. Through interaction, play, imagination, and passion, V.18 includes all generations and all sections of the community in its Cultural Programme.

Generational, cultural and geographical barriers to inclusion and participation in culture can be exacerbated or mitigated by technologies. Digital evolution can speed up our future but also bring about new cultural and societal divides. V.18 brings together cultural practitioners and theorists, creatives and scientists, business and the arts, educators and, our young people to explore and find routes to bridging these and other such contemporary, generational divides.

Routes

V.18 is a cultural laboratory for society to pose self-reflective questions about the role of the past and the challenges of the future, about borders, extremities, differences and similarities within a European and Mediterranean context.

This theme also seeks to ensure that the special atmosphere we love in Valletta today and that sets it apart in Malta, and in Europe, is not lost. The drive to seek contemporary meaning and roles for our city should not see it once more become a city 'built by gentlemen for gentlemen'. The uniqueness of Valletta's communities in its localities is another aspect of diversity to explore, giving it wider contemporary resonance as we do so.

Similarly, we look to those aspects of Maltese society - such as close family ties, small urban communities and a strong culture of volunteering that anchor life on the Islands - that are remarked on by our visitors and have been noted by our young people as aspects of society to hold on to. We examine the stresses and changes these elements are undergoing in contemporary Malta to see how they might add to European-wide thinking on familial and societal change.

Cities

Unlike many cities that are allowed to grow and sprawl randomly, the city of Valletta was planned right down to the detail of the embellishments of its corner buildings. Unlike many cities in other European countries, Malta's are designated by historic status alone and can be the size of villages or small towns.

It is with such a particular lens that we wish to foster a better understanding of our lived-in environment and of the importance of the good design for Valletta. In doing so, we dwell also on the implications for the future of 'the European city'. How can citizens, designers, artists, urban planners, architects and residents collaborate and contribute to this rethinking of Valletta as a creative city, as an ECoC? We seek inspiration in our built environment that can serve us into the future; conserving the past by giving it a contemporary calling.

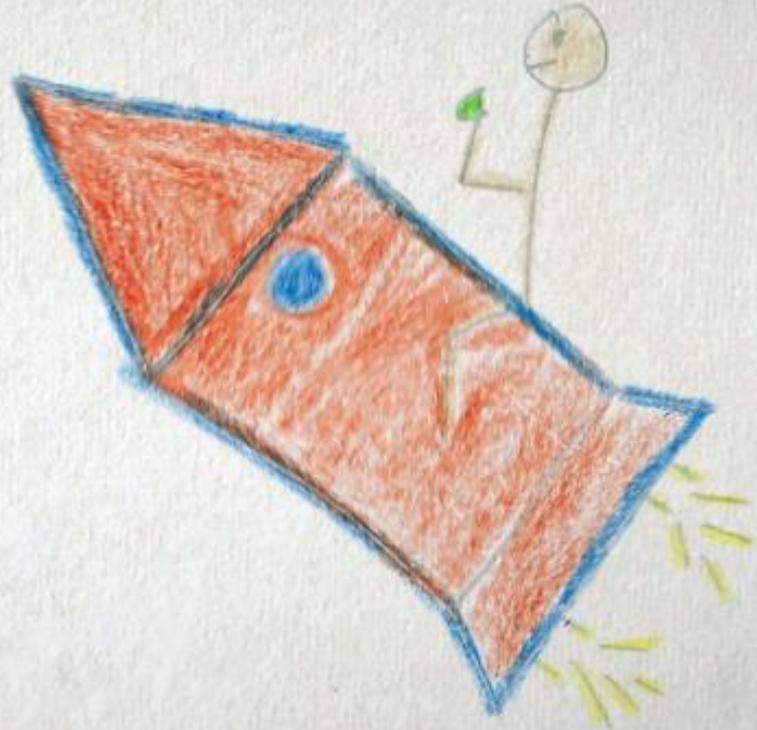
This theme reaches out also to Malta's other cities and to the urban-rural communities that define Malta. We find common ground with counterpart heritage and port cities across the EU and the Mediterranean facing similar issues of declining populations, regeneration, demands of tourism, urban congestion, environmental degradation and so on.

Islands

We are citizens of the Mediterranean, and Valletta is a unique vantage point to focus on the issues relating to this sea-cum-region bordering Europe's south. The sea has shaped our culture, manipulated our trades and industries, and influenced almost every part of our lives. Valletta exists solely because of the sea; its peninsula a strategic location fashioning the city as both defensive fortress and safe haven thanks to the natural harbours flanking it.

V.18 fosters relationships between the Maltese people and the sea that have been lost to time, are simply not understood today, or which have yet to be discovered. Through projects involving the maritime industries, V.18 will connect us with artists and performers taking inspiration from the sea to create new narratives and rekindle old ones that have a cultural resonance today.

We promote a respect for our island environment by revisiting traditional ways of interacting with the sea and coast that use our maritime resources sustainably. The current pressures on our maritime resources can be addressed in part by seeking answers in crafts and industries of old that made sensitive use of our environment.



Work stops at sunset. Darkness falls over the building site. The sky is filled with stars. “There is the blueprint,” they say.





Intercultural **Malta**





a soul for europe
Uma Alma para a Europa









Ghamel xita ghamel

Rain, rain, won't you come down

halli jikber il-haxix,

For the green green grass to grow on the ground:

il-haxix naghtuh lill-moghża*

To the goat we will then feed it,

u l-moghża taghtina l-ġbejniet.

From its milk we will make cheeselets.

Il-ġbejniet naghtuhom lin-nanna

The cheese we'll give to our gran

u n-nanna thitilna qmis.

Who will sew us a shirt in return.

This popular traditional short rhyme, passed orally through Maltese generations, is an invocation of rain for its milk-producing powers.

xita



rain

ħaxix



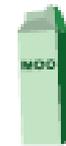
grass

baqra



cow

ħalib



milk

qmis



shirt

* Interchangeable with:
ħaqra cow
naħħja sheep





VALLETTA
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