

THE MCA NEWSLETTER



Malta
Classics
Association

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LETTER From the Editor

Salvete omnes!

On the 21st of March, the world remembers International Poetry Day! To celebrate the wealth of Classical poetry, this MCA Newsletter issue opens with a translation of a Latin poem by Catullus into Maltese by our President, Professor Horatio Caesar Roger Vella.

Next, Maria Giuliana Fenech meets Professor Christian Laes, Professor of Ancient History and President of Euroclassica. The MCA is also honoured to introduce Professor Laes as the keynote speaker in the first edition of the MCA Annual Conference of Contemporary Research in Classics, to held between the 8th and 9th April 2021.

In this issue, we are also very pleased to exhibit a breathtakingly expressive artwork by Dr Carmel Serracino, entitled ‘and his soul fleeting from his limbs’, on which the artist also comments, followed by our monthly dose of Classical etymology in The Power of the Classical Word.

The MCA is always very excited to hear whatever you’d like to tell us about the Classics! If you have an article, poem, story, illustration, project, event or anything else that you would like to contribute, we would love to hear about it. Drop us an e-mail on info@classicsmalta.org or contact us on our Facebook page.

Stay safe and ἔρρωσο!

Andrew Debono Cauchi

KATULLU 34

INNU LIL DIANA

TRADOTT GĦALL-MALTI
MILL-PROFESSUR HORATIO CAESAR ROGER VELLA

*Dianae sumus in fide
puellae et pueri integri:
Dianam pueri integri
puellaeque canamus.*

*o Latonia, maximi
magna progenies Iovis,
quam mater prope Deliam
deposivit olivam,*

*montium domina ut fores
silvarumque virentium
saltuumque reconditorum
amnumque sonantum:*

*tu Lucina dolentibus
Iuno dicta puerperis,
tu potens Trivia et notho es
dicta lumine Luna.*

*tu cursu, dea, menstruo
metiens iter annum,
rustica agricolae bonis
tectata frugibus explēs.*

*sis quocumque tibi placet
sancta nomine, Romulique,
antique ut solita es, bona
sospites ope gentem.*



Stampa ta' *Katullu* ta' Schorle (Username)
Sors: Wikimedia Commons taht CC 3.0 Unported (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/deed.en>)

Katullu (ċ.84QK-ċ.54QK) kien poeta Ruman, maghruf għall-istil poetiku personali tieghu - il-burdata u t-ton ta' hafna mill-versi tieghu għadhom jinfluwenzaw il-poeti kontemporanji kif ukoll jiġu moqrija u studjati sal-lum.

Tista' ssib filmat tal-Professor Vella jkanta dil-poezija fuq il-Youtube Channel tal-Malta Classics Association billi tagħfas [hawn](#).

Aħna xebbiet u ġuvintur kollna mogħtija lil Diana: ejjew, ġuvintur u xebbiet kollna mogħtija, inkantaw fuq Diana.

O bint Leto, wild kbir ta' Ġovi l-Wisq Kbir, li omm(ok) weldet ħdejn iż-żebbuġa ta' Delu

biex tkun is-sinjura tal-muntanji u tal-boskijiet iħaddru u tal-widien moħbija u tax-xmajjar joħolqu l-ħsejjes:

int imsejħa "Ġunun Lucina" għal dawk fl-uġiġħ tal-ħlas, int Trivja ħakkiema u l-Qamar (hekk) imsejħa għad-dawl misluf.

Int, o alla mara, li tkejjel il-korsa annwali b'ġirjie(tek) ta' kull xahar, int timla d-dar tal-kampanja tal-bidwi bi prodotti tajba.

Jalla tkun imqaddsa b'kwalunkwe isem li jogħġbok, u jalla tgħajjex ġens Romulu b'abbundanza tajba kif kont imdorrija (tagħmel) fl-antik.

The Malta Classics Association meets...

PROFESSOR CHRISTIAN LAES

Maria Giuliana Fenech from the Malta Classics Association speaks to **Professor Christian Laes**, Professor of Ancient History at the University of Manchester, about his research interests and his term as the incumbent President of Euroclassica. Professor Laes is also the Vice-President of Academia Latinitati Fovendae, and he will also be the keynote speaker at the MCA First Annual Conference of Contemporary Research in Classics in April 2021.

How did you start studying Classics?

I was very lucky. I went to a school run by the Norbertine Fathers which had a very strong Latin and Greek tradition. When I was 12 years old, in my first year of studying Latin, we had nine hours of Latin a week. The following year, the number of Latin hours decreased, but four hours of Greek were added. By the time I was 13 or 14 years old, I knew that I wanted a life with Classics in it! In 1992, while a University student, I attended a Living Latin summer school which reinforced my passion for all things classical, and I am still very active in the contemporary Latin sphere.

What are your research interests?

They are varied, but since 1997, I have been working a lot on social and cultural history. Some of my research has concentrated on disability and the course of human life, from childhood to old age. We often think that the way we treat children and old people is the only good way, however researching these topics emphasises the importance of context. These topics fascinate me, and they also satisfy my passion of reading texts and meeting people. They are also thrilling because they are under researched and therefore there is the excitement of venturing into undiscovered pastures.

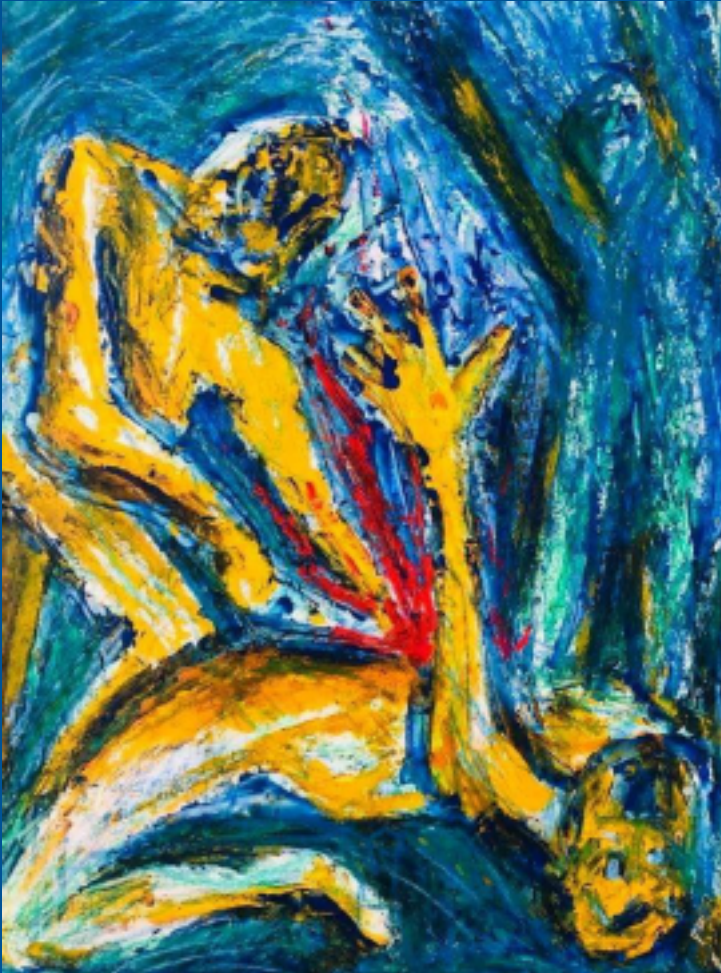
Can you tell us a bit more about Euroclassica?

I was elected President in 2019. Essentially, Euroclassica brings together all the associations of teachers of classical languages and civilisations in Europe and promotes their cooperation. Yet, for me, Euroclassica can also be described as a grassroots organisation. Quite

frankly, we are not very rich, but our broad is extensive and our potential is huge. In 2019 we held our conference in Antwerp. More than 50 teachers attended that conference; thus, the conference served as inspiration to the local Classics community. It is our ambition to expand the association further. Eight countries should be joining our organisation and I hope that all European countries will eventually be members.

I would like to end this interview with a plea. I always tell my students to follow their passion. The great thing about Classics is that they are very broad and not at all restrictive. Several paths branch out from the study of Classics. In fact, I think it is better if University education is less specialised in general and this why I think liberal arts colleges, which offer broad programmes of study, and expose students to both humanities and sciences are particularly excellent. Classics are so broad and so eclectic that they automatically include everyone. The classical world does not have to be admired, worshipped or placed on a pedestal. It is there in order that we may interact with it, criticise it and learn from it.





**‘and his soul
fleeting
from his
limbs’**

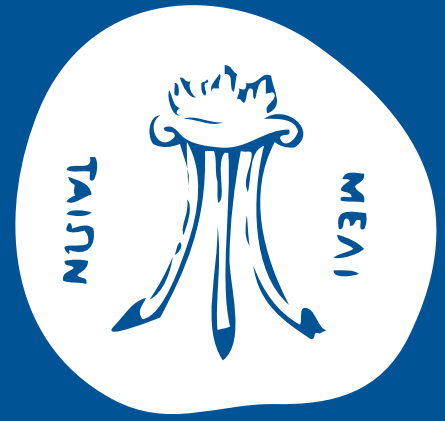
**mixed media
on paper**

**by
DR CARMEL
SERRACINO**

The Artist’s Comment

“I did this many years ago when I was still an undergraduate discovering for the first time the horrors and ecstasies of Homer's ‘Iliad’. My great ambition then was that one day I would make the definitive film version of the epic. I still hope one day I might.”

the power of the **CLASSICAL** **WORD**



abysmal

adjective //

Used to describe something as extremely bad.

From the Classical Greek ἄβυσσος (abyssos) meaning 'bottomless', 'unfathomed' or 'the underworld'.

Amanda

noun //

A female name given to a person, popular in the last 200 years.

From the Latin *amo* meaning 'to love'.

cereal

noun //

An edible grain, commonly a type of breakfast food.

From the Latin *cerealis* meaning 'concerning Ceres' or 'concerning agriculture'.

sarcasm

noun //

The use of irony to mock or convey contempt.

From the Classical Greek σαρκασμός (sarkasmos) meaning 'mockery' or 'sarcasm'.

Ambrose

noun //

A male name given to a person, most famously the name of a Bishop of Milan in the 4th century.

From the Classical Greek ἀμβρόσιος (ambrosios) meaning 'immortal' or 'divine'.

arcane

adjective //

Used to describe something as understood by a few, mysterious, secret or obscure.

From the Latin *arcanus* meaning 'secret', 'trusty' or 'silent'.