

ZFINMALTA

NATIONAL DANCE COMPANY

UNDER THE ARTISTIC DIRECTION OF

PAOLO MANGIOLA

PRESENTS

A CHRISTMAS SHOW
COMPOSED &
DIRECTED BY

**THE NEW
VICTORIANS**

CHOREOGRAPHY BY

**ADRIANO
BOLOGNINO**

15/16/17 & 20/21/22

DEC 2023

**19:30 VALLETTA
CAMPUS THEATRE**



CHRISTMAS WITH ŻFINMALTA

NATIONAL DANCE COMPANY

Welcome to ŻfinMalta's first ever Christmas show, a truly unique collaboration with some of Malta's best creative minds. From the first seeds of an idea to the astonishing audio-visual performance you are about to experience, the process of bringing this work together has been a magical ride and a privilege. We are immensely grateful to everyone who has contributed. *Ħolm tal-Milied?* is a beautiful and memorable Christmas celebration for all to enjoy.

Looking ahead, ŻfinMalta is launching into a new year of community outreach programmes, international tours, and collaborations with a stellar line up of local and international artists. Join an evening class on Mondays and Tuesdays with *Iżfen Ma' ŻfinMalta*, get an exclusive preview of each new production at open rehearsals, and catch us in April at Belgrade Dance Festival and Teatro Ariosto in Reggio Emilia.

Download the full season program from our website.



FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

As Artistic Director of a national repertory dance company, I am frequently asked whether our company would stage a classic Christmas production, such as the quintessential *Nutcracker*. My response is always a firm 'no'. As a Maltese company, deeply rooted in our unique culture, I have always believed we could offer much more than replicating a story which, in my opinion, has been told far too many times.

Credit is due to my partner who introduced me to Trevor Zahra's book *Ħolm tal-Milied?* and its enchanting narrative, thus marking the beginning of a beautiful, creative journey. The book offers numerous points of inspiration where dance, theatre and music meet to create a rich, multidisciplinary work. In keeping with the spirit of collaboration at the core of everything we do at ŻfinMalta, a team of creatives was gathered, each with their own unique signature, to create our own quintessential Christmas show celebrating Maltese traditions through contemporary storytelling.

Ħolm tal-Milied? now holds a place alongside a growing catalogue of works in the ŻfinMalta repertoire dedicated to Maltese heritage and culture. We are excited to present this Christmas gift to our expanding audience, and hope it will become an annual tradition, enriching the festive season with a distinctive and culturally resonant performance.

PAOLO MANGIOLA

ĦOLM TAL-MILIED?

A CHRISTMAS SHOW COMPOSED & DIRECTED BY
THE NEW VICTORIANS

DATES & TIME: 15/16/17 & 20/21/22 DECEMBER 2023, 19:30

VENUE: VALLETTA CAMPUS THEATRE

This season ŻfinMalta comes bearing a special gift for all the family with *Ħolm tal-Milied?* a dance-music-theatre production portraying the power of a child's dream to heal and restore the spirit of Christmas. Under the artistic direction of The New Victorians, this unique collaboration brings together the local award-winning sister duo with Adriano Bolognino, a young Neapolitan choreographer and rising star on the international dance scene. An adaptation of the homonymous work by the popular Maltese author Trevor Zahra, *Ħolm tal-Milied?* immerses us into the heart of Maltese Christmas traditions. The dancers pace us through the story of Leli, a young boy who is determined to restore the celebration of Jesus's birth from past misfortunes that struck his family at Christmas, and the story of Liża, an orphan who longs to share her joy with a family of her own. The piece weaves The New Victorians' bright palette of theatre and popular music through reimagined hymns and carols with the sharp gestural choreographies of Bolognino's contemporary dance, and the narrative verse of Victor Jacono, who is also dramaturg for the production. The company's gifted dancers, together with Anna Horvath's set design, costumes by Laurent Uyttersprot, lights by Dali Aguerbi, and the paper art of James Dimech, will immerse audiences in a magical atmosphere that shifts the story between the hardships of reality and the thrilling world of dreams. For those who love the combination of dance, music, song, and theatre, *Ħolm tal-Milied?* will surely unwrap an experience of hope and joy this Christmas.

The New Victorians are a high-profile, award-winning sister duo who make music and theatre. Since 2015, they have released two full length studio albums and multiple EPs, opened for multi-platinum artist Anastacia on her Evolution Tour and for the BBC Concert Orchestra in 2019, and repeatedly topped local airplay charts.

Adriano Bolognino's extensive portfolio of achievements includes recipient of the Danza&Danza Emergent Choreographer Award 2022, new creations for Kayzer Ballet in 2023 and Compagnia Opus Ballet in 2022. He was selected by the European Dance Network Aerowaves, and in 2020 the Venice Biennale commissioned him to create *Your body is a battleground*.

Based on the book Ħolm tal-Milied? by Trevor Zahra. Published in Malta by Merlin. Supported by the Italian Cultural Institute of Valletta.



DURATION: 70 minutes

AGE: 5+

PRODUCTION TEAM

**Artistic direction, original score,
and live performance:**

The New Victorians

Choreography: Adriano Bolognino

Dramaturgy: Victor Jacono

Ballet Master: Florinda Camilleri

Set design: Anna Horvath

Costumes: Laurent Uyttersprot

Light design: Dali Aguerbi

Paper artist: James Dimech

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

ZFINDAYS 2024

DOUBLE BILL: ARINGA ROSSA .10, CANTATA

DATES & TIME: 16/17/18 & 23/24/25 FEBRUARY 2024, 19:30

VENUE: VALLETTA CAMPUS THEATRE

ARINGA ROSSA .10

In this collaboration with ŻfinMalta, choreographer **Ambra Senatore** revisits 'Aringa Rossa', first created as a full-length work in 2014. Attentive to a curious, open dance, attuned to the experience of the choreographer and the dancers, 'Aringa Rossa' takes Senatore's compositional style to the extreme, constantly shifting the pieces of an ever more astonishing puzzle. Working with clues, games with changing rules, and fragmented scenes, the dancers eventually take over this meticulous choreography.

Ambra Senatore has been director of the National Choreographic Center in Nantes since 2016.

Supported by the Embassy of France in Malta and the Italian Cultural Institute of Valletta

CANTATA

ŻfinMalta is thrilled to present 'Cantata' by the inimitable **Mauro Bigonzetti**.

'Cantata' is Bigonzetti's personal quest to read and recover the traditional musical heritage of Southern Italy. The passionate and visceral gestures of the choreography are evocative of its wild, Mediterranean origins. 'Cantata' is an intuitive dance that stages a continuous game of opposites, sacred and profane, man-woman, sun and moon, love and violence, where music, sounds, voice and body are the main interpreters of the piece.

*Supported by the Italian Cultural Institute of Valletta, and
The Embassy of Portugal in Rome and Camões I.P*

For more information and bookings visit

zfinmalta.org



DANCERS

Leli's Father / King / Chorus - Marti Blanco Romeu

Creators / Chorus - Pearl Calleja

Leli's Grandmother / Fisherwoman - Lidia Carिकासole

Washerwoman / Chorus - Noemi Coin Andreotti

Liza/Betti - Lotte La Haye

Leli's Uncle / Shepherd / Chorus - Jérémie Lafon

Fisherwoman / Sheep / Chorus - Rocío Moreira De Castris

Suor Emilia / King / Chorus - Keith Micallef

Sheep / Chorus - Marion Paquet

Leli - Matteo Real

Creators / Chorus - Simon Riccardi-Zani

King / Chorus - Benjamin Spiteri

Leli's Mother / Angel / Chorus - Amber Van Veen

Fisherwoman / Sheep / Chorus - Becci Wilkinson

THE COMPANY

Artistic Director: Paolo Mangiola

Agency Head: Christabel Borg Preca

Producer: Nicole Bearman

Education & Outreach Artist: Martina Zammit

Marketing & Communications Manager: Suzanna Nikolic

Communications, Marketing and Administration Officer: Emma Walker

Administrative Assistant: Sylvia Attard

Technical Manager: Mohamed Ali 'Dali' Aguerbi

Technical Assistant: Nathan Tanti

ŻfinMalta National Dance Company is part of the National Agency for the Performing Arts (NAPA), a public agency providing a joint legal, administrative, and organisational framework for KorMalta, Teatru Malta and ŻfinMalta.

EXECUTIVE TEAM

Dominic Galea, Executive Head

Christabel Borg Preca, Acting Director for Administration

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the Performing Arts



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THANKS TO OUR ACCOMMODATION PARTNERS

Elisa & Simon Grech

BECOME A SUPPORTER

Your support for ŻfinMalta National Dance Company will contribute directly to
the future of world-class dance in Malta.

For further information contact: Nicole Bearman, Producer, +356 99999520 or
email nicole.bearman@zfinmalta.mt

FULL SEASON PROGRAMME

zfinmalta.org

Design: Marie Claire Cremona

Photography: Kurt Paris