

An opera by Reuben Pace on a libretto by Ġorġ Peresso
A production by Mikiel Anton Vassalli College in collaboration with Belt il-Bniedem

TRASH

The Rest Is Dust

Synopsis

Rocco, a powerful, ambitious, and profit-obsessed real estate developer, has turned his attention to a pristine valley. He envisions a gleaming new world—an opulent landscape of high-rise buildings, luxury villas, and a cutting-edge university campus. It's a vision of modernity and money, and he is determined to see it realized at any cost. His son, Sonny, shares his enthusiasm and follows eagerly in his father's footsteps.

To make this dream a reality, Rocco enlists the support of Ernest, a pragmatic university professor. Ernest sees an opportunity: the development offers the possibility of a new campus that could elevate his status. Willing to trade integrity for ambition, he throws his weight behind the project.

But standing in the way of their plans is one significant obstacle—a small farmhouse located directly on the path of the proposed road. Surrounded by abundant gardens, it is tended by its mysterious owner, the so-called Lord of the Garden. This figure, more legend than man, is a spiritualist committed to preserving nature. He refuses to sell, rejecting the developers' offers outright.

Unwilling to be bested, Rocco and Ernest begin to orchestrate underhanded methods to seize the property. But their plotting is disrupted by the arrival of Gaia—Ernest's fiercely independent daughter, returning from South Africa. Accompanying her is her partner, Prue, a calm but determined man of African descent. Gaia immediately allies herself with the Lord of the Garden.

Together with Carmen, a fiery young artist from the village, Gaia and Prue become the spark for a growing movement of resistance. They attract others—most notably a band of spirited children—who rally to protect the garden and its guardian. What began as a lonely stand becomes a vibrant front, united in their determination to shield the land from development.

The battle lines are drawn. On one side stand greed, power, and unbridled development; on the other, a collective yearning for connection, community, and ecological balance. As tensions rise and tactics become more desperate, all paths lead back to the garden—the sacred ground where the future of the valley will be decided.

In the end, when the dust settles, what remains may not be bricks or borders, but the spirit of resistance, the resilience of nature, and the unshakable power of love.

How will it all end? The rest... is dust.

Foreword

By the Head of College Network
Mikiel Anton Vassalli College

It is with great pride and anticipation that we present **TRAB** – *The Rest is Dust*, a groundbreaking multidisciplinary opera production that exemplifies the core vision of Mikiel Anton Vassalli College (MAVC); that of fostering a holistic and innovative educational environment through the integration of music, drama, dance, and visual arts.

This contemporary opera is not merely a performance, but a living educational project. It brings together students from across all four of MAVC's specialised schools: the Malta School of Music, the Malta School of Drama and Dance, the Malta School of Art, and the Gozo Visual and Performing Arts School; and invites them to collaborate alongside established artists and professionals from the creative industries. This collaborative model allows our students to experience the realities of artistic production while developing their technical skills, creative expression, and capacity for teamwork.

TRAB explores powerful contemporary themes through an original score by Reuben Pace and libretto by Gorg Peresso, while incorporating experimental and immersive staging elements crafted through the lens of visual art, choreography, and design. The process behind this production reflects MAVC's commitment to interdisciplinary learning, where creativity becomes a bridge between disciplines and where young artists learn not only through study, but by doing.

This project is a testimony to what education in the arts should aspire to be: relevant, collaborative, ambitious, and transformative. I commend our educators, artists, technical teams, and above all, our students, for embracing this challenge with such energy and vision. Together, they have created a work that does not only speak to the present, but dares to shape the future.

We invite you to witness **TRAB** – *The Rest is Dust* with an open mind and heart. Let it inspire you, move you, and reaffirm your belief in the unifying power of the arts.

Victor Galea

Executive Producer
Head of College Network
Mikiel Anton Vassalli College

The Producer and Composer

TRAB: The Rest is Dust is the third and final opera in the first-ever Maltese opera cycle. The cycle began with SWAR: Behind the Fortifications, which premiered to great acclaim on November 14, 2018, at the Mediterranean Conference Centre as part of the Valletta 2018 celebrations. The second opera, BLAT: The Island Fortress, was adapted into the first-ever opera film in Maltese and premiered on June 22, 2022.

Each opera within this cycle explores the theme of siege from various human perspectives: SWAR addresses the siege on religious beliefs, BLAT examines the siege on political ideology and social class, while TRAB delves into the siege of humanity against itself, as well as issues related to nature, sexual orientation (homophobia), and skin colour (xenophobia).

The librettos for all three operas were crafted by the esteemed author Ġorġ Peresso, whom I regard as a father figure. His mentorship, philosophies, and worldview have profoundly influenced me on personal, artistic, and spiritual levels.

Musically, the operas incorporate certain leitmotifs, though not for every character, as was more prevalent in the previous two works. Characters are more distinctly characterized through their melodic lines; for example, Rocco's melodies typically exhibit a sharp, rhythmic, and authoritative quality, while Carmen's material is characterized by flowing melismas and lyrical elements. Stylistically, the music is primarily atonal and contains elements of intertextuality—many of which I leave for the audience to discover—including references to the previous two operas. A wide variety of textures are employed, and the orchestral colours are fully explored.

Although this marks the conclusion of this opera cycle, it is by no means the end of my operatic endeavours.

Reuben Pace

Multidisciplinary Art Studies Coordinator
Mikiel Anton Vassalli College

The Librettist

“There’s a past in fables that seems to have never been.

There’s a future that might still happen.

There are stories that sound like fables, but that really took place and that only a fable can tell.

This is one such story.”

The opera begins with a madrigal performed by The Four Seasons, which serves as a recurring motif throughout the libretto, music, and artistic vision. This piece sets the tone that resonates throughout the entire work. The first act unfolds through a storyline grounded in realism, though it is not without its controversies. At its heart is a confrontation between two opposing forces: an ambitious entrepreneur eager to develop a prestigious complex, including a university, and the enigmatic Lord of the Garden, whose tranquil and almost otherworldly way of life stands in stark contrast. His meticulously cared-for garden, a sanctuary for artists and unconventional spirits, becomes an obstacle to the entrepreneur's relentless pursuit of progress.

In contrast, the second act delves into a more surreal, nearly dreamlike narrative. It blends fantastical elements with tangible, real-world issues, exploring themes such as beauty, wisdom, knowledge, innocence, and humility. These concepts are brought to life through the voices of children, whose persistent—sometimes even insistent—calls prompt contemplation. Ultimately, the destruction of the garden emerges as a poignant symbol, echoing an age-old lesson: each of us must tend to our own garden. Progress devoid of culture leads only to ruin, reducing everything to dust.

Unless...

Gorg Peresso

Writer, Poet and Veteran Broadcaster

The Stage Director

Upon reading *Rest Is Dust*, I was struck by its richness and depth, presenting a daunting challenge for staging, even more so than our 2018 production of **Swar**. The core issue was how to effectively express its numerous themes within a cohesive design.

Through extensive discussions with Rueben, George, and our creative team, we established that the production must center on the children, as they embody the future. The opera contrasts nature and industrialization, requiring children's significant roles both onstage and off. We involved art students of varying ages in creating visuals and projections, ensuring authentic, organic expressions rather than adult-imposed concepts.

The narrative gradually developed, suggesting a shared childhood between Rocco and the Lord of the Garden, whose paths diverged over time. Act 1 portrays a bleak, monochrome industrial landscape, while Act 2 shifts to vibrant color as the climax unfolds. Rocco's questionable victory raises the question of his conscience. The Lord manipulates Rocco to reconsider his destructive choices, elevating himself from gardener to spiritual Guru to evoke Rocco's sense of duty to nature, parallel to contemporary climate activism.

The opera also functions spiritually, featuring a vocal ensemble representing the four seasons, supported by young dancers whose choreography illustrates interconnectedness with nature amid climate change.

Ultimately, the production culminates in a somber tableau, where the stunning red of the Rose symbolizes both beauty and foreboding. Blood-red sand spilling through an hourglass highlights the impending doom as the world spins in a troubling direction. Yet, in the face of technological advancement and environmental crises, nature endures and continues to flourish. While the resilience of nature is reassuring, we must heed the warnings of climate scientists and advocates.

"The past is yours the future mine"
The Stone Roses-

Michael Moxham
Opera Director

The Conductor

Participating in the premiere of **TRAB: *The Rest is Dust*** by Reuben Pace has been an extraordinary experience for me as a young conductor. I am honored to lead the world premiere of this final opera in a trilogy reflecting Malta's historical, cultural, and ecological transformations.

The music is unconventional and challenges easy reception, even among professional musicians. Pace's distinct musical idiom diverges from typical European contemporary styles, featuring unique orchestration that is evocative, precise, and illustrative. The score incorporates echoes of Stravinsky, the sensual lyricism of French composers like Fauré, and dramatic vocal shaping reminiscent of Puccini. Trumpet motifs evoke Liszt's Dante Symphony and the wartime signals in Ullmann's *Der Kaiser von Atlantis*. These allusions tie the score to a broader cultural memory while remaining distinctly Maltese, shaped by the island's landscape and history.

TRAB addresses urgent ecological issues such as the destruction of green areas for commercial expansion, a pressing concern in Malta that resonates with similar challenges in my native Poland. The transformation of parks into concrete spaces and the prioritization of development over sustainability are not just local matters; they reflect broader European issues. This project has heightened my awareness of environmental concerns, transforming my experiences from an industrial background marked by ecological degradation into musical expression. The intercultural collaboration behind this project is inspiring. Despite linguistic differences, we are creating art that transcends national lines, reminding us that music can bridge divides. The Maltese language and its Semitic roots, exemplified by words like "Alla" for God, remind me of the deep connections between language and cultural identity.

Although I have conducted various genres before, leading a production of this scale is a first for me. Working with an international cast of singers and collaborating closely with the composer has been a fulfilling experience. This engagement has deepened my understanding of Malta's unique musical ecosystem, its complex history, and its place within the EU.

I hope the experience we share - between musicians, Mikiel Anton Vassalli College, and the Maltese artistic community - will resonate deeply with audiences and mark the beginning of meaningful cooperation between our nations, anchored in shared human values and creative spirit.

Andrzej Mandryka
Conductor

The Maxime Orchestra

Maxime Orchestra is a dynamic orchestra established in 2022 by the talented students of the Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music in Katowice. With a foundation built on rigorous musical education and artistic passion, the ensemble spans a broad spectrum—from engaging popular arrangements to ambitious classical masterpieces. Every performance is meticulously prepared, as the orchestra's musicians, all highly trained graduates and current students of premier music institutions, invest countless hours in rehearsals to ensure that each note resonates with both precision and emotion.

The organization prides itself on a professional approach that goes beyond the stage. A dedicated team manages marketing, logistics, and administrative duties, ensuring that every concert is tailored to meet the unique requirements of its venue. This personalized attention has earned them honorary patronages from leading cultural figures, further validating their commitment to artistic excellence.

In its repertoire, Maxime boldly embraces wide repertoire of baroque, classic, romantic, XX century and modern music. This versatility, coupled with collaborations with esteemed soloists and external organizations, enables the orchestra to create fresh, memorable interpretations that captivate a diverse audience across cities like Katowice, Zabrze, Dąbrowa Górnicza, Częstochowa, and Bielsko-Biała. Maxime Orchestra is also known as an ensemble which promote polish music of XX century like Karłowicz, Bacewicz or Szymanowski. Ultimately, Maxime is more than an orchestra—it is a beacon of youthful innovation and meticulous artistry, consistently striving to transform each concert into a unique, emotionally charged experience that bridges tradition with modernity.



A vibrant evening of contemporary classical music featuring Polish performers from the Maxime Orchestra and new works by Maltese and Polish composers. (Rabat, Malta April 16 2025)

The Choir Master

Born to Welsh-speaking parents, I had a typically Welsh musical upbringing, singing in choirs from the age of seven, accompanying from thirteen, and conducting from sixteen. After graduating from UCNW Bangor, I furthered my studies on the répétiteur course at the London Opera Centre, then completed my M.Mus. and won a government scholarship to study composition in Warsaw, Poland.

Back in Wales, I took part in performances of *The Magic Flute*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, and Hoddinott's *The Trumpet Major*. As musical director of Opera Gogledd Cymru, a touring opera company, I directed *Hansel & Gretel*, *Eugene Onegin*, and *The Marriage of Figaro*, and I was commissioned to write a Welsh opera, *Dagrau Pengwern*, which premiered at the National Eisteddfod in 1989.

In 2013, I moved to Malta and once again found time to work in live music, particularly in music theatre and opera. I got involved in several productions at the Teatru Manoel, acting as chorus répétiteur for *La clemenza di Tito*, serving as musical director for *The Great Big Radio Show*, and working as chorus master for *L'elisir d'amore*, *Orphée et Eurydice*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Così fan tutte*.

2017 saw performances of *Rajtek Tinbidel* in Xewkija and in 2018 came the premiere of the musical play *Star of Strait Street* at various venues in Malta as well as work as chorus master for the Maltese opera *Aħna Refuġjati* which was performed in Floriana as part of the Valletta 2018 programme. *Star of Strait Street* was later taken on tour and performed to Maltese audiences in Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne, and San Francisco as well as runs at two venues in London. It re-opened in June 2023 at the Theatre Next Door before again going on tour to the Chichester Festival in the UK. Last year

This is Geoffrey's third occasion working with Reuben Pace and his fourth working with MAVC. Previously, he was chorus master for Gawhar Misjub and Id-Dejjem. He also trained a small choir from the various constituent schools of MAVC who sang in Strasbourg in the summer of 2023 as part of the European Parliament 70th anniversary celebrations.

Geoffrey Thomas

Choir Director

Main Soloists



Andrew Louis Cassar (Malta), Bass Baritone Rocco

Louis Andrew Cassar is an active Maltese Baritone in both opera and sacred genres.

Amongst the many interesting projects in which he was on board, Louis featured in the APS's Bank project in reviving Antonio Nani's Requiem Mass with the Bulgarian Philharmonic Orchestra, under the baton of Mro Joseph Vella, singing the role of St. Paul in the world premiere of Monsignor Marco Firisina's Oratorio *Fino ai confine della terra* with the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra directed by Monsignor Firisina himself, and the VIAF concert in 2019 during which both Carl Orff's "Carmina Burana" and Felix Mendelssohn's "Die Walpurgisnacht" were performed.

2024 also proved to be quite demanding for Louis, since in January he featured in another premiere of the Mro Christopher Muscat's Oratorio "Hawn F'nofs l-Ghar Musbieh qed jixghel", as part of the Agape Music Festival, and was also involved in the premiere of the late Mro. Joseph Vella's unfinished Opera "Valeriana, the Titan's Rock", which premiered on the 4th of May 2024.

The year 2024 saw Cassar interpreting once again the role of St. Paul in Msgr. Firisina's Oratorio, in November 3th, this time under the abled baton of Mro. Christopher Muscat in the Basilica Santi Apostoli in Rome, together with the Jubilate Deo Choir and the Orchestra Sinfonica Citta' di Roma.

Steffen Schantz (Germany), Tenor

Sonny



Dramatic tenor Steffen Schantz, born near Lake Constance in Germany, first earned a diploma in piano from Freiburg Music University. His career in singing began when a renowned opera director encouraged him to pursue it during a piano master class.

He later completed a Master's Degree in Opera Singing under KS Werner Hollweg and continued vocal studies with KS Nicolai Gedda and Maria Candida, currently studying with KS Olivera Miljakovic from the Vienna State Opera.

Over the past 20 years, he has performed at numerous major German opera houses, including Stadttheater Freiburg and Gärtnerplatz Theater Munich, and has sung at venues in Austria like Landestheater Linz. His international career has led him to theaters in Belgium, France, and the Czech Republic.

Having performed over 85 roles, Steffen's repertoire features highlights such as Riccardo (Un Ballo in Maschera), Rodolfo (La Bohème), and Pinkerton (Madame Butterfly), as well as operetta roles like Eisenstein (Die Fledermaus) and Danilo (Die lustige Witwe).

In addition to singing, Steffen is an active pianist, composer, and accompanist, with a passion for playing and singing the tangos of Carlos Gardel and Astor Piazzolla.

Charles Vincenti (Malta), Tenor

Ernest



Tenor Charles Vincenti studied with mezzo-soprano Claire Massa and Juliette Bisazza Zanni. In summer 2000, he attended master-classes at the Kodaly International School in the UK with Hungarian soprano Eva Andor.

The operatic repertoire includes Rinuccio (Gianni Schicchi), Spoletta (Tosca), Goro (Madame Butterfly), Pang (Turandot), Roderigo (Otello), Tybalt (Romeo et Juliette), the Governor/ Vanderdendur/ Ragotski (Candide), Aeneas (Dido and Aeneas), Monostatos (Die Zauberflöte), Edoardo (La Cambiale di Matrimonio), Turiddu (Cavalleria Rusticana), Nikol (Il-Wegħda), the first two operas from the trilogy of operas by Reuben Pace, Swar and Blat and Nemorino in Donizetti's (L' Elisir d' Amore) during the 2007 BOV Opera Festival.

The non-operatic repertoire includes Saint-Saens' Oratorio de Noel, Mozart's Requiem and Coronation Masses, "Arias and Evangelist" of Bach's Christmas Oratorio and Matthäus-Passion, Haydn's Paukenmesse, Rossini's Petite Messe Solennelle, Gounod's Messe Solennelle de Sainte Cécile, Puccini's Messa di Gloria, Paolino Vassallo's Messa da Requiem and Messa Grande, Nani's Requiem, Carmelo Pace's Trionfo di Fede and Te Deum, Albert Pace's premiere Songs of a Lonely Man, Joseph Sammut's Canticles of St Luke, Nicolo Isouard's Liturgical Works for St. John's, Tenebrae: 19th Century Liturgical Works for Holy Week and the Oratorio Rewwixta by Joseph Vella. Performances overseas include Ireland, Birmingham, Bastia and Bombay in India.

Vincenti is a graduate with a B.A. (Hons) in Music Studies and a P.G.C.E. in Music from the University of Malta.



Gheorghe Palcu (Romania), Bass-Baritone **Lord Of The Garden**

Romanian bass baritone ,Gheorghe Palcu graduated from the Music Conservatoire "Jacopo Tomadini" Udine, Italy and holds a First Class Master Degree from CSM Cork Ireland, where he lives at the moment.

Gheorghe's repertoire spans baroque through Verdi's operas .Highlights include Armida (Arcola Theatre) , Incoronation of Poppea (Cockpit), Don Giovanni (Hastings, London) , Marriage of Figaro (Deva, Hastings, Tessalonik) and others.

Gheorghe sung the role of Don Alfonso "Cosi fan tutte" for the Bergerdof Music Festival and for the Birgitta Tahlin Festival

He is member of the ErQuesta Ensemble and recently he performed at the Arcola Theatre the role of Seneca (Coronation of Poppea) and he was described as "phenomenal performer".

Gheorghe was awarded 2nd Prize bass soloist at the Feis Ceoil competition in 2022, Dublin.



Camilla Saba Davies (UK - Japan), Soprano Gaia

British-Japanese soprano Camilla Saba Davies is an up-and-coming talent who has recently made her debut in several theatres across Europe.

Notable operatic engagements include Die Junge Frau / Der Kleine Chinese in Der Goldene Drache (Theater an der Wien), Gabrielle in Die Teufel von Loudun (Bayerische Staatsoper), Gretel in Hänsel und Gretel (Schleswig-Holsteinisches Landestheater), Die Melancholie i.a. in King Arthur (Tiroler Landestheater) Ich in C:\>title Labyrinth (Staatstheater Augsburg), Berenice in L'Occasione fa il Ladro and May-Shan in Rote Laterne (Theaterakademie August Everding & Münchner Rundfunkorchester), and Königin der Nacht in Die Zauberflöte (Royal Academy Opera).

Camilla is also a keen concert soloist; highlights include Orff's Carmina Burana, Mendelssohn's Paulus, Vaughan Williams' A Sea Symphony, and Mozart's Requiem, amongst others. As a committed chamber music performer she has appeared in venues across Germany, UK, and Japan, most recently at the Münchner Opernfestspielen, Snape Maltings, the Antennenglühn Tag der Neuen Musik at the Schwerer Reiter, Kloster Seeon, the Musiktagen Feldafing, and the Klassik Sommerfestival Ettal.

Camilla graduated with distinction from the Royal Academy of Music in London and the Bayerische Theaterakademie August Everding in Munich.



Olivia le Roux (France), Soprano Prue

Olivia Le Roux is a lyric soprano from France.

In April 2022 she made her role debut as Donna Anna in Don Giovanni in Greece with Teatro Grattacielo and the Sinfonietta Hellenica under the baton of Maestro Georgios Galanis. For the coming seasons, she is preparing the roles of Musetta and Cleopatra (Giulio Cesare in Egitto)

Other operatic roles include Lia from L'enfant Prodigue (Debussy) performed at Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod 2018 with the North Wales Opera studio, operatic scenes, Antonia (Tales of Hoffmann) and Lauretta (Gianni Schicchi) performed within the Atelier Lyrique d'opera at University of Montreal directed by Robin Wheeler.

Olivia was also a chorus member at the Grange Park Opera for their 2019 season. She is a 3rd Prize winner of the IMC International Music Competition 1ere edition 2022 and was a recipient of the Mario Lanza Educational Foundation Grant in Great Britain in 2019.

Olivia graduated from Université de Montreal with a Bachelor of Music. She was a participant in numerous international master classes including Renata Scotto's curso de Interpretacion at Amigos de la Ópera de A Coruña ,Eleonora Pacetti (Opera Fabbrica di Roma) and Margreet Honig among many others.

Clare Ghigo (Malta), Mezzo-Soprano **Carmen**



With a passion for both classical and contemporary works, she has performed numerous roles in operas by Mozart, Puccini, Humperdinck, Monteverdi, Bizet, Rossini, and others, as well as contemporary pieces

by renowned composers such as Schoenberg, Morten Feldman, Luciano Berio, Reuben Pace, Karl Fiorini, Euchar Gravina, and Veronique Vella.

With a passion for both classical and contemporary works, she has performed numerous roles in operas by Mozart, Puccini, Humperdinck, Monteverdi, Bizet, Rossini, and others, as well as contemporary pieces by renowned composers such as Schoenberg, Morten Feldman, Luciano Berio, Reuben Pace, Karl Fiorini, Euchar Gravina, and Veronique Vella.

In addition to her operatic performances, Clare has also given recitals in various cities around the world, including San Francisco, London, Paris, Berlin, Bethlehem, and Luxembourg. Due to the ongoing events, she has also participated in several video productions, including an adaptation of Beethoven's Fidelio/ Leonora with The Strada Stretta Concept, Trouser Girl, a superhero film with the Teatru Manoel Toi Toi project for Ziguzajg, and chorus in Ravel L'enfant et les sortilèges with Virtual Opera. Her most recent project, the Stabat Metric project, was created in collaboration with the Gozitan visual artist Joseph Calleja and funded by the Malta Arts Council.

Four Seasons

Frances Catherine Farrugia (Malta), Soprano

Season 1



Frances Catherine is a dramatic soprano. She made her debut with FlorenceOpera in 2010 singing the title role in Puccini's Suor Angelica, followed by Lola in Cavalleria Rusticana, Mimi and Musetta (La Boheme), Giorgetta (Il Tabarro), Dorabella (Cosi Fan Tutte) and Donna Elvira (Don Giovanni), the latter taking place at the prestigious Circolo della Lirica in Padova.

Locally she is active in the Sacred Music scene and has performed as soloist in various classical works including Rossini's Stabat Mater, Mozart's Requiem and Coronation Mass as well as contemporary works by local composers. Over the years she has given concerts in various theatres and prestigious locations around Malta and has been praised for 'having a fine, clear voice that is very rich in texture'.

Frances Catherine began voice lessons with Soprano Antoinette Miggiani, with whom she built a vocal repertoire to suit her melodious velvety voice. After participating in various masterclasses abroad with international singers including Mirella Freni and Thomas Bauer, she furthered her studies with Soprano Patrizia Morandini in Florence. She is currently under the coaching of Soprano Juliette Bisazza and internationally renowned Soprano Barbara Frittoli.

She holds degrees in Theory of Music, Performance - Voice and a Masters in Knowledge-based Entrepreneurship (University of Malta) while working full time at Malta Enterprise as Head of Incentive Development.



Daphne Camilleri (Malta), Soprano

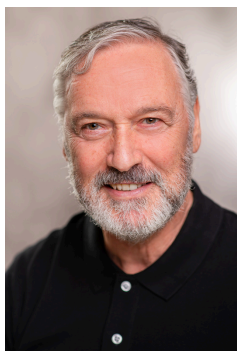
Season 2

Daphne Camilleri is a Maltese soprano. She has been singing from a young age and always had a passion for classical music and opera.

She has been part of several choirs and ensembles with whom she has performed both in Malta and abroad. Daphne made her solo debut at Teatru Manoel singing 'Emmie' in scenes from Britten's *Albert Herring* alongside international soprano Louise Alder in 2022.

She has since taken part in several productions, including world premiers, in Malta and Gozo and has also had the opportunity to study at Oxenfoord International Summer School.

Some notable debuts for Daphne include Amelia in Tom Armitage's *'Midnight at Frankie's'* (2024) and Viola/Janusina in the live version of *'Trousers Girl: An Opera for Young Audiences'* as part of ZiguZajg and Toi Toi in (2023).



Ray mangion

Season 3

Trained in the UK, Ray has performed in many new and established musicals in the West End of London, including *Evita*, *A Chorus Line*, *Les Miserables* and *Miss Saigon*, *West Side Story*.

Opera performances at the ENO, London, including *Tosca* and *Carmen*. Ray has also been known as Franco in the BBC – *All Creatures Great and Small* and appointed a semi-permanent character in the Series. In Malta, he formed a Musical Theatre Company. Musicals in Malta he produced, directed and played leading roles, were numerous and included, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *The Sound of Music*, *Fame*, *Blood Brothers*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, naming but a few. The last production before retirement, Ray directed a Concert Version of London's 25th Anniversary of *The Phantom of the Opera*, held at the MFCC. He is a member of St Paul's Co Cathedral Choir and St Paul's Choral Society. Trab is his latest participation of the new Maltese Opera TRAB (*The rest is Dust*), playing one of the Four Seasons role - Winter.



Roland Vella

Season 4

Roland Vella serves as a Senior Procurement Officer at a private local company. He holds a degree in Industrial Electronics Engineering from the Fellenberg Training Centre.

For the past 50 years, he has been an active member of the Jubilate Deo Choir, performing in the baritone section. The choir primarily serves at the Metropolitan Cathedral in Mdina and St. John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta and is also the resident choir of the Collegiate Church of Naxxar. In addition to his musical involvement, Mr. Vella has participated in various stage and television drama productions.

The Children's Choir

SoM Young Singers

MAVC, Malta School of Music



The SOM Young Singers is the children's choir at the MAVC, School of Music, Malta. The choir is made up of children aged eight to fifteen, with the majority of them also being students at the same school.

Having started a few years ago, the main goal for the existence of SOM Young Singers is to instil a love for choral music while enhancing the children singing voices and strengthen their musicianship skills.

Led by the choral conductor Marouska Attard, the SOM Young Singers has taken part in several performances organised by the school and also on other occasions organised by other local performance institutions and entities in Malta and Gozo.

Choir Members:

Tiana Calleja, Valentina Muscat Vassallo, Nina Schembri, Agius Kottman Ylenia, Arnaudez Sebastian, Ciappara Matteo, Mallia Scicluna Matthias, Vella Gregory Faith, Huang Kyra, Lattes Adriano Jesus, Xiaoyou Huang, Fiorella Coleiro, Rakela Borg.

Adult Choir Members:

Sopranos: Daphne Camilleri, Graziella Debattista, Francesca Catherine Farrugia

Alto: Annelise Borg, Joanne Camilleri, Ann Marie Scerri

Tenors: Terrence Clement, Ray Mangion

Basses: Tonio Vella, Roland Vella, Luke Camilleri

Repetiteurs: Sofia Narmania, Gomez Arruda Bruno Jacy

Visual Art Students MAVC, Malta School of Art

Alakkad Leah Francesca, Azzopardi Andrea, Bellia Krista, Bellizzi Peter Paul, Bezzina Danzel, Bondarenko Mariia, Bondin Elena, Bonnici Leah, Borg Adele Chenise, Brincat Liam, Calleja Serah Maria, Calleja Tonna Beppe Mauro, Caruana Nelly, Cassar Valentina, Chetcuti Luigi, Chetcuti Nathalie, Daniel Camilleri, Doublesin Quinn, Farrugia Ella, Farrugia Preca Julia, Formosa Cumbo Naielle, Frendo Isabella, Galea Amber, Grixti Georgie, Hu Leyi, Liu Weiran, Lukina Anastasiia, Magri Anna, Magro Camilleri Haley, Meli Liam, Mifsud Lucija, Misiulia Edzita, Mizzi Jake, Muscat Jack, Musienko Aleksandr, Musienko Marta, Parra Clemente Jose Antonio, Pisani Andy Colin, Saliba Mariam Frida, Sammut Alistair, Scerri Saliba Lei, Spiteri Agnes, Spiteri Andreas, SUI Jason, Sui Yilin, Tonna Alana, Vella Neil, Vershuta Marharyta, Wang Yiqi, Xu Ruoyan, Yakymchuk Vitalina, Yao Wen, Yonas Arsema, Zahra Lara, Ruby Mercieca

Projections – Students of MAVC, Malta School of Art

Image Manipulation – Roderick Camilleri (Head, MAVC Malta School of Art),
Mario George Attard (teacher, MAVC, Malta School of Art),
Fabrizio Ellul (teacher, MAVC Malta School of Art),
Kamy Aquilina (teacher, MAVC Malta School of Art)

Student Dancers MAVC, Malta School of Drama and Dance

Zoe Galea, Emma Azzopardi, Yilin Sui and Rakela Borg

Acting and Drama Students MAVC, Malta School of Drama and Dance

Adele Vella and Scarlett Vella

Stage Assistant Students

Beppe Mauro Calleja Tonna, Ruby Mercieca and Miley Bezzina (Gozo VPA)

Instrument Performance Students

MAVC, Malta School of Music

Michela Schembri	Clarinet in E flat & B flat	Samuel Darmanin	Clarinet in B flat,
Isaac Micallef	Tenor Saxophone,	Ninu Scicluna	Alto saxophone
Elisa Borg & Eleonor Borg	Flute, ,	Martha Kouzoupi	Timpani

Members of the Maxime Orchestra

Conductor

Andrzej Mandryka

Violins 1:

Daria Mandryka
Anna Śliwczyńska
Marta Kosecka
Wiktoria Linek
Emilia Cebula
Kamila Kociotek
Julia Zawierucha
Katarzyna Kołakowska
Solomiia Deriabina

Violins 2:

Agnieszka Kucala
Aleksandra Zientek
Wiktoria Heryszek
Kosma Stanek
Emilia Pióro
Amelia Basista
Lidia Filipczuk
Natalia Hudy

Violas 1:

Marzena Niemczyk
Martyna Kachniarz
Barbara Olearczyk
Igor Khomenko
Karolina Reguła

Violoncello:

Julia Le Hai
Marcelina Morawiec
Oliwier Wojski

Fute:

Vanessa Kania

Oboe:

Filip Lenart

Clarinet:

Szymon Mikuszewsk

Bassoon:

Zuzanna Szuba

Horn:

Iwo Sawaszkiewicz-Ziomka
Jakub Adamski

Trumpet:

Aleksy Ostrowski
Karol Świerczyna

Trombone:

Kacper Dudek
Kacper Julkowski

Tuba:

Julia Niedzielska

Piano:

Weronika Mucha

Orchestra inspector/librarian

Wiktoria Konecka

Orchestra social media specialist:

Aleksandra Pałasz

Double Bass:

Arkady Ptak
Stanisław Pikul

The Crew

Executive Producer - Victor Galea, Head of Mikiel Anton Vassalli College

Producer and Composer - Reuben Pace

Librettist - Gorg Peresso

Conductor - Andrzej Mandryka

Stage Director – Michael Moxham

Assistant Stage Director – Ken Scicluna and Clare Ghigo

Production Manager – Clare Ghigo

Assistant Production Manager - Yasmin Falzon, Koen Tryssesoone

Choir Master - Geoffrey Thomas

Children's Choir - Maruska Attard, Teacher MAVC, Malta School of Music

Head of Visual Design - Roderick Camilleri, Head of School, Malta School of Art

Set Design – Students at the MAVC Malta School of Art

Light Design – Kevin Zerafa

Wardrobe and Costume Design – Stephania Grech Vella

Stage Management – Marco Mallia

Assistant Stage Managers - Beppe Calleja

Audio Engineer - Alec Massa

Hair and Make-up Artist– Karen Schembri Grima

Projector Operator – Mario George Attard, Teacher MAVC, Malta School of Art

Surtitles Programming – Yasmin Falzon, Teacher MAVC, Malta School of Drama & Dance

Surtitles Operation – Francesco Luca Borg, Teacher MAVC, Malta School of Music

Finances - Finance Directorate, MEYR

Masterclasses Coordinator - Emmanuel Cassar Teacher MAVC, Malta School of Drama & Dance

The Educational Process Towards the Production

Masterclasses

Stage Management – Mr. Marco Mallia
held at MAVC, Malta School of Drama & Dance
Thursday, 20th March 2025



Theatre Costume Design – Ms. Stefania Grech Vella
held at MAVC, Malta School of Drama & Dance
Monday, 24th March 2025



Light Design – Mr. Kevin Zerafa
held at MAVC, Malta School of Art
Tuesday, 25th March 2025



Set Design – Mr. Fabrizio Ellul and Mr. George Mario Attard
held at MAVC, Malta School of Art
Wednesday, 26th March 2025



Hair and Makeup – Ms. Karen Schembri Grima
held at MAVC, Malta School of Drama & Dance
Thursday, 27th March 2025



Voice Masterclasses - French Mélodie Interpretation – Olivia Le Roux
Performance Techniques & Stage Skills – Camilla Davies
German Repertoire, Operetta & Lied – Steffen Schantz
Holistic Vocal Interpretation – Gheorghe Palcu

held at MAVC, School of Music
Monday, 7th April 2025



The Educational Process Towards the Production

Rehearsals and Working within a Multi-disciplinary Arts Setting



The Multidisciplinary Arts Studies Courses

Students participating in such multidisciplinary arts productions are awarded an “Award in Placement in a Production” as part of MQF Level 3 in the qualification/certificate offered by Mikiel Anton Vassalli College’s “Multidisciplinary Arts Studies”.

This module allows students to apply their learning by taking an active role in a professional, multidisciplinary production. Each student is assigned a defined role—either on the artistic team or production crew—within projects organized by the College or approved external productions. Under the supervision of an artistic director ensuring equal opportunity and fair participation, students engage in a real-world production environment requiring collaboration, discipline, and creative problem-solving.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this module, students will demonstrate autonomy and responsibility in a live production context. They will collaborate with fellow artists and crew, meet the demands of professional environments, and handle challenges arising during pre-production and production phases. Learners will develop the ability to manage tight timelines and take ownership of their responsibilities.

Students will gain firsthand insight into professional productions, reflecting on their performance through feedback and self-assessment. They will maintain a reflective journal documenting meetings, tasks, rehearsals, and the final performance, fostering awareness and growth.

This immersive experience helps students refine skills developed in previous modules. They are expected to work reliably as independent team members, contribute to shared goals, and solve problems quickly and effectively. The pre-production and production stages offer opportunities to strengthen their roles and add value to the project.

By the module’s conclusion, learners will confidently operate within their roles without supervision, anticipate issues, apply practical solutions, and consistently document their contributions. This module bridges academic study with professional practice, preparing students for real-world creative industry work.

Those interested in pursuing such practical studies are encouraged to register here:

<https://mavc.gov.mt/programme/apply>.

For more information, one may contact the College on mavassalli.college@ilearn.edu.mt

Acknowledgments

The Mikiel Anton Vassalli College (MAVC) extends its sincere gratitude to the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation, with special thanks to the Office of the Permanent Secretary and the Finance Directorate for their unwavering support and collaboration.

We also express our heartfelt appreciation to the Director General (Education Services) for the continued encouragement and endorsement of the College's artistic endeavours and productions.

Our sincere thanks go to the Heads and administration of the Schools within the College—namely the Schools of Art, Music, Drama, and Dance—as well as to the dedicated teaching staff, whose commitment to nurturing creativity and artistic excellence continues to inspire and uplift.

We are also deeply grateful to all crew members and the professional and established artists who contributed to this production. Your dedication, enthusiasm, and spirit of collaboration have been invaluable throughout the process.

A warm thank you is extended to all College and school staff, especially the educators who were involved directly or supported the production indirectly. Your efforts, both visible and behind the scenes, played a vital role in bringing this work to life. Our appreciation also goes to the esteemed audiences whose presence and support enrich the experience for everyone involved.

Last but by no means least, we express our deepest appreciation to the students who participated in this production, particularly those enrolled in the MQF Level 3 Certificate in Practical Multi-Disciplinary Studies, and to their families for their continuous support. Your talent, passion, and dedication are the beating heart of this project.

Should any name or role have been inadvertently omitted from this publication, we sincerely apologize. Any such oversight is entirely unintentional.



MIKIEL ANTON VASSALLI COLLEGE