

Anthony P. Vella

ART AS A PASSION

WORDS MARIA BONNICI



An innate love of beauty and a yearning for the transcendent, a deep-rooted attraction to classical art and the masters, and a rigorous discipline in design are the basic elements in Anthony

Patrick Vella's artistic expression.

Anthony P. Vella was born in Valletta, Malta, in 1961. There he lived surrounded by the highest form of baroque art expression, foremost among these being St John's Co-Cathedral where he

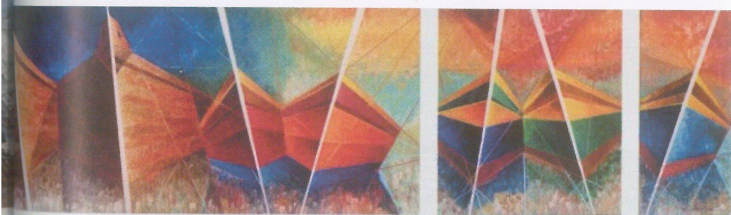
also attended religious functions. These have left an indelible mark on him, not only visually but also deep in his interiority. "I was an altar boy for many years," Anthony recounts. "I lost my father when I was 6 years old and as a result my mother had to fulfil both roles. To support the family she used to sew until two o'clock in the morning. My mother realised that I was gifted in art, so she sent me to an art school which, luckily, was just down the road from my house."

Anthony is a multifaceted artist. Aside from painting he performed as a drummer on the international stage of the *Teatro Greco* in Taormina. He is a jazz lover, with a Latin variation, and his









favourite musicians include Peter Erskine, Sonny Emory and Eliane Elias. His experience as a percussionist and his talent in improvisation and spontaneity are reflected in many of his works.

Throughout his career, he embarked on a continuous artistic exploration in different artistic languages such as painting, design, music etc, utilising different media. His first public exhibition was made entirely of a new composite in polychromatic bas reliefs.

He has worked in collaboration with different Maltese and Italian artists, designers, architects, and musicians. At one stage he lived in Italy and was involved in different architectural projects. He also studied museum design in Florence. As a result he was commissioned with a number of museum projects. Aesthetics in art and design remain his forte.

Anthony is also a member of the International Council of Museums (UNESCO). His artworks are exhibited around Europe and elsewhere in private and public collections. One of his exhibitions took place in *Castello Gallego* (a recently restored medieval castle) in Messina.

In 2018 he was conferred an academy by the *Accademia Leonardo da Vinci*, Ficarra, Messina, Italy.

Amongst his outstanding works, both in Malta and abroad, there is the *Adoration Chapel* in Santa Lucia, bas reliefs at the *Mediterranean Conference Centre* and the main painting at the reception in *Grand Hotel, Gozo*.

Anthony is the father of two daughters aged 32 and 28, and husband of Maria Rita, who is Italian-born. This undoubtedly is where a merge of cultures occurred!

For 28 years he has been teaching Art and Graphical Communication, continuing to produce valuable artistic, architectural and interior works. These last eleven years he has been Head of the Department for Art and Graphical Communication with the Secretariat for Catholic Education.

Anthony's creations reflect a warm, generous disposition and zest for life which contributes to the balance and harmony in his work, often referred to as therapeutic. I personally find his art to be imbued with a sense of serenity and tranquillity, and upon contemplating it, I feel peaceful and regenerated.

Throughout my professional dealings with him I have known him to be a good listener, always respectful and never imposing his ideas. His greatest ambition is to share his talent with others, particularly those who love art.

It is for this reason that Anthony recently created a website which allows him to showcase his artwork. He invites you to visit his online gallery at www.anthonypatrickvella.com 🌐

Maria Bonnici is a freelance archivist and website publisher. She holds a Graduate Diploma in Information Management (Records & Archives) from the University of Melbourne.