



## The Malta National Community Art Museum

MUŽA is Malta's brand-new visual arts institution and legacy project for Valletta 2018 European Capital of Culture title. In 2018, the project has been flagged by the Guardian as one of 13 must see new European museums and by Architecture Digest as one of 15 noteworthy brand-new worldwide museums which opened in 2018.

### PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION

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Before visitors come to MUŽA, all relevant information about The Malta National Community Arts Museum can be easily accessed from the Heritage Malta's website. Such information includes opening and closing hours, highlights of the sites and admission fees. Furthermore, Information leaflets are also available in museums and in tourist information offices.

Besides, from the Heritage Malta website one can access full details and maps which explains how to reach the museum. In addition, we had also recently published on our Facebook page a video which explains how to get to the museum from the Triton fountain located at the main entry point of Valletta.

Heritage Malta museums target different audiences of varying age groups. Hence, we offer admission fees to Adults, Seniors, Students, Children and persons with disability amongst others. Nonetheless, service dogs are also most welcome.

### Visiting The Malta National Community Art Museum

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#### Transport and parking

The museum's main entrance is located in Merchant street just a few minutes walk from city gate and the new Renzo Piano Parliament building at the entrance to Valletta. Thus, the museum is very close

to the Malta Public Transport located next to the city gate of Valletta. This link below provides all the information and the routes that Malta Public Transport's provide from villages around Malta to Valletta. <https://www.publictransport.com.mt/>

Other sources of transportation within Valletta are Electric City Cabs, taxis, Hop on Hop off buses and Fun Trains.

Should one decide to use a private car, there are various parking areas just outside Valletta, such as the Malta Car Park (MCP), located next to the Malta Public Transport terminus.

Furthermore, Transport Malta also offers the Park and Ride service located in Floriana, where they offer an easy, quick and low-cost solution, with over 750 spaces and a regular high-frequency shuttle service directly to Valletta.

## **Main Entrance, Reception and Ticketing Area**

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### **Main Entrance and Building**

The building was the historic seat of the Italian knights of the Order of St John with over 400-year-old history and thus the building itself is a prime historic site, meticulously restored to expose historic layers. Contemporary interventions reveal various historic features within the Auberge, such as the main staircase.

The main entrance of MUŻA is found at ground floor at Merchant Street. Once entering the door on the left-hand side, one will find a door together with two steps to enter the Tourist Information Office (TIO) whose main role is to help anyone visiting Valletta, and beyond, to feel welcome and well oriented through its main attractions thus promoting Malta as a tourist destination. The TIO also assists visitors and advise on any tourism-related issues and to undertake activities and projects to fulfil their role. On the right-hand side, one will find another door together with two steps to enter the MUŻA reception. Both TIO and MUZA reception may also be accessed through alternative access for all entrances at the corridor leading to the central courtyard.



*Figure 1: Main entrance to MUZA museum*

Furthermore, one can walk into the main courtyard, which is a public space in its own right, to discover the beauty of the building.

There is also another entrance to the Museum overlooking Piazza de La Vallette. A ramp running along the perimeter of Piazza de La Vallette leads you to MUZA's alternative entrance. From this entrance one can reach the Museum reception and the Tourist information office by going around the main corridor surrounding the central courtyard.



Figure 2: Entrance to the Museum from Piazza de La Vallette

### **Shop and Reception**

Once entering the right-hand side door from the main entrance one can immediately view the reception desk and also the gift shop. From the MUZA's gift shop, visitors will be tempted to buy something from the variety of selection found there targeting different ages. Some of the items include postcards, small souvenirs, stationary items such as pencils, HM notebooks, brick eraser, colouring books for children, MUZA branded T-shirts for both adults and kids, puzzles, art books, history books and cooking books amongst others. Furthermore, many of these books are available in different languages. All the signage and prices are clear and visible.



Figure 3: Items found at MUZA Gift shop



Figure 4: Price Tags Infront of items



From the reception desk visitors can buy their tickets, thus the reception is always manned by the front of house personnel who received customer care training. Furthermore, all employees working with Heritage Malta are given a name tag which also shows their role within the company.

Once visitors purchase their tickets, the Front of house (FOH) personnel will give instructions to visitors to place their bags in the locker room. Visitors are given a key to one of the lockers which they return back to the reception before leaving. The locker room is situated next to the Tourist information office, the FOH personnel explain the procedure to the visitors once purchasing the ticket. After placing their bags in the lockers, visitors will be directed to proceed through self-operated turnstiles (found in front of the Museum reception) to start their tour from the ground floor galleries.



*Figure 5: Locker room at ground floor level*

### **Access to the Museum Galleries**

The permanent exhibition unfolds along 4 main narratives over two floors. All galleries are fully accessible to persons with mobility issues compliant to Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD). Starting from The Artist gallery at ground floor. One reaches the first-floor galleries by going up the glass staircase (with handrails throughout) to experience the Mediterranean, Europe, the Empire galleries. Persons with disability can easily access first floor galleries by using the passenger lift situated next to the glass staircase. In the first-floor galleries there are also some stairs which divide galleries on two levels. A platform lift (Figure 7) and passenger lift (Figure 9) provide unhindered access to all galleries at first floor level.



Figure 6: Staircase + the lift on the left side of the picture (found at ground floor level).



Figure 7: lift next to the staircase (found at Ground floor level).



Figure 8 disabled elevator found inside the first-floor galleries.



Figure 9: Elevator found in first floor galleries

## Restrooms and other facilities

### Restrooms

In MUŻA, visitors can make use of the Public restrooms found at ground floor level and also those found in First-Floor level in the galleries area.

At ground floor level restrooms are unisex, one can find 6 cubicle toilets together with one separate unisex access for all restroom . In this restroom there is also a nappy changer facility.

At the first-floor level, restrooms are divided according to gender. There is one access for all restroom which like the ground floor level it also has a nappy changer facility. Furthermore, there is one restroom for Female which have 2 cubicles and another restroom for male which have 1 cubicle and 2 urinals.

Next to the restrooms there is an elevator which can be used by persons in possession of a wheelchair, pushchair etc. Besides, there is also a small seating area just in front of the lift were visitors can rest.



Figure 10: Ground floor unisex restrooms



Figure 11: First Floor Men's Restroom



Figure 12: First Floor Ladies Restroom



Figure 13: The elevator next to the First Floor Restrooms

### **Info points**

Another facility found at the museum are the various info points installed on various levels. Many visitors make use of these info points as a reference for general information about the museum such as the building's history, the galleries, and various insights behind various museum spaces including the Courtyard, the Camerone hall and the staircase amongst others. Besides prices and opening hours of the museum are also part of the information found at each Info Point. Furthermore, the Info Point also gives information about the events and exhibitions that will take place along the year in the museum. Yet many visitors also use the Info Point for orientation and way-finding purposes , since it has the facility of showing the map of the museum floors. Furthermore, all information is featuring both in Maltese and also in English, thus visitors can read with their preferred language.

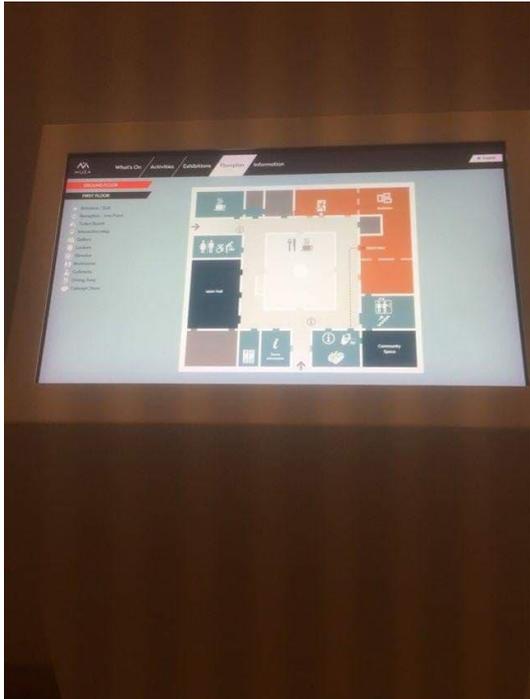


Figure 14: Info point next to the Camerone Hall

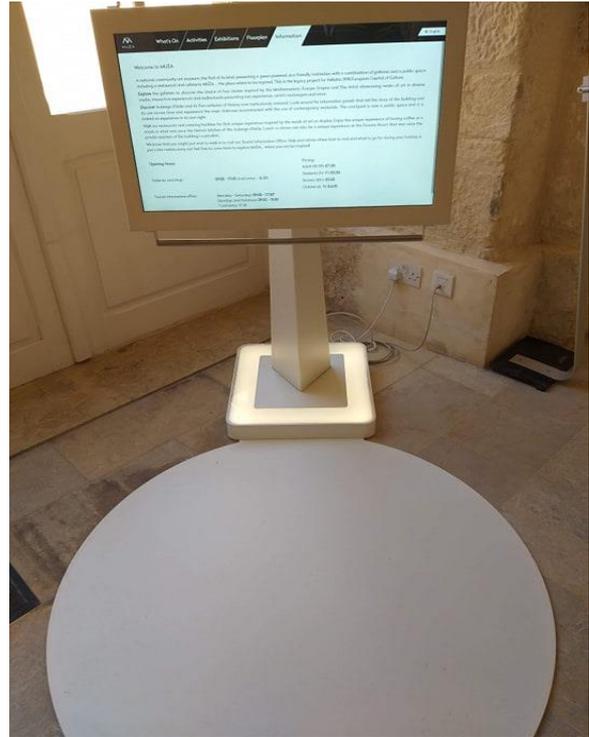


Figure 15: Info point next to Courtyard

### Signage

Besides the info points, another important tool to help with visitor orientation are the way-finding signs along the floors. Throughout the museum there are visible panels which indicate for instance where the reception, galleries, restrooms and lockers are located. Whilst in the galleries themselves there are also panels which indicate the visitor's different section of the galleries. Furthermore every art work is labelled with a caption, all of which are written in a large format both in Maltese and English.



Figure 16: Restroom signage



Figure 17: Sign panel with information about every floor



Figure 18: Map of first floor



Figure 19: Sign panel found in First floor galleries

### A net-zero museum

MUŻA is also a net-zero building with virtually no impact on the environment as it generates its energy requirements through photo-voltaic cells purposely installed on its roof and lower consumption thanks to the intelligent use of the thermal mass of the building, double glazing and intelligent LED lighting systems. On the other hand, lighting levels in galleries (both those at the ground floor and the rest at first floor level), is adjusted different due to the nature of the galleries.

## MUŻA Restaurant

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Together with the museum, there is also a Restaurant located within the remit of MUŻA public space. It opens beyond the museum's opening hours and it is conceived as an extension of the museum experience. Upon approaching the museum through De Valette Square, one can enter by going up the stairs found in front of the entrance. Those with wheelchairs or pushchairs can easily make use of the ramp found on the right-hand side of the entrance.



*Figure 20: Entrance to MUŻA Restaurant*

MUŻA Restaurant boasts three main areas within MUŻA each having a rich history of their own.

The Bar-Cafe area, is located within what once was the Auberge's Kitchen. A quaint space where surviving elements from the original historic kitchen including the flagstone flooring, the hearth complete with sooth and grime and other architectural features are combined with and interpreted through modern décor.

The Donato Room is adjacent to the Bar-Café area. The luxurious interior, with shades of blue, red and green is illuminated by the resplendent metal-work chandelier which casts a delicate floral pattern onto the interior. This pattern is inspired by the early 20th century decorative frieze which still survives.

Last but not least, the typical Mediterranean Courtyard is the ideal open space to unwind and experience the historic fabric of the building itself. This is the MUŻA agora or public space with a prominent arch crowning a well at the centre of the courtyard. This is the place where to enjoy Malta's

Mediterranean weather, to hang out or to just get inspired following your visit to the museum galleries.



*Figure 21: MUZA Courtyard*

Hence by paying a visit to MUŻA, one can enjoy from a lovely visit at the museum galleries and could also explore the culinary experience at its bespoke cafeteria and restaurant serving dishes inspired by and branded to complement the collection on display. Thus, visitors will surely not disappoint themselves!

## Contact Information

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**Address:** Auberge D'Italie, Merchant Street, Valletta VLT 1170

**Telephone:** +356 21 220 006

**Opening hours:** Monday to Sunday:09.00 – 17.00hrs (last admission at 16.30hrs)

**Hours of Operation:** All year round except 24, 25 & 31 December, 1 January & Good Friday

**Website:** <https://heritagemalta.org/muza-national-community-art-museum/>