

Lifestyle on Saturday

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President opens exhibition

HE Dr George Abela recently opened an exhibition at the Auberge d'Italie of Alain Despert's paintings. Present at the vernissage, apart from M. Despert's American wife, who gave a short but informative talk about her husband's work which was

accompanied by a highly professional visual presentation, were a number of personalities including the French ambassador to Malta M. Michel Vanderpoorter and the American ambassador Ms Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley and her husband Gerard Winstanley. The National Museum of Fine Arts

from its current location in South Street to the Auberge d'Italie is now well in hand. The museum's curators, together with the museum's library, have already relocated to the Auberge. The project is referred to as Back Home since the first Malta museum, including what was then the Fine Arts

Section, was established at the Auberge d'Italie in 1925. This transfer, happening in phases over the coming years, means a return back home to where the Fine Arts section was born. Alain Despert's exhibition which is entitled *From Bora Bora to Malta* is open until 7 February.



A guest, Dr Deo Debattista and Mr Joe Gauci



HE Dr George Abela admiring Alain Despert's painting of the Maltese flat



Mrs Karen Despert, Mr John Cordina, the artist, the President, the American and French ambassadors



Mr Steve Briese and his wife Jeanette, Mr John Cordina and his wife Linda, the artist and Mrs Despert



Alain Despert's interpretation of Georges Seurat famous painting 'Une Baignade à Asnières'

O'Hea celebrate

The Quarterdeck Bar at Hilton Malta was the venue chosen by the Directors of O'hea Opticians for a reception which brought together clients, friends and suppliers for a most convivial evening of friendship, good food and plenty of drink.



Mr Melvin Gouder and Ms Celia Melillo

Celeb Christ

On 7 January the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Malta in collaboration with the Russian Centre for Science and Culture organized a concert to celebrate the Orthodox Russian Christmas. Traditionally this event is held in the Russian chapel at San Anton Palace, Attard but at present the chapel is being redecorated and it was held in one of the lovely drawing rooms.

The invitees, about 200 of them, included several ambassadors, amongst whom were the ambassadors of the USA, United Kingdom, Greece, Palestine, Germany, ministers and parliamentarians, as well as the representatives of the Church and art organizations, leaders of non-governmental organizations, Russian compatriots and Maltese friends.

H.E. the Ambassador of the Russian Federation in Malta Mr B. Marchuk addressed the audience and congratulated his compatriots on this event. He also said that the tradition to celebrate Russian Christmas in San Anton is a result of the friendly relations between the two countries. The Ambassador emphasized that the preservation of Christian values is a common aspiration of both countries.

The Ambassador's speech was followed by a performance by Posolon a vocal student group from the Russian folk song department of St Petersburg State University of Culture and Arts. The five female singers are Olga Shkultina, Daria Klimentyeva, Anastasia Strabykina, Anna Khvan, and Iana Zagoskina while the Artistic Director is Marina Kuznetsov. The audience enjoyed their songs and melodic voices. The name of the group "Posolon" (in the Old Russian language «posolon» meant moving around the sun) reflects the aspiration of the participants to recreate through song a festive mood through the use of lyrics.

The group's repertoire included psalms, song collections of the 17th and 18th centuries, romances, renditions of Russian national songs and compositions by modern musicians.

The audience appreciated the passionate and strong emotional impact that the group created.

