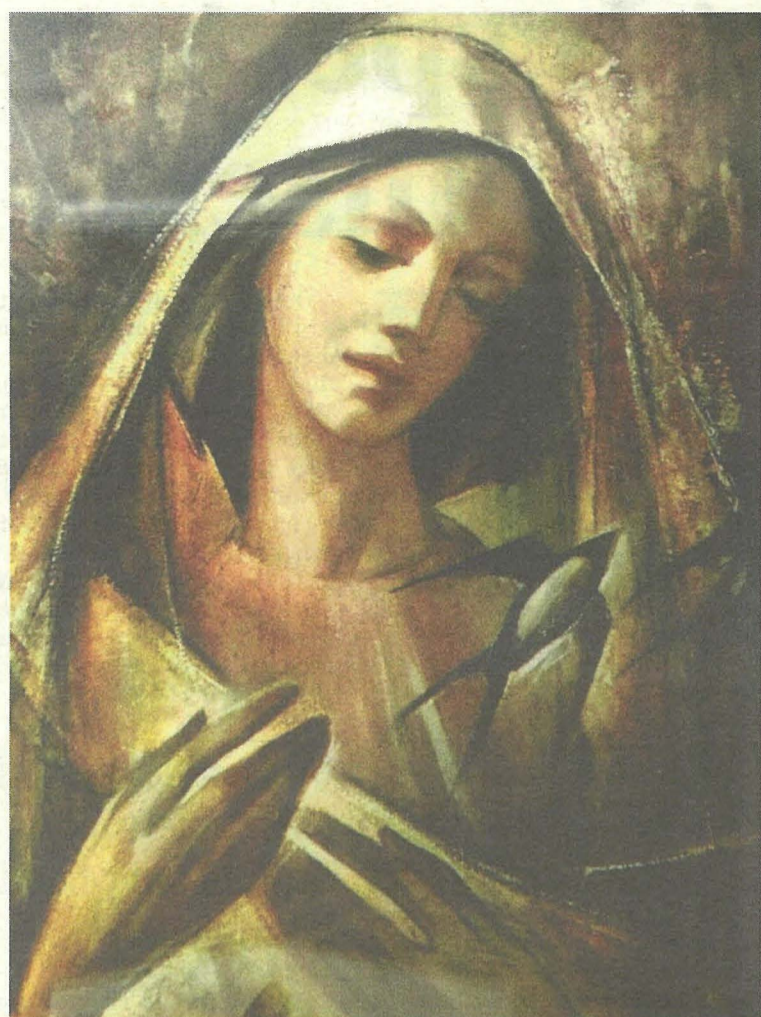
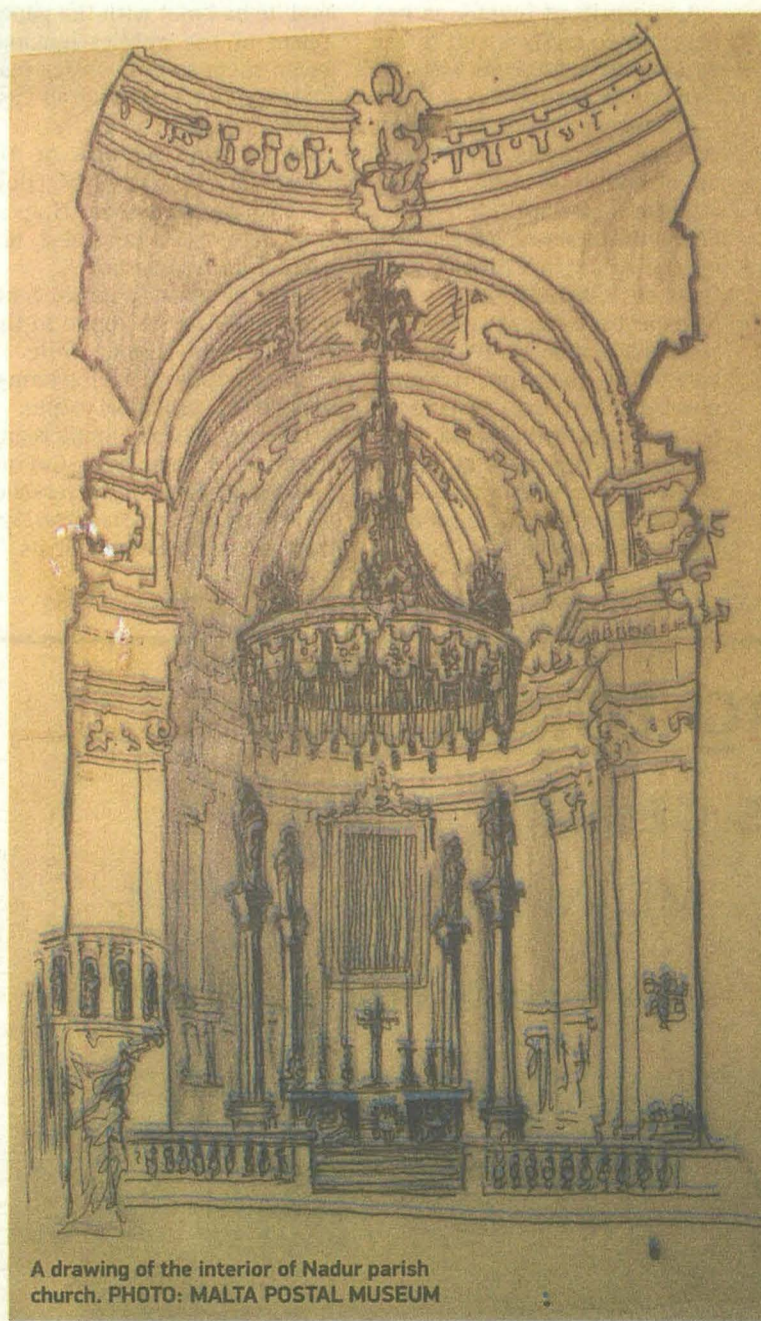


NATIONAL



Celebrating the genius of Emvin Cremona



A drawing of the interior of Nadur parish church. PHOTO: MALTA POSTAL MUSEUM

Drawings, doodles, sketches and a selection of paintings by Emvin Cremona are on display at the Malta Postal Museum and Arts Hub in Valletta.

The collection has been meticulously curated to bring together a representative selection of the many works of the multi-faceted artist. Selected from MaltaPost's archives, private collections and collections belonging to the artists' daughters, they chart the artistic journey of the pioneering modernist that Cremona was - from the mid-1940s to the last works before his death in 1987.

"A formidable name in the fields of landscape, church decoration, stamp design and abstract painting"

2019 marked the centenary of the birth of Emmanuel Vincent Cremona - Maltese artist and stamp designer extraordinaire.

His large-scale works have embellished and adorned many a church interior and his diminutive designs for stamps throughout the 1960s and 1970s gained him (and Malta) considerable recognition in philatelic circles.

It can be safely said that Cremona is one of Malta's foremost 20th-century artists. A formidable name in the



The exhibition at the Malta Postal Museum features Emvin Cremona's drawings, doodles, sketches and a selection of paintings. PHOTOS: MATTHEW MIRABELLI

fields of landscape, church decoration, stamp design and abstract painting, his art developed from impressionistic landscape painting to early manifestations of abstraction (in Malta), followed by bold, angular sacred compositions, culminating in the full-blown abstraction of his later works.

Cremona used drawing as the foundation for his art - drawings that

started off as one thing only to morph into something else. Many of them in pencil, sanguine and ink give an insight into how his ideas changed and developed over time.

Other designs were used several times over but adapted to suit different contexts.

The focus of this exhibition is, in fact, on drawings, many of which are the genesis of what is



seen in a much-larger scale in local churches. "All these drawings are being exhibited for the first time and it is from this proliferation of drawings and sketches that these works have

been selected. They demonstrate technical prowess and prolific output but also, and more importantly, Cremona's sheer versatility," curator Lara Bugeja notes.

"Here, we are privy to Cremona as church painter, interior designer and draughtsman, designer of metalwork, mosaic, furniture, carnival floats, stamps, street decorations and statuary.

The mind boggles as to the quantity of work produced in a relatively short space of time," she continues, adding that he died at the age of 68.



A smaller gallery contains a more intimate selection of Cremona's original artworks for Christmas stamps. His first Christmas stamp made its appearance in 1964, which coincided with the end of his tenure as 'master of painting' at the School of Art.

He continued designing Christmas stamps each year until his last in 1979.

"Large, chiselled angels, omnipresent stars and deep hues of purples, blues and mustard yellows characterise these wonderful creations so cleverly designed. Like his large-scale church work, they are innovative, colourful, stylish and, above all, beautifully executed," Ms Borg says.

A special limited edition commemorative folder and cover record and celebrate this special

event and gifted artist. Of interest to collectors of Melitensia as well as philatelists, it can be obtained from the counter at the Museum.

The exhibition can be viewed daily from 10am to 4pm and on Saturdays from 10am to 2pm at the Malta Postal Museum and Arts Hub at 135, Archbishop Street, Valletta. It closes on January 31. Entrance is free.