

DETAILED INFORMATION OF NEW ISSUES

by **JOE FARRUGIA**

ALBRECHT DURER ISSUE

Date of Issue	7th March 1978.
Values	1c7, 8c and 17c.
Stamp Size	31mm x 44mm.
Art Designer	Antoine Camilleri.
Printers	Printex Limited Malta.
Process	Lithography.
Perforation	14 x 13.9 (comb)
Watermark	Maltese Crosses pointing upright.
Paper	Chalked Surfaced.
Gum	P.V.A.

Colours

- 1c7 Blue, Black and Red.
- 8c Grey, Black and Red.
- 17c Green, Black and Red.

Designs

This set commemorates the 450th anniversary of the death of Albrecht Durer (1471-1528). Born in Nuremberg, Durer was a master of various media. He was not only an important painter, draughtsman and engraver but also the best representative artist of Germany. His creative genius reached its highest expression in the graphic arts, the copperplate engravings and especially the woodcuts, which he refined and perfected.

The Malta Postal Administration has reproduced three of his copperplate engravings from the fine collection at the Cathedral Museum, Mdina, Malta. The Durer prints, acquired by the Cathedral Museum in 1896, form part of a large collection of prints bequeathed to the Cathedral Museum, by Count Saverio Marchesi (1757-1833) in 1833.

Count Saverio Marchesi had acquired his Durer prints partly from an auction sale held in Valletta in 1815, and partly from purchases made in 1815 and 1822 from the painter and engraver Filippo Benucci. The complete collection of Durer woodcuts and engravings once owned by Count Marchesi is now on permanent exhibition at the Cathedral Museum, Mdina.

The 1c7 stamp—Young lady on horseback and trooper—shows a lady of high standing sitting on a horse with her right hand resting on the shoulder of a man carrying a helbard. Durer's mark is seen in the middle at the base of the picture. The 8c value—The bag-piper—depicts a peasant leaning against a tree playing the bag-pipe. The year 1514 and Durer's mark are seen at the base to the left. The 17c stamp—Mary with the long tailed monkey—features the Virgin Mary holding the infant Jesus who is playing with a bird perched on his right hand. A monkey tied to the planks of the seat, is resting at the feet of the Virgin. Durer's mark is seen near the tail of the monkey.

Colour checks in the form of coloured discs, 3mm in diameter are seen in the right hand margin, next to the last stamp of the bottom row in all Panes of the three values. This is another set, where it must be pointed out again, that a Pane of stamps is looked at in such a way that the Plate/Pane numbers are at the left hand side of the bottom margin and the Printer's Imprint on the right of the same margin. In this way looking at any Pane of the three values, the stamps will be seen sideways, resting on their 44mm side.

In all the three values, the colour checks from top to bottom correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers from left to right, in both Panes of each value.

Cumulative totals of progressive columns of stamps are seen in the top and bottom margins. Figures are 2.5mm high and printed in Blue, Grey and Green in the 1c7, 8c and 17c values respectively.

The Printed Sheets of all three values consisted of two Panes, "A" and "B". Each Pane has fifty stamps made up of five rows of ten stamps. The stamps of all three values are of the vertical format.

Plate/Pane Numbers

These are seen under the first stamp of the bottom row.

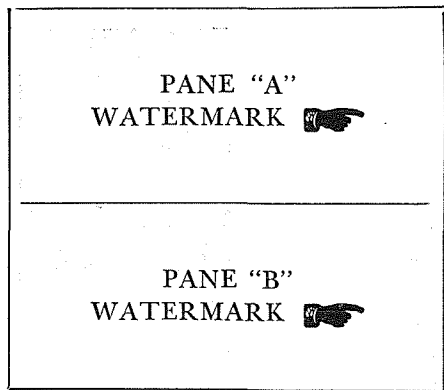
1c7 = 1A x 3, 1B x 3.

8c = 1A x 3, 1B x 3.

17c = 1A x 3, 1B x 3.

Perforation of Margins

The top margin of Pane "A" of all three values is imperforate. The left hand, right hand and bottom margins of Pane "A" of all three values are fully perforated. The top, bottom, left hand and right hand margins of Pane "B" of all three values are also fully perforated. No registration marks were seen on any Pane of all three values.



From a study of all the details given, the Printed Sheets of all three values, before cutting into Panes, would look as shown on left. Looking at the Printed Sheets as shown, stamps of all three values will be seen sideways resting on their 44mm side. Hence the reason why, when individual stamps are examined, the watermark will be seen upright.

I would like to thank the Postal Authorities for giving us the chance to see the progressive sheets of all three values of this set. These were exhibited at the Cathedral Museum, Mdina, during the Durer exhibition. Also on show, was the work done by the designer of this set, Mr. Antoine Camilleri, and it must have been a hard job for the Board to choose the best three designs from all of Mr. Camilleri's artistic works.

Imprint Blocks

"PRINTEX LIMITED MALTA" is seen under the last stamp of the bottom row and printed in Blue, Grey and Green in the 1c7, 8c and 17c values respectively. Letters are 1mm high. An Imprint Block of four will also include the colour checks. A special hand-postmark was used for cancellation on the first day of issue. It is inscribed, "L-Ewwel Jum Tal-Hrug" — Malta — 7.3.78" and the name of the respective local'ty. Durer's monogram is also incorporated in the postmark. On the first day of issue, the amount realized from the sale of this set amounted to £M37,998.