



Victor Pasmore (right) next to a work in concrete by Gabriel Caruana (left).

Homage to Victor Pasmore at Il-Mithna ta' Ganu

Joseph Paul Cassar

A group of close friends of the late painter Victor Pasmore met at il-Mithna ta' Ganu recently to pay tribute to this champion of abstract art who adopted Malta as his home.

Il-Mithna in Birkirkara offers exhibition space to various contemporary artists both local and foreign and is run by sculptor ceramist Gabriel Caruana. Victor Pasmore used to meet Gabriel and friends regularly at the windmill.

The gathering of friends took place in the presence of the artists' son John Pasmore.

Rev. Prof. Peter Serracino Inglott delivered a short speech for the occasion in which he remarked what a stimulus Victor Pasmore's art has been to him intellectually, serving as a witness to the values of the spirit that he feels will continue to act upon him as long as he lives.

John Pasmore thanked all those who were present and admitted that he himself is a "fan" of his father's artistic expression. He said Malta was Pasmore's home. He loved it and always spoke about the charm of this island wherever he went.

Richard England suggested a toast to this great artist who will continue to live among us through his art.

It was a great occasion to meet art lovers and at the same time reflect on the achievements of the great painter. Artist Antoine Camilleri recounted when Pasmore visited his studio in Balzan in the late 1960s at Three Churches Street and

was attracted to a limestone *kenur*. It was old, fairly large and black with soot. Pasmore liked its shape and was fascinated by it.

"It is a stove," Antonio informed him. In the end he gave it to Pasmore. It weighed a few pounds and Pasmore carried it away to his home in Gudja.

Fr Marius Zerafa recounted when he met Wendy, the artist's wife, in Malta. "I have met you somewhere before," he said to Wendy. "No," she replied, "that's not possible. I have just arrived in Malta!"

Then it dawned on Fr Marius that he had seen a portrait of Wendy holding a flower at the Tate Gallery in London. The resemblance was remarkable.

Fr Peter told his story of when Pasmore asked him to write something about his work for an exhibition publication. He had accepted willingly but then fell sick.

Fr Peter had started the article but needed to undergo surgery. He realised that he might not have another chance to write about Pasmore, so before he went into the operating theatre he asked how much time he had left before the operation.

"Ten minutes," they told him, and he jotted down points and ideas in a rush until he finished scribbling, to the point that till today he cannot read the last bit.

This occasion was a great tribute to the artist. Among those present were sculptor Anton Agius, Luciano Micallef, Mary Rose Caruana, Anthony Cassar, Sandra Attard, Charles Farrugia, J. Briganski, Prof. Chris Abel and Norman Lowell among others. Special messages arrived from Bone-tan-Kati, Holland and from Mucci in Faenza.

Anyone wishing to sign his or her name as a sign of appreciation of Victor Pasmore's art can do so at the Windmill Art Gallery in B'Kara.

