

## Editorial

### Oliver Friggieri (1947-2020)

Victor Grech

Oliver Friggieri (1947-2020) was a Maltese poet, novelist, literary critic, and philosopher. He led the establishment of literary history and criticism in Maltese while teaching at the University of Malta, including the works of Dun Karm and Rużar Briffa and others. A prolific writer himself, Professor Friggieri explored new genres to promote the Maltese language, including writing the libretti for the first oratorio and the first cantata in Maltese. He strongly promoted the Maltese cultural identity, while not shying from criticism. One of his most famous novels, *Fil-Parlament Ma Jikbrux Fjuri (No Flowers Grow in Parliament, 1986)*, condemned societal tribal divisions caused by politics.

I first met Oliver in 2019 and discovered that this humble giant was also a philanthropist. Lea Hogg, a mutual friend, introduced us and pointed out that Oliver sketches. Oliver was not only happy to meet me but was delighted to support me in my non-profit work. He donated 48 original sketches which became the basis of a book, *Oliver Friggieri, Sketches and Poems, with responses by Victor Grech, Lea Hogg, Arthur Lyon Dahl and Richard England*. The sketches were categorized into nine themes, and we decided to match them with his poems, and some art of my own consisting of oil paintings and some digital artwork together with an artwork or sketch by Richard England and Arthur Lyons Dahl's recommendations to improve our environment in Malta, along with interviews by Lea.

The book was published in 2019, his last. I only knew Oliver for a brief time but I miss him, as do we all. *Non omnis moriar*.

Il-ħajja mistoqsija  
miġbura f'elf għaliex,  
u ssirlek poeżija  
jekk int ma twegjibhiex.  
"Jekk", Oliver Friggieri

#### Cover Picture:

'Pastoral'

pencil and ink sketch on cardboard

By Oliver Friggieri (1947 –2020)

Maltese poet, novelist, literary critic, and philosopher.

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**Figure 1** Book cover (*Sketches and Poems*)



# Oliver Friggieri

EDITED BY VICTOR GRECH

## Sketches & Poems



*Featuring responses by*

**Victor Grech**

**Lea Hogg**

**Arthur Lyon Dahl**

**Richard England**

*Save and Support Trust*  
2019



**Figure 2** In Professor Oliver Friggieri's personal home library. Left to right: Lea Hogg, Victor Grech and Oliver Friggieri.

