

## Memorial celebration for Lions Club departed members

### Concert

Daniela Stigliano, soprano, Laura Beltrametti, pianist  
*Sagrestia Vault*

An initial idea to celebrate Mass in remembrance of late Lions Club presidents and members ended up with a concert which featured soprano Daniela Stigliano and her accompanist Laura Beltrametti who came over from Italy for the purpose. When presenting the concert, club president Alfred Micallef Attard announced a few changes, the nature of which was not forthcoming at first. When the soprano started with *Io son l'umile ancella* from Cilea's *Adriana Lecouvreur* her beautiful, rich voice made an immediate impact for an extremely well-rounded interpretation and the masterfully handled difficult and very chromatic climax of this piece. Equally impressive was *O mio babbino caro* from Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*, after which she sang *Ritorna vincitor* from Verdi's *Aida*. Midway through this piece there was some surprising unevenness in pitch, the only fly in the ointment here. Then it became clear why when Mr Micallef Attard announced that the singer was running a high temperature but wanted to honour her commitment as far as possible, and that she was therefore omitting another Verdi piece as well as one each by Puccini and Rossini.

The wonder was that she sang the rest of the programme so very well and without any hitches. Her rapport with the pianist was a constant example of mutual support and confidence. On her part the pianist mastered the keyboard as soloist as well, additionally proving her worth as a composer since apart from interpreting with considerable accomplishment Chopin's *Ballade No. 1 in G minor, Opus 23* and Albeniz's *Tango* she performed two brief romantic and charming pieces of her own, namely *Rimpianti* and *Momento poetico*.

The lighter side of the concert began with two works by Lloyd Webber: *Memory* from *Cats* and *Think of me* from *The Phantom of the Opera*. It ended with *De Curtis's Torna a Surriento* and *l'te vurria vasà*. These classics of different genres were superbly sung and yet again made one wonder how much more Ms Stigliano could have achieved had she not been indisposed, which leaves only one option and hope: a speedy return to Malta.

- Unwilling to miss another chance to hear this lovely voice, the following evening I attended the commemorative Mass said by Fr Charles M. Grech at the church of the Ursuline Crèche in Sliema.

Daniela Stigliano was unfortunately still indisposed but still managed to delight the congregation with her singing. Accompanied by organist Norman Cristina she sang Schubert's *Ave Maria*, Pirangelo Sequeri's *Symblium '77 (Tu sei la mia vita)*, Franck's *Panis Angelicus*, *Amazing Grace* and to Norman Cristina's own arrangement, *Fratello Sole, Sorella Luna*.