

Monday, 31st March 2008 – TimesofMalta.com

## Handcrafts transcend borders

Two embroiderers of different nationalities yesterday showed that art transcends boundaries and race as they sat in the shade and practised their craft at the Valletta open market in St James Ditch.

Local embroidery teacher Doris Cachia and Egyptian embroidery worker Amal Sayed Hassan Sayed sat side by side under a tent, using the traditional methods of their respective countries as part of the activities marking the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. Yesterday's event, which was devised by the Fair Trade Cooperative, will be repeated tomorrow at the Cospicua open air market.

The aim of the event was to show how one can experience other cultures through the sense of touch, enhance intercultural dialogue through handcrafts and acquire understanding of one another's skills. A similar event will be organised next month where a Maltese stoneworker will be displaying his technique with his counterpart from another Mediterranean country.



Amal Sayed Hassan Sayed working on embroidery at the open air market in St James Ditch in Valletta, yesterday.

National coordinator Toni Attard said the aim of the activities was to promote dialogue among people from different cultures. He explained that, even if they spoke different languages, workers could still work side by side in harmony. Nathalie Grima, from the cooperative, pointed out that fair trade was in itself a hands-on experience of active collaboration between cultures, community development, diversity and sustainable practices.

The artisans will also be delivering a two-hour embroidery workshop at the Malta Society of Arts, in Valletta, tomorrow at 5 p.m.

The Egyptian embroiderer will then be holding a three-hour workshop for Malta College of Art Science and Technology students on Wednesday.

The 2008 European Year for Intercultural Dialogue is an EU initiative organised with co-funding from the Education Ministry and support from the National Lottery Good Causes Fund. St James Cavalier Centre for Creativity is coordinating the national events.

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