



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND TOURISM

The Manoel Theatre Management Committee
present an

ORCHESTRAL CONCERT

Leader — GEORGE SPITERI

Conductor — JOSEPH SAMMUT

Paola — Wednesday, 29th July, 1970

300

PROGRAMME

OVERTURE

ROSSINI 1792 - 1868

Rossini's greatest gift as a composer was his deft touch in writing sparkling, effervescent music that bubbles like champagne. Frequently criticized for writing music with little more depth than a mere surface veneer, Rossini nevertheless was a master of opera-buffa style. In the production of music that chuckles and sparkles in every bar, Rossini was incomparable.

Gioacchino Rossini was born in Pesaro, Italy. Studied with Mattei at the Liceo Musicale in Bologna.

In his overture Rossini uses his most brilliant colours and allows his rhythmical "sirocco" temperament to flare at every opportunity.

DANZA SPANGNUOLA

DIACONO 1876 - 1942

The Maltese Composer Carlo Diacono born 1876 at Żejtun, is one of Malta's best known and loved Maestros. He studied music under Paolino Vassallo, another Maltese composer of merited fame, and began immediately his prolific musical activity which ended only with his death at 66 years of age.

He composed two operas, three oratorios, an operetta, twentyone cantatas, seven symphonies and various overtures, besides hymns and innumerable compositions for church music. Licinio Refice considered Diacono as a "luxury" for Malta and Lorenzo Perosi found in Diacono's music peace and consolation, in all life's troubles.

EGYPTIAN SUITE

LUIGINI 1850 - 1906

Luigini Alexander Clement Leon Joseph, French Violinist conductor and composer of orchestral piece called "Egyptian Ballet" and other light orchestral music; also of operas.

No. 1 Allegro non Troppo No. 2 Allegretto No. 3 Andante Sostenuto
No. 4 Andantino, Allegro non troppo.

INTERVAL

BALLET SUITE FROM FAUST

GOUNOD 1818 - 1893

Faust in five acts, book by Jules Barbier and Michel Carve, was performed at the Theatre Lyrique in Paris, on March 19, 1859. It took Gounod two years to write Faust which was the successor of a series of operas, all of them failures. Faust was not successful at its first performance, though the "Soldiers' Chorus" was praised. One critic called the opera an experiment that had failed and not a publisher would at first risk issuing it. In time, however, an enterprising publisher named Chaudens

decided to issue it; and to his amazement the published opera earned more than three millions francs profit within a few years. A revival of Faust was therefore demanded ten years later when it was given again on March 3, 1869, it met with rousing success, and has remained to the present time one of the best-loved operas.

SYMPHONY No. 6 IN F MAJOR, OP. 68

BEETHOVEN 1770-1872

The Pastoral Symphony was written at Heiligenstadt near Vienna. A small monument marks the spot where Beethoven said, "Here I wrote the Scene by the Brook, and the yellow-hammers, the quails, the nightingales and the cuckoos round about did part of my mark".

I. Allegro ma non troppo — With no more than a short, four bar introduction by the strings in which the violins announce the main theme over a tonic and dominant pedal, the music at once sets off gaily.

II. Andante molto mosso — Then we move to a brook which ripples through tall grasses and we can imagine ourselves lying by its brink and dangling our hands in the diamond-cool water. Just before the end of the movement we distinctly hear the distant call of the cuckoo, played on the clarinet, the nightingale on a flute, and the quail, imitated by the oboe, all coming from the brooding depths of the wood.

III. Allegro — We are with a group of peasants who are singing and dancing. The local musicians are not a very expert lot, and the bassoon player is perhaps a rather sleepy old man, judging by the way he repeats the same few notes. The oboe player, is not attending to his job, for he miscounts and comes in at the wrong moment. A folksong enables everybody to join in the singing.

IV. Allegro — When the fun is at its height, a low, distant growl causes everybody to gaze at each other in dismay. There is going to be a storm! A series of pattering quavers announces the rain. Everyone scurries for shelter and the storm rages violently. Gusts of wind shake the trees, torrents of rain pour down the noise swells, and the fury of it all frightens the drenched peasants.

The storm abates as quickly as it arose and the sky clears rapidly. The last ominous mutterings die away, people emerge from their hiding places and gather again for the dancing. Their country songs again float out over the fields and forests.

IV. The Shepherds' Hymn — Gratitude and Thanksgiving after the Storm — Allegretto — The finale of the Symphony opens with a cow-call, which is like a Swiss yodel, played first on the clarinet and then on the horn. A gay rondo — expresses the thankfulness of the shepherds that the storm is over and peace has returned. The symphony ends with another yodelling sound, echoing the one at the movement, but this time hushed and grave.

LUDWIG van BEETHOVEN (1770 — 1827)

Beethoven was born at Bonn, a town on the River Rhine in Germany which is now the capital city of the German Federal Republic. His cruel and lazy father was a singer at the court of the Archbishop-Elector of Cologne. When the little boy Ludwig showed signs of being musical his father thought he might get rich quickly by showing off his son as an infant wonder, as the great composer Mozart had been when he was little. At the age of four Ludwig was therefore locked into a room with a harpsichord and violin and told to practise, and at the age of eight he was also learning the organ. When he was 12 years old he was appointed to a post in the court theatre where his duty was to accompany the orchestra on the harpsichord. In this way, in spite of an unhappy childhood, he gained valuable experience in music and was already trying his hand at composing music himself.

The first important event of Beethoven's life was his visit to Vienna in 1787. There he met Mozart, who heard him play and said: "Pay attention to him; he will make a noise in the world some day." The visit to Vienna was cut short by the death of Beethoven's mother and he returned to Bonn. This time life became happier for him than it had been before. He met the von Breuning family, his first real friends, and Count Waldstein, who provided him with a piano and helped him in other ways. Beethoven later showed his gratitude by dedicating one of his piano sonatas to Count Waldstein.

Beethoven was now 18, stocky and rugged in appearance, ill-mannered, hot-tempered and obstinate. When he was not occupied in the court orchestra or with teaching he would go for long walks alone in the country, jotting down tunes that occurred to him in a little notebook, something which he did all his life. From these little notes he would work out the themes for his sonatas and symphonies. All his life he was a lonely and often a sad man, and although many stories are told of his love affairs he never married.

In 1792 Beethoven again left Bonn for Vienna to study composition with the composer Haydn. Haydn did not take much trouble with his pupil and the lessons ended when the master went to England in 1794. Beethoven then studied with J.G. Albrechtsberger, a strict teacher who could not understand his pupil's rebellious nature.

On this second visit to Vienna everything at first went well. Beethoven was successful both as a pianist and as a composer, playing his own music at the court and at other important concerts, teaching many of the nobility and having new works published all the time. The Prince and Princess Lichnowsky looked after him and provided him with money. In his private life, on the other hand, he was always quarrelling with his friends, having difficulty over his servants and his lodgings and indulging in practical jokes.

It was at this time that Beethoven became deaf. He had already had trouble with his hearing, but by 1801 it was becoming more and more serious and in the end he could hear nothing at all. It was a terrible thing to happen to a musician — and yet it was after this that he wrote some of his most wonderful music — music which he never heard himself. Gradually he withdrew more and more into himself and his music; his behaviour, too, grew more strange and difficult when he could no longer enjoy other people's company. At the first performance of his ninth symphony in 1824 he was so completely deaf that a friend had to turn him round to see the thunderous applause for his music. He remained in Vienna until his death at the age of 57.

He was chiefly a composer of music to be played on instruments rather than to be sung, although he did write a choral mass and an opero called Fidelio, and the last movement of his ninth symphony is choral. His greatest works are his nine symphonies and 17 string quarters (pieces for four players). Musicians think of the nine symphonies of Beethoven in the same way as writers think of the plays of Shakespeare; they are among the greatest works of music.