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THE MANOEL THEATRE MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE

presents an

ORCHESTRAL CONCERT

by the

MANOEL THEATRE ORCHESTRA

Soloist: CONNIE SULTANA

Leader: GEORGE SPITERI

Conductor: JOSEPH SAMMUT

at the MANOEL THEATRE

FRIDAY, 22nd NOVEMBER 1974.



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PROGRAMME

OVERTURE

NICOLAI (1810-1849)

THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR

Carl Otto Ehrenfried Nicolai was born at Königsberg, 9th June, 1810; died at Berlin, 11th May, 1849. He had an unhappy home life, but found a good friend in Justizrath Adier of Stargard, who sent him to Berlin to study music. In 1833 he went to Rome as organist to the Prussian Embassy Chapel, where he studied both the old and the modern masters. In 1841, he became Court Kapellmeister at Vienna, where in 1842 he established the Philharmonic Society. In 1844 he became Director of the Domchor and Court Kapellmeister of the Opera in Berlin. His chief operas were: *The Templar* (1840), *Il Proscritto* (1841) and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Berlin, 1849). The latter met with a brilliant success, which, however, the composer did not long live to enjoy, as he died two months after its first production.

PIANO CONCERTO No. 2 IN C. MINOR OP. 18

RACHMANINOFF (1873-1943)

Moderato — Adagio sostenuto — Allegro scherzando.

This world-famous concerto has had unbroken popularity from the time when it was first presented, with the composer as soloist, at one of the Moscow Philharmonic Society's concerts in October 1901. This is not surprising because it is exceedingly well-built, assured in its orchestration, and written with the keyboard mastery expected from one of the greatest pianists ever known.

Rachmaninoff's rich creative gifts are more evident in this concerto than in his other three. All the movements are a gold-mine of magnificent tunes ranging from intense power to exquisite lyricism, and the music is distinguished throughout by a style that proclaims the composer's strong personality in every bar. From exuberance to tears, this concerto the gamut of the emotions.

A nervous disorder early in his career prevented Rachmaninoff from composing for a period. The Second Piano Concerto was the first work written after his recovery, and is dedicated to the physician, Dr. Dahl, who looked after him during his illness. It is noteworthy that the second and third movements were written and performed before the first, but the three movements are so wonderfully unified, that, by listening to the work, no one could possibly find this out.

The tolling opening chords of the FIRST MOVEMENT (*Moderato*) create a wonderful introduction and set the mood for the impassioned main theme which follows immediately. A second subject is announced by the soloist where the feeling is more tranquil. A prominent section in G minor soon appears imbued with a rhythmical martial spirit, and the movement comes to an exciting conclusion following a brilliant development of the various themes.

The SECOND MOVEMENT (*Adagio sostenuto*) is one of Rachmaninoff's loveliest inventions. Here lyrical thoughts are varied by a quick-moving interlude, maintaining an atmosphere of wistfulness totally in keeping with the melodic content of the movement. In the middle section there is an increase in tension brought about by an extended cadenza, which however soon gives way to the calm of the opening.

The challenging, scherzo-like beginning of the THIRD MOVEMENT (*Allegro scherzando*) gives way to the statement, initially in B flat major, to one of the greatest themes of the concerto repertoire. After further episodes, this great tune appears again in D flat major, and finally in the 'home' key of C major. The glowing finale comes to an end in bravura fashion as befits one of the great romantic concertos.

I N T E R V A L

SYMPHONY No. 41 IN C MAJOR (K.V. 551) MOZART (1756-1791) *(JUPITER SYMPHONY)*

Allegro vivace — Andante cantabile — Allegretto — Allegro molto.

First movement, *Allegro vivace*. The first subject complex is shown here as it appears after twenty third bars that are in a sense introductory, for they come to a standstill on a bare dominant. There is a second subject in the orthodox key and position, as well as a cadence phrase borrowed from a comic opera by Paisiello — so much for Jupiter! This seems at first inclined to shoulder the whole working out, but some development follows, and there is more in the recapitulation, serving at the same time for the transition to the second subject.

Second Movement — *Andante Cantabile*. The slow movement, in F Major, with muted strings, is at first perfectly serene; but there are strangely disturbing syncopations and passing 'wrong' notes in a new theme in C Minor, which presently seems to lose all control by suddenly producing the effect of 2—4 motion within the 3—4 time. This is the kind of thing a modern composer would self-consciously advertise by changing his time signature. At its return the first subject is considerably more ornate and in this form, together with a second subject of a kind of drooping loneliness, it furnishes the close of the movement.

Third Movement, *Allegretto*. If there is any exuberant joviality in the symphony, it is not in the minuet, which is curiously subdued, smiling rather than rollicking music. The chromatic woodwind descent towards the end is exquisite. The Trio is simplicity itself: gentle calls in C Major, a vigorous answer on the dominant of A Minor which never reaches the tonic definitely, and a melting cadence leading back to the first phrases.

Fourth Movement, *Allegro Molto*. This is sometimes called the "Final Fugue". It is nothing of the sort: what we have here is not a fugue but a finale in regular sonata form with its material treated in very elaborately polyphonic fashion not at every point, but almost continuously. There is a second subject in the proper key and place whose two interlocked phrases are capable of combining contrapuntally with the three belonging to the first-subject material. Here is a passage from the coda where all five themes come together as by a miraculous coincidence, for the process sounds so natural and musical that the amazing mental concentration which made it possible is not apparent to the ear. Yet the ear catches everything that is going on, so lucid and well aired is the score, and it all flows by in a stream of beautiful music that will satisfy even those who have no notion of the incredible skill that went to its making.



CONNIE SULTANA, née Muscat was born in Valletta. She started her musical education at an early age, but the war years interrupted her studies for a while. In 1947, she obtained the L.R.S.M. Diploma, under the guidance of Miss Giovanna Bascetta, qualifying first in order of merit. Shortly afterwards, she was recommended for a Commonwealth Scholarship in London.

It was during this period that Connie Sultana emerged as a pianoforte performer of promise. She gave a number of public performances including several at the British Institute, the Malta Cultural Institute, and over the Rediffusion network. In January 1949, she had the distinction of being selected by Maestro Cantoni to perform at the Manoel theatre during an operatic and instrumental concert organised to raise funds for the Malta Catholic Institute.

In 1950, Connie Sultana proceeded to London where she lived for some years. Here she was for some time the Music adviser and music teacher at St. Anne's Convent in Ealing. She was a regular patron of the Royal Festival Hall and of the Royal Albert Hall, and she was contracted on three occasions by the Overseas Service of the British Broadcasting Corporation to talk about the Henry Wood Promenade Concerts.

The Rachmaninoff Concerto No. 2 in C minor is not a new work for Connie Sultana. She played it with her sister May Sultana, L.R.S.M., on two pianos during the inauguration of the cultural year (1949-1950) of the Malta Cultural Institute. It is perhaps for this sentimental reason that she has selected this work to stage her 'come-back' tonight!

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

M.T.M.C. — **VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL CONCERT** — Friday, 29th November 1974, at 7.30 p.m.

PRINCESS POUTIATINE'S PUPILS AND M.A.D.C. — **PUPILS OF PRINCESS POUTIATINE RUSSIAN ACCADEMY OF DANCING AND A GUEST APPEARANCE BY M.A.D.C., WITH MUSIC OF THE SPHERES** — Saturday, 7th at 7.30 p.m., Sunday, 8th December, at 6.30 p.m.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE — **MINI MUSICAL 1974** — Saturday, 14th Sunday, 15th December, at 6.30 p.m.

MALETH — **QERQ JEW SERQ?!** — Thursday, 19th; Friday, 20th, at 7.00 p.m.; Saturday, 21st at 7.30 p.m., and Sunday, 22nd December, at 6.30 p.m.

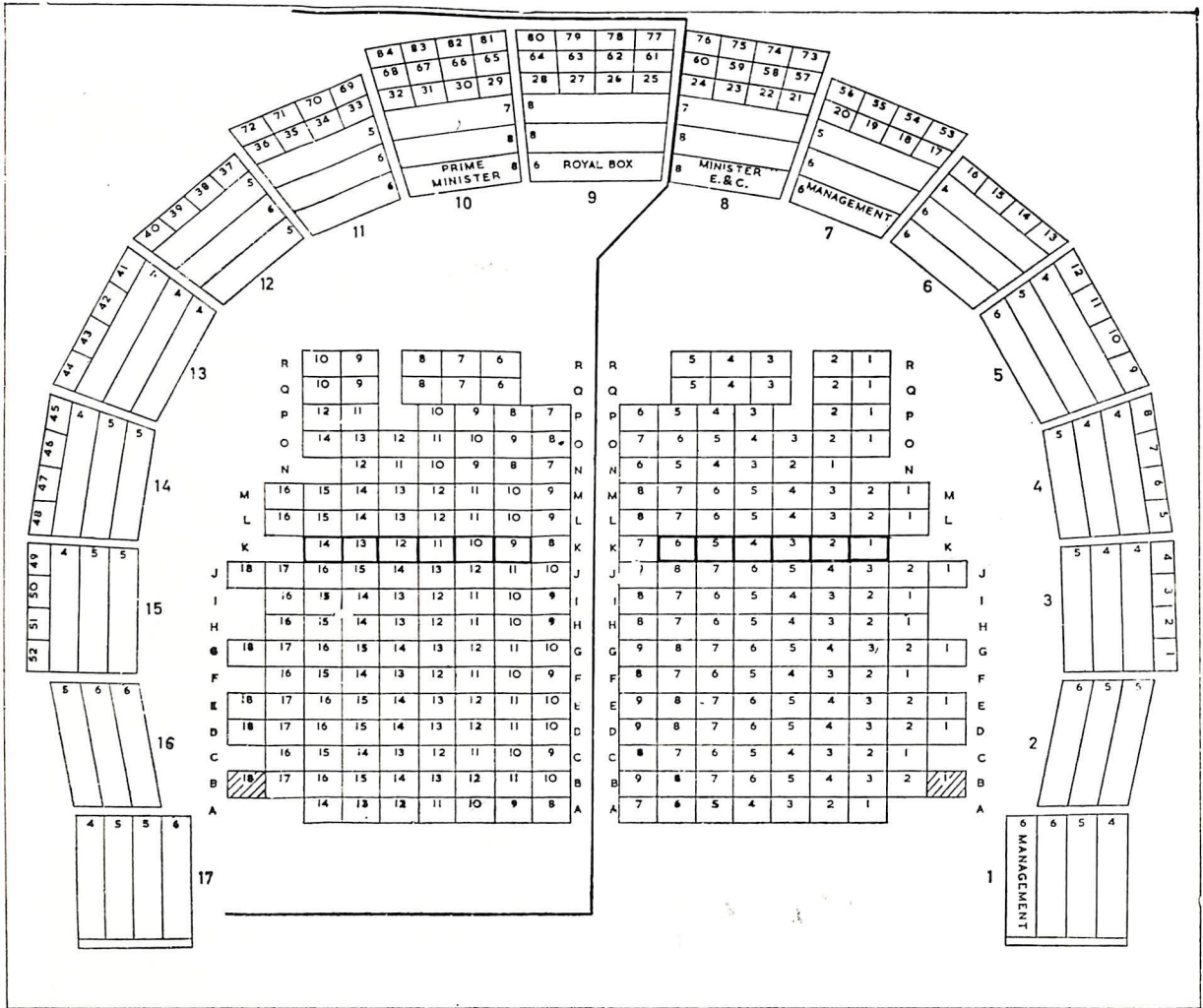
ARIEL PLAYERS — **CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME — SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS** — Friday, 27th, at 7.00 p.m., and from Saturday, 28th, to Monday, 30th December at 2.30 p.m. and 7.00 p.m.



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MANOEL THEATRE BOOKING PLAN

Late comers will not be admitted to the Auditorium.

Smoking is not permitted in the Auditorium, in Boxes and in the Gallery.

The Management reserve the right to vary or omit any part of the programme without previous notice.

Patrons are reminded that the taking of photographs during the performance is not allowed.

Children even when accompanied by their parents, will be required to occupy a seat.

