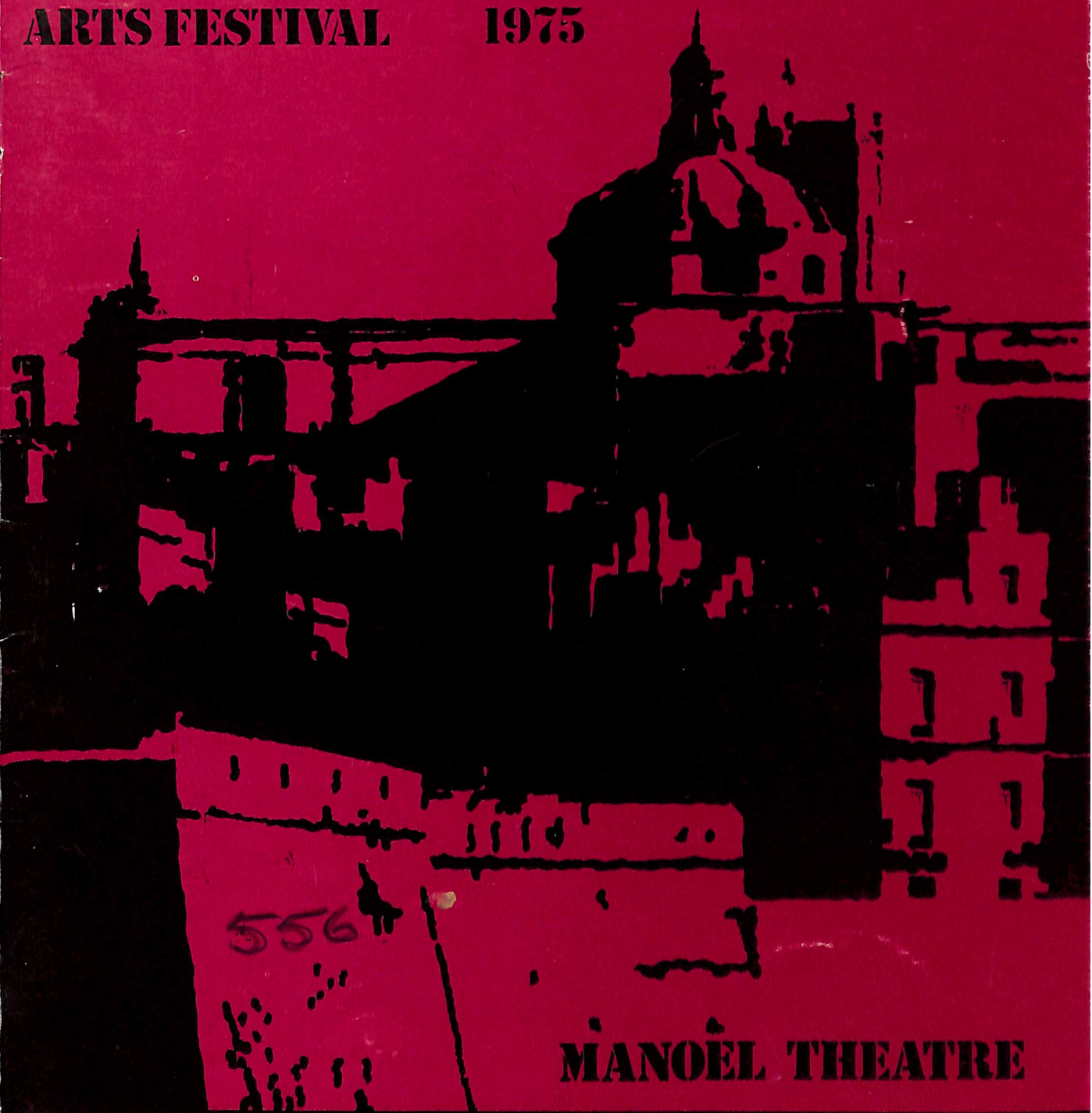


Samy Holcho.
with 4 other ppl. 1975.

**MALTA INTERNATIONAL
ARTS FESTIVAL 1975**



MANOËL THEATRE

The International Arts Festival 1975

is organised by the

Manoel Theatre Management Committee

on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Culture

Management Committee: Hon. President, G Muscat-Azzopardi

Chairman, A Agius Ferrante

Hon. Treasurer, Miss M L Bonnici, LRSM L.Mus.LCM FLCM

Consultants: Richard England, Michael Ellul and

Victor Castillo

Festival Director of Publicity: Victor Lewis FIPR (Tel 73912)

Programme cover design by Richard England.



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MALTA INTERNATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL 1975

THE MANOEL THEATRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

in association with

THE EMBASSY OF ISRAEL

proudly present

ISRAEL'S MASTER OF MIME

**SAMY
MOLCHO**

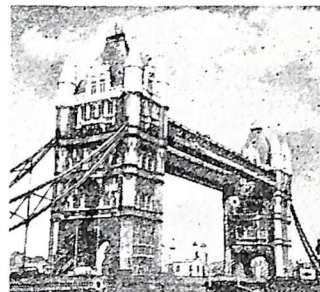
in two separate programmes

from his repertoire

These are the 13th & 14th Concerts in the International Arts Festival

*At the Manoel Theatre
on Monday 20 October
and Tuesday 21 October
at 7.30 p.m.*





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THE WORDLESS LANGUAGE

MIME is an art in itself.
Its language, though wordless, is none the less impressive.

A hungry child looking through the window into a sweetshop is mime in itself.

Mime is a timeless art — and therefore also an art of today. It is far more intimately associated with its interpreter than any other art. And it lives and dies with the artist, its creator.

Mime is a reflection in perspective of human situations, underlining and stressing the comic and the dramatic as well as human aspects. Thus it gives full play to the imagination both of the performer and his audience.

What we call modern mime today started with impressions of climbing steps, running against the wind, walking on the same spot, and the like. Very soon, however, neither the public nor the artist was satisfied with these purely physical illusions. Ideas were added to these technical effects and mime in its full meaning was born.

The movements of the artist in mime must be plainly understandable. It is the movement and the change of dimension which give the performance its greater significance and which evoke the viewers' reactions.

Mime is primarily a drawing in black and white, receiving its colour through the imagination of the onlooker.

It is not only pleasant things that the wordless language tells of. Like any other language it aims to be a vehicle of expression not only of laughter but of tears, and of the moods and nuances of behaviour between those two extremes.

By Samy Molcho



SAMY MOLCHO

SAMY MOLCHO, who was born in Tel-Aviv, was 15 when he began to study the art of movement, specialising later in the dramatic and modern dance. He studied in Israel's famous Kammer - Theatre and also played many times in the Israel National Theatre, 'Habimah', during which time he learned the basic elements of pantomime under the noted Elvin Eppstein.

Having so equipped himself he decided, in 1957, that he was ready to present his first programme as a solo artist in the field of mime. His appearances attracted more and more attention and after two hundred performances he was elected Israel's 'Artist of the Year'.

The year 1960 saw him break into the field of international acclaim with his first European tour of Greece, Germany, Switzerland, Italy and Austria. A second European tour, over an even wider field, followed.

Samy Molcho, in addition to performing, has become a vital figure as teacher, author and director. At the end of his Euro-

pean tours he became guest instructor at the Reinhardt Seminar in Vienna and the International Summer Academy in Cologne.

Molcho, his name and talents then known throughout Europe, then toured South America and, literally, the rest of the world, including many appearances at famous international arts festivals. He has played in well over 52 countries and in such distinguished theatres as Milan's Piccolo, Vienna's Burg, London's Royal Court.

As a professor at the Vienna Reinhardt Seminar, the Royal Academy in Stockholm, and the International Dance Academy in Cologne he developed, as an aid to actors, what is widely known as the 'Molcho Method'. His own ballet, 'Bereshit', has been performed and filmed in Germany. He created 'Mimo-Vision' for the Austrian National Television Service, which was awarded first prize at the International Television Festival in Prague in 1964. And in the following year he played 37 different parts in a One Man Show as Austria's entry for the famous Golden Rose of Montreux Festival.

As a director he was responsible for the first German language production of Genet's 'The Blacks', in addition to German production of plays by Ionesco and Gogol.

TONIGHT'S PROGRAMME

1. *My Language*
2. *The Egg*
3. *Farewell at the Station*
4. *The Bank in a Park*

5. *The Soldier*

INTERVAL

6. *The Trial*
7. *The Men and the Tree*
8. *The Bachelor and the Bottom*
9. *The Babysitter*
10. *The Bird and the Hunter*

The artist reserves the right to adjust his programmes according to circumstances.

THE MANOEL THEATRE

IT IS VARIOUSLY CLAIMED that the Manoel Theatre in Valletta, focal point of this International Arts Festival after the opening concerts in Mdina, is 'the third oldest theatre in Europe' and 'the oldest theatre in the Commonwealth'. However that may be, the fact is it dates back to the earlier decades of the eighteenth century, when the Grandmaster of the Knights of St John of that time, one Antonio Manoel de Vilhena, decided one March day of 1731 to build a public theatre — mostly out of his own pocket — 'for the honest recreation of the people', a purpose which is recorded to this day in a Latin inscription above the main entrance.

That there was a demand for such an institution was certain, for drama and opera had flourished — and continued to flourish — through all the years of the Sovereign Military Order's rule over the island. The vows of charity and chastity to which the Knights were committed did not prevent them from indulging in theatrical activities and it is on record that at the various Auberges (headquarters), and in the open, pageants, operas and dramatic offerings were put on by amateurs and professionals and a love for the theatre had spread through the population.

Grandmaster de Vilhena was no time waster and the building of the theatre started the very day the deed of transfer for the site was signed. In ten months the job was finished. The original interior, constructed entirely of wood, was similar in design to the Palermo theatre of that time and is generally believed to have been modelled on it, being semi-circular with straight sides projecting to the stage. There have, of course, been many

alterations through the years, bringing the auditorium to its present effective oval shape.

Originally it was called, prosaically, 'Public Theatre'. Later it bore the title of 'Theatre Royal' but eventually and rightly, in 1866, in tribute to its founder, it became and has remained the Manoel Theatre.

The first night of all first nights was on 9 January 1732 with a presentation of 'Merope', a grand tragedy in the classic style, by Scipione Maffei. The setting was designed by Francois Moudion, who was the architect of the Order of St John, and it was played by the Knights.

The theatre was run by a Senior Knight of the Order, who bore the title of 'Protettore' and managed the house generally, approved each season's programme of plays (in the main lyric opera and French tragedy), acted as censor and dealt with 'difficulties' which arose from time to time betwixt impressario, performer and subscriber. Maltese playwrights and opera composers gradually earned their place alongside foreign authors and it was a Maltese — Nicolò Isouard, also known as Nicolò di Malta — who eventually became Commissioner (new name for Protettore) during Napoleon's siege of Valletta in the last two years of the eighteenth century.

Despite his great faith in the power of the stage Isouard was fighting a losing battle. For a time the theatre carried on notwithstanding the near starvation of the garrison and the besieged population, and 'despite the occasional shots from the Maltese mortars that passed over the roof of the building'. But there came the time when the players could no longer bear the strains of war as their dwindling wages proved insufficient for survival, let alone for the rigour of singing and acting. An amateur group, fired by the desire to keep up morale, took over and 'the show went on' until the siege was raised. But dark days followed for the Manoel.

With the arrival of the British the Theatre came to life again and throughout the first half of the nineteenth century there was a nine-months season of opera each year from September to May. There were nights of splendour, like the fourth of December 1838, when this jewel-box of a theatre shone in all its pristine glory when Queen Adelaide, widow of King

William IV, came with cheers, anthems and a guard of honour to see a performance of 'Lucia di Lamermoor'.

Strangely it was the very prosperity of the latter years of the nineteenth century which brought the eclipse of the Manoel Theatre. The large garrison, the fleet, and an increasing number of tourists, rendered the theatre inadequate. In 1861 it became private property. With the proceeds of the sale a new Opera House was built and Grandmaster Antonio Manoel de Vilhena's little house fell into disuse. For a period it was a doss-house for beggars. And then, suddenly, some of the old glory returned when the Royal Opera House was destroyed by fire in 1873. Grand opera replaced the evicted beggars until the Opera House was reconstructed and then the once loved little place in Theatre Street looked to be on its deathbed. It served, fitfully, as dance hall and, in this century, as cinema.

But then, once more, the fate of the Opera House brought revival to the Manoel. The former was completely destroyed in the Second World War. Dreams of bringing the Manoel back to life turned to reality when the Malta Government acquired the building in response to public appeals. Experts from Britain and Italy were called in and under their supervision and with loving care the delicate process of restoration was carried out by Maltese artisans.

All sorts of technical improvements were made on stage and back stage, with the lighting and an enlarged orchestra pit. Comfortable stalls replaced the old wooden seats and there was a rearrangement of boxes. But, in particular, the once lovely decoration of the auditorium was restored from behind the grime and whitewash and even paint which had for so long hidden the theatre's beauty. Inch by inch the great ceiling with its 22 carat gilding was restored; the dozens of tiny attractive panels and paintings which decorated the tiers of boxes were brought to life again. This jewel box of great warmth and beauty glowed with a radiance deeply moving to those who had seen their theatre in distress. More than two hundred thousand pounds sterling were spent on re-acquisition and restoration.

Came one splendid December night in 1960 and a grand opening performance — the famous Ballet Rambert company's presentation of 'Coppelia'. And on all sides there were gasps of

delight as the audience walked in to find this new and shining jewel in Malta's national heritage.

'The Manoel' is now officially Malta's National Theatre. The duties of the early Protettores are now entrusted to a Management Committee who run the theatre on a non-profit basis. Under their guidance the theatre has maintained a very high standard. International celebrities who have graced its stage include the like of Yehudi Menuhin, Rostropovitch, Boris Christoff, Leon Goosens, Richter, the Berlin State Opera Ballet; Sir Donald Wolfitt, Margaret Rutherford, John Neville, Louis Kentner, Moura Lympany, John Ogdon, Ram Gopal and a host of others, to say nothing of a great deal of local talent including distinguished concerts by the Manoel Theatre's resident orchestra.

By the end of this International Arts Festival a whole gallery of famous names will have been added to those who have graced the Manoel — solo performers and companies from many nations taking part in this Festival organised for the Ministry of Education and Culture by the theatre's Management Committee whose only reward is the satisfaction of their devotion to the furtherance of that enterprise first created by Grandmaster Manoel de Vilhena 'for the honest recreation of the people'.

Victor Lewis.

SOME FORTHCOMING FESTIVAL EVENTS

OCTOBER

Wednesday 22.

THE FOERSTER TRIO from
CZECHOSLOVAKIA playing *Beethoven's
Trio in C Minor. Op 1. No 3: Martinu's grand
Trio in C Major. No 3: and Mendelssohn's
Trio in D Minor. Op 49.*

*Friday & Saturday
24 and 25*

TWO RECITALS by **THE SCHOLARS**,
*Britain's popular vocal group presenting
Madrigals, folk songs, contemporary songs,
spirituals, part songs and their own brand
of close harmony.*

Monday 27.

FROM RUMANIA the outstanding
CLARINETTIST, AURELIAN —
OCTAV POPA, whose recital will include
works by Rumanian composers.

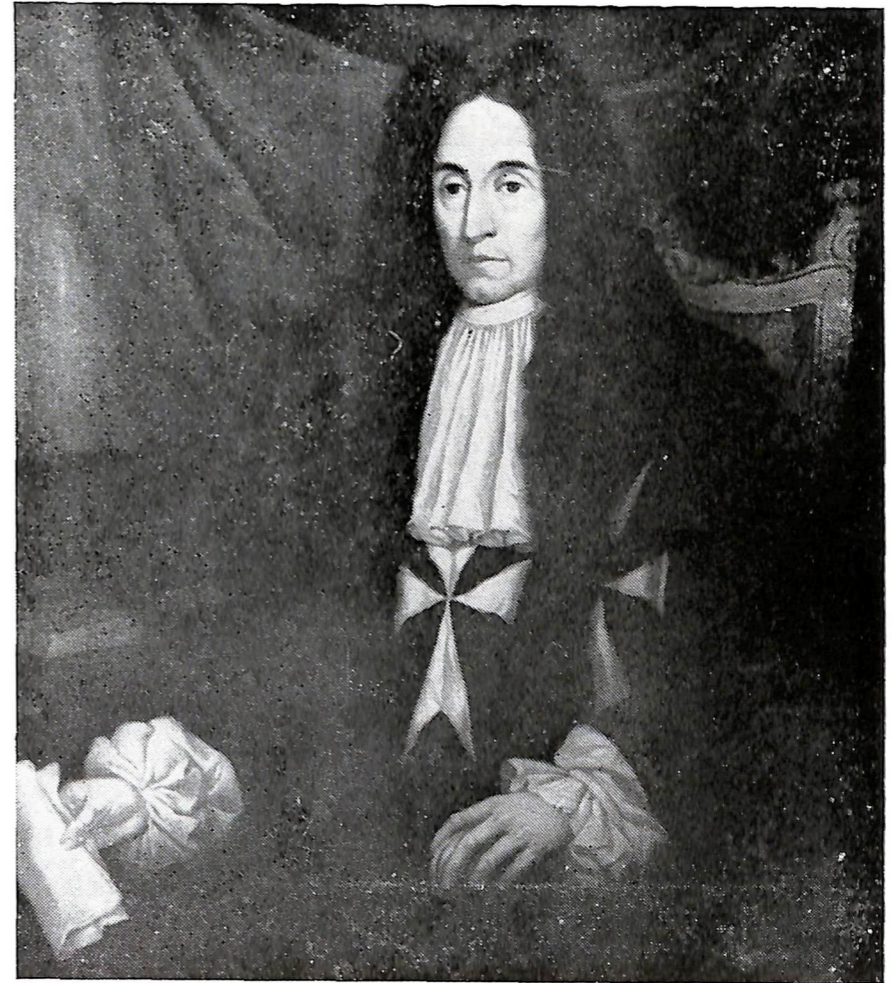
NOVEMBER

Sunday 2.

MILTON KAYE, unique pianist from
the **UNITED STATES**, presenting a
*programme of ALL AMERICAN
music from mid-nineteenth century,
through ragtime to Gershwin
and beyond.*

From 3 to 11 Nov.

**THE COMPAGNIA ITALIANA DI
OPERETTE** presents a series of
six operettas.



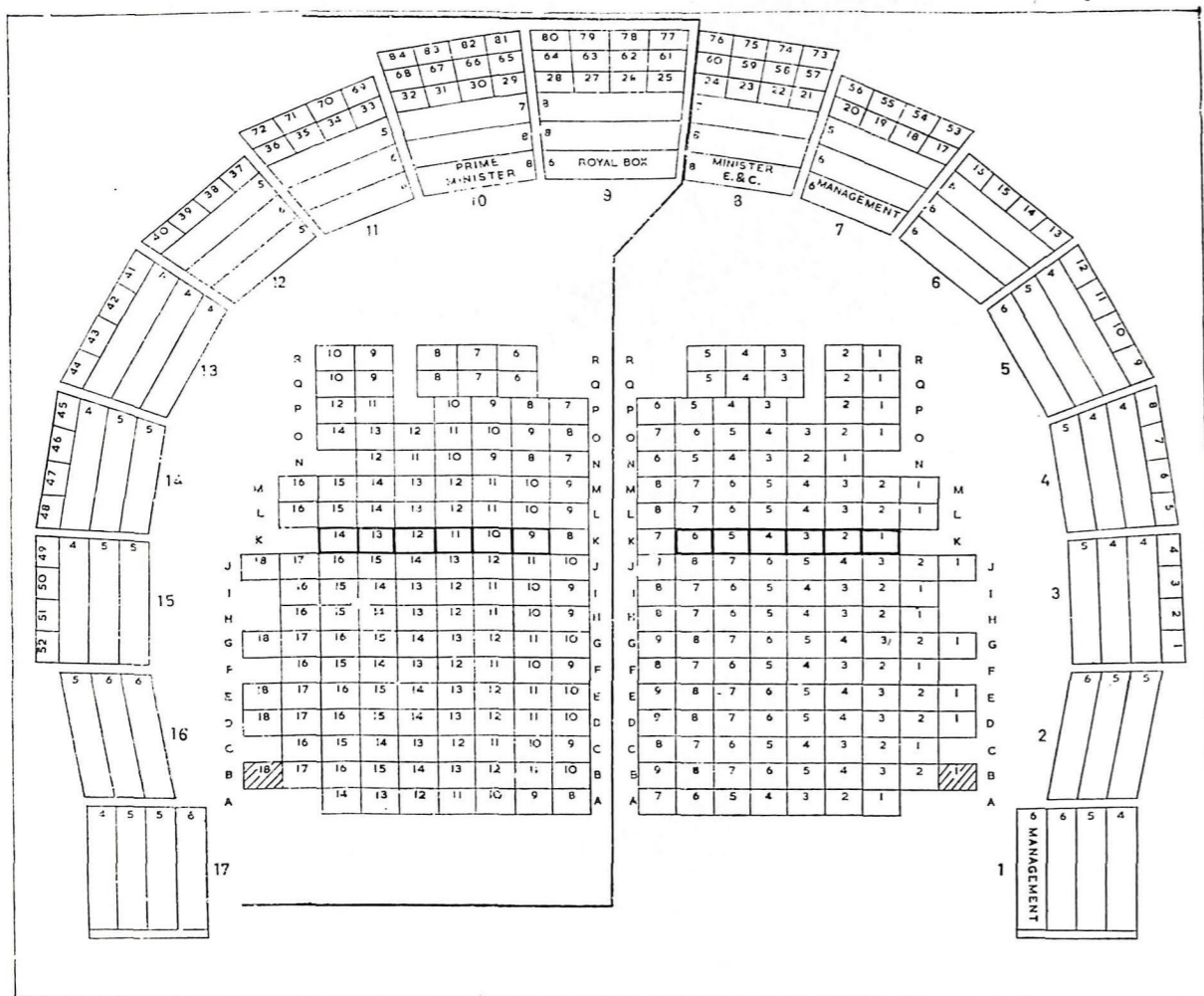
Antonio Manoel De Vilhena

Grand Master Antonio Manoel de Vilhena, a Portuguese, was elected Grand Master in 1722. A man of great intellectual qualities, he was popular with all, and his "savoir faire" earned him everyone's love.

At the beginning of his reign, fearing a second Turkish invasion of Malta, he promptly took steps for such an eventuality, and the enemy, seeing his preparedness, sailed away without even attempting a landing.

Having fortified the Island, he began to find ways and means to encourage civil enterprise, and in the political field he managed to negotiate a treaty of peace with the Sultan of Constantinople.

As a befitting gesture towards the People of Malta, he built in 1732 the Manoel Theatre, a living monument to his achievements, which keeps his memory fresh and glorious in all those that cultivate the Arts and all those who seek an honest recreation, as the Theatre's motto implies: "Ad honestatem populi oblectationem."



MANOEL THEATRE BOOKING PLAN

Late comers will not be admitted to the Auditorium.

Smoking is not permitted in the Auditorium, in the 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.

Australia

Bulgaria

Czechoslovakia

Denmark

France

Germany

Holland

India

Israel

Italy

Malta

**Roumania
(Bucharest)**

Spain

United Kingdom

U.S.A.

Venezuela

