

A Vocal and Orchestral Concert
by the
Hansel Theatre Orchestra.
22, 23/4/96.

60A

**THE MANOEL THEATRE MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE**

in association with

THE CATHEDRAL CHAPTER

present

A VOCAL AND ORCHESTRAL CONCERT

by the

MANOEL THEATRE ORCHESTRA

Leader: George Spiteri

SOLOISTS:

Soprano

OLIVIA BORG

Tenor

ANDREW SAPIANO

Baritone

JOE FENECH

Bass

JOE VELLA BONDIN

CONDUCTOR: JOSEPH SAMMUT

AT ST. JOHN'S CO-CATHEDRAL

Thursday, 22nd July 1976

Friday, 23rd July 1976

PROGRAMME

OVERTURE EGMONT OP. 84 BEETHOVEN

The Egmont Overture, op. 84, composed in 1809, is one of several pieces that Beethoven wrote as incidental music for Goethe's play. A hero in the struggle for the liberation of the Netherlands from Spain, the Count of Egmont was executed as a result of an infamous conspiracy. The heroism of the man, the strength and nobility of his character, speak out unmistakably in the majestic opening for strings. The Egmont Overture, together with other incidental pieces was first performed at the presentation of the Goethe play at the Burgtheater in Vienna on May 24, 1810.

PREGHIERA ALLA VERGINE R. BUGEJA
(on words by Francesco Petrarca)
Baritone JOE FENECH.

DER ENGEL WAGNER
Soprano: OLIVIA BORG.

SALVE R. BUGEJA
Tenor: ANDREW SAPIANO.

CANTATA SAN PAOLO C. PACE
SORGE SU MALTA UNA DIVINA AURORA
words by V.M. PELLEGRINI.
Bass: JOE VELLA BONDIN.

MOVEMENT J. SAMMUT

The construction of this work is disclosed in the fluid flow of the music.

RESTA IMMOBILE from *WILLIAN TELL* ROSSINI
Baritone: JOE FENECH.

SCHMERZEN WAGNER
Soprano: OLIVIA BORG.

QUIS SICUT from *LAUDATE PUERI* A. NANI
Tenore: ANDREW SAPIANO.

LA PREGHIERA NABUCCO VERDI
Basso: JOE VELLA BONDIN

ITALIAN SYMPHONY OP. 90 MENDELSSOHN
Allegro Vivace
Andante con Moto
Con Moto Moderato
Saltarello

The Italian Symphony is the finest and most popular of Mendelssohn's Symphonies, and it was composed in 1833 in Berlin as the result of a trip to Italy which he had taken two years earlier. On May 13, 1833, the symphony was introduced by the Berlin Philharmonic conducted by the composer.

The opening movement, *Allegro Vivace*, is built upon two principle themes. The first is heard at the very beginning — a spirited and happy subject for the strings; the second, played by the clarinets, is more restrained. The entire movement generates a feeling of joy; of healthy animated spirits, of contagious exhilaration. The second movement, *Andante con Moto* — sometimes referred to as "The Pilgrims' March" — was believed by Moscheles to have its source in a Bohemian folk song. The beautiful subject that dominates the entire movement is first heard on the oboe, clarinet, and violas, and is adopted by the strings. The clarinet has the second theme, graceful and delicate. In the third movement, *Con Moto Moderato*, a graceful and pleasing song is heard at the beginning and the end, the middle section being a Trio for bassoons and horns. The closing movement is vigorous with the exciting movement and rhythm of the Italian Carnival dance, the *Saltarello*.

ST. JOHN'S CO-CATHEDRAL CHURCH

The Co-Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, originally the Conventual Church of the Knights Hospitaller of Malta, was built between the years 1573 and 1577 on the design of the Maltese famous architect Girolamo Cassar. The adjacent Oratory of the Decollation and the Sacristies, as well as the two-storeyed buildings on either side of the Church were erected in the 17th century. The Church-Museum was inaugurated in 1965.

The plan of the vast Temple, dedicated to the Patron of the Hospitallers' Order, is very simple — a large nave with an aisle on each side. It contains seven chapels pertaining to seven different Langues of the Order, namely those of Castille, Aragon and Auvergne on the Epistle side, and those of Germany, Italy, France and Provence on the Gospel side. Two other chapels, that of the Blessed Sacrament and that of the Holy Relics, known also as the Anglo - Bavarian chapel, stand on the right and left side of the apse respectively.

The barrel-shaped vault of the Church, divided into six sections, representing the Precursor's life, was painted directly on stone by the famous artist Mattia Preti, the "Calabrese", one of the best painters of the Italian Seicento.

On every side, carved walls, marble and bronze statues, beautiful paintings and silver works adorn the Temple. Undoubtedly, the most famous embellishment is the precious set of magnificent tapestries — 29 pieces — hanging around the nave, wrought by the renowned Belgian looms of Jodocus de Vos, on subjects mostly taken from the paintings of P.P. Rubens and Poissos.

The pavement is covered with 400 large multi-coloured marble slabs, commemorating the lives and deeds of brave members of St. John's Order, the cream of European aristocracy of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries.

Within a beautiful marble balustrade one sees the costly High Altar made of lapis-azuli, onyx and other precious stones, in the middle of which there is the gilt bronze relief of the Last Supper,

attributed to Bernini. Two bronze lecterns represent Moses and St. John's Eagle. The Choir with its old carved and gilt wooden stalls and a square lectern in the middle, is dominated by the colossal group of the Baptism of Christ wrought by Giuseppe Mazzuoli, a pupil of Melchiorre Gafa the Maltese sculptor.

In the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, within the historical silver gates, the miraculous Madonna of Carafa, solemnly crowned in 1954, is venerated. In the Chapel of the Relics there are two caskets — one of silver and one of wood — containing many outstanding relics of the Saints.

The Knights of each Langue vied with each other in adorning their respective chapel with marble and bronze statues by outstanding sculptors, such as Mazzuoli, Soldani Benzi and Pradier, and with paintings of renowned artistes, such as Preti, Caravaggio, Favray, Penni and Brescianino.

The Oratory, embellished with a carved and gilt-wooden ceiling and paintings by Preti, houses Caravaggio's world-known masterpiece "the Beheading of St. John".

All the Grand Masters from 1530 to 1798 are buried either in the Church or in the Crypt almost all of them in artistic monuments or sarcophagi.

This Church, founded by Grand Master Jean de la Cassiere, embellished by the Knights and raised to the dignity of Co-Cathedral by the Holy See, is the pride of the Maltese people and a centre of attraction to foreigners.

AT THE ORGAN
Mro. ANGELO PACE

