



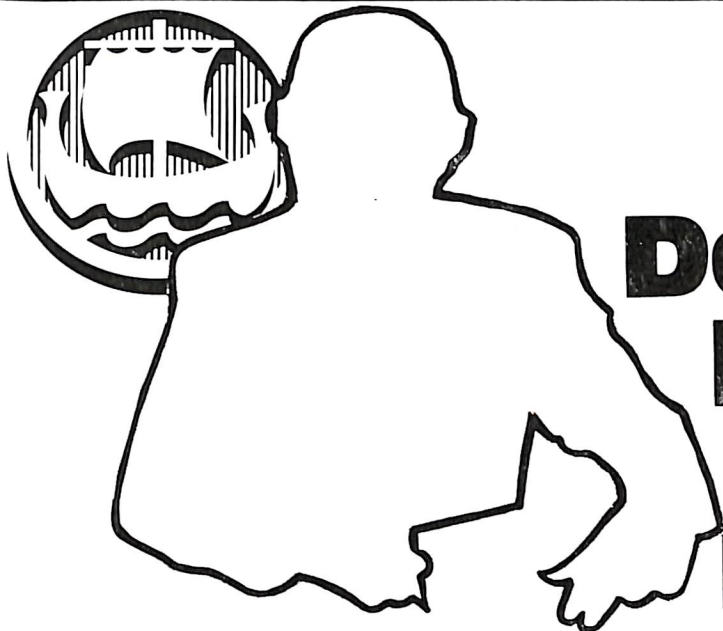
1732

Francis Piccolini  
by  
Anna Clara Belluzzi  
29. 5. 79.

MANOEL  
THEATRE

462

PIRELLA GÖTTSCHE LOWE



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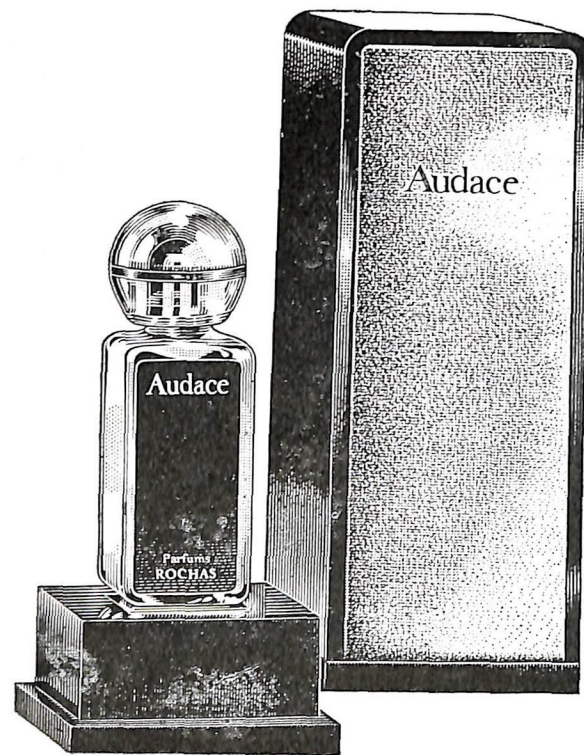
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**TUESDAY, 29th MAY 1979**

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*Barbara Bellizzi*  
*29/5/77*



Marie-Claire Bellizzi was born in Malta and started learning the piano at the age of five. In 1974 she sat for her LRSM Diploma and was awarded a scholarship by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music to study at the Royal Academy of Music. During the four years at the Academy, she studied with Jean Harvey FRAM, and took part in various concerts and music festivals. Her performance at her debut at the Manoel Theatre last year, was described as one of 'clarity and relaxation' and 'artistic poise'. She has given other concerts both in Malta and abroad and is now working with the concert-pianist Hamish Milne in London.

# PROGRAMME

## Italian Concerto

J.S. BACH (1685-1750)

*Allegro — Andante — Presto*

The Italian Concerto (1735) comes from the second part of the Clavieruebung and was written in the latter period of Bach's life when he was Cantor at the St. Thomas Church in Leipzig. It is for unaccompanied solo clavier, even though concertos were traditionally for solo instrument and orchestra. Bach here attempted a solo concerto in the form and style previously established by such Italian masters as Corelli — the reason why he entitled the work a "concerto in the Italian style". The vigour and muscular strength of this piece are found in the outer fast movements. The Allegro is a ceremonious, almost pompous movement with great contrasts between "concertino" and "ripieno" (illustrated on the two manuals on the harpsichord): while the Presto is particularly distinguished for its rhythmic invention. But surely the most eloquent part of the concerto comes in the intimate — almost improvisatory — slow movement. This is a soaring aria for the clavier in which the new age of homophony is not only anticipated but even realized.

## Prelude and Fugue

T.J. BOWERS (1954- )

Timothy Bowers studied composition with Dr. Alan Bush from 1973 to 1978 at the Royal Academy of Music and was awarded several prizes. He is now studying privately with David Blake, with the assistance of the Countess of Munster Musical Trust. His compositions include mostly chamber music and songs and he is currently writing a work for piano and orchestra.

Prelude & Fugue was composed in 1977 for Marie-Claire Bellizzi, and dedicated to her. Although both halves of the piece share some thematic material, there is a marked contrast between the two. The Prelude is a short rhapsodic movement with cadenza-like passages in the outer sections, which lend it an improvisatory character. The Fugue which follows without a break is more rhythmical and aggressive. Its form corresponds to that of the traditional fugue, using three voices and including several contrasting episodes. There is a middle section which is less contrapuntal in character in which fragments of the main subject appear in the lowest octave of the piano. This culminates in a powerful cadenza (on the counter-subject) which leads to a reprise of the exposition and finally the coda. Prelude & Fugue was given its first performance at the Academy by the dedicatee and was consequently performed at the Purcell Room and at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama earlier this year.

## Sonata in B-Flat Minor Op. 35

F. CHOPIN (1810-1849)

*Grave: Doppio Movimento — Scherzo — Marche Funebre — Presto*

The B-flat minor Sonata (1839) is frequently referred to as the Funeral March Sonata because of the third movement, certainly the most celebrated elegy in all instrumental music. But the pall of death is spread over the other movements as well. To see the structure of this sonata in its true perspective, one must see it rather as a tone-poem with a message of life and death rather than as a sonata in the classical sense. Schumann calls it "a sphinx" and certainly there is an atmosphere of foreboding and terror. The first two movements portray a life of conflict and struggle — they could be termed autobiographical, for they mirror Chopin's own life. The first movement opens with a brief sombre introduction which plunges into an agitato theme. The lyrical second theme is a beautiful melody suffused with pathos, demanding a quieter tempo than before. The movement plummets between ecstatic heights and depths of despair before spiralling to a brilliant exciting close. The breathless and impetuous Scherzo is an emotional storm of crashing chords and octaves enclosing a Trio of heavenly beauty and serenity. The idyllic close of this movement contains no hint as to the catastrophe of the next: the celebrated Funeral March. This March is too well-known to require detailed description. Karasowski says: "Such a funeral march could only have been written by him, in whose soul the pain and grief of the entire nation resounded as an echo." As the last bars of the March die away, we are left in the mood to appreciate the weird poetry of the finale. Chopin says that "the left hand unison with the right gossiping". Kullak more poetically suggests: "the autumn wind whirling away the withered leaves over the fresh grave". "It must be played", he says, "gloomily and with self-absorbed expression. It must rush by cold and unfriendly." It is

"The ground whirl of the perished leaves of hope  
The wind of death's imperishable wing".

**INTERVAL**

Fantasy in C Major Op. 17

R. SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

Liszt's schemes for building a monument to Beethoven in Bonn, led Schumann to plan a major work, the proceeds to be used for the fund. Schumann's first thought was a 'grand sonata' to be entitled, "Ruins, Trophies, Palms". The project for the memorial collapsed: but this did not prevent Schumann from writing his composition. He abandoned the sonata structure and title and called the work "Fantasy". It was published in 1839 and only through the dedication to Liszt do we find outward references to the Beethoven's tribute. (As a matter of interest, Liszt reciprocated by dedicating to Schumann his Piano Sonata.)

Also in 1836, Schumann confessed his love for the daughter of his former teacher Friedrich Wieck — Clara, herself a remarkable pianist. Not wanting anything to obstruct her career and since he did not wish Clara to marry a musician, Wieck violently opposed the match. The lovers were forbidden to meet or correspond and their sole means of communication became music. Indeed, Schumann could not have chosen a better form to lay bare his heart than writing the first movement of which he wrote to Clara: "I have besides finished a Fantasy . . . I think the first movement is more impassioned than anything I have ever written — a deep lament for you. . ." The first subject — the opening theme — was intended by Schumann to represent Clara. This melts imperceptibly into the movement's first reference to a theme which is stated openly at the coda. Its kinship to one of Beethoven's "An die ferne Geliebte" songs is too close to be coincidental especially as the words of the song are:

"Take them, then, these songs I sang thee,  
Songs of passion, songs of pain.

Let them like an echo tender: All our love call back again."

In the course of the development there is a grave C minor episode headed Im Legendenton and there is a very pointed reference to the Beethoven quote, although made to sound much more disturbed. However, the movement's crowning glory is the coda with its eloquent declaration of love through Beethoven's song. The movement ends in a C major glow showing that Schumann's own hopes were not entirely in ruins. The second part is march music with monumental sonorities, striking modulations and even discords bound together by a proud theme in dotted rhythm. The 'Clara' theme is found again, now worked into the texture in canon and again in the continuation of the central episode. The molto più mosso coda shows Schumann exulting in keyboard virtuosity as he was not often to do again. The third and concluding part comes like a benediction. Nothing in the earlier sonatas or any of his previous works, springs from such deep places of the heart! Clara's motto-theme is introduced in the bass and appears again in the second section weaving its way as this works itself to a chordal climax. The coda brings one last exultant surge of emotion, before sinking to rest in a radiant C Major.

## MANOEL THEATRE FORTHCOMING EVENTS

M.T.M.C. — ORCHESTRAL CONCERT WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF THE MANOEL THEATRE CHOIR AND LOCAL ARTISTS — Tuesday 12th June at 7.30 p.m.

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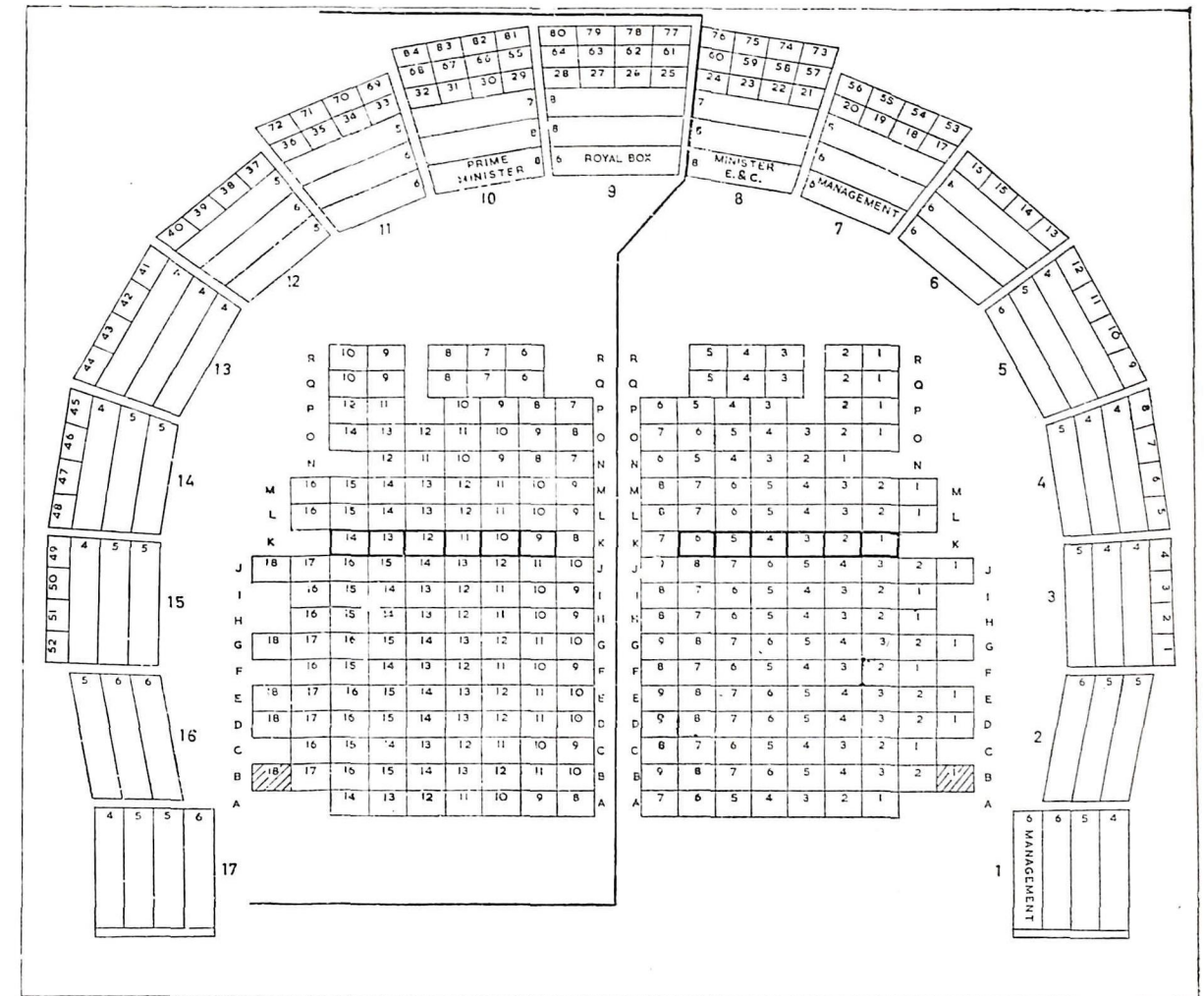
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MANOEL THEATRE BOOKING PLAN

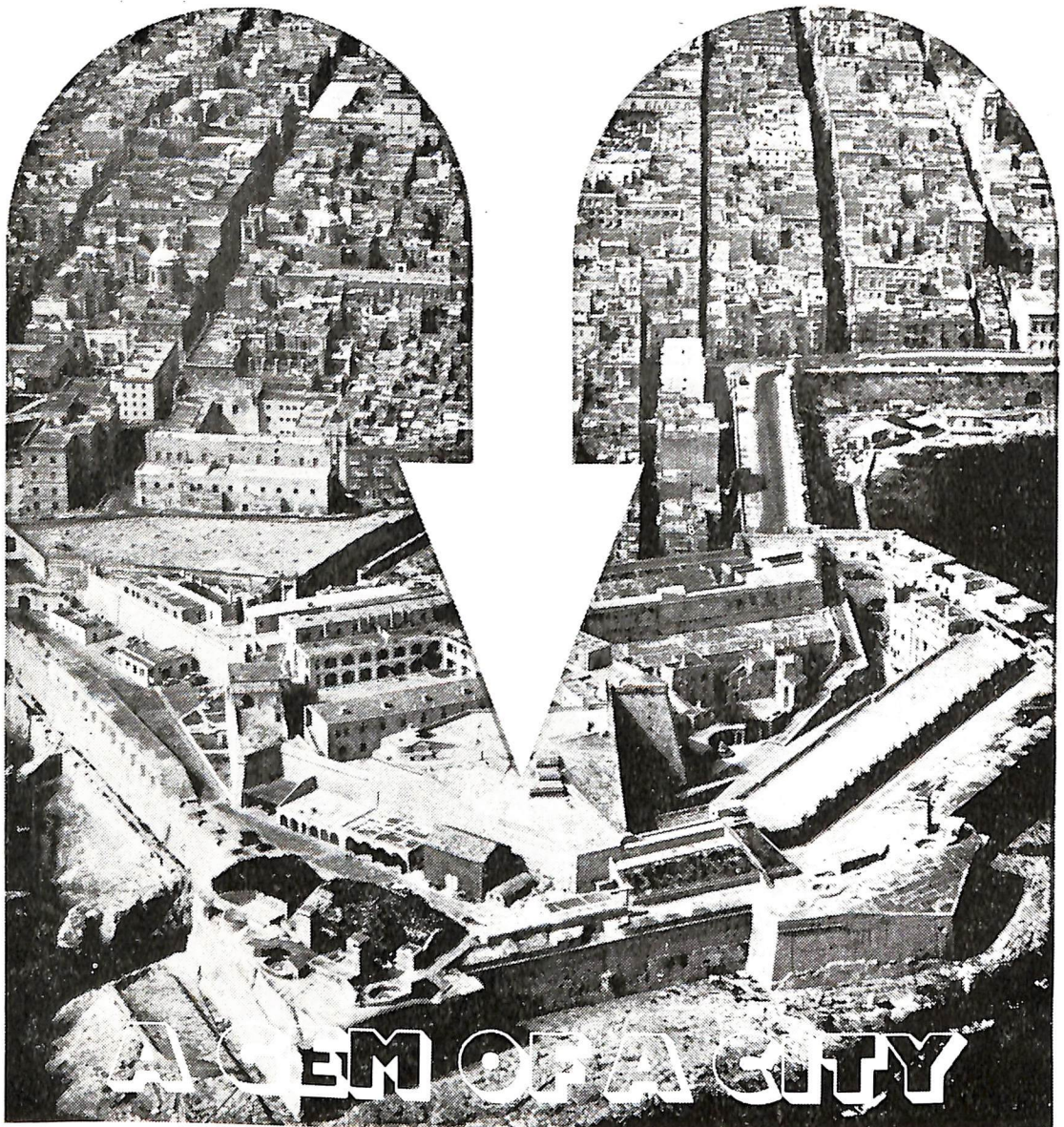
Late comers will not be admitted to the Auditorium.

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

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

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