



1732

*"Orchestral Concert"*  
*by*  
*Manuel Theatris Orchestra*  
*Solene*  
*Emanuel Spagnol*  
*11. x 11. 79*

**MANUEL  
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782

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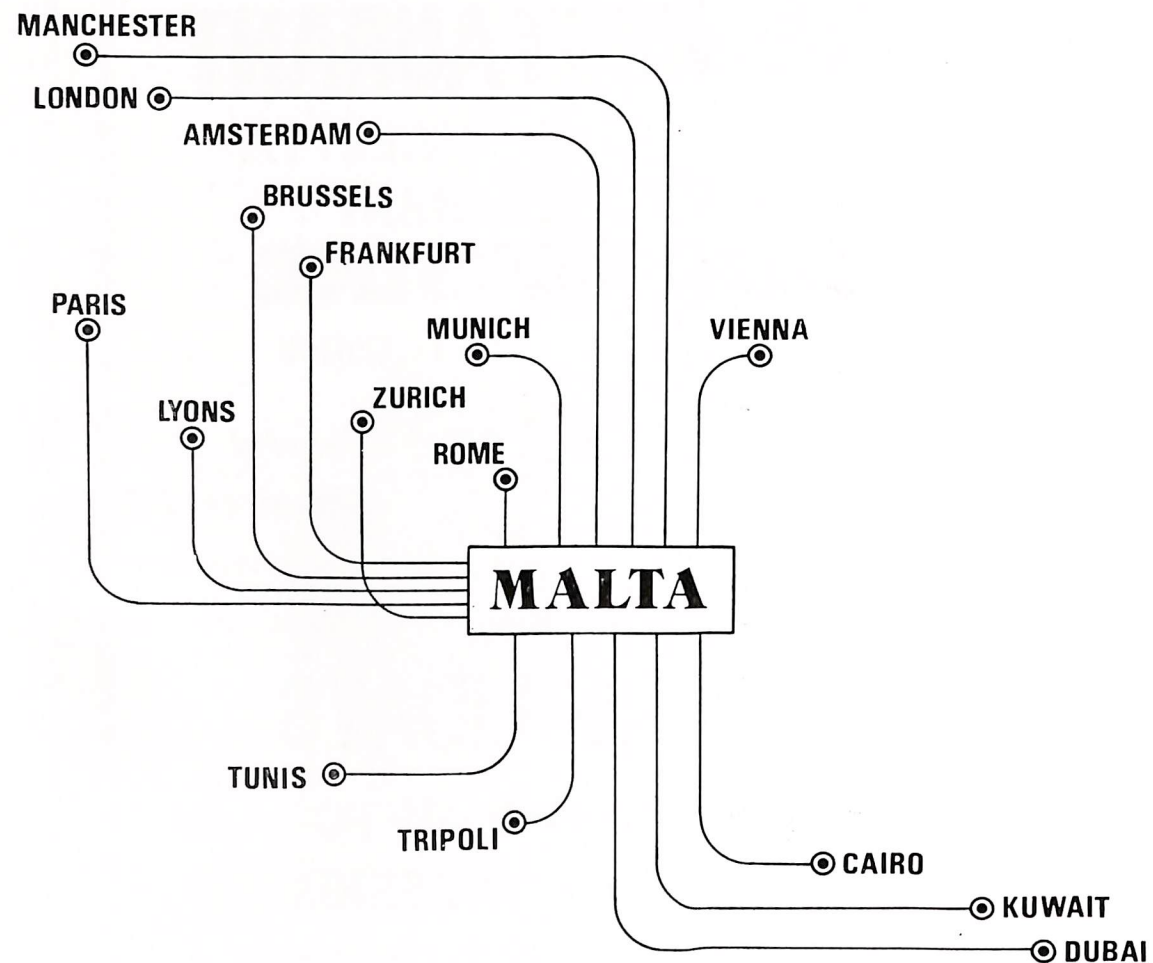
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# MANOEL THEATRE ORCHESTRA

Leader:   
George Spiteri

Soloist: EMANUEL SPAGNOL

Conductor: JOSEPH SAMMUT

at the Manoel Theatre

TUESDAY, 11th DECEMBER 1979

# PROGRAMME

Ouverture (to the opera) Zorilla

A. NANI (1892-1929)

A. NANI needs no introduction to the audiences of the Manoel Theatre. Last year on April 11, the "Preludio Marziale" from his first opera "Zorilla" was performed here, while today it is the turn of the actual "ouverture" to this 108 years old three act *Melodramma Giocoso* (libretto by A. Spadetta) which was premiered in 1872, in Naples. The following year Zorilla was so enthusiastically received at this theatre that it was again included in the Manoel Theatre repertoire for 1874 and 1875. This overture was last performed in 1942 by the then Malta Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Paul Nani, the living composer's son. Today's performance would probably be the last in the series of the commemorative occasions during 1979 to mark the 50th anniversary of the death of Anton Nani.

Air on a G String

J.S. BACH (1685-1750)

During his stay at Cothen, J.S. Bach composed his chief instrumental works. Indeed, during this period he produced the Brandenburg Concertos, the first book of the Well Tempered Clavier and the four orchestral suites which he entitled as 'Overtures'. The third orchestral suite in D was scored for 2 oboes, 3 trumpets, drums and strings. However, in 1871 the great violin virtuoso Wilhelmj (1845-1908) rearranged its second movement as a violin solo in the key of C, transposing the melody a 9th lower and with pianoforte accompaniment. The melody is played on the G string (hence Air on a G string) due to the rich tone which this lowest string of the violin possesses.

Horn Concerto in C Minor, Op. 8

F. STRAUSS (1822-1905)

*Allegro molto — Andante — Allegro molto.*

Much must have been subconsciously owed by Richard Strauss to his father Franz who was one of the greatest horn players of his time, even though the musical views of father and son were eventually to diverge. Franz's Concerto, written for the old style horn with crooks is in three movements played without a break. While the first movement may recall Schumann, the second might be a march by the young Beethoven. Weber appears to be the influence upon the orchestral colouring, yet the Concerto with its superb solo part, is ultimately more tribute to Franz's most admired composers than derivation.

In the last movement the duet for the Horn and a Flute marks the only occasion in the Concerto in which a distinctive part is given to an orchestral instrument. The solo Horn's last virtuoso outburst brings the work to a triumphant conclusion in C Major, a confident assertion of the work as a whole representing the first Horn concerto to appear in the concert repertoire since the time of Mozart.

## Interval

Symphony No. 4 in E Minor Op. 98

J. BRAHMS (1833-1897)

*Allegro non troppo — Andante moderato — Allegro giocoso — Allegro energico e passionato*

Brahms had considerable misgivings about the way the public would react to his fourth symphony. His fears were partly justified when he presented this new work in a two-piano arrange-

ment to a circle of intimate friends, most of whom disapproved. Eduard Hanslick remarked after the first movement: "Really, you know it sounds like two tremendously witty people cudgeling each other". Brahms remarked sadly to Max Kalbeck: "If persons like Billroth, Hanslick and you do not like my music, whom will it please?" Brahms then decided to put his symphony to an acid test — in a rehearsal by the Meiningen Orchestra, directed by Hans von Bülow. He insisted that if the work did not go well there he would withdraw it permanently. But the rehearsal was a success, and the conductor was most enthusiastic. He called the symphony "stupendous, quite original, individual, and rock-like. Incomparable strength from start to finish". And it was the Meiningen Orchestra, the composer conducting, which gave the symphony its world premiere, on October 25, 1885.

There is such a consistent note of melancholy in the Fourth that Walter Niemann was tempted to call it Brahms's Elegiac Symphony. In this music he finds "the inward tragedy . . . (and) the resignation of solitary old age", revealing themselves in "the weary, veiled tone, curiously objective and reminiscent of epic or ballad which predominates in it".

Without any introduction, the first theme of the opening Allegro is heard in the violins. It is a serene subject built from a two-note phrase to which woodwind give reply after each two-note sequence. An eloquent horn episode leads to the second theme — a forceful statement, the first part in woodwind and horns, the second part in woodwind and cellos, over a plucked-string accompaniment. Before the exposition ends, the strings engage in a soaring interlude, which rises to ecstatic heights in the highest registers. The development concerns itself mainly with the opening subject and only incidentally with the first part of the second theme. The two-note phrase of the opening subject, in augmentation, introduces the recapitulation; the same material is the basis of the coda.

The four-measure introduction to the slow movement offers the motive of the first theme in horns and woodwind, derived from the old Phrygian mode. In the fifth measure, the woodwinds are heard in a tender song, accompanied by pizzicato strings. This elegiac mood give way to an impassioned outburst in the strings, only to return again with one of Brahms's highest flights of melodic inspiration, a wonderful song for the cellos. Both these lyrical ideas are elaborated, and the first of these is discussed in the coda.

In the third movement, Karl Geiringer finds that "a sturdy gaiety reigns supreme". He also finds that the orchestration "is broader and more plastic more calculated to secure massive effects". The full orchestra is heard in the first sprightly subject, while the second theme, in an equally light vein, is heard in the violins.

In the finale, which Geiringer aptly calls "the crowning glory" of the whole symphony, Brahms returns to the old Baroque form of the passacaglia. Brass and woodwind present the stately, sonorous eight-measure theme. This is followed by some thirty variations. "Brahms chose the form of variations on a ground for this finale," Donald Francis Tovey explains, "because dramatic activity (always on the ebb in finales) was fully exploited in the other three movements. He desired a finale that was free to express tragic emotion without being encumbered by the logical and chronological necessities of the more dramatic sonata forms".



*Spagnol  
Emanuel*

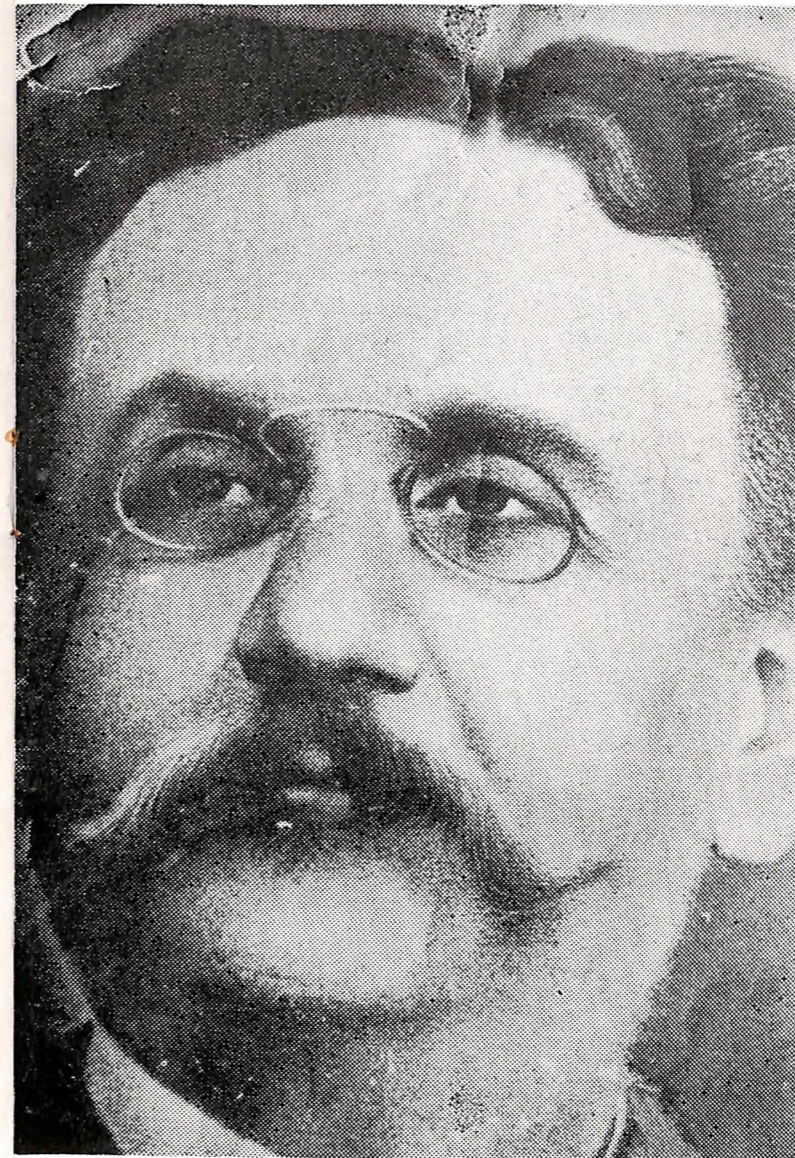
**EMANUEL  
SPAGNOL**

Emanuel Spagnol was born on the 15th March 1963. He started learning the Horn at the age of nine under the guidance of his father.

Four years later he joined the orchestra "MALTA ZAGH-ZUGHA". Then he was one of the first students to join the Johann Strauss School of Music. There he attended a Horn Summer Course under Miss Richelle Reavis.

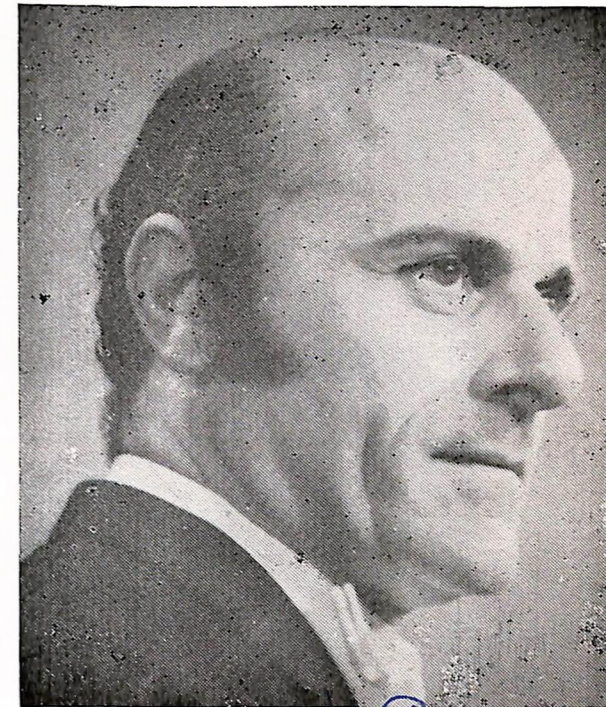
He also takes part in Orchestral Concerts, Recitals and Chamber Music activities. Last February he performed the Mozart Concerto no. 3 in E flat major with the school orchestra.

Emanuel Spagnol is also a part time member of the Manoel Theatre Orchestra.

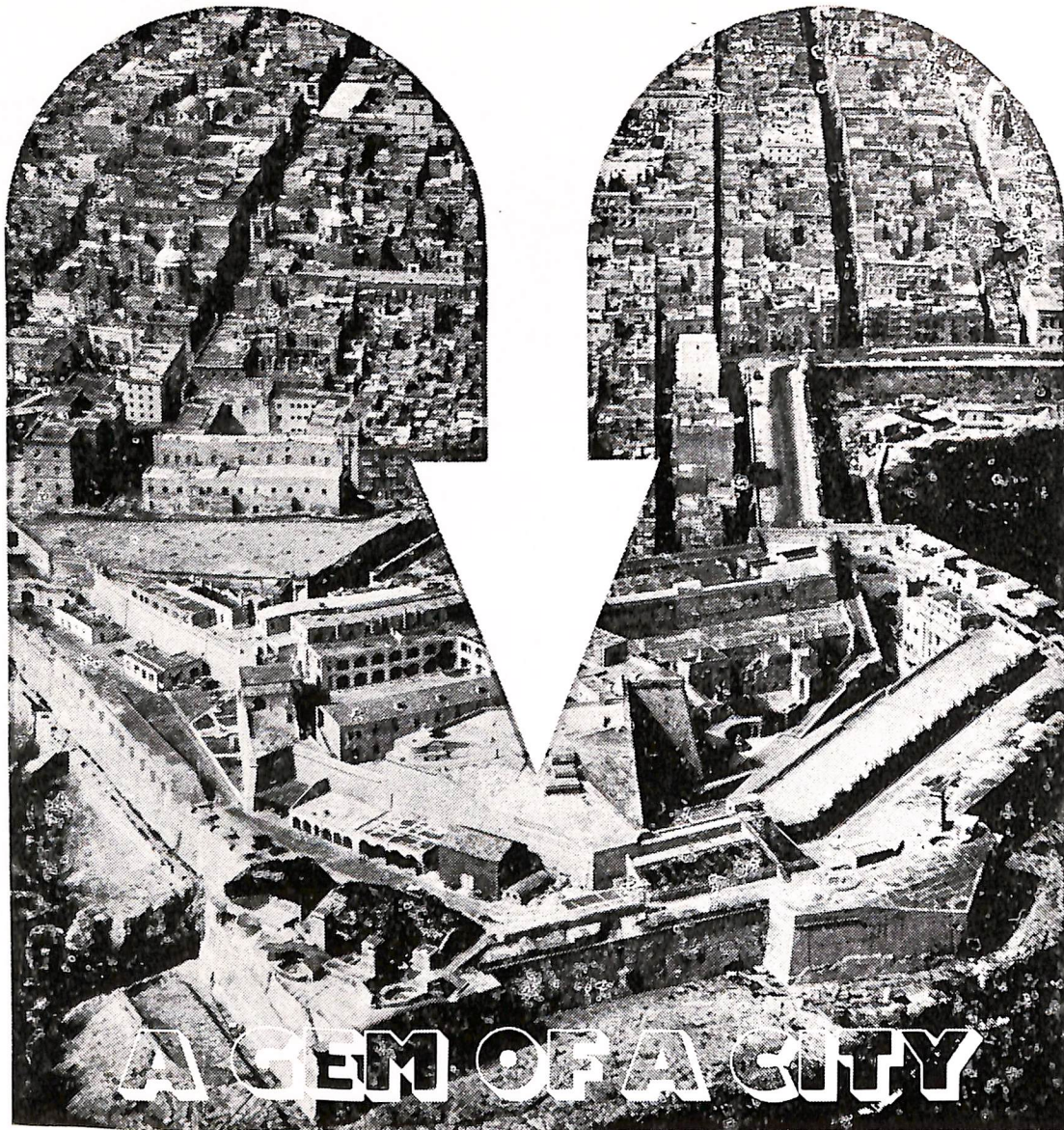


***Anton Nani (1842-1929)***

This photo shows A. Nani at the time when his renowned 'REQUIEM' was awarded the Gold Medal at the London International Exhibition in 1886. This Maltese great work was composed in 1879 — *one hundred years ago* this year. In recent years it has been performed at the Manoel Theatre, St. John Co-Cathedral and the Auditorium of the Catholic Institute.



*Joseph Sammut*  
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