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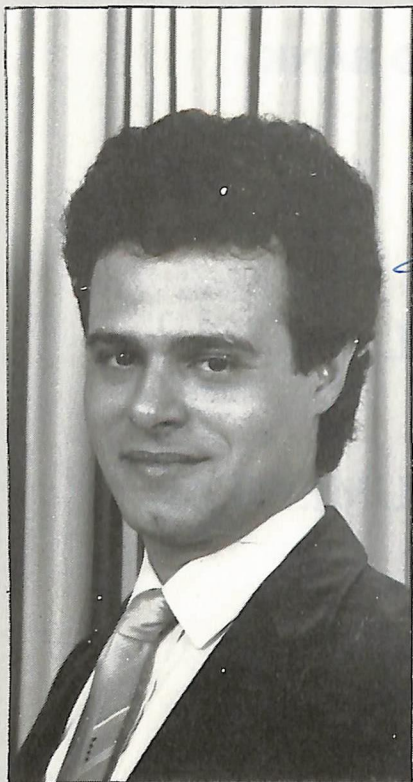
John Galea

The

Manoel

Theatre

9 May 1989



JOHN GALEA

is certainly no new comer to the Manoel Theatre. His debut was in the National Piano Competition *Malta Mużikali* way back in 1976, where he ranked as gold medallist in the under-18 category. At the time he was under the tuition of Mrs Bice Bisazza.

Two years later he appeared once more at the Manoel Theatre, this

time as musical director, conducting a spectacular performance of *Dei Lustige Witwe* by Lehar staged by the Astra Theatre Dramatic Co.

Since then he has appeared in various concerts and recitals in Malta and Gozo. He has presented the Gozitan public with numerous operettas and musicals including *Dei Czardas Fürstein* and *Oklahoma*.

Mro. John Galea is also an active composer. His works have already been performed abroad in Greece, France, UK, Australia and in the Maltese Islands. He is studying composition with Charles Camilleri and has attended master classes in the UK with James Murray-Brown and John Gardner.

Earlier this year Mro John Galea made his UK debut in a Maltese Music Celebrity Concert held in conjunction with the International London Boat Show.

At present Mro John Galea is a Mid-Med Bank employee seconded to the Gozo School of Music.



PHYLLIS BAJADA ABRAM

joined the Bank in 1966 and presently works at Merchants Street, Valletta Branch. She started vocal training with Miss A. Miggiani LRSM in 1973. Ten months later Phyllis made her debut at an MCI Concert. Since then she has participated in various recitals including concerts held at the Manoel and at St. John's Co-

Cathedral. She also gave a number of recitals on TVM.

An ex-member of the Choral Society she performed as a soloist in several sacred works under the baton of Mr. J. Vella who was then choirmaster. These included *Requiem* by Anton Bruckner, *Stabat Mater* by G. Rossini, Antonio Nani's *Requiem* and G. Verdi's *Nabucco* (concert version). In 1982 Phyllis took part in the Malta International Arts Festival when together with 3 other soloists she performed Haydn's *Mass in Time of War — Paukenmesse 1796*.

It was Mro. C. Pace who introduced Phyllis to staged opera when she was given a role in his opera *L'Ipogea* based on a libretto by V.M. Pellegrini. In 1984 and 1985 she was the lead in two opera premiers (during Malta's Arts Festival) by Charles Camilleri. In 1986 together with other foreign artists she participated in Classical Music Week organised by Hotel Phoenicia, and the following year she was invited by the St. Julian's Choir to sing in an all Verdi recital, held at the Manoel Theatre, to celebrate the choir's 25th anniversary.

PROGRAMME

L'Italiana in Algeri *Overture* **G. Rossini**
(1792-1868)

Although Rossini modestly described it as *my pastime* **L'Italiana** rates as one of his masterpieces. The overture has a steady melodious flow from beginning to end and a brilliant score bubbling with charm, freshness and high spirits.

Le Nozze di Figaro *Deh vieni non tardar* **W.A. Mozart**
(1756-1791)

The Marriage of Figaro is based on the comedy by Beaumarchais (1732-99), the famous French playwright, whose trilogy of plays on Figaro include **The Barber of Seville**, being the first of the three, while the second is the subject of Mozart's opera though it has been set by lesser composers too. In Act IV Susanna sings this aria in which she expresses her love for Figaro while waiting for him in the garden.

Lucrezia Borgia *Com'è Bello* **G. Donizetti**
(1797-1848)

The first performance of **Lucrezia Borgia** in Malta took place on the 20th March 1837 at the Manoel with Camilla Darbois in the title role. Duke Alfonso, Lucrezia's fourth husband, believes Gennaro to be her lover, who in reality is her son though she alone knows it. In this *aria di sortita* Lucrezia laments over her sleeping son whom she eventually poisons while in fact she is planning his escape.

Gugliermo Tell *Selva Opaca* **G. Rossini**
(1792-1868)

Of the four acts of Rossini's last opera, based on the Swiss legend of William Tell, Donizetti is reputed to have said: 'The first and last acts were written by Rossini — the second by God!'

This scene from Act II is a wood. Mathilde waiting for her lover Arnaldo is in turn anxious, apprehensive and excited. Her aria is an ode to the solitude and silence of the forest she loves.

Interval (20 minutes)

Norma *Overture* **V. Bellini**
(1801-1835)

Norma is generally considered to be Bellini's masterpiece and one of the most important developments in the history of opera. If Bellini lacks true vigour and drama nevertheless in **Norma** he achieved a static solemnity coupled with absolute purity of melody. The rich lyrical vein of the *Sinfonia* has always been highly esteemed. In Wagner's opinion **Norma** has a great score that speaks to the heart a work of a genius!

Adriana Lecouvreur *Io son l'umile ancella* **F. Cilea**
(1866-1950)

Francesco Cilea's most successful opera is based on the life of the 18th Century Parisian actress Adrienne Couvreur ('Le' was added later by Marc-Antoine Legrand, her teacher who was also a successful playwright). Numerous authors wrote plays for her and befriended her, the most famous of them being Voltaire, in whose *Oedipe* she gave her final performance in 1730 and in whose arms she died several days later at the age of 37. In this aria Adriana sings 'I am the creative spirit's humble instrument.... I am merely the voice of the poet, an echo of tragedy.... my voice is no more than a breath that with every new day must die....'

Tosca *Vissi d'arte* **G. Puccini**
(1858-1924)

In Act II **Tosca** is left alone with Scarpia whom she begs in order to save Mario, the man she loves. She asks his price and is repelled by his demand only for herself. In despair, finding herself in his trap, **Tosca** asks the Lord why all the charitable efforts of her good and pious life are repaid with such suffering.

I Masnadieri

Tu del mio Carlo al seno

G. Verdi
(1813-1901)

With **I Masnadieri** based on Schiller's play *Die Rauber* (The Brigands) Verdi became the first of the great nineteenth century composers to write an opera specifically for London where this work was premiered at Her Majesty's Theatre on the 22nd July 1847. In Malta it was heard for the first time at the Manoel on the 6th October, 1849.

Having fled from a banquet given by her captor Francesco, Amalia enters to pray for her beloved, whom she believes is dead, at her uncle's tomb. Later a messenger (omitted in this excerpt) informs her that both her uncle and her beloved Carlo are still alive. In the *cabaletta* that follows Amalia sings of her joy at this extraordinary news.

Piano concerto in A minor op. 16

E. Grieg
(1843-1907)

The concerto was composed in 1868 when Grieg was in his 25th year. The more formal performances were given by Grieg himself who introduced it to England in 1888. Despite the dramatic gesture with which it opens, Grieg's concerto is a characteristic example of the composer's lyrical output.

The melodic *adagio* is gently scored with muted strings which announce the theme. An echo on the horn introduces the soloist, who varies and ornaments it till it is rounded off in its original form.

The *finale* concludes the work with a cheerful pot-pourri of folk-dance tunes, unaffectedly strung together and finally worked up with increasing intensity to a shower of double octaves with which the soloist introduces the triumphant and ultra-romantic coda.

Leader Mario Bisazza

Conductor John Galea

Soprano Phyllis Bajada Abram

Pianist Stephanie Lauri Quintano



STEPHANIE LAURI QUINTANO

Started her pianoforte studies at a young age and by 1982 obtained the LRSM and FTCL diplomas under the guidance of Miss Tessie Portelli. She acquired refinement of technique and style by the Australian Professor Maria Regina Seidelhofer. Later Stephanie proceeded to London to further her musical studies at the Royal Academy of Music under the tutorship of Professor Alexander Kelly.

In July 1985 Stephanie participated in the Enna International Piano

Festival in Sicily while in 1986 and 1987 she was invited to appear at the Spring Friendship Arts Festival in Korea. In Malta Stephanie has fulfilled numerous engagements giving concerts at the Manoel Theatre, St. John's Co-Cathedral as well as the Music Cultural Institute. Very recently Stephanie was soloist in Carmelo Pace's *Meditazione for piano and orchestra* together with the Antonio Scortino Conservatory Orchestra of Trapani, Sicily. She has also appeared in duo recitals with her brother Carmine Lauri currently a violin student at the Royal Academy.

The Members of the Orchestra

First Violins

Mario Bisazza (leader)
Andrew Borg
Ronnie Pisani
Marcelline Agius
Sarah Spiteri
Tatjana Chircop
Joseph Chetcuti
Joseph Camilleri

Second Violins

Victor Micallef
Mario Frendo
Susan Borg
Joe Zammit
Denise Ebejer
Christine Lauri
Therese Testa
Stephen Galea
Orietta Zammit

Violas

Guido Mamo
Chantal Falzon
Ani Marie Chetcuti
Anna Zammit
Josette Bajada Abram

Cellos

Alfred Tonna
Mario Psaila
Ivan De Gabriele
Simon Abdilla

Basses

Lino Cremona
Twanny Chircop

Piano

Natasha Chircop

Flutes

Silvio Zammit
Laura Baldacchino

Oboes

Pierre Grech
Joseph Attard

Clarinets

Noel Beck
Mario Felice

Bassons

Archibald Mizzi
Mario Micallef

Horns

Alfred Spagnol
Emmanuel Spagnol

Trumpets

Joseph Agius
Henry Attard

Trombones

Michael Ciantar
Joseph Xuereb
Philip Ciantar

Tuba

Anton Galea

Timpani

John Fenech

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