

GALLARIJA

SUNDAY 2 MARCH 2003 THE MALTA INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY



Tenor Juan Gambina (right) will be participating in this year's Opera Festival

Fourth BOV Opera Festival launched

Manoel Theatre
15 to 23 March

The Manoel Theatre has now launched the fourth edition of the Bank of Valletta Opera Festival due to be held between 15 and 23 March. This year's edition will consist of a new production, *Lucia di Lammermoor* by Gaetano Donizetti, Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and an Operatic Concert featuring the Soloists of the Marinsky Theatre (Kirov). During the launch, Joseph F. X. Zahra presented the sponsorship cheque to Dr Peter Fenech, acting chairman of the Manoel Theatre in the presence of artistic director Tony Cassar Darien.

Elaborating on the programme of events, Mr Cassar Darien stated *Lucia de Lammermoor*, will be staged in Malta for the first time. The cast will be made up of Niko Issakov (Enrico), Mariana Panova (Lucia), Juan Gambina (Edgardo), Nikolai Pavlov (Arturo), Latchezar Lazarov (Raimondo), Andriana Nikolaeva Yordanova (Alisa) and Robert Schwartz (Normando). The artistic direction will be in the hands of Plamen Kartaloff, also director general of Sofia National Opera in Bulgaria. Due on 15 and 17 March, this opera will feature the National Orchestra under the musical direction of Michael Laus.

The Operatic Concert which will take place on 19 March will feature the soloists from the famous Marinsky Theatre,

ex-Kirov of St Petersburg namely soprano Irina Dzioeva, baritone Vladimir Samsonov and pianist Mikhail Aptekman. The programme will include various arias such as *The Magic Flute* (Mozart), *Ballo in Maschera*, *Traviata*, *Trovatore* and *Lucia de Lammermoor* (Verdi), *La Favorita* (Donizetti), *Norma* (Bellini), *Barbiere di Seviglia* (Rossini) and *Adriana Lacouver* (Chilea) amongst others.

Finally, Mozart's *Don Giovanni* will be staged on 22 and 23 March and will be co-produced with Palermo's Operalaboratorio following last year's collaboration which saw the co-production of Mozart's *Così fan Tutte*. Mozart's *Don Giovanni* has been described as "the greatest opera ever composed".

Artistic direction will be under Mauro Avogadro while musical director Michael Laus will again conduct Malta's National Orchestra.

There will also be two additional concerts on Tuesday 18 March at 7.30pm featuring Popular Operatic Arias in Concert and a Lunchtime Concert on Thursday 20 at 12.30pm comprising favourite *Romanze de Salotto Arias* from the repertoire. Both concerts will include the participation of the *Don Giovanni* cast from Operalaboratorio, Fondazione Teatro Massimo, coached by Elizabeth Smith with piano accompaniment by Mro Salvatore Scinaldi.