

TRIBUTE

Carmelo Pace

(17/08/1906 - 20/05/1993)

The Great Maltese Composer

Carmelo Pace was born in Valletta, Malta on the 17th August 1906. He received his education at St. Augustine College. He started his musical career as viola player with an Italian Opera Company in Malta. In 1931 after obtaining a teaching Diploma from the Royal Schools of Music – London, he started his career in private teaching.

His early instruction in music began under his uncle, Band Master Vincenzo Ciappara, while he started his violin instruction with Professor Carlo Fiamingo, a well known composer especially in Victoria Gozo for his great Antiphon attributed to St. George Patron Saint of the Basilica of Victoria Gozo. Pace was later coached by Dr. Thomas Mayne in harmony, counterpoint, fugue and orchestration.

Carmelo Pace was awarded first prize for Composition in the Rediffusion Competition, an event sponsored by this word-wide broadcasting corporation, for four consecutive years, from 1955 to 1958, and another first prize for Chamber Music from the Performing Rights Society of London in 1962. In 1972 he was again awarded first prize in a Chamber Music Competition from the Performing Rights Society of London. In 1975 Carmelo Pace also won the first and second prizes in the Chamber Music Competition from the Manoel Theatre Management Committee.

He is the founder of the Malta Cultural Institute Orchestra and Choir, which was also known as the Music Cultural Institute Orchestra. From the foundation of the Institute in 1948 till 1987 Carmelo Pace was also the Institute's concert organiser. He is now the Institute's Music Adviser.

He is also the first Maltese Composer who collected some Maltese folk music. His Fantasia "Maltesina" was premiered in 1931 by the 1st Battalion Highland Light Infantry in Valletta.

He composed, besides Chamber Music, many Orchestral works, which include three piano Concertos and the Symphonic Poem "Jubilamus" which was performed by the Kyoto City Symphony Orchestra in Japan during the Expo'70. Other works include an Opera Oratorio, Oratorios, Cantatas, Incidental Music, two Ballets, Band Music, Vocal Solos, Instrumental Solos, and Unaccompanied Choral Music, besides Liturgical Music.



Opera is Carmelo Pace's favourite subject. He composed four operas entitled: "Caterina Desguanez"; "I Martiri"; "Angelica" and "Ipogean". In these Operas the Composer followed the traditional style of music that suits the general Maltese audience well. He avoids using many modern experiments.

The style of Carmelo Pace's orchestral and chamber music is more modern in outlook; however, according to the composer himself, he does not follow exaggerated experiments.

Some of Carmelo Pace's compositions have been performed in England, Wales, Poland, Italy, Germany, Egypt, France, India, the United States of America, Sweden, Japan, Norway, the U.S.S.R. and Argentina.

In 1966 Carmelo Pace was awarded the Gold Medal for his merits as a Composer by the Malta Society of Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce, and in 1971 he was awarded the Gold Medal of Merit by the Confederation of Civic Councils of Malta. In 1964, Carmelo Pace was nominated a Knight of the Order of St. John (Russian Grand Priory). In 1986 the Phoenicia (Cultural Division) was presented to Carmelo Pace by the President of the Republic of Malta – Her Excellency Miss Agatha Barbara.

The "Carmelo Pace Music Collection" has been consigned to the care and administration of the Cathedral Museum, Mdina – Malta, by deed of Donation number One Hundred and Fifty dated 31st August 1989.

Records are held in the archives of Notary Anthony Attard LLD; Valletta, Malta.

All compositions in the 'Carmelo Pace Music Collection' have been microfilmed by the Hill Monastic Manuscript Library of St. John's University, Minnesota, U.S.A. and held at various universities as well as the Cathedral Museum Music Archives.

The Original Score (and copies for performance which can be borrowed) are held at the Cathedral Museum Music Archives, at Mdina. The works are catalogued with Music Manuscript numbers 2582 to 3052.

Our Band Master Abel J Mizzi was one of Carmelo Pace's students who studied under his direction the Harmony and the Counter Point.