

Politeatru
in collaboration with The American Center

Manoel Theatre

Michael Basmadjian
Martin Sapiano
Lilian Pace
Michael Sciortino
Marvic Cordina
Snits
Stephen Micallef
Shirley Blake
Marcel Zammit Marmara
Dominic Said

Neil Simon's

FOOLS

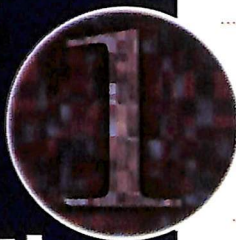
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Directed by **Ray Abdilla**

Saturday 4th April at 7.30 P.M.
Sunday 5th April at 6.30 P.M.



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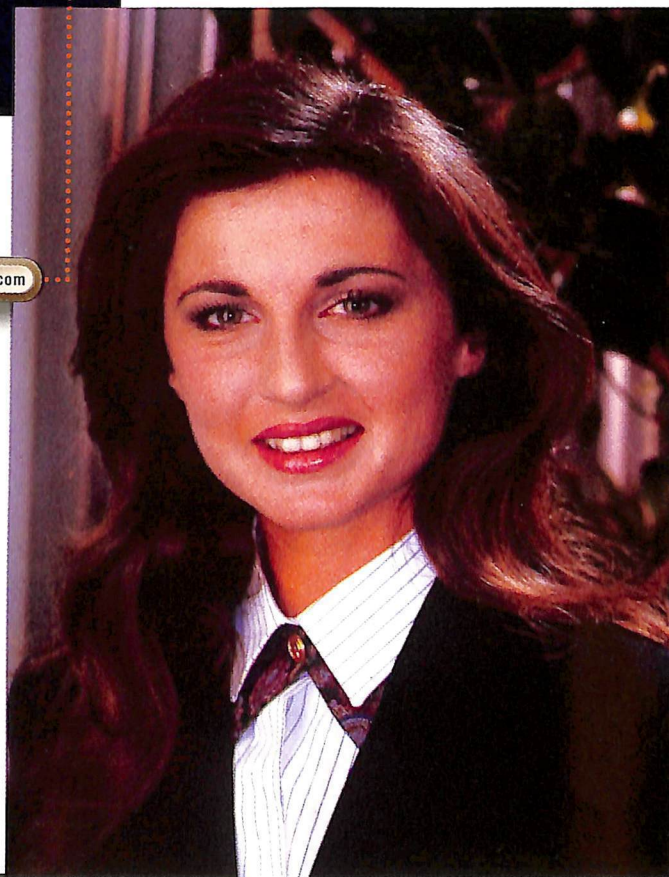
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Fools

a play by

Neil Simon

Directed
by
Ray Abdilla

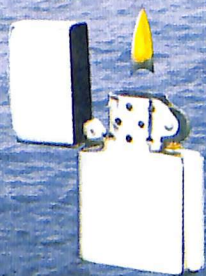
With the collaboration of
The American Center

POLITEATRU

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Cast and Crew

Leon Tolcinski	-	Michael Basmadjan
Snetski	-	Snits
Kupchik	-	Stephen Micallef
Slovitch	-	Dominic Said
Mishkir	-	Marcel Zammit Marmara
Yenchna	-	Shirley Blake
Dr. Zubritski	-	Michael Sciortino
Lenya Zubritski	-	Lilian Pace
Sophia Zubritski	-	Marvic Cordina
Gregor Youskevitch	-	Martin Sapiano

Direction	-	Ray Abdilla
Stage Manager	-	Marco Bartolo
Asst. Stage Manager	-	Rosemarie Zahra
Props	-	Alec Massa
Set design	-	Marco Bartolo
Poster & Programme	-	Ray Vassallo
Publicity	-	David Pace
Costumes	-	Tonia Farrugia
Make-up	-	Anton & Jackie Farrugia
Lights	-	Vanni Laus
Sound	-	John Bruno

There will be a 20 Minute Interval.



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10 Years of Politeatru

Politeatru was originally set up as an educational and cultural organisation in September 1987, under the auspices of the Guze Ellul Mercer Foundation. The goal was to provide an alternative theatre which would stimulate critical thought yet offer entertainment to the general public.

Politeatru came on the scene at a time when the Maltese political, social and cultural climate tended against freedom of thought and the creation of a modern maltese state. It was the opportune time for the deployment of innovative ideas and outlooks in order to prepare people for cultural change.

From the very beginning Politeatru included in its ranks people coming from different backgrounds who were prepared to educate themselves in the manifold diversities of theatre.

Politeatru's stagings tend to be political in the sense that they manifestly attack mediocrity, vulgarity and ignorance. Politeatru strongly holds that the time has come for Maltese National Identity to mature, but not through some misguided isolationism or a misplaced nationalism, but through an increased manifestation of Creativity and strong and rigorous action to improve Maltese Culture in general and Drama in particular.

Director's Note



When I first read this comedy I not only laughed at the grotesquely comic situations Neil Simon concocted but also at the silly dialogue of the characters, which he calls foolish. But the more I tried to decipher these characters and situations the more I realised how often I meet their doppelgangers....in the streets of Malta. I ended up asking myself: if these people may be termed fools then by what measure can we consider ourselves " n o r m a l " .

I have projected these "cursed" people as caricatures. The village was originally cursed two hundred years before yet these "simple" villagers present a perfect copy of their long-dead ancestors. The occult curse laid on the villagers is

in turn systemised by the peoples' oppressors as a sure means of retaining power and eradicating all form of resistance.

In this comic fable the schoolmaster represents the liberating Promethean hero who combats fear and superstition through education and knowledge. Is this attitude correct? Can we change our condition through education? Through knowledge? The increasing number of illiterates in Malta....the ever-diminishing reading public....the rising passivity of the public indeed offer fruit for thought. Are we cursed? If so what exorcising light do we need to liberate ourselves?



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Neil Simon

Neil Simon is considered as one of America's greatest contemporary playwrights. He was born in New York in 1927 and has had a large number of his comedies reworked on the Big Screen. Neil Simon was a born writer and started his career writing sketches for comedy shows and later on for radio and television.

His early experiences as a writer for American veteran comedian Sid Caesar have been immortalised in his "Laughter on the 23rd Floor".

Using typical situations, Simon mercilessly attacked society and the malaise it has imposed on modern man. His first work was produced on the stage in 1955. From then onwards he has become the favourite of a huge audience with comedies like "The Odd Couple", "Barefoot in the Park", "Plaza Suite", and "California Suite". All of these have already been produced on the Maltese stage. There were times when Neil Simon had five comedies going on in Broadway at the same time.

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This is still an unbeaten record.

This is the second time that Politeatru is staging "Fools". It was first staged by the group in a Maltese version by Paul Vella in April 1991. Then too it was sponsored by the American Center.

Why Neil Simon?

Neil Simon is often described as a thorn in the side of American society, too often dominated by problems brought about by rampant consumerism. Simon is a past master at depicting delicate situations provoked by alcoholism, solitude, adultery and sexual exploitation. In this unusual comedy Simon tackles what he terms collective ignorance and ends up posing some alarming questions: who is the real ass? He who is born without the ability to reason? Or he who pretends to be stupid because it serves his purpose to act this way? Who has a dominant role in society? The Intellectuals, the power-mongers or the masses?

Once again Politeatru offers a theatrical fare which, while it entertains, it also provides us with a looking glass inside which we can scrutinise the handicaps of its idiotic protagonists in an attempt to perceive parallelisms with our own endogenous eccentricities.

Politeatru Presents: 1998-1999 Season

David Pace

L-Ghaxar Profezija

(The Tenth Prophecy), an original play in Maltese by the author of *Kannibali*.

Dario Fo

The Pope and the Witch

The controversial play by the Nobel Prize winning Italian playwright.

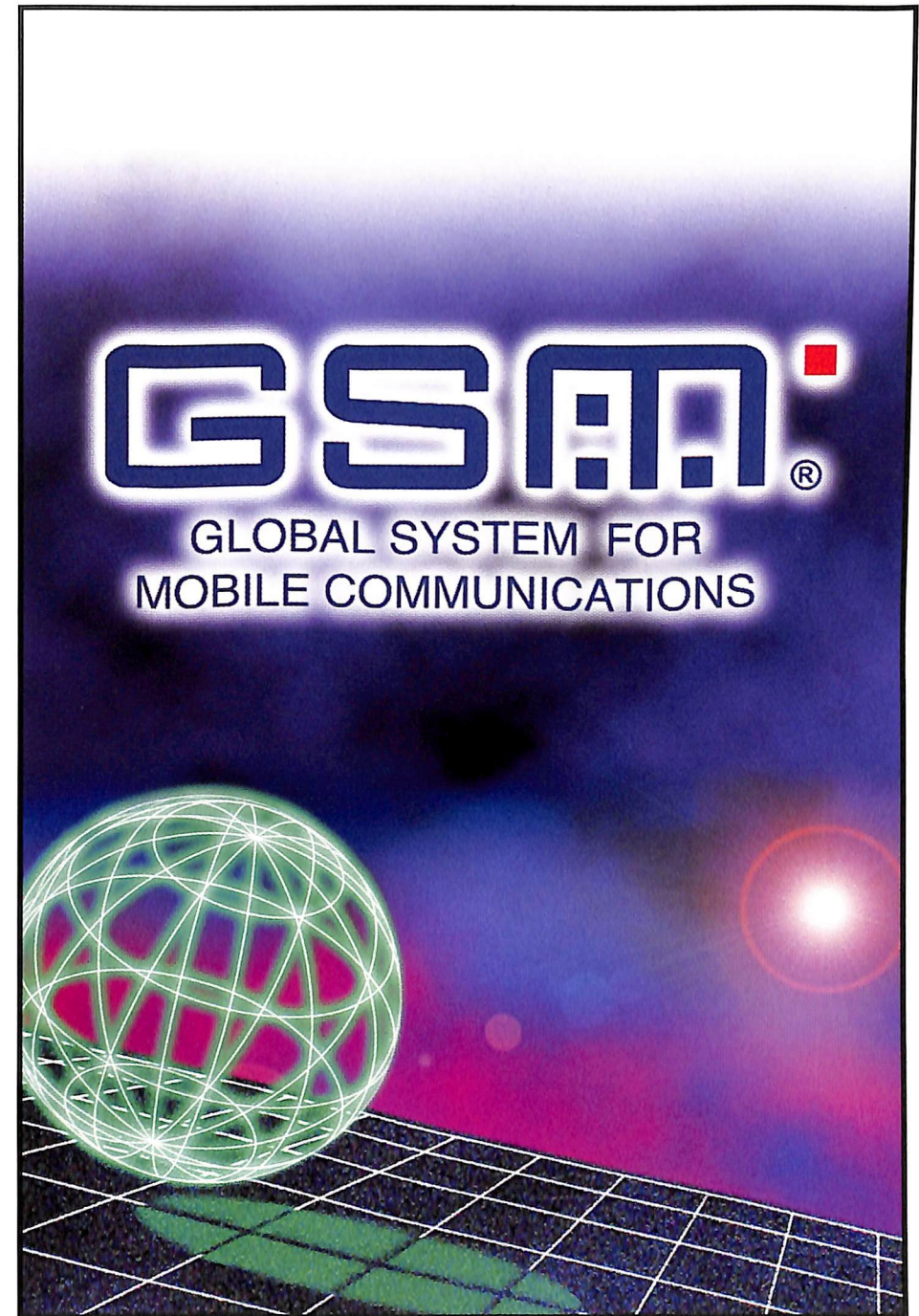
Anthony Burgess

Cyrano de Bergerac

The ultimate adaptation of Rostand's masterpiece by the enfant terrible of modern english literature. A great hit at London's National Theatre where the main part was played by Anthony Sher.

Politeatru

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