THE IMPRESARIO
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INTRODUCTION

Dear teachers,

To teach is a creative act. To assist, inspire and help you beyond the classroom resources, we have put together a section that is just for you.

Can you remember the first time you were at the theatre?
The first time you saw a live performance in theatre or music?
Do you remember its effect on you?
What is your first theatre memory?
Would you share it with your class?

The Impresario was co-produced by Teatru Manoel & ŽiguŽajg International Arts Festival for Children & Young People in 2019.
ABOUT US

ABOUT TEATRU MANOEL

As Malta’s national theatre, the mission of the Manoel, as it is affectionately referred to by locals, is to entertain, inform and educate, thereby enriching the cultural life of the audience as well as to provide a platform for artists to excel in their talents. It is committed to the presentation of quality artistic productions, to the creation of new audiences for music and drama genres, and to provide a principal platform for local and international artists.

Teatru Manoel presents an annual performance season of concerts, recitals, opera, drama, musicals, dance, an annual baroque festival and an education programme.

ABOUT ŻIGUŻAJG

The Festival’s vision is to position the creative arts for children and young people at the core of Malta’s creative ecology. It does this by:

- Presenting an annual programme of high-artistic excellence that celebrates creativity and diversity in the arts;
- Nurturing audience development and active participation through our practices;
- Providing professional development opportunities for artists seeking to work in the sector;
- Developing a national repertoire of creative work for children and young people;
- Championing social inclusion and accessibility in the creative industry;
- Establishing international networks and collaborations with strategic partners.

Visit www.ziguzajg.org/schools for more information.
THEATRE ETIQUETTE

Please review this common theatre etiquette with your class before attending the performance.

**DO:**

- Arrive at the theatre early.
- Use the toilets before the performance.
- Turn off mobile phones, alarms, and other electronic devices.
- Wait for your school or group to be dismissed.
- Keep your feet on the floor.
- Show your appreciation of the performers by applauding.
- Stay with your group or school at all times.
- Watch and listen closely to the performers.
- Listen to instructions given out by the theatre ushers.

**DON’T:**

- Stand in the aisles.
- Put your feet on the seats or balcony railing.
- Talk, sing, hum or fidget.
- Take pictures or record the actors during the performance.
- Leave the theatre during the performance.
- Kick the seat in front of you.
- Eat, drink or chew gum in the theatre.
- Leave your seat before the performers have taken their curtain call.

On behalf of Teatru Manoel and ŻiguŻajg, enjoy the show!
Mme Goldentrill and Ms Silverpeal are sparkling with talent! But who will Mr Scruples choose to join his team? Will there be a lot of arguing? Will they ever find out who is the best? Who will be the star of the show? Oh let's hope he decides fast, otherwise he will get grumpy!

Mozart’s greatest comic opera is a melodic treat showing Mozart at his best and unveiling maturity. Elegantly sculpted with graceful melodic line and colorful orchestration, *The Impresario*, is the most playful of Mozart’s works.

The melody is the main tune of any piece of music. Usually it is the part of the music that you can sing or hum along with. As for the orchestration, it means how many instruments play different parts of the music at once. For example, an orchestration can have the string instruments play on their own, sometimes the flutes and clarinets will be on their own, with the flutes playing the melody and the clarinets playing the accompaniment, and sometimes the whole orchestra plays altogether. The harmony is what the other notes are whilst the melody is being played; a melody can be beautiful, but without other notes happening at the same time, it can sound quite empty. That is why both melody and harmony (accompaniment) are important in music.

The feature character of The Impresario is assisted by one Mr. Angel (Thomas Birch), who attempts to cajole two rival sopranos into appearing together in an upcoming opera. Both women possess outsized egos and crave solo spotlight. The temperamental Madame Silverpeal (Lisa Algozzini) appears first for her audition. She is less than pleased when Madame Goldentrill (Nicola Said) interrupts the proceedings and flirts outrageously with the Impresario and Mr. Angel during her try-out. Predictably, the two exhibit mutual antagonism. After alternating solos, one soprano endeavoring to outdo the other, the two ultimately join Mr. Angel in a light-hearted contrapuntal trio. In the end, harmony is established as the sopranos agree to appear together setting aside petty differences for the sake of art. The opera company’s star basso buffo, Mr Bluff (Simon Grange) offers his congratulations as the divas prepare for their performance. Who will receive top billing? It’s anyone’s guess.
SPOTLIGHT ON: MOZART!

Who was Mozart?

Mozart's full name was Johannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus Mozart, but since that name is so long to write and remember, we refer to him as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. He was a prodigy (meaning a child genius); he could play the piano very well at age three, and he composed his first pieces of music when he was just five years old!

Mozart was born in Salzburg, which was then part of Bavaria (Germany) but is now a part of Austria. He was born in 1756, so he was born well before your grandfather, or even your great-grandfather! Wolfgang's father, Leopold Mozart, was a composer and a music teacher, but once he discovered the talent that his son had, he made a promise to be in service only to his son's talents. Wolfgang also had a sister, Anna Maria, nicknamed Nannerl, who he loved very much and enjoyed playing the piano with. They used to play music for piano for four hands which Wolfgang himself would compose.

Eventually, the Mozart family went on tour around Europe. That sounds like a lot of fun, but back then, there were no aeroplanes, no trains, not even buses, so they had to travel around by horse-drawn carriage, which can get very tiring as well as boring quickly! Plus, imagine getting caught in the rain in a carriage, that's no fun at all! The Mozart family spent more than ten years on tour, so that Wolfgang and Nannerl could show people in the courts what good musicians they were for their young age. The nobles were particularly interested in young Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who could improvise on any tune he was given, and could even play the keyboard blindfolded.

As he started growing from a boy to a man, Mozart started becoming more and more popular as a composer and musician. A lot of people in those times enjoyed music which he wrote that perhaps you may have heard of, such as The Magic Flute, Don Giovanni or The Marriage of Figaro, some of his greatest operas, or the serenade Eine kleine Nachtmusik, or the iconic March of the Turks, or the incredibly beautiful Clarinet Concerto.
In Mozart’s day, a **musician** was considered just another form of **servant** – you served your aristocratic master, who hired you to write and play music at his court or palace; your job was on a par with the cooks, butlers, maids, and cleaning staff. From the age of about twelve until he was twenty-five, Mozart was in the service of **Count Colloredo, Archbishop of Salzburg**.

Slowly Mozart grew tired of life in little Salzburg, and in **1781**, he left and moved to **Vienna**. Here he also gave piano lessons, conducted his own compositions, starred in his piano concertos as soloist, and became the talk of the town. During his years in Vienna, Mozart was what today we would call a **freelance musician** – one who picks up jobs here and there rather than receiving a regular salary from a single source.

Mozart died on the **5th of December, 1791**, at the young age of **thirty-five**. His health had never been good. All those years travelling as a boy took their toll. In addition, he had an intense lifestyle and was always overworked. His death cannot be attributed to a single cause, but during the last few weeks of his life we know he suffered from kidney failure and possibly rheumatic fever, which put a further strain on his feeble body.

Mozart is such an icon in Austria that they invented a chocolate treat named after the composer: **Mozartkugeln**! It is a small, round sugar confection made of pistachio marzipan and nougat that is covered with dark chocolate. If you ever visit Austria, or have family or friends who visit Austria, be sure to try them out, they’re totally delicious!
MEET THE DIRECTOR

Antonella Mifsud is the director for this opera. Her job as the director needs lots and lots of planning. Before rehearsals start, she speaks to everyone who will help bring the story to life on the stage. She makes decisions about what it will look like, how long it will last and who the singers will be. This is called casting – the conductor and her choose the best singers for the roles. Everyone who works on the opera is called the Production Team.

They are experts but, in the end, Antonella has the final say. She helps everyone complete their tasks so they are all working together. Her main job is to make sure everyone who performs on the stage knows what they have to sing, where to stand, where to move to and why. She makes sure everyone tells the story to the audience.

Q: Where is the production set?
A: The production is set in a producer’s office. Our producer works in a very bright and colourful office!

Q: What are your thoughts on Mozart’s humour?
A: Mozart’s work is somewhat very relevant to today, especially with this piece, which I find is very relatable to the theatre world today. Mozart’s humour, therefore, can be adapted very easily to today’s audiences, which is what we would like to bring forward with The Impresario. We will be bridging the gap between Mozart’s time and ours, and therefore showing the universality of his music and humour.

Q: Why is this being performed in English translation?
A: For audiences who are new to opera, especially young audiences, it is much easier to acquaint themselves with the genre through a language they are familiar with. Therefore, we decided to bring the audience a step closer to Mozart, following the points above, by performing the piece in English.

Q: Tell us about you... What do you love about the theatre and how did you become a director?
A: There is a lot that I love about theatre. It’s hard to pinpoint! I love the magic mostly. I love that any space can become a theatre space, and that every piece can have its magic. I love how theatre can replicate real life, how it can twist it, make fun of it, and exaggerate it. I love how theatre can touch human beings and channel emotions that are otherwise hard to reach or explain. I love that theatre can educate, entertain and move us. I love that theatre needs not have a limit.

I began performing at quite a young age, and slowly I grew to love the feeling. I also became interested in the way theatre is created. I was lucky enough to have worked with tutors who did not just teach me acting but taught me about collaboration and theatre making. I began directing small shows for children, and then student productions at university, and slowly started to love directing more and more and wanted to keep learning and experiencing this side of the theatre... and loving it.
CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

How to be a Director

1. Select one person to be the director (For the first go, perhaps the teacher takes this role). The director stands in the downstage area of the room, facing upstage.
2. All other players, the chorus, stand facing the director.
3. The director can explain each command. Begin with a few practice rounds for players to build familiarity with the commands.
4. Once everyone has had a practice, the game begins.
5. After each call, either the last person or the one not taking part with full energy, is out!
6. The last player remaining is the new director. The important thing to remember is, if a player does not follow an order correctly he/she is out. This decision is made by the director who has the final say. The last person to complete the task is also out. Again, the director confirms who this is.
FOR DISCUSSION

Here are some points of discussion you can have with your class about this production of *The Impresario*:

- What were the characters wearing? Were they wearing clothes that you would wear nowadays, or do you think they were clothes which were worn in the past?
- Did you like the colours and the lights during the performance? Why is lighting important during the performance?
- What did you think of the set? Was it realistic? Was it imaginative?
- Did you like the actions which the characters did? Did you understand what the director wanted the story to show you?
- Did you like the flow of the music? Did it make you feel certain emotions, like happiness, excitement, anger, or sadness?

You can also use the following points of discussion to talk about opera in general:

- Do you like the way opera singers sing? What words can you use to describe the voices of opera singers? (i.e. loud, soft, bright, dark, etc)
- How old do you think the artform of opera is? Hint: It’s older than your grandma and grandpa! *In fact, opera is just over 400 years old, with the first opera being written in the year 1598!*
- Have you ever listened to opera before? Maybe you will have heard opera music composed by Puccini, Verdi, Rossini, Wagner, and others.
- Have you ever seen an opera singer before? We have a very popular Maltese opera singer, and his name is Joseph Calleja, but there are also plenty of other Maltese opera singers who are very good, such as Nicola Said, Cliff Zammit Stevens, and Nico Agius Darmanin. Maybe you’ve been on Youtube too and seen videos of Pavarotti, Callas, and Fleming.
- Did you notice that none of the opera singers used microphones whilst singing in the opera? Why do you think that is, and how can you still hear them over the orchestra? *Opera singers are like athletes, they have to train their bodies and their voices for many years before becoming professionals, and the way they sing makes them project their voice a lot louder than other singers can!*
## GLOSSARY

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<th>Term</th>
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<td>Act</td>
<td>One large part of an opera; <em>The Impresario</em> is a one act opera</td>
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<td>Aria</td>
<td>A solo sung by one person conveying feeling rather than fact; a generic Italian word for featured solos in opera; (pronounced ARE-ee-ah)</td>
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<td>Bass</td>
<td>The lowest male singing voice; Mr Bluff is a bass</td>
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<td>Conductor</td>
<td>Directs music to keep both orchestra and singers together</td>
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<td>Costumes</td>
<td>Clothing worn by the actors to establish the time, place, and mood adding colour and interest to the story</td>
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<td>Duet</td>
<td>Two people singing two different parts together</td>
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<td>Librettist</td>
<td>The person who writes the libretto or words; in some cases, this person is different from the composer of the opera, and in other cases this person is also the composer</td>
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<td>Libretto</td>
<td>Literally, “little book”, it is the actual text of the opera</td>
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<td>Opera</td>
<td>A play that is sung; a drama with costumes and scenery in which all or most of the text is sung to the accompaniment of an orchestra</td>
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<td>Orchestra</td>
<td>A group of musicians accompanying the entire opera and occasionally playing purely instrumental sections</td>
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<td>Parlata</td>
<td>Literally spoken, not sung</td>
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<td>Pit</td>
<td>The area where the orchestra is located below and in front of the stage</td>
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<td>Recitative</td>
<td>A song-speech performed by one person which is half-sung; half-spoken; it is used to quickly convey ideas important to the action of the story; (pronounced reh-chita-TEEVE)</td>
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<td>Scene</td>
<td>A part of an act</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set</td>
<td>Scenery used to establish the time, place, and mood adding color and interest to the story</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solo</td>
<td>A person singing a part on their own, without other singers</td>
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<td>Soprano</td>
<td>The highest female and child voice; Madame Silverpeal and Madame Goldentrill are both sopranos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tenor</td>
<td>The highest male singing voice; Mr Angel is a tenor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tutti</td>
<td>A number of people singing different parts together</td>
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