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MAESTRO GIANFRANCO RIVOLI'S BIOGRAPHY

Gianfranco Rivoli is a conductor who devoted his life to music, with great care and respect for the work of all the people he collaborated with: composers, orchestra members, singers, directors and theatre operators.

A Milanese musician who loved music more than anything else, and tried to introduce it to people in order to “destroy the walls among populations”.

He was born in Milan on 2nd June 1921, he attended Milan Academy of Music, where he graduated as a composer, and orchestra and choral singing conductor. He achieved his professional preparation completing piano and organ studies and acquiring the art of reading and appreciating music in an immediate and definite way.

He drew his inspiration from the most prestigious conductors of the XX century, like:

- Antonino Votto, Arturo Toscanini's right-hand man;
- Ernst Ansermet, founder and conductor of Suisse Romande Orchestra from 1918 to 1967.

In 1937 Gianfranco Rivoli won Bologna National Competition for piano composition and in 1940, just before Italy went to Second World War, he became conductor of Milan University Orchestra.

In 1943 he interrupted his musical career to join up the Italian Army, where he served until 8th September 1945.

To remind this period, he composed the music for the war film "I Trecento della Settimana", that was adapted in 1943 by Mario Corsi, Alessandro De Stefani, Cesare Vico Ludovici and Mario Baffico, who was also the film director.

After the end of war, he went back to Italy, where he met Raffaella Cortellini. They got married and had two sons: Gianluca in 1946 and Gianmarco in 1948.

From 1946 on, he collaborated with “Teatro alla Scala” of Milan, where he was orchestra conductor for Ballets for some seasons until 1953.

From 1951 on, he became opera and symphony concert conductor in the most prestigious theatres of the world.

From 1957 to 1981 he conducted and recorded many musical pieces with Geneva Suisse Romande Orchestra as well as Lausanne Orchestra and Zurich Beromuenster Radio. These performances are still conserved and available in the Archives.

In 1964 he started a very important cultural activity, being appointed Artistic Permanent Director of Lisbon Gulbenkian Foundation Chamber Orchestra and its Festival. He invited the best young instrumentalists from all Europe to this orchestra and formed them. He performed many pieces with them, which are conserved in the Foundation archives.

Then he met Marie-Thérèse Boiton, who became his second wife. They got a son, Matteo in 1968 and a daughter, Athena Beatrice in 1978.

In 1970 he was appointed Musical Director of Turin new "Teatro Regio", rebuilt after Second World War, where he became conductor and promoted initiatives for the diffusion of opera and symphonic music.

He continued to carry out his commitment in the most prestigious European theatres. In 1971 he conducted the ballet "Serenata" by Alfredo Casella at "Piccola Scala" of Milan and the new opera "L'arca di Noè" (Noah's Fluddle) intended for a young audience, set to music by Benjamin Britten, taken from British religious and popular ancient theatre.

In 1972 he was invited to Paris "Opera", where he conducted "Il barbiere di Siviglia" by Gioacchino Rossini.

Maestro Gianfranco Rivoli was particularly fond of musical festivals, where he has often conducted.

In 1964 he directed “L’incoronazione di Poppea” by Claudio Monteverdi at Aix-en Provence prestigious Festival, he took part in for nine seasons.

At Carnegie Hall Festival he conducted “Il Pirata” by Vincenzo Bellini, at Bilbao Festival in 1977 “Andrea Chenier” by Umberto Giordano and at Bordeaux Festival “Il Turco in Italia” by Gioacchino Rossini.

Great interpreters like Placido Domingo, Pietro Cappuccilli and Alfredo Kraus worked with him.

In 1981 he directed “live” “I Pescatori di perle” by Georges Bizet with Alfredo Kraus in the main role.

Until 1987 he conducted and recorded many performances at Radio and Television in various European countries.

As well as classical performances from Italian, French and German repertoires, he conducted many first nights of operas and symphonic pieces by great contemporary composers and produced a considerable appreciated discography.

Among the most famous contemporary composers, he directed operas by Alan Berg, Benjamin Britten, Riccardo Malipiero, Giulio Viozzi, Luigi Dallapiccola, Bruno Bettinelli and Luciano Chailly, he was bound to by a deep friendship.

Gianfranco Rivoli was in his profession, the typical Italian clever, passionate conductor. His intuitive mind and impetuous temperament expressed themselves both in operas and in symphonic music.

He died on 18th October 2005 at Città di Castello, in his beloved Umbria, where he had spent the last period of his life.