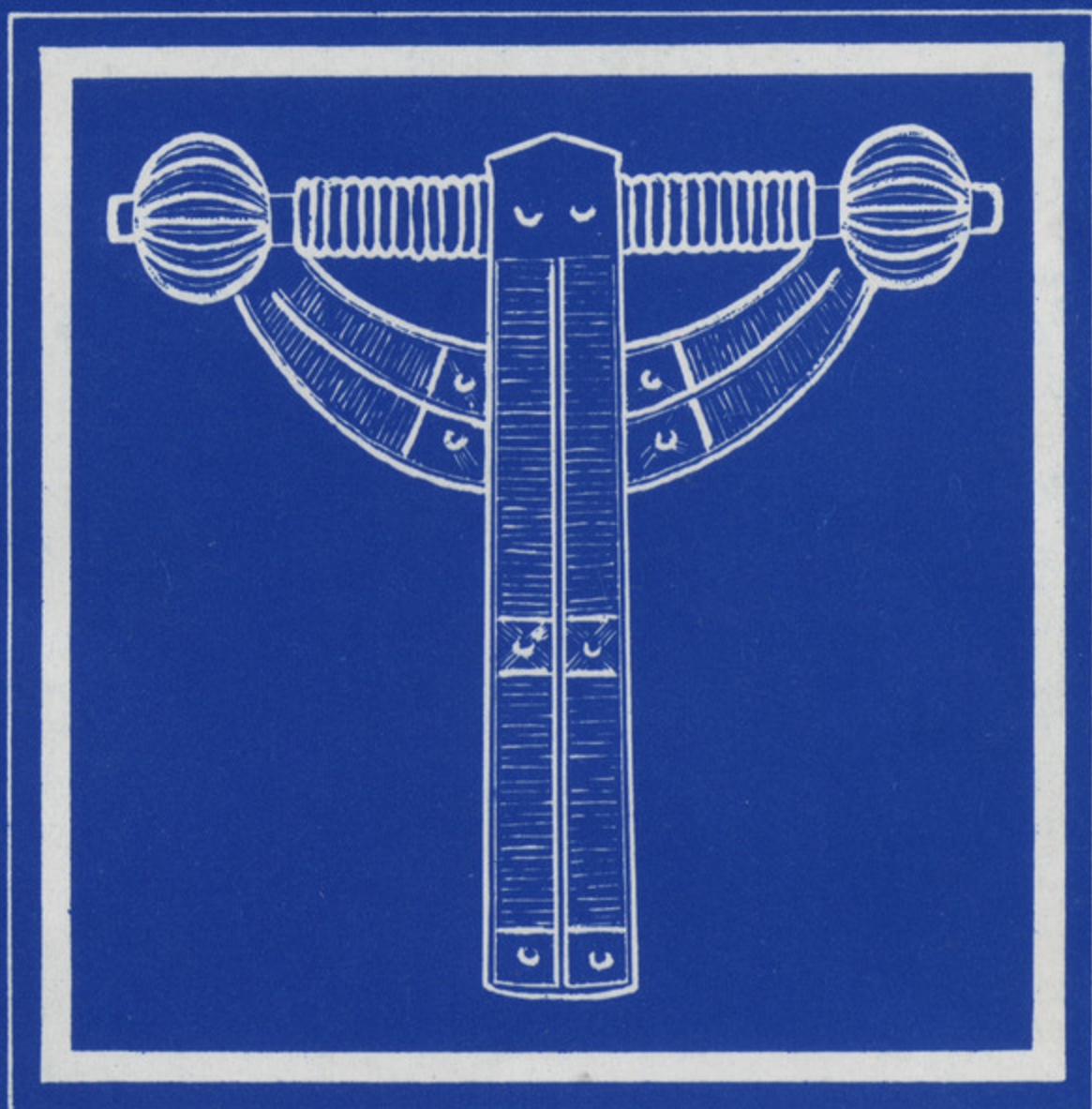


28th
LATVIAN
FESTIVAL
OF ARTS

ADELAIDE
1978





MUSIC

The Latvian folk-songs have been a source of inspiration for the entire nation, especially for our composers. Periodic song festivals have been held in Latvia since 1873. Today these festivals are being held all over the world. In order to illustrate the importance of the song festival as a growing and attractive musical event among the people we shall mention a few dates. The first song festival in 1873 took place with 1003 singers participating. The number of singers of the last song festival in Independent Latvia had increased to 16,000.

The real beginning of the purely Latvian art-music was in the first half of the 19th Century. The beginnings of professional Latvian music are closely linked with the conservatorium at St. Petersburg in pre-revolutionary Russia and the most outstanding representative of Latvian Music — Jazeps Withols. Regular and active developments in all branches of music could take place only after 1918, when the independence of Latvia was re-established. The leading factors of the musical life became the National Opera, the State Conservatorium founded in 1918 and the State Broadcasting Corporation founded in 1925.

The three concerts held during the festival will represent a wide selection of Latvian music. The Concert of Latvian Music will feature violinist Laura Viksna, Quartet for strings and Piano — R. Cooper (violin), J. Ezergailis (viola), A. Ezergailis (cello), M. Biezaitis-Lashchuk (piano), Combined Adelaide choirs, conductor K. Svenne, and Latvian Festival Orchestra, conductor Joseph Aronoff. Approximately 250 singers in national costumes and male choir of 80 voices will perform at the Town Hall on 28th December.



DRAMA

Prior to independence Latvian drama was influenced by Russian and German literature. The post independence period is characterised by a more diversified approach to drama.

Rudolfs Blaumanis can be considered to be the first great master of Latvian drama. He was a realist with a thorough knowledge and understanding of Latvian peasant life. Latvian classical drama is best represented by Janis Rainis and Anna Brigadere.

For the 28th Latvian Arts Festival the play "The Mirrored Walls" by Richards Ridzenieks was chosen. Richards Ridzenieks, a resident of Sweden, represents Latvian contemporary drama. In the play the author analyses the feelings which the younger generation of Latvians have for Latvia, and the idea of a free Latvia. Young Maris questions the activities, attitudes of the older generation and attempts to find his place in the Latvian Society. He maintains that more effort should be applied if Latvia is to regain her freedom. However, he is unsure of the means as to how this is to be achieved. The answers are provided by a symbolic character Karlina, who first appears in the play as an old woman. At the end of the play she changes into a young and beautiful woman dressed in national costume symbolically representing free Latvia.

Diversity of characters and frequent change of scenery should prove it to be an interesting play to watch.



FOLKDANCE

On comparing all cultural elements, folk dancing is visually one of the most spectacular events of the festival because of the numbers of dancers participating and the multiplicity of colour of the hand-worked national costumes and traditional jewellery.

Historically folk dances were first mentioned in the 16th century but their origin can be traced back much further. Expressing mostly mythical rhythms and cults in ancient times, the Latvian folk dances in the latter period of their development obtained more social character and became an integral part of social events, thus expressing the national character and temperament of the people.

Even today folk dancing is a highly significant part of Latvian culture. Over 67 different folk dances have been collected from all districts in Latvia and generally can be divided into two groups; the couple dances and the group dances. The types of dances can be further differentiated into 4 groups:

- (1) Cult and mythological dances — the oldest ones
- (2) Those connected with festivals and celebrations
- (3) Changing seasons and customs
- (4) Purely for enjoyment

The earliest accompaniment was provided simply by clapping hands to keep time and singing. The first musical instruments were mainly wood instruments. A string instrument resembling a Zither called a "Kokle" plays an important part in many of the dances.

This year's festival will feature 13 folk dancing groups comprising some 300 dancers from all over Australia. The programme is designed to accent the geometric nature of the Latvian folk dance. Dances include from 4 to 6 couples, using the square and circle as the base for the arrangement.

A special attraction this year is the "Saules Josta" ensemble from Canberra and Sydney.



ART & CRAFT

Latvian folk art is not only an interest for museums but is also a living art form which still continues to develop in the domestic culture of the present. Archeological excavations reveal that the ancient Baltic tribes' creative skills in pottery, wood-carving, jewellery design and manufacture and leather-craft were all advanced and showed great aesthetic appeal.

The national costumes of the many provinces have excited a good deal of amazement and admiration. A remarkable series of woven and hand-embroidered shawls with bracelets, brooches and rings, amber necklaces and the imposing cornet-shaped head-dresses and fillets as well as richly embossed breast buckles figure conspicuously in the full traditional dress of the Latvians. Amber, once called the northern gold, features so significantly in Latvian craft and culture, it can probably be considered as the national stone.

Art and Craft exhibitions represent the two main sections in the category to be shown at the 28th Arts Festival this year. Fine arts and painting exhibitions have been a part of every Latvian Arts Festival. The exhibitions will display the most recent paintings, by Latvian artists living in Australia. Many of the artists participating have had successful exhibitions favourably received by the Australian Press and public.

The craft exhibition reveals the skill and artistic quality of the contemporary Latvian Art craftsman. All the hand-crafted articles are unique and the display confirms the high standards that have been maintained in this field. The exhibition features: needlework, weaving, ceramics, wood-carving, metal work, jewellery and sculpture. It is evident in many cases that whilst working in the traditional style the artists create new designs and art forms of an individualistic nature often from locally available materials.

Programme

**28TH AUSTRALIAN
LATVIAN FESTIVAL OF ARTS
25th To 31st December, 1978
ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

The 28th Australian Latvian Festival of Arts will be held in Adelaide from the 25th to the 31st of December. The opening of the festival a Church Service, will be followed by a Recital of Sacred Music at Maughan Church, Franklin Street, Adelaide.

These festivals are an annual event taking place during the Christmas holiday period. They are held alternately in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth and Canberra. Traditionally these festivals date back to 1873 in Latvia, when the first of such festivals was held. The popularity of the festivals was expressed in the participation of increasingly more people and great public attendance from all parts of Latvia. When the last pre World War II festival was held in Riga in 1938, the combined choir was 17,000 voices strong and there were several hundred thousand spectators.

Such festivals are held all over the world, wherever Latvian communities exist. They are an attempt to foster and preserve the valuable cultural heritage of the Latvian people. A significant addition to the locations was the recently held festival in London, which was included in the official programme of events covering the Queen's Silver Jubilee celebrations.

The festival in Adelaide this year will include traditional folk dancing, comprising some 300 dancers in national costume, choral concerts, youth concerts, drama, exhibitions of art, craft and paintings. Interest shown in previous festivals assures us of capacity crowds, which will include visitors not only from interstate but also from overseas.

The Exhibition of Arts and Crafts will be opened by — Alessandro Gardini B.Sc., B.A., Dip.T. Adv.Dip.Ed., Ethnic Affairs Adviser, Premier's Dept.

The Exhibition of Paintings will be opened by Ben Cooke N.D.D., F.S.I.A.D., A.I.D.I.A., M.B.I.M., A.F.A.I.M., F.R.S.A. F.R.S.A.S.A., Principal of the S.A. School of Art.

INFORMATION

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352 2396

Mr. E. Voitkuns
Administrator
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Rossllyn Park, S.A. 5072
31 5059

Bookings—
Victoria Co.
90 Pirie St.,
Adelaide.
Tel. 2236096

OPENING OF FESTIVAL AND RECITAL OF SACRED MUSIC

Monday, 25th December, at 3.00pm.
Maughan Church, 43 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

YOUTH CONCERT

Monday, 25th December, at 8.00pm.
Latvian Hall, 4 Clark Street, Wayville.

OPENING OF EXHIBITION OF ARTS AND CRAFTS

Tuesday, 26th December, at 11.00am.
Kensington Park Uniting Church Hall,
286 Kensington Road, Leabrook.

OPEN AIR YOUTH CONCERT — PARADE OF NATIONAL COSTUMES

Tuesday, 26th December from 12.00 - 4.00pm.
Elder Park,
King William Road, Adelaide.

OPENING OF EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS

Tuesday, 26th December, at 1.00pm.
Institute Building
North Terrace, Adelaide.

CONCERT OF LATVIAN MUSIC

Tuesday, 26th December, at 8.00pm.
Adelaide Town Hall, Adelaide.

DRAMA (in Latvian)

Wednesday, 27th December, at 8.00pm.
Thursday, 28th December, at 3.00pm.
Latvian Hall, 4 Clark Street, Wayville.

CHORAL CONCERT

Thursday, 28th December, at 8.00pm.
Adelaide Town Hall, Adelaide.

FOLK DANCING

Friday, 29th December, at 8.00pm.
Apollo Stadium, Richmond.

VARIETY SHOW (in Latvian)

Saturday, 30th December, at 3.00pm.
Latvian Hall, 4 Clark Street, Wayville.

FOLK DANCING — SAULES JOSTA ENSEMBLE FROM CANBERRA AND SYDNEY

Sunday, 31st December, at 3.00pm.
Prince Alfred College, Kent Town.