

# ANGELO MUSCAT



**ANGELO MUSCAT** was born in Malta in 1930 and died in 1977, some months after *Six of One* started, aged only 47. The society made contact with him during his final year and Angelo sent back a signed goodwill message. He was justifiably proud of his Prisoner part, but sadly did not live to see *Six of One's* future development and the appreciation of his butler role.

Angelo's acting life began in Malta, while he spent six years with the state theatre. From the day when he was given a small non-speaking part, it was the start of his career. The death of both his parents within a short space of time sent a heartbroken Angelo to London. A new opportunity arose, enabling him to join a touring adaptation of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. Gradually, TV parts came his way - *The Liars*, *The Joe Baker Show*, *Emergency Ward 10*, all preceding his big break in *The Prisoner*. He sent back many reports from Portmeirion, saying how he enjoyed working there, as

well as being in the studio with McGoochan, and also becoming the 'mascot' of the production team.

ITC's original publicity described the butler: "The dwarf-sized figure is the only running character in support of Patrick McGoochan throughout the tense series, with an inevitable question mark hanging over him. He appears silently, ominously, sometimes carrying an enormous umbrella, other times serving, obeying instructions. He doesn't even have any dialogue. Patrick McGoochan personally selected him for the role". Angelo expressed his gratitude towards McGoochan. "He has given me responsibility for the first time in my life. I am playing an important part in a big series. I am something, for the first time ever. I could hardly believe it when he chose me." ITC also reported that Angelo was as strong as any man of his age, despite his size, claiming that he could lift two men above his head.

The casting of Angelo was meant to raise issues regarding his dramatic purpose. Given the additional aspect that he would remain totally silent throughout *The Prisoner*, an abundance of questions soon surrounded the dwarf-sized figure - who was he, what was his function and, as a symbol, what did he represent? Further importance was bestowed upon the butler character by virtue of his appearance at the end of some episodes. The closing scene in the first episode *Arrival* has him, with his cape, bowler hat and enormous umbrella, looking sinister beside a 'residents only' sign, as the story ends. Also, in *Checkmate* he replaces the pawn on the chess board in the final suspenseful scene. Moreover, in *Fall Out*, it is the butler who makes his exit through the door of the London home, 'No. 1', just as the entire series reaches its conclusion. Some of his other screen appearances are listed below.

1971 *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* movie - Oompa Loompa

1967 *Beatles' Magical Mystery Tour* TV special - Dwarf on Bus

1966 *Alice in Wonderland* TV movie - Queen's Servant

1965 *Doctor Who* TV season – Chumbley

*Karen Langley*