



ROYAL
OPERA
HOUSE

THE ROYAL BALLET

Director
KEVIN O'HARE CBE

Founder
DAME NINETTE DE VALOIS OM CH DBE

Founder Choreographer
SIR FREDERICK ASHTON OM CH CBE

Founder Music Director
CONSTANT LAMBERT

Prima Ballerina Assoluta
DAME MARGOT FONTEYN DBE

MANON

BALLET IN THREE ACTS

Choreography KENNETH MACMILLAN
Music JULES MASSENET
Orchestrated by MARTIN YATES
originally compiled by Leighton Lucas with the
collaboration of Hilda Gaunt

Designer NICHOLAS GEORGIADIS
Lighting designer JACOPO PANTANI
Staging and Artistic Supervisor for
the MacMillan Estate LAURA MORERA
Rehearsal Director CHRISTOPHER SAUNDERS
Répétiteurs DEIRDRE CHAPMAN, HELEN CRAWFORD
Principal Coaching ALEXANDER AGADZHANOV

Conductor KOEN KESSELS

Orchestra of the Royal Opera House
Concert Master SERGEY LEVITIN

Directed for the screen by ROSS MACGIBBON

Exceptional philanthropic support from
Royal Opera House Principals JULIA AND HANS RAUSING
Season Principal ALINE FORIEL-DESTEZET

Generous philanthropic support from AUD JEBSEN,
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SUSAN GREEN, THE PAUL FERGUSON MEMORIAL FUND,
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COVENT GARDEN AND THE AMERICAN FRIENDS OF
COVENT GARDEN

The 2023/24 Royal Ballet Season Generously supported by
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Original Production (1974) made possible by
The Linbury Trust

Broadcast live from the Royal Opera House on
WEDNESDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2024 AT 7.15PM

APPROXIMATE TIMINGS

PRE-SHOW 15 minutes

Act I 40 minutes

Interval 25 minutes

ACT II 45 minutes

Interval 25 minutes

ACT III 30 minutes

CURTAIN CALL 10 minutes

CAST

Manon NATALIA OSIPOVA

Des Grieux REECE CLARKE

Lescaut ALEXANDER CAMPBELL

Monsieur G.M. GARY AVIS

Lescaut's Mistress MAYARA MAGRI

Students of The Royal Ballet School appear by kind
permission of the Artistic Director CHRISTOPHER
POWNEY

All casts subject to change. For full up-to-date casting, find
the full cast sheet online.

Tweet your thoughts about tonight's performance before it
starts, during the intervals or afterwards with #MANON



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SYNOPSIS

ACT I

Actresses, gentlemen and the demi-monde from Paris gather at the courtyard of an inn near Paris. Among them are Des Grieux (a young student), the wealthy Monsieur G.M. and Lescaut, who is there to meet his sister Manon on her way to enter a convent. During the hustle and bustle of arrivals and introductions, a beggar steals a watch from Monsieur G.M. and celebrates gleefully before its loss is discovered and Lescaut has to intervene to save him from punishment. Soon afterwards, Manon arrives with an Old Gentleman who is obviously attracted to her. Lescaut notices the Old Gentleman's interest and takes him into the inn to come to an arrangement over Manon. Manon remains outside and meets Des Grieux. He is entranced by her. They fall in love and decide to escape to Paris with the help of the money that she has stolen from the Old Gentleman. Lescaut and the Old Gentleman come out of the inn, having made a bargain, and to their dismay see that Manon has disappeared. Monsieur G.M. tells Lescaut that he too is interested in Manon and, because of G.M.'s wealth, Lescaut promises to find Manon and persuade her to accept him.

Des Grieux and Manon are at his lodgings in Paris. He is writing a letter to his father. Manon interrupts by declaring her love for him. Des Grieux goes to post the letter and in his absence Lescaut arrives with Monsieur G.M.. Manon quickly yields to G.M.'s advances. When Des Grieux returns, Lescaut persuades him that there will be great wealth for all of them if he will sanction the liaison between G.M. and Manon.

ACT II

Manon arrives at the party given by Monsieur G.M. at Madame's hôtel particulier. She is clearly torn between the wealth of her companion and her love for Des Grieux, who is there with Lescaut. Des Grieux tries to persuade Manon to leave with him but she tells him that the time is not right and will be only when he takes more of Monsieur G.M.'s money at cards. Des Grieux is caught cheating and he and Manon rush away.

Back in Des Grieux's lodgings, he and Manon once again declare their love. Monsieur G.M. arrives with the police and Manon is arrested as a prostitute. In the ensuing struggle, Lescaut is killed.

ACT III

The Gaoler of the penal colony awaits the arrival of the convicts from France at the port.

Manon has been deported to America as a prostitute and Des Grieux has followed her there by pretending to be her husband. The Gaoler sees them together and turns his interest towards Manon.

The Gaoler has arrested Manon but takes her to his room and offers her rewards in the hope that she will desert Des Grieux and live with him. Des Grieux breaks in and kills the Gaoler.

Manon has escaped with Des Grieux into the swamp of Louisiana to elude their pursuers. All her former ambitions of wealth and splendour have been renounced for her love of Des Grieux. Manon collapses and dies in Des Grieux's arms.

THE ROYAL BALLET

Director KEVIN O'HARE CBE

Music Director KOEN KESSELS

Resident Choreographer WAYNE MCGREGOR CBE

Artistic Associate CHRISTOPHER WHEELDON OBE

Administrative Director HEATHER BAXTER

Rehearsal Director CHRISTOPHER SAUNDERS

Clinical Director Ballet Healthcare SHANE KELLY

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