



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

Exceptional philanthropic support from

Royal Opera House Principals **Julia and Hans Rausing**

Season Principal **Aline Foriel-Destezet**

Generous philanthropic support from **Aud Jebsen, Sir Lloyd and Lady Dorfman OBE, Kenneth and Susan Green, The Paul Ferguson Memorial Fund, Melinda and Donald Quintin, The Patrons of Covent Garden and The American Friends of Covent Garden**

Original Production (1974) made possible by **The Linbury Trust**

The role of Manon is generously supported by **Sarah and Anthony Gutman**

The 2023/24 Royal Ballet Season Generously supported by **Aud Jebsen**

This year marks the 25th anniversary of **Roberto Bolle's** first appearance as a guest artist with The Royal Ballet, when he performed in *The Nutcracker* with **Darcey Bussell**.

# MANON

## BALLET IN THREE ACTS

**09.02.2024 7:30 PM**

The 303rd performance by the Royal Ballet at the Royal Opera House.

## APPROXIMATE TIMINGS

The performance lasts about 2 hours 45 minutes, including two intervals.

**Act I** 40 minutes  
**Interval** 25 minutes  
**Act II** 45 minutes  
**Interval** 25 minutes  
**Act III** 30 minutes

## GUIDANCE

Suitable for ages 14+

This production contains scenes of an adult nature, including sexual violence. There is a gunshot approximately 42 minutes into Act II.

## CREDITS

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 ..... LAURA MORERA  
 and Artistic Supervisor for the  
 MacMillan Estate  
 Rehearsal Director ..... CHRISTOPHER SAUNDERS  
 Répétiteurs ..... DEIDRE CHAPMAN AND HELEN CRAWFORD  
 Principal coaching ..... ALEXANDER AGADZHANOV, LEANNE BENJAMIN, ALESSANDRA FERRI, EDWARD WATSON AND ZENAIDA  
 YANOWSKY  
 Benesh Choreologists ..... DANIEL KRAUS AND GREGORY MISLIN

## CAST

Manon ..... MARIANELA NUÑEZ  
 Des Grieux ..... ROBERTO BOLLE  
 Lescaut ..... RYOICHI HIRANO  
 Monsieur G.M. .... CHRISTOPHER SAUNDERS  
 Lescaut's Mistress ..... ITZIAR MENDIZABAL  
 Madame ..... CHRISTINA ARESTIS  
 The Gaoler ..... GARY AVIS  
 Beggar Chief ..... DAICHI IKARASHI  
 Courtesans ..... OLIVIA COWLEY, HANNAH GRENNELL, CHARLOTTE TONKINSON, AMELIA TOWNSEND  
 Gentlemen ..... DAVID DONNELLY, TÉO DUBREUIL, TAISUKE NAKAO  
 Clients ..... LUKAS B. BRÆNDSRØD, KEVIN EMERTON, AIDEN O'BRIEN, FRANCISCO SERRANO, THOMAS WHITEHEAD  
 Old Gentleman ..... PHILIP MOSLEY  
 Conductor ..... KOEN KESSELS  
 Concert Master ..... SERGEY LEVITIN  
 Orchestra ..... ORCHESTRA OF THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

Harlots, Innkeeper, Skivvies, Actresses, Beggars, Townspeople, Ratcatcher, Servants, Guards and Footmen  
**Artists of The Royal Ballet**

Students of The Royal Ballet School appear by kind permission of the Artistic Director **Christopher Powney**

## 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

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

## GUIDELINES

Photography and filming are prohibited during performances in any of our auditoriums. You are welcome to take pictures throughout the rest of the building and before performances and share them with us through social media. Commercial photography and filming must be agreed in advance with our [press team](#).

Larger bags and backpacks need to be check into our complimentary cloakrooms. Unattended bags may be removed.

Please do not place any personal belongings on the ledges in front of you.

Only bottled water and ice cream purchased from the premises can be taken into the auditorium.

If you arrive late to the auditorium or leave during a performance, you will not be allowed back to your seat until the interval or a suitable break.

Smoking and vaping are not permitted anywhere on the premises.

The safety of our visitors, staff and artists is still our priority. To help us provide a comfortable experience for everyone, please be mindful of others and their personal space.

Our staff are committed to treating everyone with dignity and respect and we ask that you show them and your fellow audience members respect too. We adopt a zero-tolerance approach in response to anyone who interacts with our staff or with fellow audience members in an intimidating, aggressive or threatening manner.

## DIGITAL CAST SHEETS

We are working hard on our commitment towards becoming more sustainable and are striving for our net zero goal of 2035. By using digital rather than printed cast sheets, we have reduced our paper consumption by over five tonnes per year. You can view our digital cast sheets on a computer, tablet or smartphone by scanning the QR codes displayed around the building using your smartphone's camera app. They are also displayed on screens outside the auditoria. Cast sheets are generously supported by the Royal Opera House Endowment Fund.

## SUPPORT OUR ONGOING RECOVERY

We are so glad to welcome our artists back to our theatres to perform for you the opera and ballet you love. During the pandemic we lost £3 in every £5 of our income and we continue to feel the impact as we recover. Sustaining the future of ballet and opera has never been so important. Please consider making a donation to the Royal Opera House community today and help support the future of ballet and opera.

[roh.org.uk/donate](https://roh.org.uk/donate)