

# Westminster Abbey



A SERVICE TO DEDICATE  
A MEMORIAL TO THE FOUNDERS  
OF THE ROYAL BALLET

Tuesday 17 November 2009  
Noon

## HISTORICAL NOTE

**DAME NINETTE DE VALOIS OM CH DBE (1898-2001)**

**Founder Director**

**SIR FREDERICK ASHTON OM CH CBE (1904-88)**

**Founder Choreographer**

**CONSTANT LAMBERT (1905-51)**

**Founder Music Director**

**DAME MARGOT FONTEYN DBE (1919-91)**

**Prima Ballerina Assoluta**

The Royal Ballet owes its existence to Dame Ninette de Valois, dancer, choreographer, teacher, whose vision led to the creation of both The Royal Ballet companies and School.

The Royal Ballet, under the name of the Vic-Wells Ballet, gave its first full-evening performance at the Old Vic Theatre on 5 May 1931. Ninette de Valois persuaded Lilian Baylis to provide the small company and school that she had founded in 1926 with a home at the Sadler's Wells Theatre in North London, where it remained until 1939 and the outbreak of the Second World War. The Company spent the war years touring widely in Great Britain creating new audiences for ballet wherever it went. In February 1946 came the transfer to the Royal Opera House, where de Valois premiered a new full-length production of *The Sleeping Beauty* to re-open Covent Garden as a lyric theatre after its war-time closure.

In 1956, to mark the Company's twenty-fifth Anniversary, the name 'The Royal Ballet' was granted by Royal Charter.

As Founder Choreographer, Frederick Ashton's choreographic style was the first to shape the Company, and remains a major influence to the present day. Renowned for a precise and unforced lyricism he could create, with equal facility, the humour and grandeur of *Cinderella* (1948), the subtle but overwhelming emotion of *A Month in the Country* (1976), and elegantly abstract pure dance in works such as *Symphonic Variations* (1946) and *Rhapsody* (1980). Ballets including *Façade* (1931) and *La Fille mal gardée* (1960) demonstrate his mastery of subtle comedy and wit.

The Company's Founder Music Director, the conductor and composer Constant Lambert, conducted regularly for de Valois' early ventures and when she sought a Music Director for her Company at Sadler's Wells she had no hesitation in appointing him. She was to rely heavily on his brilliant musical sense throughout the years at Sadler's Wells Theatre and later at Covent Garden, and his influence on the life of the young Company

extended beyond his musical contribution, embracing the elements of dance and design to major effect. He worked closely with Ashton, writing three original scores for him and arranging several others. He conducted the Company's first triumphant performance at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, in 1949.

At that performance, the success of which was to set the seal on the Company's international reputation, Margot Fonteyn danced the role of Aurora in the de Valois/Messel production of *The Sleeping Beauty*. Fonteyn's purity of line, musicality, and effortless grace epitomised The Royal Ballet's style and she was to lead the Company for over three decades. In 1979 she was awarded the title 'Prima Ballerina Assoluta of The Royal Ballet'.



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*Most of the church, with the exception of the North Transept, is served by a hearing loop. Users should turn their hearing aid to the setting marked T.*

*Please ensure that mobile phones, cellular phones, and pagers are switched OFF.*

*The service is conducted by The Very Reverend Dr John Hall, Dean of Westminster.*

*The service is sung by The Choir of Westminster Abbey, conducted by James O'Donnell, Organist and Master of the Choristers.*

*The organ is played by Robert Quinney, Sub-Organist.*



# ORDER OF SERVICE

*All stand. The Choir sings*

## THE INTROIT

**E**XULTATE Deo, adjutori nostro: jubilate Deo Jacob.  
Sumite psalmum, et date tympanum: psalterium jucundum,  
cum cithara.

Buccinate in neomenia tuba: insigni die solemnitatis vestrae.

*Sing merrily to God our strength: shout for joy to the God of Jacob.*

*Take up the song and sound the timbrel: the tuneful lyre with the harp.*

*Blow the trumpet in the new moon: as at the full moon, upon our solemn feast day.*

*Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525-94)*

*Psalm 81: 1-3*

*All remain standing to sing*

## THE HYMN

*during which the Collegiate Procession  
moves to places in the Quire and Sacrarium*

**P**RAISE, my soul, the King of Heaven;  
to his feet thy tribute bring.

Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,  
who like me his praise should sing?

Praise him! Praise him!

Praise the everlasting King.

Praise him for his grace and favour  
to our fathers in distress;

praise him still the same for ever,  
slow to chide, and swift to bless.

Praise him! Praise him!

Glorious in his faithfulness.

Father-like, he tends and spares us;  
well our feeble frame he knows;  
in his hands he gently bears us,  
rescues us from all our foes.  
Praise him! Praise him!  
Widely as his mercy flows.

Angels, help us to adore him;  
ye behold him face to face;  
sun and moon, bow down before him;  
dwellers all in time and space.  
Praise him! Praise him!  
Praise with us the God of grace.

*Praise, my soul 436 NEH*  
*John Goss (1800-80)*

*Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847)*  
*after Psalm 103*

*All remain standing. The Very Reverend Dr John Hall, Dean of Westminster, says*

## THE BIDDING

ON behalf of the Dean and Chapter I am pleased to welcome you to Westminster Abbey for a service of untrammelled celebration. The Abbey hosts many occasions of national significance, of solemn remembrance, of thanksgiving tinged with the sorrow of loss.

Within the precincts of the Abbey more than three thousand people are buried or memorialised: kings and queens, statesmen, musicians, scientists, poets, novelists, explorers, architects, clergy, warriors. There are memorials to groups of civil servants and imperial proconsuls, and to those who have protected our nation.

Today, in dedicating a memorial to the Founders of The Royal Ballet, we establish a permanent means of honouring the imaginative, spiritual, physical, and organisational gifts that have come together to create a great and enduring dance company. We shall enjoy the spectacle of dance; we shall thank God for the wonder of creation; and we shall pray for all who have received God's gift of creativity.

*All sit. David Bintley CBE, Director, Birmingham Royal Ballet, reads*

ECCLESIASTES 3: 1–8, 11

**F**OR everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover, he has put a sense of past and future into our minds.

*All remain seated. The Choir sings*

PSALM 150

**O** PRAISE God in his holiness: praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him in his noble acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.

Praise him in the sound of the trumpet: praise him upon the lute and harp. Praise him in the cymbals and dances: praise him upon the strings and pipe. Praise him upon the well-tuned cymbals: praise him upon the loud cymbals. Let every thing that hath breath: praise the Lord.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end.  
Amen.

*Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924)*

*Sir John Tooley, Chairman, The Rudolf Nureyev Foundation, reads*

PHILIPPIANS 4: 4–9

**R**EJOICE in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of

God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

*All remain seated. Charlotte Edmonds, Thomas Bedford, Magdalena Chan, and Ashley Hardwick, White Lodge pupils, perform*

to RONDINO  
from ROMEO AND JULIET TABLEAU No 1

*Constant Lambert*

*choreographed by Liam Scarlett (b 1986)*

*All stand to sing*

THE HYMN

LET all the world in every corner sing,  
my God and King.  
The heavens are not too high,  
his praise may thither fly:  
the earth is not too low,  
his praises there may grow.  
Let all the world in every corner sing,  
my God and King.

Let all the world in every corner sing,  
my God and King.  
The Church with psalms must shout,  
no door can keep them out;  
but above all the heart  
must bear the longest part.  
Let all the world in every corner sing,  
my God and King.

*Luckington 394 NEH  
Basil Harwood (1859-1949)*

*George Herbert (1593-1633)*

## THE ADDRESS

*by*

The Dean

*All kneel or remain seated. The Reverend Michael Macey, Minor Canon of Westminster, leads*

## THE THANKSGIVINGS AND PRAYERS

**L**ET us give thanks to God for his gift in men, women, and children everywhere, and for the pulse of life within us expressed in rhythm and dance. For those to whom he has given special gifts of body and mind; of physical grace and movement; and especially for all who enrich human life through the medium and art of ballet.

Let us bless the Lord:

**Thanks be to God.**

Let us thank God for the special gifts given to the Founders of The Royal Ballet, whose lives and achievements we celebrate today, and for their foresight in establishing The Royal Ballet for the enrichment and adornment of society.

Let us bless the Lord:

**Thanks be to God.**

Let us pray for dancers and choreographers, for composers and designers, for musicians, and for all who are engaged in the administration of the arts; and let us pray that we may be faithful stewards of the gifts which God has given to us, and that we may use them for the good of others; let us pray to the Lord.

Lord hear us:

**Lord graciously hear us.**

**A**LMIGHTY God, we praise thee for these thy servants whom we remember today with love, whose gifts and ambitions have enriched humanity: and we pray that by the dedication of our own abilities we may share with others the great inheritance which we have received; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**O** GOD, who by thy spirit in our hearts dost lead us to desire thy perfection, to seek for truth and to rejoice in beauty: illuminate and inspire, we beseech thee, all dancers, writers, and musicians; that in whatsoever is true and pure and lovely, thy name may be hallowed and thy kingdom come on earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

All these our prayers and praises let us now present before our heavenly Father, in the prayer our Saviour Christ has taught us:

**O**UR Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*All sit. The Choir sings*

#### THE ANTHEM

**O** BE joyful in the Lord, all ye lands: serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song.

Be ye sure that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and speak good of his Name.

For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting: and his truth endureth from generation to generation.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end.  
Amen.

*All stand for*

## THE DEDICATION OF THE MEMORIAL

*The Dean invites The Lady Sarah Chatto, Vice President, The Royal Ballet, to unveil the memorial to the Founders of The Royal Ballet.*

*The Lady Sarah Chatto unveils the stone and says:*

**I** ASK you, Mr Dean, to receive into the safe custody of the Dean and Chapter, here in the South Transept, this memorial in honour of the Founders of The Royal Ballet.

*The Dean says:*

To the greater glory of God and in thankful memory of the Founders of The Royal Ballet, and in celebration of the art of dance, I dedicate this memorial: in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*All sit. Steven McRae, The Royal Ballet, and Robert Parker, Birmingham Royal Ballet, perform*

## SATAN'S SOLO *from JOB*

*Ralph Vaughan Williams  
(1872-1958)*

*choreographed by Dame Ninette de Valois OM CH DBE*

*All stand to sing*

## THE HYMN

**N**OW thank we all our God,  
with heart and hands and voices,  
who wondrous things hath done,  
in whom his world rejoices;  
who from our mother's arms  
hath blessed us on our way  
with countless gifts of love,  
and still is ours to-day.

O may this bounteous God  
through all our life be near us,  
with ever joyful hearts  
and blessed peace to cheer us;  
and keep us in his grace,  
and guide us when perplexed,  
and free us from all ills  
in this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God  
the Father now be given,  
the Son, and him who reigns  
with them in highest heaven,  
the One eternal God,  
whom earth and heaven adore;  
for thus it was, is now,  
and shall be evermore.

*Nun danket 413 NEH*

*from Johann Crüger's Praxis Pietatis Melica c1647*

*German, Martin Rinkart (1586-1649)*

*translated by*

*Catherine Winckworth (1827-78)*

*All sit. Dame Monica Mason DBE, Director, The Royal Ballet, reads*

#### THE CROCUS

WITH confidence the crocus lifts its head,  
The height is measured by the hedging grass  
That guards the progress from a trustful birth  
To meet the spring's caress.  
Cossetting spring!  
You have a hold that kills expectancy  
And leaves the petals in mute disarray  
To fence with potency.  
It is the course of youth to ripen or to fade  
In servitude to its own summer day...  
A seedling born and wholly free  
Or seized instead by enmity.  
Perennial life is pledged to heed  
An unknown force that holds it to  
A rhythm rife before  
The birth of earth.

*Dame Ninette de Valois OM CH DBE*

*All remain seated. Natasha Oughtred, Birmingham Royal Ballet, and Romany Pajdak, The Royal Ballet, perform*

SOLO  
*from THE WISE VIRGINS*

*William Walton OM  
after Johann Sebastian Bach*

*choreographed by Sir Frederick Ashton OM CH CBE*

*All stand. The Dean pronounces*

THE BLESSING

**G**O forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast that which is good; render to no-one evil for evil; strengthen the faint-hearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honour all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

*All remain standing to sing*

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

**G**OD save our gracious Queen,  
Long live our noble Queen,  
God save The Queen.  
Send her victorious,  
Happy and glorious,  
Long to reign over us:  
God save The Queen.

*Music after the service:*

*The Royal Ballet Sinfonia performs:*

*Finale from Horoscope*

*Constant Lambert*

*All remain standing as the Procession moves to the west end of the church.*

**Members of the Congregation are requested to remain in their places  
until directed to move by the Stewards.**

*There will be a retiring collection in aid of the work of  
The Royal Ballet Benevolent Fund.*

**Anyone wishing to view the Memorial Stone to the Founders of  
The Royal Ballet is welcome to do so following the service.**

*The bells of the Abbey Church are rung.*

#### THE MEMORIAL STONE TO THE FOUNDERS OF THE ROYAL BALLET

Anyone wishing to make a contribution towards the funding of the Founders' Stone is invited to send their donation to Elizabeth Ferguson, c/o The Royal Ballet, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9DD, cheques made payable to Royal Opera House.

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*Image of Dame Margot Fonteyn DBE by Houston Rogers, reproduced by kind permission of V&A Theatre Collections.*



Dame Ninette de Valois OM CH OBE  
*Founder Director*



Constant Lambert  
*Founder Music Director*



Sir Frederick Ashton OM CH CBE  
*Founder Choreographer*



Dame Margot Fonteyn DBE  
*Prima Ballerina Assoluta*

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