

joined by Poussette and her friends in singing about their love of pleasure and of gambling. Three times Guillot loses large sums to his rival. Des Grieux displays his winning to an ecstatic Manon, but Guillot demands in fury that the game be stopped, implying that des Grieux has cheated. Guillot makes an ominous threat and goes out, leaving Manon to plead with des Grieux to take his money and flee, but honor and his innocence dictate that he must stay. Guillot returns with the police. Des Grieux in his indignation is about to set upon him, but he is stopped by his father, who maintains that des Grieux shameless life with Manon is a blight on the family reputation. Manon sees that her happiness has ended, while des Grieux pleads in vain that they be spared. The Count tells the police to take his son away for temporary detainment, but Guillot demands that Manon be arrested and imprisoned with other women of easy virtue.

#### Act V

##### *On the road to le Havre*

Des Grieux is alone, waiting for Manon to pass by with the other prisoners being taken to Le Havre for deportation. Lescaut appears, claiming that all of the men he had hired to attack the escort fled as soon as they saw the guards' muskets. The soldiers are heard approaching in the distance. Impetuously des Grieux wants to rescue Manon single-handed, but Lescaut persuades him to be more reasonable. They hide and overhear the sergeant and a soldier talking about the condition of their prisoners, one of whom is dying. It is Manon. Lescaut asks for des Grieux's purse and speaks to the sergeant, offering him a bribe. The sergeant permits Lescaut, to be with her during the day; he also must promise to lead her back before nightfall. Painfully, she comes down the path and, falling into des Grieux's arms, implores his forgiveness for all the suffering she has caused him. He promises her that their happiness will be renewed once more, but Manon realizes that she is dying. Des Grieux tries to comfort her by recalling the words she had used to lure him away from St. Sulpice. Manon grows weaker, revives for a moment, and dies in des Grieux's arms.



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MANON

# MANON

Jules Massenet

Staatsoper Unter den Linden Berlin

#### Cast

<b>Conductor</b> Daniel Barenboim	<b>Manon Lescaut</b> Anna Netrebko
<b>Director</b> Vincent Paterson	<b>Le Chevalier Des Grieux</b> Rolando Villazón
<b>Stage Design</b> Johannes Leiacker	<b>Lescaut</b> Alfredo Daza
<b>Costume Design</b> Susan Hilferty	<b>Le Comte Des Grieux</b> Christof Fischesser
<b>České titulky</b> Petra Ocelková	<b>Guillot de Morfontaine</b> Rémy Corazza
<b>Chorus</b> Staatsoperchor and orchestra Staatskapelle Berlin.	<b>De Brétigny</b> Arttu Kataja
	<b>Poussette</b> Hanan Alattar
	<b>Javotte</b> Gal James
	<b>Rosette</b> Silvia de la Muela

*Czech subtitles are based from English subtitles and are informative character.*

*Opera on 5 acts.  
Sung in French language*

*Recorded 2007 at  
Staatsoper Unter den Linden Berlin*

*Premiere  
January 19, 1884*

*Libretto  
Henri Meilhac a Philippe Gille*

*Template  
Antoine François Prévost*

## ACT I

### *The courtyard of an inn in Amiens*

The old roué Guillot de Morfontaine and his younger companion Brétigny, travelling with the three "actresses" Poussette, Javotte and Rosette, impatiently call to the innkeeper to serve them their supper. Townspeople awaiting the arrival of the coach from Arras gather in the courtyard. They are joined by Lescaut, a soldier, who is meeting his young cousin, Manon. She is on her way to a convent. The coach arrives. Lescaut goes off to search for Manon's baggage, leaving her by herself. Guillot sees her and is dazzled by her beauty. His friends advise him to leave the girl alone, but Guillot, offering Manon the use of his carriage, hopes to persuade her to become his mistress in Paris. Lescaut returns and chides Manon for flirting. He goes off to join his companions for a round of drinks and gambling. Manon, once more alone, speculates on the life she might have led if her family had not destined her for a convent. Des Grieux, a student, enters to await the coach that will take him to his father. He sees Manon and immediately falls in love with her. She is also captivated and decides to escape with him. They flee to Paris in Guillot's carriage.

## Act II

### *The apartment of des Grieux and Manon on the rue Vivienne in Paris*

Des Grieux writes to his father about Manon, describing his passion and her many charms. Before leaving with his letter he notices a bouquet of flowers, but his questions to Manon about its origin are interrupted by noises from the street. Manon's cousin and Brétigny are admitted, and Lescaut threatens to punish the lovers while Brétigny pretends to counsel clemency. Lescaut's anger seems to diminish when he hears that des Grieux is seeking his father's approval to marry Manon. He has drawn des Grieux aside, permitting Brétigny to talk with Manon. He informs her that des Grieux's father plans that very evening to abduct his son and promises her great wealth if she doesn't tell des Grieux of the plot. Lescaut pretends to bless the union between the lovers.

Manon hesitates over whether or not to betray her lover and accept Brétigny's promises of a more opulent life of pleasure, then bids farewell to the joys she had known with des Grieux. She loves him still, but it seems better for them both if their relationship is ended abruptly. Des Grieux returns and passionately relates his dream of an idyllic life together. When someone knocks, Manon's resolve to leave de Grieux weakens and she pleads with him not to open the door. He pushes her out of his arms and disappears. A struggle is heard and Manon is left alone.

## Act III

### *The promenade of the Cours-la-Reine in Paris on the day of a fete*

Lescaut promises the vendors that he will buy out their entire stock as a gift for his new love. Guillot sees Poussette and her two friends with their new acquaintances. Manon enters and draws admiration from everyone. She sings ecstatically of her life as "queen" among all the Paris beauties. Manon's Gavotte is a joyous homage to the advantages of youth and the frailties of love. She is bored by Brétigny and impudently mocks him behind his back. Des Grieux's father, the Count, greets Brétigny, who is now an abbe and will soon be entering a monastery. Manon sends Brétigny off on an errand and then questions the Count as to how her former lover has endured their separation. The Count tells her that des Grieux has forgotten her. He leaves as Guillot enters in triumph, bringing the ballet to Manon. During the ballet sequence Manon observes that she is still in love with Grieux. She asks Lescaut to take her to Saint-Sulpice. Women come out of the seminary chapel enthusiastically praising des Grieux's eloquence and fiery passion. The Count, des Grieux's father, appears and caustically flatters his son on the success of his sermon. Des Grieux, as a result of his bitterness and disappointment with the ways of the world, persists in wanting to fulfill his holy vows. The Count advises him instead to find a good wife and accept life in the calmer role of paterfamilias, but nothing moves des Grieux to change his mind. Though the Count still scorns his son's resolution, he promises to send him his share of his inheritance. Left alone, des Grieux confesses that he is still haunted by his memories of Manon, in spite of all efforts to banish her from his mind. Manon enters and asks the porter to bring de Grieux to her. While the choir in the distance sings the Magnificat, Manon addresses herself to heaven and asks for God's mercy and the return of des Grieux's love. When he comes into the room, she begs his forgiveness and tries to rekindle his love by reminding him of the happiness they formerly shared. Des Grieux firmly rejects her. Manon gently begins to caress his hand, claiming that her eyes and her voice have all the sensuous charm they had in times past. She persuades him to look directly into her eyes to recognize the same Manon he once loved. He is powerless. Even if it should bring down some terrible vengeance from heaven upon himself, he admits that he cannot live without Manon.

## Act IV

### *The Hotel de Transylvania, a gambling house*

Gamblers assembled around the gaming tables are making their bets. A commotion is heard, and Manon enters with des Grieux. Guillot informs Lescaut that his pride is still hurt because Manon has rejected him. Des Grieux is sad and Manon tries to comfort him, but her uncontrollable desire for opulence and pleasure leads her to encourage her lover to gamble what is left of his inheritance. Guillot challenges des Grieux to a game. Manon is

