

DAME NINETTE DE VALOIS  
Founding Director, The Royal Ballet

“Madam”, from Robert de Warren’s arrival at The Royal Ballet, consistently mentored his growth as a dancer, budding choreographer and future director. During his career they were always in touch and she gave him the benefit of advice or kind admonitions if she thought he needed to adjust his focus. “Madam” was a great lady and a true inspiration with a strong sense of humor under her directorial countenance.

There are many handwritten letters from Madam to Robert in his personal archives. The one below was her last, before her passing at the venerable age of 103!

Cover: Lord Hastings (Chair) Madam Robert de Warren



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23 March 1990

Mr. Robert de  
Warren, Teatro alla  
Scala, Milan 20121,  
Italy. -

My dear Robert,

Thank you so much for your letter. I think it is absolutely marvellous what you have done with La Scala!


Of course, you may put on 'Checkmate'. Knowing you have to do the business side with the Opera House - what it is I have not any idea - I will tell you straight away the girl to get to mount it for you is Jacquie Hollander. Her address is: 19 Hyde Green, Marlo, Bucks SL71QL. She has mounted 'Checkmate' all over the world for me.

In the last eighteen months she has put it on in South Africa, Sydney and one of the big cities on the west coast of America. Her virtue lies in the fact that, unlike so many choreologists, she can move herself in the style of the ballet. So many of them are not dancers and give a very literal reading which I find rather depressing. Mind you, anything you remember that she does not appear to, please discuss it with her. She is very willing to receive any hints of past productions.

I am sending copies of this letter to Jacquie Hollander and to Anthony Russell-Roberts.

With love,

DAME NINETTE DE VALOIS

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Ninette", followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right edge of the signature box.