

# Lord Of The Dance Song History

# LORD OF THE DANCE

(Sydney Carter)

Song from [www.traditionalmusic.co.uk](http://www.traditionalmusic.co.uk)

I danced in the morning when the world was begun  
I danced in the moon, the stars and the sun  
I danced down from Heaven and I danced on Earth  
At Bethlehem I had my birth

Dance, then, wherever you may be  
I am the Lord of the Dance, said He  
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be  
And I'll lead you all in the dance, said He

I danced for the scribe and the Pharisee  
They would not dance; they would not follow me  
So I danced for the fisherman, for James and John  
They came with me and the dance went on

I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame  
They holy people said it was a shame  
So they whipped, they stripped, they hung me high  
And they left me on the cross to die

I danced on a Friday, when the sky turned black  
Its hard to dance with the Devil on your back  
Oh they buried my body, they thought I'd gone  
But I and the dance still go on

They cut me down, but I lept on high  
I am the light that will never, never die  
But I'll live in you if you'll live in Me  
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he

works well with Simple Gifts  
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Lord of the Dance is a song that encompasses a rich history steeped in both spirituality and cultural expression. Written by English songwriter Sydney Carter in 1963, this hymn-like piece draws inspiration from the life of Jesus Christ as well as traditional folk dance themes. Over the decades, Lord of the Dance has transcended its origins, evolving into a beloved piece in both religious and secular contexts, celebrated for its lively melody and profound message. This article delves into the song's background, its evolution over the years, and its impact on music and dance.

## **Origins of "Lord of the Dance"**

### **Inspiration and Composition**

Sydney Carter, the mind behind Lord of the Dance, was influenced by a variety of sources, including folk music, dance, and his Christian faith. The song is a retelling of the life of Jesus through the metaphor of dance. Carter's lyrics illustrate key events in Christ's life, emphasizing themes of joy and celebration, which are often associated with dance.

- Influences:
- Traditional folk songs
- Spirituals and hymns
- The idea of dance as a universal expression of joy and spirituality

The melody itself, which is lively and engaging, was adapted from a Shaker tune called "Simple Gifts." This connection to traditional American folk music adds an additional layer of cultural significance to the song, making it resonate with a broad audience.

### **First Performance and Publication**

Lord of the Dance was first performed in 1963 at a folk music festival in the UK. The song quickly gained popularity and was published in various hymnals and song collections, making it accessible to churches and communities around the world. Carter's unique approach to combining dance and spirituality caught the attention of many, leading to its widespread adoption in liturgical settings.

## **Evolution Over the Years**

### **Musical Adaptations**

Over the years, Lord of the Dance has been performed by numerous artists across diverse genres. The original folk style has been adapted into various interpretations, showcasing the song's versatility.

- Notable recordings:
- The original by Sydney Carter
- A popular version by the Irish folk group The Dubliners
- An adaptation by the renowned British singer and actress, Julie Andrews
- The rendition by the modern dance show "Lord of the Dance" created by Michael Flatley

Each version brings its own flavor to the song, whether through orchestration, vocal stylings, or accompanying dance, ensuring that Lord of the Dance remains a dynamic piece.

## **Choreography and Dance Interpretations**

The dance that accompanies Lord of the Dance is as vital to its identity as the music itself. The choreography often reflects the joyous spirit of the lyrics.

- Michael Flatley's "Lord of the Dance":
- Launched in 1996, this show popularized the song globally.
- Features elements of Irish dance, with intricate footwork and vibrant costumes.
- The choreography is designed to embody the themes of the song, illustrating the narrative of Christ's life through movement.

This show propelled the song into the international spotlight, leading to performances in various countries and cultural contexts, further embedding it into the global music and dance landscape.

## **Impact and Legacy**

### **Religious and Cultural Significance**

Lord of the Dance has been embraced by numerous religious communities, often sung in churches and at special events. Its themes of joy, celebration, and the divine connection through dance resonate with many believers.

- Usage in Worship:
- Sung during Easter and Christmas services, highlighting moments of joy and celebration.
- Used in youth groups and camps, fostering a sense of community and shared faith.

The song's adaptability allows it to fit various contexts, making it a staple in religious gatherings.

### **Global Reach and Variations**

The song has crossed geographical boundaries, with translations and adaptations in multiple languages. Its universal themes of joy and spirituality make it relevant to diverse

cultures.

- Translations:
- Spanish: "Señor de la Danza"
- French: "Seigneur de la Danse"
- Many other languages, ensuring its message reaches a wider audience.

Because of its broad appeal, Lord of the Dance has become a global phenomenon, often performed at international gatherings, festivals, and cultural celebrations.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Lord of the Dance is more than just a song; it is a cultural artifact that bridges music, dance, and spirituality. From its inception by Sydney Carter to its modern interpretations, the song has undergone a remarkable journey, touching hearts and inspiring movements around the world. Its lively melody, combined with powerful lyrics, invites everyone to partake in the joy of dance and the celebration of life. As it continues to evolve, Lord of the Dance will undoubtedly remain a cherished piece in both religious and secular contexts, reminding us of the power of music and movement to connect us all.

Key Takeaways:

1. Lord of the Dance was written by Sydney Carter in 1963.
2. The song's melody is based on the Shaker tune "Simple Gifts."
3. It has been adapted and performed by numerous artists across various genres.
4. The song's choreography, particularly in Michael Flatley's show, has popularized it globally.
5. Its themes of joy and spirituality have made it a favorite in religious communities worldwide.

Through its vibrancy and depth, Lord of the Dance continues to inspire and uplift, celebrating the universal language of dance as a means of expressing faith, joy, and togetherness.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the origin of the song 'Lord of the Dance'?

'Lord of the Dance' is a hymn written by English songwriter Sydney Carter in 1963, inspired by the life of Jesus and the themes of dance and celebration.

### How has 'Lord of the Dance' been used in cultural and religious contexts?

The song is frequently used in church services and gatherings, particularly in folk and contemporary Christian music settings, symbolizing joy and community.

## Which famous performance is associated with 'Lord of the Dance'?

The song gained significant popularity through its inclusion in the dance production 'Lord of the Dance' created by Michael Flatley, which premiered in 1996.

## What themes are explored in the lyrics of 'Lord of the Dance'?

The lyrics explore themes of creation, joy, resurrection, and the idea of life being a dance, reflecting both spiritual and earthly experiences.

## Who are some notable artists that have covered 'Lord of the Dance'?

Notable artists include the Irish folk group The Clancy Brothers, as well as contemporary performers like Peter, Paul and Mary and various church choirs worldwide.

## What impact has 'Lord of the Dance' had on modern dance and performance art?

'Lord of the Dance' has inspired various dance interpretations and performances, blending traditional folk dance with contemporary styles, and has become a staple in dance schools and festivals.

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## Lord Of The Dance Song History

~~~~~**Your Grace**~~~~~ ...

Lord~~~~~ ( )~~~~~My Lord Jesus Christ~~~~~ My Lord~~~~~  
~~~~~ ...

~~~~~**"Your Honor"** ~~~~~ ...

~~~~~My Lord~~~~~Your Honor~~~~~  
~~~~~ ...

**heaven, god, lord**~~~~~? - ~~~

LORD:mid-13c., laved, loverd, from Old English hlaforð "master of a household, ruler, feudal lord, superior; husband," also "God," translating Latin dominus, Greek kyrios in the New Testament, ...

~~~~~**"Lord"**~~~~~**"master"**~~~~~ ...

“Lord” “master” ...

...  
...  
...

Lord  
"You, my lord, your son in Scotland being thus employed, shall secretly into the bosom creep of that same noble prelate, well beloved, the Archbishop of York, the Lord Scroop." ...

Love, Lord -  
Love, Lord 19

**your grace your majesty your highness my lord** ...  
Aug 28, 2012 · Your Majesty Your Royal Highness Your Grace  
My Lord / My ...

My lord "Your grace ...  
Sep 9, 2014 · my lord ...  
...

Lord -  
Jul 1, 2017 · "Lord" ...

Your Grace ...  
Lord ( ) My Lord Jesus Christ My Lord ...  
...

**"Your Honor"** ...  
My Lord Your Honor ...  
"My Lord"

heaven, god, lord? -  
LORD:mid-13c., laved, loverd, from Old English hlaford "master of a household, ruler, feudal lord, superior; husband," also "God," translating Latin dominus, Greek kyrios in the New Testament, Hebrew yahweh in the Old (though Old English dryhten was more frequent).

“Lord” “master” ...  
“Lord” “master” ...  
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Lord  
"You, my lord, your son in Scotland being thus employed, shall secretly into the bosom creep of that same noble prelate, well beloved, the Archbishop of York, the Lord Scroop." Lord Cardigan, 61, has vowed to fight to save what remains of the estate after the Court of Appeal approved the

disposal of Tottenham House, which has ...

Love, Lord -

Love, Lord 19

[your grace](#)[your majesty](#)[your highness](#)[my lord](#) ...

Aug 28, 2012 · Your Majesty Your Royal Highness Your Grace  
My Lord / My Lady

*My lord* "Your grace "

Sep 9, 2014 · my lord  
20

*Lord* -

Jul 1, 2017 ·  
"Lord" "Lady" " " " " "

Uncover the captivating history of the "Lord of the Dance" song

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