



For immediate release

VITTORIO GRIGOLO TRIUMPHS IN ROYAL OPERA HOUSE DEBUT

“The birth of a star” - *Evening Standard*

“As house debuts go, it was little short of sensational” - *The Independent*

“The most sensational debut to be heard at Covent Garden for some time” - *The Guardian*

(Berlin June 25th) **Vittorio Grigolo**, exclusive **Sony Classical** artist, created a sensation this week with his keenly-anticipated debut as the Chevalier des Grieux in **Laurent Pelly's** new production of **Massenet's “Manon”** at the **Royal Opera House, Covent Garden**. The young singer thrilled audiences and critics alike with his ardent and passionate singing, drawing comparisons with many of the historic first nights of great singers of the past.

Mr. Grigolo, regarded by many as the finest Italian tenor in a generation, more than lived up to his advance billing. Born in Arezzo, Tuscany, he was a soloist in the celebrated **Sistine Chapel Choir** as a child and attracted the praise of the great **Pavarotti** himself when, at age 13, he starred alongside him as the Pastorello in “Tosca” at the **Rome Opera**. He went on to be the youngest tenor ever to debut at the legendary **La Scala, Milan** and has conquered many of the world's great opera houses since, appearing with the finest artists and conductors of our day.

For his Royal Opera debut, his musical partners were the acclaimed Russian lyric soprano **Anna Netrebko** and Covent Garden Music director **Antonio Pappano**. The Chevalier des Grieux is one of the most challenging roles in the lyric tenor repertory, requiring singing of exquisite tenderness and explosive dramatic intensity. The critics unanimously agreed the young singer passed all tests with flying colours and was worthy to take his place alongside the great interpreters of the part.

“Grigolo made a triumphant Covent Garden debut as Des Grieux. He balances Italianate ardour with style and intelligence.....and his good looks and energetic acting make him an appealing stage figure. A great operatic career lies in his sights.....” *The Daily Telegraph*

“He's got everything the role demands – a voice that flows, terrific looks, an instinctive sense of theatre. He's entirely credible as a 20 year old uncontrollably in love and everything he does seems natural, from his impetuous first appearance in the Aimens courtyard, to his chilling shriek of despair at Manon's death.” *The Guardian*

“In his Covent Garden debut, rising star Vittorio Grigolo wins the audience's hearts with his good looks, ardent singing and an eager demeanour that takes on the full tragic dimension of Chevalier des Grieux's predicament” *The Stage*

“More than matching Netrebko for passion and control was the Des Grieux of the young Italian tenor Vittorio Grigolo, making his debut at Covent Garden. The thunderous ovation he received at curtain call suggested that the audience sensed the birth of a star.” *The Evening Standard*

***The Independent* praised: “Vittorio Grigolo's dashing and thrillingly sung Chevalier des**

Griex, his seductive middle voice covered to beautiful effect in the many subito shadings in mezza voce”.

***The Times* remarked: “The voice was ablaze, mobile in dynamics like Des Griex’s heart, able to soar and sob alike without the slightest strain. The house loved him.”**

With this thrilling debut, **Vittorio Grigolo** fully confirms his claim to be regarded as the finest exponent of the Italian tenor tradition in a generation. He has recently become an exclusive **Sony Classical** artist and his first recording for the label - **“The Italian Tenor”** - will be released on **September 20th**. It promises to be one of the most significant classical recordings of the year.