

PLÁCIDO DOMINGO, GENERAL DIRECTOR
JAMES CONLON, MUSIC DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Los Angeles Opera Media Contacts:
Gary W. Murphy, Director of Public Relations
gmurphy@laopera.com; (213) 972-7554
Robert Cable, Public Relations Manager
rcable@laopera.com; (213) 972-7274

Plácido Domingo Conducts LA Opera Premiere of Massenet's *Manon*

**Anna Netrebko and Rolando Villazón Star in New Production
Directed and Choreographed by Vincent Paterson**

September 30 – October 21, 2006

(LOS ANGELES, CA) September 2006 – Opera's most electrifying and glamorous stage duo, **Anna Netrebko** and **Rolando Villazón**, last seen in LA Opera's 2005 production of *Roméo et Juliette*, return to the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion to star in a romantic, sensuous new presentation of Jules Massenet's *Manon* conducted by **Plácido Domingo**. A Company premiere, *Manon* is a co-production with the Staatsoper unter den Linden (Berlin) and will be directed by noted choreographer **Vincent Paterson** in his operatic directorial debut. The production opens Saturday, September 30 and will run for 7 performances through Saturday, October 21, 2006.

Massenet's exquisite score illuminates a decadent, divine and quintessentially French human drama about an impetuous French beauty who must choose between love and a glittering life of luxury. This striking new production by Vincent Paterson (director of the video *Anna Netrebko: The Woman, The Voice*, and a seminal force in music video direction of the 1980s through his collaboration with some of the industry's most successful artists) evokes the glamour and fashion of Dior and 1950's Paris. Scenery is by **Johannes Leiacker**, costume design is by **Susan Hilferty** and lighting design is by **Duane Schuler**.

The "great golden couple" (*The Guardian*, London) soprano Anna Netrebko and tenor Rolando Villazón, who star as the lovers Manon and Chevalier Des Grieux, instantly became the most sought-after operatic partnership after creating a sensation in LA Opera's *Roméo et Juliette*. In the intervening two seasons, the pair has conquered Salzburg, New York and Berlin, where they sang with Plácido Domingo for the finals of the World Cup soccer in July. *Manon* also features bass **David Pittsinger** as Comte des Grieux, baritone **Hyung Yun** as Lescaut, tenor **Ryland Davies** as Guillot de Morfontaine and bass-baritone **Dale Travis** as De Bretigny.

--More

Jules Massenet composed *Manon* to a libretto by Henri Meilhac and Philippe Gille, after the novel *Manon Lescaut* (1731). Destined for life inside a convent and desperate to escape, Manon encounters two very different men and a crucial dilemma: the choice between love and money but Manon's heart always remains devoted to the handsome young man who first captured her heart. The opera received its premiere in Paris on January 19, 1884 and quickly conquered the world's stages. *Manon* is Massenet's most successful opera and, with *Faust* and *Carmen*, remains one of the mainstays of the French repertoire.

Manon opens on Saturday, Saturday, September 30, 2006 at 7:30pm. Evening Performances October 5, 11, 18 and 21 at 7:30pm and matinee Performances October 8 and 15 at 2pm. All performances of *Manon* are at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Music Center, 135 North Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Tickets range from \$30 to \$220 and are on sale at the Los Angeles Opera Box Office, by phone at (213) 972-8001 or online at www.laopera.com. For disability access, call (213) 972-0777 or e-mail wehelpyou@laopera.com.

Artist headshots can be found on the LA Opera Press Gallery:
<http://www.laopera.com/press%5Fphoto/index.asp?productionid=203>

Synopsis and artist biographies can be found on the LA Opera website:
<http://www.laopera.com/production/index.asp?productionid=203>

Manon will be sung in French with English Supertitles projected above the stage.

All programs, artists and dates are subject to change.

#####