



## 20 QUESTIONS WITH: Tenor Giuseppe Filianoti

by Albert Imperato 30 April 2009



Giuseppe Filianoti  
photo by E. Paiz

Italian-born Giuseppe Filianoti has won acclaim around the world for his superb performances in the *bel canto* repertoire. The well-read family man appears May 12-25 as Nemorino (opposite Diana Damrau) in Laurent Pelly's staging of *L'elisir d'amore* at Covent Garden.

His beautifully sonorous voice has been heard on all the great opera stages including New York's Metropolitan Opera, Milan's La Scala and London's Royal Opera House. Describing his performance in January 2009 in Verdi's *Rigoletto* at the Met, the New York Times praised his "virile, bright voice with Italianate ping in his upper range" and "limber and youthful appearance."

Following his run in the Donizetti classic, Filianoti sings the title role in Gounod's *Faust* at France's Théâtre du Capitole Toulouse. In September he returns to the United States for *Elisir* performances at Los Angeles Opera.

### 1. A few works of classical music that you adore:

Massenet's *Werther*; Cilea's *L'arlesiana*; Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes*; Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*; Verdi's *Un ballo in maschera*, Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*. All the works of Mahler and Chopin.

### 2. Classical music recordings that you treasure:

All tenor recordings of Aureliano Pertile, Alfredo Kraus, Tito Schipa and Fritz Wunderlich; Carlos Kleiber in Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

**3. Favorite non-classical musicians and/or recordings:**

When I don't work or study I don't like to listen to any kind of music. Since I spend so much time in my life singing, I prefer to do something else.

**4. Music that makes you cry – any genre:**

Usually I cry when I don't sing as I would or should, but also listening to the fabulous music composed by Ennio Morricone, Chopin and Puccini.

**5. Definitely underrated work(s) or composer (s):**

Cilea's *L'arlesiana* and *Gloria*; Manfroce's *Ecuba*

**6. Possibly overrated work(s) or composer (s):**

Mascagni, Giordano, and a lot of modern music.

**7. Live music performance (s) you attended – any genre – that you'll never forget:**

Every time Alfredo Kraus sang he taught me how to use my voice. Every minute in which my son Riccardo (now 4 years old) performs for me like a tenor – he is surely better than his father.

**8. A few relatively recent films you love:**

*Elizabeth – The Golden Age*; *A Beautiful Mind*; *La vita e bella*; *Il postino*; *Hamlet*

**9. A few films you consider classics:**

*Psycho*; *Rebecca*; *Schindler's List*; *Amarcord*; *Jules et Jim*

**10. A few books that are important to you (and why):**

In my opinion every artist must read these books. There is not a real reason but for me it was a route. Vladimir Nabokov: *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight*; Henry James: *The Lesson of the Master and Real Thing*; Richard Powers: *The Time of Our Singing*. These others are my best classic, deeply engraved in my soul: Italo Svevo: *The Confessions of Zeno*; James Joyce: *Dubliners*; Everything by Italo Calvino... and many, many others.

**11. Thing(s) about yourself that you're most proud of:**

First of all, my son Riccardo, who plays a major part in everything in my life. I feel it's imperative to recognize how many things in this world are useless or without importance, and false, in comparison with the love of family and real friends. I am also proud of my tenacity and my constancy.

**12. Thing(s) about yourself that you're embarrassed by:**

My total incapacity with everything scientific or mathematical; to always forget the name of people just a few minutes after I speak with them; sometimes to not be able to shut up and to say anything I think.

**13. Three things you can't live without:**

My family, my music, my books

**14. "When I want to get away from it all I..."**

Go inside myself.

**15. "People are surprised to find out that I..."**

I am sooooo stubborn!

**16. "My favorite cities are..."**

Reggio Calabria, New York, London, Barcelona, Madrid

**17. "I have a secret crush on..."**

No secret, please!!!... but sometimes during the night I awake looking for... dark chocolate, sorry.

**18. "My most obvious guilty pleasure is..."**

To love so much to sing.

**19. "I'd really love to meet..."**

Myself from the outside to see how many things I have to change and my grandmother (she is no longer with us) to tell her about my baby, my career and to see in her eyes that she is proud of me.

**20. "I never understood why..."**

It is so difficult to be accepted and to be appreciated by people for who we really are.

**BONUS QUESTION:**

**21. Question you wish someone would ask you (and the answer to that question):**

**Q:** Why are you giving answers to this stressful questionnaire?

**A:** Because I am trying to reveal more of myself, so people that who come to listen me sing can decide if I am only a simple tenor or also a good person. At least I hope.

Please visit Mr. Filianoti's website at:

[www.giuseppefilianoti.it](http://www.giuseppefilianoti.it)

**Giuseppe filianoti**  
Tenor

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