

**SÉBASTIEN IZAMBARD** from IL DIVO

**SIGNS SOLO DEAL WITH UNIVERSAL MUSIC  
AND RELEASES FIRST NEW ALBUM IN 5 YEARS**

***"FROM SEB WITH LOVE"***

**WORLDWIDE ON 28 SEPTEMBER 2022**

**PROMOTIONAL VISIT TO JAPAN DURING THE WEEK  
OF THE ALBUM RELEASE ANNOUNCED**



**SÉBASTIEN IZAMBARD, THE FRENCH MEMBER OF  
MULTI-PLATINUM AND GOLD SELLING WITH  
GLOBAL NO.1 HITS AND 30-MILLION-ALBUMS-SOLD  
VOCAL GROUP IL DIVO,  
SET TO RELEASE NEW SOLO ALBUM  
- A COLLECTION OF THE SONGS  
HE REALLY WANTS TO SING -  
PRECEDED BY THE SINGLE 'HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY'  
AND THE ACCOMPANY VIDEO  
TO BE RELEASED DIGITALLY ON 7 SEPTEMBER  
PRE-ORDERS FOR THE DIGITAL ALBUM WILL ALSO START ON THE  
SAME DAY**

Sébastien Izambard, the sole French member of the multi-national classical crossover vocal group Il Divo, who is celebrating the group's 18th anniversary this year and attracted a great deal of attention with a large-scale tour of eleven shows across six cities in Japan from 26 March to 9 April, has announced that he has signed a solo record deal with Universal Music. *"From Seb with Love"*, his first new solo album in five years, is set to be released digitally worldwide on Friday, 28 September 2022, and physically on CD in Japan on the same day, before of the rest of the world.

Il Divo was formed as a group of four male singers from four different nations of the world, discovered and mentored by music producer Simon Cowell, a world-famous (former) judge for British television talent shows such as Pop Idol and The X Factor, which caused a worldwide sensation, and their American equivalent, American Idol. It wasn't so long ago when the tragic news hit us that Carlos

Marin, the Spanish member of the group, passed away suddenly from COVID-19 on 19 December 2021, and his untimely death shocked and deeply saddened fans all over the world. After struggling to overcome their grief at the loss of Marin, the three remaining members of the group decided to carry on believing that it was what Marin, who was also their spiritual pillar, would have wanted. The group embarked on the world tour called "Greatest Hits Tour 2022 / Special Tribute to Carlos Marin" with a guest baritone singer, in memory of the late band mate. As part of the tour, the group made its seventh visit and first in four years to Japan from late March to early April this year.

Besides being active in the group, Izambard began preparing a new solo album a few years ago. His first new solo album in five years since 2017's *"We Came Here to Love"*, *"From Seb with Love"*, whose name seems to be a pun for one of the classic Bond film titles, is a collection of covers featuring a wide range of songs from timeless standards to chansons to pop to rock, where he selected some of his favourite numbers he wanted to interpret, i.e., the songs he really wanted to sing.

**"I've wanted to make an album like this for a long time,"** says Izambard.

**"This shows the background of the artist Sébastien Izambard. I'm the only member in Il Divo that has had a different type of career. I mean, the other members have all had careers in opera or musical theatre and been classically trained, whereas I'm a pop musician who have taught myself to sing and play guitar and piano. I was what you would call a typical singer-songwriter, writing and singing my own songs. So, my first solo album [*Libre*], which was released in France in 2000 before I joined Il Divo, was made in a desperate attempt to let people know what kind of artist I was."**

After the release of the album, Izambard had a fateful encounter with Carlos Marin, and both applied for and passed the Il Divo audition. 2004 saw the release of the self-titled first album by the group, which debuted at number one in the UK charts and also climbed to number four in the US charts, catapulting the group into international stardom. As pioneers of the genre known as 'classical crossover', which aims to combine pop and classical music, Il Divo's popularity soon exploded worldwide, and they went on to release a string of albums in quick succession, including *"Ancora"* (2005), *"Siempre"* (2006), *"The Promise"* (2008) and *"Wicked Game"* (2011), all of which became big hits around the world. In 2021, in conjunction with Motown Records' 60th anniversary celebrations, the group's latest album *"For Once in My Life: A Celebration of Motown"*, a collection of classic Motown songs was issued. While engaged in these group activities, Izambard has also vigorously pursued his solo career.

**"As you know, every Il Divo album is a collection of cover songs. The concept hasn't changed since the group was formed, and the song selection is really diverse, from pop to rock, classical to musicals to Motown. It's always a challenge to sing these songs, but I'm also a musician, so I've never stopped writing my own songs. My previous album [*We Came Here to Love*] was the latest collection of original songs I had written, and after releasing the album I undertook a solo tour in Japan. I sang my version of 'Smile' by Charlie Chaplin on the tour, and I thought - what about making an album where people can get to know the background of Sébastien Izambard, a singer and artist, apart from Il Divo? I felt like making an album that would act like a calling card, an album that would say, 'This is Sébastien Izambard', introducing my personal musical tastes and influences."**

The new album includes a cover of 'I've Got a Crush on You' (well known for versions by Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald), along side a wide spectrum of classic songs from standards like 'Let's Fall in Love', which was originally written as the theme tune for the musical comedy film "Let's Fall in Love" (1933), to chanson masterpieces such as Edith Piaf's 'La Vie en Rose' and 'La Mer/Beyond the Sea', a medley of Charles Trenet's greatest hit and its English version, to 'Have I Told You Lately', one of Van Morrison's best-known numbers, which was also sung by Rod Stewart, to a famous ballad by Elton John called 'Sorry Seems to Be the Hardest Word' amongst others. It is a unique and interesting selection of songs covering a broad range of genres.

**"When I set out to work on this album, I started with making a list of potential songs to cover, and it was a real fun to make that list,"** he recalls. **"I started writing down the names of the songs that popped into my mind, and then there were dozens of them. From there, the process of actually narrowing them down was very difficult. I had a really hard time deciding which ones to be on the album and which ones to leave out. I tried a lot of different things in the studio, but in the end I just chose the stuff that I really wanted to sing. I think a lot of my musical tastes and preferences are reflected on this album."**

The stand-out track is Mark Ronson's 'Uptown Funk'. **"I really wanted to include this song on the album,"** explains the singer. **"I listen to an extensive wide range of music, everything from jazz to classical to pop and rock, but I also like intense danceable music like 'Uptown Funk'. This is also one of the songs I'm really looking forward to singing live."**

Another surprise is that a cover of 'Sukiyaki' by Kyu Sakamoto is sung in

Japanese. **"With Il Divo, we've sung Japanese songs in Japanese before, but in the process of compiling a list of potential songs for this album, I decided I wanted to sing a song in Japanese too. After my first visit to Japan with Il Divo, I was deeply impressed by Japanese culture and music. So when I decided to make a covers album myself, I started looking seriously for some good songs to sing in Japanese. I don't quite remember how I first found 'Sukiyaki', but I had known about it for a while, and some Japanese-speaking friends over here [L.A.] explained the meaning of the lyrics to me, and I thought, 'This is it'.**

**It was right around the time that COVID-19 started ravaging the globe when I began recording this album. We've faced some unexpected challenges over the last few years, firstly the COVID-19 pandemic and now the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which came out of the blue. And because of the invasion, people all over the world are now facing new difficulties such as a severe global food and energy crisis. Still, COVID-19 is wreaking havoc around the world and the pandemic is far from ending, too. If we look back a few years ago, I don't think anyone could've foreseen the situation we all face right now. It's a difficult time to live in, really. Some people may have lost loved ones, friends or acquaintances during the pandemic. I too lost my precious friend Carlos to COVID-19. And now it just breaks my heart to think of what Ukrainians are going through. Still, we all just have to live with these hardships. When I realised what the song ['Sukiyaki'] was about, it seemed to echo the sentiments we all were feeling through these difficult times, and I knew I must include it on the album."**

And then, an unexpected saviour entered the picture. **"The thing is, before we set out to record 'Sukiyaki', I received an e-mail from Rikimaru-san, the**

son of the composer who wrote the song, Mr. Hachidai Nakamura," continues the singer. "He kindly explained the meaning of the song and what the lyrics was about, which helped me a lot in understanding the lyrics in Japanese and also in recording the song. As a French person, it's still a big challenge for me to sing with correct Japanese pronunciation, but thanks to the e-mail from Rikimaru-san, I got to know exactly where and how I should pour my emotions. I tried again and again, and I believe I got the best take possible, but what do you think? It's a song I really want people, not just in Japan, but around the world to hear."

The album ends with 'I Do', a brand-new original song by Izambard and John Coggins: "It's a love song about the love of your life, and I wanted to show my romantic side. It is a song I wrote with my friend John Goggins in hope that it will become a song to propose or get Married to your partner. I really wanted the album to close with this song, because by putting it at the end of the album, I feel I completed an album where I could proudly say, 'This is me, this is Sébastien Izambard'."

Sébastien Izambard was born on 7 March 1973 in Paris, France. The singer and actor released his first solo album "*Libre in France*" (released in France only) in 2000. Shortly after starting his career as a pop artist in full-swing, he met Carlos Marin in Paris and passed the audition for Il Divo, which led him to begin a new career as a member of the group in November 2004. Izambard shared his memories of the late Carlos Marin on stage at Il Divo's concerts in Japan this year.

"It's still hard to accept Carlos' death," he says, revealing his feelings concerning the sudden loss of his long-time friend and band mate. "I could never imagined that he would be gone so soon. He was such a jovial fellow

**and so professional. A born entertainer. You don't often see such a gifted singer with such an incredible voice. To be honest, it's still hard for me and I miss him so very much my heart still aches just talking about it. I tried to use those emotions into the song 'Sukiyaki'.**

**"I've also listened to Carlos' solo album *Portrait* [released in 2020]. The album is packed with his favourite cover songs, very much characteristic of him. It might have inspired me to some extent to make this album. It wasn't a conscious move, though. That's why I'd like to dedicate this album to him. The seventeen years I spent with him were just wonderful, full of precious and happy memories."**

Sébastien Izambard's latest effort, "*From Seb with Love*" is set to release worldwide on Wednesday, 28 September 2022. Ahead of the album drop, 'Have I Told You Lately', the lead track off the album and the accompany video will be released digitally worldwide on Wednesday, 7 September.

Izambard is scheduled to make a promotional visit to Japan during the week of the album's release, from Monday 26 September to Sunday 2 October, taking breaks in between his current world tour with Il Divo. During his stay in Japan, his first-ever album launch events are to take place in Tokyo and Osaka. A long-awaited solo tour to coincide with the release of the album is also planned for 2023.

**"I'm very excited and I can't wait for everyone to hear the album," the singer enthuses. "I'm also going to do some in-store album launch performances in the shopping centres in Japan during this promotional visit as I'm still a newcomer as a solo artist. I'd be happy if my beloved**



**Japanese fans and also as many people in Japan as possible who don't know me yet, would hear and see me sing live, understand what kind of artist Sébastien Izambard is, and hopefully like the album. That's why this album is called *From Seb with Love*. I'm really looking forward to seeing you all again in Japan I Love and adore my fans."**

### **Sébastien Izambard / Biography**

Sébastien Izambard was born on 7 March 1973 in Paris, France. Self-taught in singing and playing guitar and piano, the singer and actor released his first solo album "*Libre*" (released in France only) in his native France in 2000. Shortly after he started his career as a pop artist in full-force, he had a fateful encounter with Carlos Marin in Paris, and applied for and passed the Il Divo audition, which led him to make his worldwide debut as a member of Il Divo in November 2004. The self-titled first album by the group entered straight at No.1 in the UK charts and reached No.4 in the US charts, which propelled the quartet into international fame. As pioneers of the new genre known as 'classical crossover', combining pop and classical music, Il Divo's global popularity soon exploded. The group continued to release a string of albums including "*Ancora*" (2005), "*Siempre*" (2006), "*The Promise*" (2008) and "*Wicked Game*" (2011), all of which became huge hits around the world. 2021 saw the release of the group's latest album "*For Once in My Life: A Celebration of Motown*", a collection of covers of classic Motown material, in conjunction with the 60th anniversary of Motown Records. Alongside these group activities, Izambard released "*We Came Here to Love*", his second solo album and first in seventeen years in 2017, and the following year saw his first solo concerts in Japan at Osaka Sankei Hall Breeze (13 Feb) and Tokyo Bunkamura Orchard Hall (14 Feb). Il Divo toured Japan for the seventh time and first in four years from 26 March to 9 April 2022, in the wake of the

sudden passing of Carlos Marin in December 2021. The tour was part of the "Greatest Hits Tour 2022 / Special Tribute to Carlos Marin", a world tour in memory of the late baritone, with a guest singer to fill in for him. *"From Seb with Love"*, Izambard's third solo album and first in five years (and also his debut for Universal Music) is set to release worldwide on 28 September 2022. Preceding the album drop is the lead track from the album 'Have I Told You Lately' and the accompany video, available digitally worldwide from Wednesday, 7 September. A solo tour to support the new album is also being planned for 2023.

## **SÉBASTIEN IZAMBARD *"FROM SEB WITH LOVE"***

### **1. I'VE GOT A CRUSH ON YOU**

Lyrics and Music by George Gershwin and Ira Gershwin

© 1930 by NEW WORLD MUSIC COMPANY LTD.

### **2. LET'S FALL IN LOVE**

Lyrics and Music by Harold Arlen & Ted Koehler

© by BOURNE CO.

### **3. LA VIE EN ROSE**

Lyrics by Edith Piaf

Music by Louiguy

© 1947 by EDITIONS MUSICALES PAUL BEUSCHER.

### **4. HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY**

Lyrics and Music by Van Morrison

© by BARRULE UK LTD.

## **5. PURE IMAGINATION**

Lyrics and Music by Anthony Newley and Leslie Bricusse

© 1999 by TARADAM MUSIC, INC. / DOWNTOWN DMP SONGS.

## **6. SORRY SEEMS TO BE THE HARDEST WORD**

Lyrics and Music by Elton John and Bernard Taupin

© by HST PUBLISHING LTD. / ROUGE BOOZE, INC.

## **7. UE WO MUI TE ARUKOU (SUKIYAKI)**

Lyrics by Rokusuke Ei

Music by Hachidai Nakamura

© 1961 by HACHIDAI CORPORATION, INC.

## **8. LA MER / BEYOND THE SEA**

Lyrics by Charles Trenet

Music by Albert Lasry & Charles Trenet

English Lyrics by Jack Lawrence

© by RAOUL BRETON EDITIONS. / BRO 'N SIS MUSIC, INC.

## **9. UPTOWN FUNK**

Lyrics and Music by Philip Lawrence, Bruno Mars, Jeffrey Bhasker,  
Devon Gallaspy, Mark Ronson, Lonnie Simmons, Rudolph Taylor,  
Nicholaus Joseph Williams, Charles Wilson, Robert Wilson, Ronnie  
Wilson and Peter Gene Hernandez

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RIC MUSIC. / NEW SONGS ADMINISTRATION LTD.

## **10. I DO**

Lyrics and Music by Sébastien Izambard and John Coggins

Produced by John Coggins and Sebastien Izambard

Recorded, Mixed and Mastered by John Coggins

Drums, Piano, Guitars and Everything by John Coggins

Orchestra Music Performed by The City of Prague Philharmonic Orchestra

Orchestra Arranged by John Foreman except for "UE WO MUI TE ARUKOU (SUKIYAKI)"

and "LA MER / BEYOND THE SEA", which were orchestrated by Matt Amy and John Foreman

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