

## A lecture by PETER BASSETT

a Wagner Society in NSW Inc event

*Hurry away then, towards the East*

2.00PM Sunday 10 April 2022

Goethe Institut

90 Ocean Street (corner of Jersey Road), Woollahrah

*Das Rheingold*, Scene IV, Bayreuth 1983, Peter Hall director, William Dudley designer.

“Valhalla was a painted cloth looking like a castle designed by a committee of Tibetan and  
Cambodian architects.”  
quote from “The Ring” by Stephen Fay and Roger Wood

To find out more about the Wagner Society in NSW Inc.  
please go to: [www.wagner.org.au](http://www.wagner.org.au)





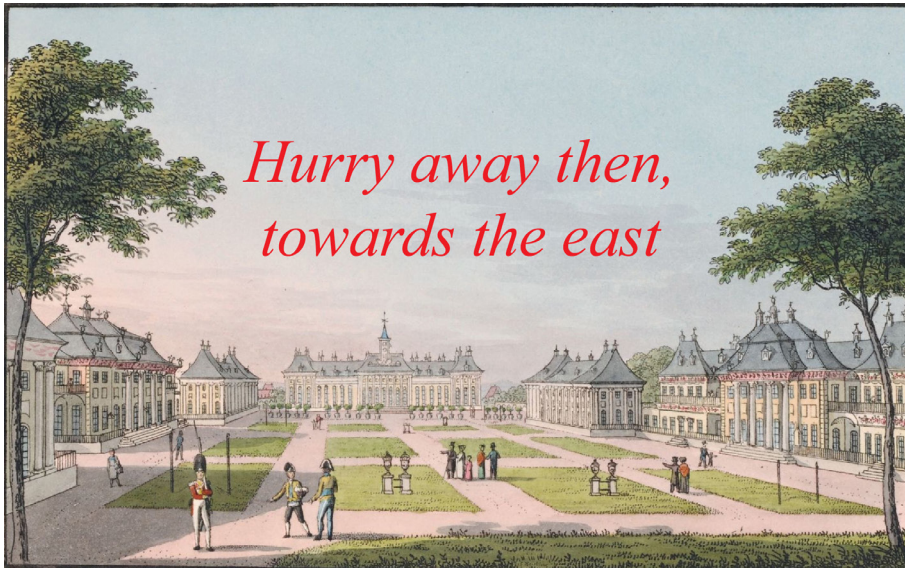
## PROGRAMME



12.30pm [AEDT]: DVD - *Die Feen*

### 2.00pm [AEDT]: Talk by PETER BASSETT “Hurry away then, towards the East”

Richard Wagner grew up in early 19th century Saxony when there was a growing fascination with Chinese porcelain and decoration, Persian stories and poetry, and Indian ideas and philosophies. Mozart, Spohr and Weber had already drawn on eastern subjects in their works, and other composers followed suit. In the 1830s, Wagner toyed with an opera inspired by The Thousand and One Nights, and in the 1850's, disillusioned and in exile, he talked about settling down in what was then the Ottoman Empire. His interest in the Orient and its philosophies never left him, as *Tristan und Isolde*, *Siegfried*, *Götterdämmerung* and *Parsifal* demonstrate beyond doubt. As we contemplate the planned Brisbane Ring production directed by Chen Shi-Zheng, it is timely to look at Eastern influences which played such an important part in Wagner's creative endeavours.



3.00pm [AEDT]: Refreshments / drinks / afternoon tea

## PETER BASSETT

Peter Bassett graduated BA (Hons), MA, LLB from Queensland University (and was admitted to the Queensland and Commonwealth Bars), and PhD from the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University. He was a Guest Lecturer in the 2021 Lisa Gasteen National Opera Program and a Sessional Lecturer at QCGU in 2010. In association with the Conservatorium, he coordinated a symposium on *Das Rheingold* in 2012 during a visit to Brisbane by Hamburg State Opera and the Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Simone Young.



He was Dramaturg and Artistic Administrator for the 2004 Adelaide production of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (for which he was awarded a Centenary Medal) and was closely involved with SOSA productions of the *Ring* of 1998, *Parsifal* of 2001 and *Der fliegende Holländer* of 2009. He gave twelve pre-performance talks for each of the 1998 and 2004 *Rings* and organised *Ring* conferences in 1997 and 2003 in Adelaide and 2016 in Melbourne. He contributes regularly to program booklets for opera and record companies in Australia and abroad (on the works of numerous composers), has published widely on Wagner's works, has recorded talks on the *Ring* for Decca, and has lectured in Europe, North America and throughout Australia and New Zealand. Since 2001 he has led some 40 international opera tours for the Sydney-based company Renaissance Tours. He is President of the Wagner Society in Queensland and an Honorary Member of the Finnish Wagner Society, one of the largest in the world.

For two decades Peter served in the Australian Diplomatic Service in West and East Europe, Asia, and the Pacific, including as High Commissioner, and was Deputy Legal Adviser in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Canberra. He was appointed Official Secretary (Chief of Staff) to two Governors of South Australia between 1992 and 1999.

## WHAT'S COMING UP NEXT?

- i) Fritz Lang's masterpiece *Siegfried* on 1 May
- ii) Erica Miner talks to us from Seattle via Zoom about *Berlioz and Wagner* on 4 May
- iii) OA's *Lohengrin*, State Theatre, Melbourne on 14, 17, 21 and 24 May
- iv) AGM, Wagner's birthday and recital with Brad Cooper on 29 May
- v) DVD, *Marjorie Lawrence - the World at her Feet* on 26 June