



A film by **FRITZ LANG**
a Wagner Society in NSW Inc presentation
SIEGFRIED'S DEATH
Part 1 of Die Nibelungen

Siegfried kills The Dragon, a still from the film "*Siegfried's Death*"

To find out more about the Wagner Society in NSW Inc.
please go to: www.wagner.org.au

1.30PM Sunday 1 May 2022
Goethe Institut

90 Ocean Street (corner of Jersey Road), Woollarah



PROGRAMME



1.30pm [AEDT]: DVD - *SIEGFRIED'S DEATH*
Part 1 of Die Nibelungen



3.00pm approx [AEDT]: Interval

4.00pm approx [AEDT]: Refreshments / drinks / afternoon tea

murder Siegfried during a hunt in the Odenwald. Hagen deceives Kriemhild into divulging Siegfried's weak spot by sewing a cross on the spot in Siegfried's tunic.

After the hunt, Hagen challenges Siegfried to a race to a nearby spring. When Siegfried is on his knees drinking, Hagen pierces him from behind with a spear. In an evil twist of bitter revenge, Brunhild confesses that she lied about Siegfried stealing her maidenhood in order to avenge Gunther's deceit of her.

Kriemhild demands her family avenge her husband's death at the hands of Hagen, but her family is complicit in the murder, and so they protect Hagen. Kriemhild swears revenge against Hagen while Brunhild commits suicide at the foot of Siegfried's corpse, which has been laid in state in the cathedral.



DONATIONS TO WSNSW

Your Society has a number of recurrent philanthropic projects for which we seek your help. One such project, which we would like to focus on in the first half of 2022, is the **Jane Mathews AO Scholarship**, named in honour of our former President Justice Jane Mathews AO.

The Society joined with **PACIFIC OPERA** to establish a \$5,000 annual scholarship to help young potential Wagnerians. It also forges stronger ties between our two organisations. The first Scholarship has been awarded to **Ellen McNeil**.

If interested in contributing please contact the President.

SIEGFRIED'S DEATH PLOT SUMMARY

The title character Siegfried, son of King Siegmund of Xanten, masters the art of forging a sword at the shop of Mime. Siegfried hears the tales of the kingdom of Burgundy, the kings who rule there, as well as of Kriemhild, the princess of Burgundy. Siegfried announces he wants to win her hand in marriage, much to the amusement of the smiths. Siegfried demands to be told the way. Mime, who is envious of Siegfried's skill as a swordsmith, claims there is a shortcut to Burgundy through the Wood of Woden, wherein dwell all kinds of dangerous creatures. Siegfried encounters a dragon, and deviates from his path to slay it. He touches its hot, yellow blood and suddenly understands the language of the birds, who instruct him to bathe in the dragon's blood in order to become invincible – except for one spot on his shoulder blade, covered by a falling lime (linden) leaf.

Soon after, the powerful Siegfried trespasses on the land of the Nibelungs and is attacked by Alberich, King of the Dwarves, who has turned himself invisible. Siegfried defeats Alberich, who offers Siegfried a net of invisibility and transformation if he spares his life, whereupon Alberich offers to make Siegfried “the richest king on earth!” While Siegfried is mesmerized by the treasure and the sword Balmung, Alberich tries to defeat him, but dies in the attempt. With his dying breath, Alberich curses all inheritors of the treasure and he and his dwarves turn to stone.

Siegfried finally arrives in Burgundy in his new guise as King of twelve kingdoms. A fight breaks out between Siegfried and King Gunther and his adviser Hagen of Tronje, which is interrupted by the appearance of beautiful princess Kriemhild. Hagen asks Siegfried to aid Kriemhild's brother, King Gunther, to win the hand of Brunhild, the Queen of Iceland. The men travel to Brunhild's kingdom, where Siegfried feigns vassalage to Gunther so that he can avoid Brunhild's challenge and instead use the net's power of invisibility to help Gunther beat the powerful Queen in a threefold battle of strength. The men return to Burgundy where Gunther marries Brunhild and Siegfried weds Kriemhild.

Brunhild is not, however, completely defeated. She suspects deceit and refuses to consummate the marriage. Hagen again convinces Siegfried to help. Siegfried transforms himself into Gunther and battles Brunhild and removes her arming during battle, after which she submits to his will. Siegfried leaves the real Gunther to consummate the marriage.

Kriemhild discovers Brunhild's armet and asks Siegfried about it. Siegfried discloses the truth to Kriemhild about his role in Brunhild's defeat. When the Nibelungen treasure that Siegfried acquired from Alberich arrives at the court of Burgundy as Kriemhild's wedding gift, Brunhild becomes more suspicious about Siegfried's feigned vassalage to Gunther. Brunhild dons the Queen Mother's jewellery and proceeds to the cathedral to enter as the first person, as is her right as Queen of Burgundy. Kriemhild tries to take Brunhild's right of way and an argument erupts between the two Queens. Kriemhild betrays her husband's and brother's secret to Brunhild, who then confronts Gunther.

Brunhild demands that Siegfried must be killed, which she justifies by claiming that Siegfried stole her maidenhood [intertitle 1.94] when he struggled with her on her wedding night. Hagen von Tronje and King Gunther conspire to



FRITZ LANG

Friedrich Christian Anton “Fritz” Lang (December 5, 1890 – August 2, 1976) was an Austrian-German-American film director, screenwriter, and occasional film producer and actor. One of the best-known émigrés from Germany's school of Expressionism, he was dubbed the “Master of Darkness” by the British Film Institute.

Lang's most celebrated films include the groundbreaking futuristic *Metropolis* (1927) and the influential *M* (1931), a film noir precursor that he made before he moved to the United States. His other major films include *Dr. Mabuse the Gambler* (1922), *Die Nibelungen* (1924), *Fury* (1936), *You Only Live Once* (1937), *Hangmen Also Die!* (1943), *The Woman in the Window* (1944), *Scarlet Street* (1945) and *The Big Heat* (1953).

WHAT'S COMING UP NEXT?

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

SIEGFRIED'S DEATH CAST LIST

Paul Richter as King Siegfried of Xanten

Margarete Schön as Kriemhild of Burgund

Hans Adalbert Schlettow as Hagen of Tronje

Theodor Loos as King Gunther of Burgund

Hanna Ralph as Queen Brunhild of Isenland

Rudolf Klein-Rogge as King Etzel

Bernhard Goetzke as Volker of Alzey

Rudolf Rittner as Margrave Rüdiger of Bechlarn

Georg John as Mime the Goldsmith / Alberich the Dwarf / Blaodel (Etzel's brother)

Gertrud Arnold as Queen Ute of Burgund, Gunther's mother

Hans Carl Müller as Gerenot of Burgund, Gunther's brother

Erwin Biswanger as Giselher of Burgund, Gunther's brother

Fritz Alberti as Dietrich of Bern

Georg August Koch as Hildebrandt, Dietrich's aide

Annie Röttgen as Dietlind of Bechlarn

Frida Richard as the Runenmagd, wench at the Burgund court

Georg Jurowski as the priest at the Burgund court

