



The Richard Wagner Society of South Australia Inc.

NEWSLETTER 313 MARCH/APRIL 2021

Patron:
Deborah Humble

The Society hasn't arranged any events between February and May. Several possible events are being planned which we hope can be scheduled later in the year, depending on the availability of presenters and venues. However, we have organised a celebration of Wagner's birth on the afternoon of **Sunday 30 May** at **Living Choice Fullarton**. This will be a screening of Richard Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* and a lunch. Full details will be provided in the May Newsletter.

This year we were able to commemorate the Master's death on the actual date, 13 February, with a well-received presentation on "Russian Wagnerism" from Konstantin Shamray. See the review on P. 2-3.

Our new Patron Deborah Humble has sent us the text of an online interview she recently did. You can read this in full on P.4-6.

Members with technical know-how and access can find a great deal of Wagner-related material to see and hear online, including performances, newsletters, lectures and such. Details of some such events are sent directly to the Society, to be printed in the Newsletter, and/or made available on the Society website.

Our Membership Registrar reports that a few members have still to renew Society membership, and they will receive a reminder with this Newsletter. It is always possible to renew online at <https://www.wagnersa.net>, a Membership Application/Renewal Form was sent out with Newsletter 311, or if you phone us another can be sent out. **Donations to the Public Fund are always appreciated.**

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Russian Wagnerism

A good turnout of members and friends met in the hall of North Adelaide Baptist Church on the afternoon 13 February to hear Honorary Member, Konstantin Shamray. There was a little tension when the guest speaker hadn't arrived at 2.25 pm., and great relief when he appeared, explaining he'd been teaching at the Adelaide Conservatorium, and would be returning for another student at 5.00 pm!

Once everyone had settled, the President Dr. Geoff Seidel introduced Konstantin, a regular Society guest since June 2012, and now a very well-known performer locally, Australia-wide and abroad. After Geoff had congratulated Konstantin on both being recently awarded a PhD from the University of Adelaide and having become a father, he pointed out that Konstantin has played a major part in the revival of live classical music in Adelaide during the COVID-19 shutdown, firstly performing online, then on stage. The subject Konstantin had chosen was "Russian Wagnerism", and Geoff mentioned a couple of suitable connections on the topic. He then handed over to Konstantin, who remarked that the first sight of the piano all set up for a recital had given him a slight shock! He explained that he had first had the idea for his topic while minding his little son Maxim, when he had taken the opportunity to listen to some Russian opera, particularly those of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, who had heard the *Ring Cycle* in 1889, and thought a lot of Wagner.

Konstantin had noticed similarities to Wagner's work in some later operas, such as *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh*. The following is an attempted summary of Konstantin's presentation...

Wagner himself went to Russia in 1862-63 and wrote later that it was one of the best times of his life -- possibly because had earned lots of money, 1,000 rubles a concert, there! Interest in Wagner has varied in Russia over the years. In the 1850s, the composer and music critic Alexander

Serov had started to promote Wagner's works, and Wagner wrote that Russian critics understood his music. In 1868 *Lohengrin* was staged and was very well received by audiences, but many Russian musicians were not keen on Wagner's work, Tchaikovsky spoke of his "disgusting chromatism". Wagner was very influential in Europe. There was a general movement away from the Italian style of opera, but the Russians didn't want German influence either! However, some of the composers were still influenced by Wagner, many of their operas were based on Russian myths or history and there was movement towards his other ideas. Konstantin spoke of Glinka's *Ivan Susanin (A Life for the Czar)* containing some aspects of "music drama" which is how Wagner described his later works.

Konstantin mentioned several composers who had a conservative influence, Chopin, Schumann and Liszt, but there were many other "foreign" composers and musicians in Russia. It took about four decades, into the 1890s, before Wagner really took off there. Eventually musicians like Tchaikovsky and other composers studied his scores. In St. Petersburg a nationalistic group of musicians known as the Mighty Five (Balakirev, Borodin, Cui, Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov) were very influential and didn't support Wagner's music and ideas: however individual members did break away later. Konstantin feels that Mussorgsky didn't copy Wagner, but came to his own conclusions.

Konstantin spoke of chord progressions, played the end of *Die Walküre* with chord inversions, then played some "Russian chords". He pointed out that there were some differences in Russian music, like the use of the tritone (Devil's interval) which was disliked in the west. This was partly because in Russia bells were often bought individually so they tended to sound discordant. Konstantin did his PhD on bell-inspired piano music and played several examples from different composers, but noted that Rimsky-Korsakov tended to use the diatonic bell tones. Konstantin said the plagal mode is the most dominant aspect of Russian music, and played the end of *Parsifal* compared with an extract from a piece by Rimsky-Korsakov which sounds very similar. Rimsky-Korsakov was a very well-educated musician,



who had commented that Wagner's works were "too colourful" but his own later works were also colourful -- although not as colourful as those of Prokofiev! Konstantin played some more Rimsky-Korsakov extracts with similarities to Wagner's music, but he also thinks that Stravinsky's music is more Germanic than that of Rimsky-Korsakov, and was the summit of Wagner-like writing in Russia. He referred back to Rimsky-Korsakov's *City of Kitezh* and said that he had not heard of any Rimsky-Korsakov's operas being performed in Australia: someone mentioned *The Golden Cockerel* and of course his *Scheherazade* is often played here. Another person asked whether Rimsky-Korsakov had corresponded with Wagner, but they did not.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there was a great boom of interest in Wagner's music in Russia, although his works were only performed in the largest theatres. The standard of singing improved, as different voices were required.

Then came Alexander Scriabin (Konstantin has spoken previously about this composer) who had a similar philosophy to Wagner and was influenced by non-Russian music, that of Chopin, Liszt and later Wagner. He used fairy tales and wrote epic works. Konstantin feels that Wagner had superior orchestration while Scriabin had similar ideas, but for piano performance; one chord develops into another and there is some leitmotif structure.

While Wagner operas were still staged in Russia in the early 20th century they didn't fit in with Marxist philosophy -- although *Mastersingers* was still liked! Socialists found the never-resolving chords too difficult. Lenin had said that art had to be understood by the people, Stalin wanted simplification of music. Then came World War II and Wagner's music fell further out of favour. It wasn't until 1969 or 1970 that *Lohengrin* was again staged -- perhaps this was considered "safe". Then *Das Rheingold* was performed. Konstantin's teacher saw it and said it was a fiasco: the singers weren't adequate. Visiting companies performing Wagner were made welcome, though.

It wasn't until Valery Gergiev came to the Mariinsky Opera Company that interest in Wagner's operas has been revived in Russia, including the *Ring Cycle*. There are now Wagner societies in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Konstantin added that there is now a Mariinsky Theatre II, possibly the biggest in Europe.

This was followed by some general comments about the influences of other composers, nationalism and other movements that had affected musicians and composers, and a few questions, to which Konstantin tended to give an answer and then play examples. He clearly enjoys discussing and explaining aspects of music, and would probably have gone on much longer, except that time was limited. Afterwards some members said they had particularly enjoyed Konstantin's wonderful playing of the various excerpts and examples. David Murphy thanked Konstantin for his most interesting presentation, Penny Hewson had a couple of gifts from the Society, then members were invited to move around for discussion and afternoon tea.

Lee Brauer
Photo by David Murphy

For another report of Konstantin's talk, see that of Peter Jakobsen on his website The Varnished Culture at: <http://www.thevarnishedculture.com/wagner-in-russia/>

Das Rheingold in Melbourne 2021

Melbourne Opera now appears to have become the Wagner Opera company of Australia with its sixth major Wagner opera production, *Das Rheingold*, part one of the *Ring of the Nibelung*. It was the most satisfying *Rheingold* I have seen in Melbourne.

The simple abstract sets had a majestic grandeur. Initially just a simple black circular platform represented the Rhine. It then became obvious it had been cut from the centre of a much larger square platform for the home of the gods, which lowered to cover it, and raised on its side, became Nibelheim underneath. Clever lighting and projections depicted the water of the Rhine, Alberich's serpent and frog (large cane toad?), hints of Valhalla, and created the appropriate moods. The orchestra overflowed the pit, wind section excelling, was under conductor Anthony Negus. Melbourne Opera went to great

lengths to successfully get him here from Wales, unlike first choice Wotan, Warwick Fyfe, whom they couldn't get from New South Wales. In his place was Eddie Muliaumaseali'i, whom we have seen in recent OzOpera and Co-Opera productions in Adelaide. This was Eddie at his best -- it seemed a role he really fitted into. He was most impressive as the gods prepared to enter Valhalla.

Simon Meadows' Alberich was outstanding, with remarkably rich, strong voice. In singlet and King G overalls in the Rhine and gold and black attire in Nibelheim, his beautiful baritone was impressive. The marvellously clear, confident soprano of Rebecca Rashleigh led and united the Rhinemaidens in an enticing commencement to the opera (while two extra silent maidens in the background on long inverse pendulums swayed vigorously). Sarah Sweeting's Fricka was imperial, portraying a calmness amid the chaos around her. Clever costuming of Froh in pink as the god of sunshine, Donner in silver as god of thunder and lightning, Freia with golden basket of large golden apples, Loge in red and black suit, and the giants (who did look tall) in pelts and furs. I loved Fasolt's endearing, tender bass. Bold voiced Fafner conveniently brought a fur-lined cart to take the gold, and subtly booted the murdered Fafner off the set.

Roxane Hislop, who has sung many successful roles for Opera Australia and was arguably the highest profiled of the cast, seemed a poor choice for the role of Erda.

The final entry to Valhalla was clever: The gods stood back stage at attention as if in wonder. Froh stepped forward to sing of the bridge and rainbow colours layered across the stage (red on the left, where Loge patiently sat, to violet on the right). The gods came in a row to front of stage, and when the Rhinemaidens began their lament turned, stood around the central circle, looked down first in wonder then contempt on the Rhinemaidens, and eventually departed up the rear steps to Valhalla, turned back and looked triumphantly into the theatre. The platform (their earlier home) folded up to capture them in the central cut out circle, as if framing them in a family photo destined to remain for posterity.

Brian Angus

Our new Patron Deborah Humble recently gave an interview to the musical website *SoundsLikeSydney* and has sent us a transcript of that interview...



Like most artists, you had all your engagements cancelled in 2020. What effect did this have on you? I was towards the end of a block of Opera Australia Ring Cycle rehearsals in March when things got shut down in Sydney. My partner Bruce Caldwell and I decided to retreat to our property in the Hunter Valley where we were grateful to have space and fresh air and plenty of physical work to occupy us for the next few months. As each singing engagement was cancelled it was difficult not to get more and more dispirited and despondent. It became apparent fairly quickly that the entire year was going to be a disaster professionally and financially. For me personally this meant not only the cancellation of a four-month contract for the Ring Cycle in Brisbane in which I was to sing Waltraute, but also contracts in Munich, Venice and Vicenza, the European launch of a new CD and multiple concerts around Australia. I had my first job as a tour guide for The Travelling Tenor cancelled. I was to lead a tour through Northern Italy taking in multiple performances and featuring various cultural and food experiences. I also missed out on my first international teaching engagement in Germany. By the end of the year I realised, in a way I have never really had to confront before, just how much my personal and financial self-worth and identity are tied up in my singing career. I really missed the adrenaline rush and excitement that performing always gives me, as well as the actual physical and mental benefits and challenges of singing itself, to say nothing of interacting with audiences and colleagues.

Tell us about some of the things you did to keep busy last year? In some ways I've never been busier. My first priority was to assist my students when it became clear we could no longer meet face to face. We set up zoom lessons in April and began online coaching. I organised seminars in score reading and learning and set everyone an operatic role or a song cycle to learn. I put them in touch with language coaches and directors and overseas teachers. So many young aspiring singers missed out on

important career advancing opportunities in 2020. There were no competitions, no masterclasses, no young artist programmes, no international summer schools and no performances. It was very hard for them to know what it was they were actually continuing to work towards. Many lost their singing income and other part time jobs overnight which caused a lot of financial stress on top of everything else. I was not only a teacher last year but at times also an amateur psychologist, motivator, mother figure and shoulder to cry on. I continue to be hugely impressed at the adaptability, positivity and resilience that a lot of the young people I work with and mentor have displayed.

You opened your home in the Hunter Valley to visitors for the first time. How did that come about? In May I decided to open up part of our house, Brycefield Estate, and list it on Airbnb. I spent a month refurbishing the space into a self-contained guest suite and making it ready for the first visitors who arrived for the June long weekend. I naively thought that a few people might come and that it would give me something to do as well as making up for some of the income I had lost. So far we have had nearly 70 groups of guests staying with us. A spontaneous idea quickly turned into a near full time commitment and I ended up offering all sorts of extra services; wine tours around Lovedale and Pokolbin, private dinners, cooked breakfasts, morning teas. I was concierge, guest services manager, tour guide, cook and cleaner. The Hunter Valley is a popular destination for weekend breaks in NSW and with travel restrictions being what they are for the time being, I'm sure it will be busy for the foreseeable future.

In October last year you put on the first Brycefield Estate Small Scale Music Festival. What inspired you to do that? The other idea I had regarding our property was to start a Brycefield Estate Music Festival. Numbers were restricted in private homes at the time so I organised the sale of twenty tickets for every event and implemented the correct COVID safe regulations. It was all rather unpredictable, but I was very motivated and inspired to get Sydney and Newcastle artists back to work and give them a live audience to interact with. Thus the first festival was held over an extended weekend in October and featured fourteen musicians all of whom were delighted to return to performing. It was also very clear that audience members were thrilled to hear live music again. It turned into a very emotional and hugely successful weekend. We were entertained by Mark Trevorrow and Bev Kennedy who made us laugh and cry during their very clever cabaret show 'Singing Straight.' The Newcastle Camerata gave a sensational concert which featured the World Premiere of 'Taking Flight' by composer David Banney and received a spontaneous standing ovation. Classical guitarist Andrew Blanch gave a Latin inspired solo concert and joined the Camerata to give a performance of Vivaldi's Lute Concerto. We finished the weekend with an evening Art Song recital as the sun went down over the Brokenback Ranges. Spurred on by the enthusiastic feedback, I was inspired to organise a second festival weekend which will take place at the end of March 2021 with larger audience numbers. The concerts will feature a wide variety of local artists including the amazingly versatile mezzo-soprano Jacqui Dark performing her new cabaret show, harpist Emily Granger, guitarist Andrew Blanch back by popular demand, flautist Jane Rutter, Newcastle quartet Sax Blu and baritone Teddy Tahu-Rhodes. There is an opportunity to picnic in the Brycefield gardens and to mingle and talk with the performers. The festival has already attracted numerous private sponsors and it is my hope that it will continue to grow.

After giving tremendous support to your students and pouring so much initiative and energy into your hospitality venture, what do you do to regenerate your energy and emotions? By the time 2020 came to a close I have to say I felt physically and mentally exhausted. I realised that I had not only felt my own disappointments very keenly but also those of my colleagues and friends. Bruce summed it up very well when he said that, whether or not we acknowledged it every day, there had been a constant level of anxiety present for the entire year. When he was also unable to work for several weeks due to the cancellation of elective surgery we enjoyed time in our garden and vineyard. It's always been one of Bruce's dreams to make wine and a couple of years ago he planted some of Australia's first pecorino vines as well as continuing to establish the chardonnay and semillon. He spent hours every day working on the property and was rewarded at the end of this January with a very good 2021 harvest. We both spent a lot of time in our kitchen cooking and trying new recipes; Bruce preserved our lemons and made our first 'lockdown limoncello.' He also made batches of great tomato chutney. We grew and ate our own garden produce (how many ways can you cook with kale?) and connected with local Hunter Valley suppliers for other foods like eggs, cheese and milk and bread. I kept a Coronavirus diary which might be interesting to look back on in the future. I skyped with friends

in Europe and it turned out there were several advantages to having virtual dinner parties, the least of which was not having to drive home afterwards! We really didn't go out at all for two months; my diary notes that I used one tank of petrol in seven weeks. In some ways it was a privileged time. We had space to enjoy our home without the pressures of our regular jobs and we became very grateful for the small and simple things in life. I guess you could say we slowed down. We took time to smell the roses and watch the sunsets.

What does 2021 hold for you? Overseas travel is still impossible but some Australian concerts and engagements are beginning to be rescheduled. Opera Australia have reissued my Ring Cycle contract and recently announced the complete casting so I'm very much looking forward to that keeping me busy from early August. I have spent the last few weeks with the company learning and rehearsing the role of **Judith** in Bartok's *Bluebeard's Castle* whilst the Romanian mezzo who was cast in the role was in Melbourne quarantine. There was some doubt as to whether she would get to Australia at all, so I stepped in to rehearse the music and production at the last moment. This was a great opportunity to get back in vocal shape very quickly; something of an initial shock after a year off! I am very aware that Opera Australia may be the only company in the world performing at present and I've made the most of every moment immersed in this exciting score, relishing the chance to reconnect and make music with valued friends and colleagues.

I have several performances of Lee Holby's one act operatic monologue for mezzo-soprano *Bon Appétit* coming up with pianist Sharolyn Kimmorley. This comic, culinary extravaganza is based on a classic episode of Julia Child's popular television show where she makes *Le Gâteau au Chocolat L'Éminence Brune*. It's quite a challenge baking a cake in 25 minutes whilst singing! We've been invited to be part of the Newcastle Food Festival in April which sounds like a lot of fun. I have a concert performance of *Elijah* with the Sydney Philharmonia Choir in September, will sing Respighi's *Il Tramonto* as part of the Newcastle Music Festival in August and have several recitals booked. The world is nowhere near back to normal but there are some engagements to look forward to at least.

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News from the Norns

From 4 May 2021, Wagner specialist Barry Millington, will be presenting five weekly online talks on the Ring Cycle for Martin Randall Travel's newly launched webinar series.

Founder/editor of *The Wagner Journal* and author of eight books on Wagner including *The Wagner Compendium* and *Richard Wagner: The Sorcerer of Bayreuth*, Barry Millington will delve into the creation of the tetralogy from its inception in 1848 to its triumphant première at Bayreuth in 1876, and will address the political and philosophical ideas that underpin the drama.

Barry will also be leading "Wagner in Leipzig" for Martin Randall Travel in 2022, providing an opportunity to see all thirteen of the composer's operas in his place of birth. The total cost of these five talks is GBP £65 (c. \$120) and subscribers are given access to recordings of all talks up to eight weeks after the final live broadcast of the series.

For more information and to book your place visit the website <https://martinrandall.com/tea-time-talks-wagners-ring> or call the Australian office 1300 55 95 95



Opera Australia is still promoting the Brisbane *Ring Cycle* in November, and all going well, it will be performed there. However, things still look much less certain in Europe. And it's unlikely that any Australians will be attending the performances announced below. However, there is a possibility some may be screened and available online, while the ENO project is going to last for several years.

The Aix-en-Provence Festival has announced it will mount a new production of *Tristan und Isolde* from 2-15 July 2021, with a cast including Nina Stemme and Stuart Skelton, conducted by Sir Simon Rattle. See their website www.festival-aix.com for more details.

The Bayreuth Festival is promoting the 2021 performances from 26 July-25 August 21. The programme includes a new production of *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Die Walküre*, and *Tannhäuser*, a *Parsifal* concert and two other concerts conducted by Andris Nelsons. See www.bayreuther-festspiele.de

The English National Opera has announced a new staging of Wagner's *Ring Cycle*, directed by Richard Jones, conducted by Martin Brabbins. It will be in a new English language translation, in co-operation with the Metropolitan Opera, New York. The plan is for *Die Walküre* to be staged in the British Autumn 2021 "subject to any lockdown restrictions" with *Das Rheingold* to premiere in 2022/2023, and new productions of *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* to follow in 2024 and 2025. For more details see: www.eno.org

Obituaries

Elijah Moshinsky, 8 January 1946-14 January 2021

Born in Shanghai to Russian Jewish parents, Elijah Moshinsky was five years old when the family moved to Melbourne. In 1965, while still an undergraduate he designed a set for a stage adaptation of Kafka's *The Trial*. He supported his studies at the University of Melbourne as third flute for the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. In 1969 he directed *Krapp's Last Tape*. After graduation Moshinsky won a scholarship to St. Antony's College, Oxford. While a student there he directed a production of *As You Like It*, which was seen by the General Director of Covent Garden who offered him a job as a staff producer at Covent Garden. In 1975 Elijah Moshinsky made his directing debut at the Royal Opera House with a low-budget production of *Peter Grimes*, which was very well received, and was afterwards reproduced in Paris, La Scala, Tokyo and Los Angeles! This was probably the real beginning of his long and very successful career directing operas from Mozart to world premieres, around Great Britain, Europe, the U.S.A., Asia and Australia – including a somewhat mixed experience in Adelaide! It is difficult to find a full listing of the operas he directed over the years, and he certainly didn't specialise in any one composer, but he seems to have directed Wagner's *Lohengrin* more than once, also at least one production each of *Tannhäuser*, *Tristan und Isolde* and *Mastersingers*.

But Elijah Moshinsky was not just an opera director, he became equally renowned as a theatre director, and throughout the years, his name was associated with those of many leading companies and performers. He made a number of television films, mainly of operas but also of several Shakespeare plays and other titles, as well as a couple of BBC documentaries.

In 1970 Elijah married Ruth Dyttman, they lived in London and had two sons. It is reported that he had a fall at home in early January, that while in hospital he contracted COVID-19 and died on 14 January. Vale.

Stefan Mickisch, 5 July 1962-17 February 2021

German pianist, musicologist, composer and transcriber Stefan Mickisch was born in Schwandorf, Germany, to a family of musicians and started to learn the piano from an early age, later also the violin and organ. He made his first public appearance at the age of seven, and had already composed some works. He won several national and international piano prizes from an early age. Stefan studied extensively in Nuremberg, Hanover and Vienna, and first appeared internationally as pianist and accompanist in 1993. That same year he founded the Robert Schumann Society Bavaria, which he directed until 2000.

Stefan Mickisch had started making recordings from 1984, but became better known to Wagnerians from 1998, when he began to give introductory lecture-recitals at the Bayreuth Festival. His particular type of lecture-recitals on Wagner, also R. Strauss, Beethoven and Mozart, became very popular around Europe and beyond – some members may remember his 1996 appearance in Adelaide. Stefan did his own piano transcriptions of the works discussed, he made many CDs, also DVDs, and briefly appeared playing on Wagner's piano in Stephen Fry's documentary "Wagner & Me". Stefan Mickisch's knowledge and love of Wagner's works was renowned, and he composed a *Tristanfantasie*. However, his popularity waned as he spoke more publicly of white-washing Wagner's antisemitism, and in 2020 was actually "fired" from Bayreuth after he spoke of "Corona fascism". However, Stefan continued to issue CDs and lectures and was due to move to the Sibelius Academy Helsinki when he died suddenly at the comparatively young age of 58. Cause of death was not given. He is survived by his wife Carla Hernandez. There is a nice but measured tribute to Stefan Mickisch by the President, Rainer Fineske, on the Richard-Wagner-International Verband website. Vale.

James Lawrence Levine, 23 June 1943-9 March 2021.

The American pianist/conductor James (Jimmy) Levine was born in Cincinnati, Ohio and showed a very early interest in the piano, beginning lessons before his fifth birthday. He made his debut with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra at the age of ten. Later he won a scholarship to the Juillard School in New York. In 1956 at the Marlboro Festival in Vermont he was chorus-master for an opera production, the following year he joined the Aspen Music Festival, which he attended for the next thirteen summers, and concentrated on conducting. As assistant to George Szell, he made his conducting debut with the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra in 1967 and made his debut with the Metropolitan Opera in 1971, beginning a very long association with that company. He was appointed Principal Conductor in 1972, Music Director in 1975, and Artistic Director in 1986, a position he held until 2004, reverting to Music Director when he moved on to the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Further afield, Levine was music director of the Chicago Orchestra's Ravinia Festival from 1973 until 1993, also teaching at Cleveland Institute of Music, was often a guest with the Vienna Philharmonic, also the Berlin Philharmonic, made his debut at the Salzburg Festival in 1976 and in 1982 made his Bayreuth debut with the centennial production of *Parsifal*, which he conducted over several years, followed by a production of Wagner's *Ring Cycle*. He also conducted a number of Wagner productions during his long association with the Metropolitan Opera. Some of these were broadcast, later televised and issued on DVDs.

Levine remained active as a recital pianist and recorded chamber music, and in 1996 conducted an extensive world tour with "The Three Tenors". He also worked with and encouraged young musicians, receiving many honours from cultural and civic organisations in Europe and the U.S.A. Between 1982 and 1991 his recordings earned eight Grammy Awards, and in 2010 he was elected an honorary member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

His relationship with the Met. Management was not always smooth, in 1999 Levine also became Chief Conductor of the Munich Philharmonic and in 2004 Music Director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He had begun to have health problems, eventually recognised as Parkinson's disease, which caused long absences and cancellations. In 2016 the Met. announced Levine as Music Director Emeritus, but after allegations of sexual abuse he was suspended and eventually terminated. Levine had always been reticent about his private life, but there had been many rumours. He died of natural causes in Palm Springs, survived by his wife Suzanne Thomson, and his sister Janet. A not-for-profit memorial trust to support and encourage the continuing classical music culture in American was set up in his name. Vale.

| PROGRAMME FOR 2021 | | |
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| Date to be announced? | Festival Theatre, Adelaide? | ASO "Classical Hits" c. Guy Noble. Includes Wagner's <i>Ride of the Valkyries</i> |
| SUNDAY 30 May, 11.30 am. | Living Choice Fullarton | DVD of <i>Der Rosenkavalier</i> and lunch in celebration of Richard Wagner's birthday |
| 29, 31 October, 2, 4 November; 6, 8, 10, 12 November; 14, 16, 18, 20 November | Lyric Theatre, QPAC, Brisbane | Opera Australia ...et al... present three Wagner <i>Ring Cycles</i> |
| Saturday 30 October, Tuesday 9 November, Monday 15 November | Queensland Multicultural Centre, Brisbane | Brisbane <i>Ring Symposia</i> |

The Richard Wagner Society of South Australia

ABN 17 163 964 669

Postal Address: PO Box 307, North Adelaide S.A. 5006

www.wagnersa.com.au

Phone :+ 61 8 8353 5503; email admin@wagnersa.net

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