

Sunday 22 November 2020: Warwick Fyfe, via Zoom

Speak, Memory!

Warwick Fyfe talks about his first Wotan...
amongst other things.

4 - 5.30pm, Sunday 22 November 2020
via Zoom



About Warwick Fyfe:

Warwick Fyfe is a Helpmann Award-winning singer and is considered one of Australia's finest baritones.

Recent appearances include Beckmesser (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), Alberich (*Der Ring des Nibelungen*), Sancho Panza (*Don Quichotte*), Amonasro (*Aida*), Geronio (*Il turco in Italia*) and Klingsor (*Parsifal*) for Opera Australia, Alberich (*Das Rheingold*) for the Japan Philharmonic and Tianjin Symphony Orchestras and Peter (*Hansel and Gretel*) in Singapore. 2019 appearances included Athanaël (*Thaïs*) and Amonasro for Finnish National Opera, Barone di Trombonok (*Il viaggio a Reims*) for Opera Australia and Bartolo (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) for Victorian Opera; in early 2020, Warwick sang Wotan (*Die Walküre*) in Singapore and Pizarro (*Fidelio*) in Melbourne.

Read more about Warwick from the Opera Australia website at <https://opera.org.au/artist/warwick-fyfe>



Above: Warwick Fyfe, as Wotan, at the Orchestra of the Music Makers semi-staged production of the Singapore premiere of *Die Walküre* on 5 January 2020 at the Esplanade Concert Hall.

Report from the December 2020 Quarterly

On Sunday 22 November Warwick Fyfe, “Australia’s Favourite Alberich”, Wagner Society member and Sponsorship recipient, enthralled 49

members and guests on Zoom with reflections on performing his first Wotan in Singapore plus observations on different directors' approaches to staging Wagner's music dramas. Warwick was in turn hilarious, with tales of various backstage incidents and mishaps, and then serious, with profound insights into the needs of performers and how to best convey the messages of Wagner's stories.

Warwick was full of praise for the ambition and enthusiasm of the young but generally inexperienced team that presented the semi-staged *Die Walkure* in Singapore in January 2020. Though by no means perfect - there were costume and acoustic problems - the team 'conjured something out of nothing', partly due to the very collaborative and supportive approach of the conductor Tzelair Chan.

Warwick has sung in and seen many Wagner productions in Australia and overseas and expressed criticism of the approach of many directors new to the works – often too academic or intellectual without understanding of the need for the essential sense of theatrical wonder. Directors who choose to focus on just one aspect of the work but failed to give the layered richness of meaning and depth that these cultural icons deserve. Alternately some directors had enthusiasm and ambition but lacked real directorial talent and insight.

Warwick gave some teasing insights into his future performances – Wotan in *Das Rheingold* in Melbourne in February and Alberich in the Brisbane *Ring* in November. He observed that the Melbourne Opera team is a very close-knit and experienced community determined to honour the work and he expects great things from the production, despite limited resources. The generously funded OA Brisbane *Ring* will have a huge WOW! Factor with a timeless universal myth approach.

Warwick finished his talk by sharing his thoughts on the need for theatre artists to have a broad education, with an interest in the other arts and literature. He revealed that he is writing a novel. If he writes the way he speaks (without too much filtering) it will be fabulous.

Robert Mitchell expressed appreciation of Warwick's insights and suggested that 'A singer's lot is not a happy one' (Paraphrasing G&S Policemen)

We were very pleased to welcome overseas Zoomers including Verband VP Andrea Buchanan from UK and Past President and Lifetime Member Roger Cruickshank from NZ.

