

## A letter to Members

Dear Members

Welcome to our second Newsletter for 2007. Sydney is in the depths of winter, and everyone's gaze seems to be turning to the emerging European summer and its exciting festival offerings.

### Functions

On Sunday, March 18, Robert Gay gave a talk on the influences of French Grand Opera found in Wagner's works after *Rienzi*. Robert was (up to this time) the only person I'd met who admitted to attending a performance of *Rienzi*, and I often quoted his comment that it was surprising to listen to so much music only to leave the opera house with just one tune in your head, the "Allmacht'ger Vater". I was therefore surprised that in the audience for his talk were two members of our Society who had also seen performances of *Rienzi* – Cherry Jackaman and Gaby Bremner-Moore. However, Robert's talk was not about *Rienzi*, but about the occurrence of defining elements of French Grand Opera, the dominant art form of that period, which are to be found in Wagner's mature works, even in *Parsifal*.

On Sunday, April 15, Nigel Butterley gave his second Faust talk, entitled "Faust and the Feminine", which concluded his survey on the influence of the Faust story on the music of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. I confess that I am surprised that the Faust story, principally as told by Goethe, has had such an impact on the great cultural and artistic imaginations of the nineteenth century. Many of the story's themes may seem quaint or even slightly awkward from our perspective, finding ourselves as we do in an age where such supernatural works as Weber's *Der Freischütz* has been relegated to the status of family Christmas pantomime. But Nigel's talks have left us in no doubt about the breadth and seriousness of that impact and the diversity of the themes and the composers who have been influenced by them. It is difficult to name another prose work which has provided an equivalent inspiration on music over the past 200 years, perhaps reflecting the emergence of cinema as the performance art form of the age.

On Sunday, May 20 we held our AGM. Mary Haswell has retired from the position of Honorary Secretary, and I'd like to thank her again for her work with the committee, and to welcome Alan Whelan, our new secretary. All the other suspects were approved in their existing positions.

We agreed at the AGM to appoint an auditor for the 2007 accounts, and I'd like to thank Julie Carroll, who has used her good offices to secure the services of the firm of accountants Walter Turnbull to complete this work *pro bono*, and to extend our thanks to Executive Director, Mark Driessen, and his team at Walter Turnbull for their generous support.

We also agreed to modify our process for allocating seats to the Bayreuth Festival, which will start with the Bayreuth 2008 applications. This will allow members to state their preferred seating prices when they apply for tickets, and will ensure that members have a variety of seating locations and different Society members as their companions at each performance.

At the end of 2006, we awarded German Language Scholarships to five students from the Conservatorium of Music, to enable them to study German at the Goethe-Institut, Sydney - Catherine Bouchier, Helen Sherman, Andrew Finden, Adam Player and Matthew Thomas. The *quid pro quo* is that if they're available, the scholarship winners give us a recital following the AGM. Matthew was with Opera Australia in Melbourne, and Adam was unwell, so Catherine, Helen and Andrew gave a recital, accompanied by Sharolyn Kimmorley.

Catherine Bouchier has been awarded a scholarship from Opera Foundation Australia, to participate in the American Institute of Studies Summer Intensive Opera programme in Graz (Austria) in July. Catherine's German language scholarship this year means that she will be able to participate in the programme at a higher level because of her existing language skills.

#### Newsletter Highlights

- P. ? Katharina Wagner as new Bayreuth chief?
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**FOR YOUR DIARY**

<b>2007</b>		
<i>Tannhäuser</i>	Opera Australia, Sydney NSW. Revival of Elke Neidhardt's production	8, 11, 16, 20, 23, 27, 30 October & 2 November <b>2007</b>
<i>Siegfried Idyll</i>	Sydney Symphony Orchestra with Gelmetti and Frank Peter Zimmermann in Berg Violin Concerto and Schubert Great C major symphony	5, 6, 7, 8, December <b>2007</b>

**COMING EVENTS**

<b>2007</b>		
<b>DATE</b>	<b>EVENT</b>	<b>TIME and LOCATION</b>
June	NO FUNCTION	
July 15	The President speaks: on "Wolfram, the glue that binds the story of <i>Tannhäuser</i> "	<b>2 PM Goethe Institut</b>
August	NO FUNCTION	
September 2	Professor Heath Lees: Wagner and Mallarmé: Music as Poetry	<b>2 PM Goethe Institut</b>
October 21	Bayreuth attendees return like the pilgrims from Rom, to tell us of the second year of the Ring and the new production of <i>Meistersinger</i> by Katharina Wagner	<b>2 PM Goethe Institut</b>
November	TBC	<b>2 PM Goethe Institut</b>
December	End of Year Function - please bring a plate.	<b>2 PM Goethe Institut</b>
<b>Goethe-Institut address 90 Ocean Street Woollahra (corner of Jersey Road)</b>		

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**A Letter to Members (cont.)**

**Amy Radford**

The Opera and Arts Support Group Inc is holding a fundraising concert to support Amy Radford and Stuart Haycock, graduates of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, who are continuing their opera study at the Royal Academy of Music, London. Amy was awarded German Language Scholarships by our Society through the Goethe-Institut in 2005 and 2006, and took part in the recital at our 2006 AGM.

To help raise money for both Amy and Stuart, there will be a concert at the Paddington Uniting Church, 395 Oxford Street, Paddington, on Sunday 8 July 2007, at 2.00 pm for 2.30 pm, with associate artist Sharolyn Kimmorley. Tickets are \$35, which includes drinks on arrival and drinks and sandwiches following the concert, and you can book through Opera and Arts Support Group members Robert on 9327 6069 (H) or Paul on 9386 5305 (B) 9357 2570 (H). Tickets also on sale at the door.

**Jessica Pratt**

Here's an update on Jessica Pratt, which is taken from a number of emails Jessica sent from Rome, where she is currently based, and is studying with Renata Scotto. This year she has sung the role of Anitra in Greig's *Peer Gynt*, with Ashenazy conducting at the l'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, one performance of which was broadcast live on RAI 3 for which Jess received two good reviews, and in April she sang the role of Aminta in Mozart's *Il Re Pastore*.

In June she will sing *Sofia* in Rossini's *Il Signor Bruschino* in Rome with l'Accademia Nazionale, Daniele Abbado

directing, and is currently traveling between Rome and Milan, attending courses with As.Li.Co. (Associazione Lirica e Concertistica Italiana) with whom she will sing the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Como, Brescia, Cremona and Pavia in October and November.

Things have been going well for Jess. She went to the semi finals of Operalia (the world opera competition founded in 1993 by Placido Domingo) and also to Germany with Neue Stimmen (an international singing competition which aims to discover young opera singing talent), which has led to some work both in America and in Germany.

Jess had some trouble with her back and ended up in hospital in Riga for two weeks over Christmas and New Year. She was told that she might not walk again, and that an operation may be required (including a stay of 6 months in Riga), Thankfully her dad went over from Sydney and took her out of hospital and back to Italy where Ms Scotto had organised a doctor who has looked after many singers, and now that she is singing again he goes to all her performances. Jess's dad was able to stay with her until she was independent again, and she has made a full recovery and is now very much back at work.

If you're interested in following Jessica's fortunes overseas, she keeps her Myspace page up-to-date with details of concerts and performances – just go to [www.myspace.com/jessicapratsoprano](http://www.myspace.com/jessicapratsoprano). Watch the sound level on your computer – when you reach the site you definitely will hear “Der Holle Rache” from *Die Zauberflöte*.

### **2007 Bayreuth Scholar**

I'm delighted to report that the 2007 Bayreuth Scholar is one of our members – Warwick Fyfe! Warwick has been a member for many years, and is a devoted Wagnerian who has been able to sing a number of major roles with Opera Australia, most notable the role of the *Holländer* in 2004. This year Warwick is Wolfram von Eschenbach in OA's revival of *Tannhäuser*. Warwick plans to take up his scholarship in November.

### ***Tannhäuser***

As I noted in my president's report at the AGM (published elsewhere), will be singing the role of *Tannhäuser* in Opera Australia's revival of Elke Neidhardt's 1998 production, later this year.

The Opera Australia website now lists “two exciting talents sharing the title role: Australian Glenn Winslade and, making his Australian debut, Richard Berkeley-Steele”. The cast list for each performance shows both Glenn Winslade and as *Tannhäuser*, with Glenn Winslade marked “Dates TBA”.

CBE, who conducts the performances and is Opera Australia's musical director, is also musical director of the St Endellion summer festival, which this year is performing *Tannhäuser*, its first Wagner opera, with in the title role, and . In his Director's Letter, Hickox writes “*Tannhäuser*.” Let's hope that Mr Hickox's surgical desires don't extend to his Opera Australia performances! Off-stage, Ms Neidhardt's 1998 production was enlivened by a dispute with the conductor, Philippe Auguin, and this year I was hoping that all the drama would be on-stage.

### **Paul Curran**

On Sunday 12 August, as part of this year's Proms in London, the four-year Proms Ring cycle reaches its climax with a concert performance of *Götterdämmerung*, with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Singers and Chorus under San Francisco Opera's Donald Runnicles. It features Christine Brewer as Brünnhilde, Stig Andersen as Siegfried and Sir John Tomlinson as Hagen, in a concert staging by Paul Curran, who is also a member of our Society. Those of you who are going to the third cycle at Bayreuth this year will have the opportunity to meet Paul, who obtained tickets in last year's ballot. Paul has offered to give an informal talk to members of our Society when they are in Bayreuth, on his experience of current opera production in Europe. [Please see below a note on Paul's production at the Mariinsky Opera Company's of *Tosca* – Editor]

### **Bruce Martin's Wagner CD**

In the March Newsletter, I mentioned that Bruce Martin was recording a selection of Wagner items with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra under Simone Young. Recording was scheduled to start on 10 July, but , the and , has advised by email that “sadly Bruce Martin has had a freak accident and cracked 3 ribs in his back. The recording is therefore postponed. We don't know as yet when it can be made, it depends on Simone Young's availability. It will possibly only happen in July of next year.” Elizabeth will be in touch again when they have a definite date. If necessary, you can contact Elizabeth by email at .

### **Bayreuth 2008**

Normally the 2008 Bayreuth application form would be included in our September Newsletter. This has meant in the past that members who are away in September lodge late applications, so that they're not part of the process but rely on being the beneficiaries of another's misfortune after the initial ballot. This year we're giving all members the chance to apply early to avoid disappointment.

## Newsletter

I would encourage members to take advantage of the Newsletter to air your views, review Wagner performances, books or recordings, ask questions, share tips and hints on accommodation or places to visit in Wagnerian cities, or just to take the Editor to task!

Warmest regards  
Roger Cruickshank  
13 June 2007

## NEW MEMBERS

**The following people joined the Society:** Claire Pate (959) – welcome Claire.

## DONATIONS

The Society welcomes all donations and they can be addressed to the Treasurer, Wagner Society in NSW Inc, at the Society's GPO Box address shown on the back page of this Newsletter. Such donations help us to carry out our objective "to promote the music of Richard Wagner and to encourage a wider appreciation of the significance of his achievements". Donations are tax-deductible and receipts will be issued. Donations were gratefully received from the following members and supporters: Deanne Whittleston and Anthony Gregg; Judy and Joseph Ferfoglia; Peter Cumines; Brian Freestone and Charles Brady; Terence Watson; Patricia and Roy Hodson; Naomi Kaldor; Susette and Martin Dickson; Elsie and James Moore; Rae and Russ Cottle; Barbara de Rome; Julie Carroll; Barbara McNulty; Mary and Graeme Fogelberg; Anna Ziegler; and Moya Crane.

## FAMILY PROMOTES KATHARINA WAGNER AS NEW BAYREUTH CHIEF

In an article from "dpa German Press Agency" of Wednesday, 30 May 2007, we gain a little more information about the succession on the Green Hill in Bayreuth that has intrigued all Wagnerians over the last few years. Firstly, it is sad to learn that, according to his wife, Gudrun, Wolfgang Wagner is suffering severely from arthritis in his legs that makes walking difficult.

All attention will soon be on Katherina Wagner and the 25 July premiere of the production of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* as an indication of the success of her claim to succeed her father as the Director of the Bayreuther Festspiele. Gudrun Wagner reminds us all that Wolfgang Wagner has: "a lifetime contract with the festival and only he could terminate it." So any transition might not happen immediately. But, in general, as Frau Wagner is quoted as saying: "A Wagner always runs Bayreuth. Not keeping it in the family would mean unnecessarily abandoning something that exists nowhere else in the world." In addition, Gudrun Wagner hints: "her daughter was 'a very able artist and cultural manager who knows the ropes.'" But don't forget – there's another daughter with a claim – Nike, although her claim seems to be slight and receding. You can read the full story at

[http://rawstory.com/news/dpa/Family\\_promotes\\_Katharina\\_Wagner\\_as\\_05302007.html](http://rawstory.com/news/dpa/Family_promotes_Katharina_Wagner_as_05302007.html)

## HAMBURG RING CYCLE – DE FACTO AUSTRALIAN PRODUCTION??

While Australia (Adelaide in particular) continues to weigh the costs of reviving (or mounting a new) Ring Cycle, two Australian singers who featured spectacularly in the 2004 Adelaide Ring will join forces with Australian conductor, Simone Young, in Hamburg's new Ring Cycle in Hamburg. Lisa Gasteen (Brünnhilde) and Stuart Skelton (Siegfried) will join an impressive cast including Falk Struckmann (Wotan), Christian Franz (Siegfried), Yvonne Naef (Sieglinde), Wolfgang Koch (Alberich), Peter Galliard (Mime), Katja Pieweck (Fricka) and John Tomlinson (Hagen) in a production directed by Claus Guth. Members may remember that Herr Guth impressed the editor with his production of *Der fliegende Holländer* in Bayreuth in the No. 95, March 2004 Newsletter (or online at [http://www.wagner-nsw.org.au/reviews/004\\_review02.html](http://www.wagner-nsw.org.au/reviews/004_review02.html)).

Simone Young said in the press notice that *Der Ring des Nibelungen* "ist für ein Opernhaus so etwas wie ein 'mission statement' – ein Bekenntnis zur Kraft der Kunst in unserer Welt" (The Ring is for an opera house something of a 'mission statement' – a confession (declaration) of the power of art in our world). "The Hamburg State Opera looks back on a proud tradition of Ring cycles, and it is for me, as Director and General Music Director, a double challenge, to bring this monument of music theatre literature to the stage with my Team", Young also says. This seems to be an admirable principle for any opera house aspiring to world standing to adopt.

The schedule is: *Das Rheingold*, 16 March 2008, *Die Walküre*, 19 October 2008, *Siegfried*, 18 October 2009, and *Die Götterdämmerung* premieres on 17 October 2010. with two complete cycles in October 2010. [Editor May 2007]

## WAGNER'S CROSS-DRESSING PROCLIVITIES?

Members may remember that the President, Roger Cruickshank, referred to the launch of a new "Wagner Journal" in the UK, edited by Barry Millington, and the somewhat frivolous article (on 2 March 2007) reported as "Wagner's secret

passion for frock opera” (SMH headline) and “Curtain lifts on Wagner's secret pink rhapsody” (The Age) and “Letter skirts dress code” (Sydney’s free evening MX paper). The President noted: “It seems that Mr Millington and all the sub-editors involved enjoyed the punning opportunities this story gave rise to.”

Well-known Wagner lecturer and regular contributor to our Newsletter, Peter Bassett, has addressed the articles –and the events that gave rise to and resulted from the frivolousness. He writes:

“The suggestion that a letter from Richard Wagner to a Milanese couturier is evidence of the composer's cross-dressing proclivities has no doubt sold copies of the inaugural issue of the London-based Wagner Journal but it can hardly be taken seriously. The letter was supposedly written in January 1874, but Cosima recorded at the time that her husband had just given her for Christmas 'some splendid Chaillou things to wear indoors, and he is pleased that they suit me and please me.' Chaillou-Ghezzi was the Milanese tailor referred to in the letter, and Cosima had used this firm since at least 1869.

“Cosima reveals in her diary that she would sometimes write letters (of all kinds) for her husband who would then copy and sign them. He would also make copies of letters for their records. We know that Cosima was also suffering from eye trouble around that time. In February 1874, for instance, she wrote 'bad eyes which refuse to function any longer. The doctor does not know what to do'. On another day: 'my eye prevents me from reading and writing. R takes over the reading in the evening' and so on. Her diary entries were usually done in batches after the event, and Wagner even wrote some of them himself on dictation from her or from her notebooks when she was ill.

“Late 1873/early 1874 was a difficult time for Wagner in his relations with the king. There were doubts that a royal financial guarantee would be forthcoming (it didn't come until 25 January) and he was depressed and worried about paying for work on the festival theatre then under construction. He was also building his tomb in the garden of the unfinished Wahnfried and often expressed a wish to be in it already! Whether or not the letter to Chaillou was actually written in January or merely post-dated January, Wagner was in no state of mind (I would have thought) to be contemplating a life in drag.”

However, there is an interesting context to the media coverage and the need for a response. Stewart Spencer, who was at the time of the publication of the original articles in the UK (that was then picked up by Australian newspapers), the co-editor of the newly launched “Wagner Journal”, resigned in protest at the “spin” that had been put on his serious article on the unpublished letter. Mr Spencer has given us permission to quote from his comments to Mr Bassett to put the story straight from his perspective:

“I wrote the article in the inaugural issue of The Wagner Journal as no one else was able or willing to provide a context for the previously unpublished letter from Wagner to Gaetano Ghezzi. It's not a piece that I would have chosen to have written. But in writing it, I went out of my way to say that there was no evidence that the items that Wagner ordered were for himself. And I consciously distanced myself from the speculations of writers like Joachim Köhler who have claimed otherwise.”

Joachim Köhler’s recent biography of Wagner, *The Last of the Titans* (trans Stewart Spencer, Yale University Press, 2004), devotes a number of pages throughout his work detailing what is known of Wagner’s behaviour, including examining his “cross-dressing” predilections.

What does Wagner himself say that stimulates biographers and critics, such as Köhler and Robert Gutman (with whom Köhler largely concurs), to find revealed a desire to “cross-dress” or, perhaps more precisely, to dress in garments conventionally worn by women, since the verb “cross-dress” already comes with significant baggage in Western culture.

In his autobiography, *Mein Leben*, Wagner describes his reaction to growing up in a theatrical world: his father attended the theatre and his stepfather and most of his older siblings were actors and/or singers in Dresden and Leipzig and some other cities. So, it is not surprising that the child and adolescent (who only left this milieu when he made his first serious break with his family by becoming the repetiteur and Chorus Master in Würzburg in 1833) was fascinated and perhaps bewildered by the theatrical world that spilled over into his home as part of his day-to-day reality. Wagner writes:

“What attracted me so strongly to the theater, in which I include...the dressing-rooms, was not so much the desire for entertainment and diversion... but rather a tingling delight in finding myself in an atmosphere that represented such a contrast to normal life by its purely fantastic and almost appallingly attractive quality. Thus a set...or a costume...appeared to me to emanate from another world...and contact with all this would serve as a lever to lift me out of a monotonous everyday reality into that fascinating demoniacal realm. Everything connected with the theater had for me the charm of mystery, an attraction amounting to intoxication, and while I tried with playmates to imitate performances of *Freischütz*, and devoted myself with great zeal to the production of costumes and masks through grotesque painting, it was the more delicate costumes of my sisters, on which I often observed my family working, that exerted a more subtly exciting

effect on my fantasy; touching these objects could cause my heart to beat wildly. Despite the fact that...there was little tenderness in our family, particularly as expressed in caresses, the predominantly feminine element in my surroundings must have had a strong impact on my emotional development. Perhaps it was precisely because members of my immediate family were restless that the other attributes of femininity, particularly insofar as they were connected with the imaginary world of the theater, filled me with an almost passionate delight” (translated A Gay and edited M Whittall, Da Capo Press, New York, 1992, pp. 13-14).

Köhler picks up another episode from Wagner’s life, as recorded by Wagner in *Mein Leben*:

They [his sisters] were replaced by Bohme's grown-up daughters and the latter's female friends, who lent a certain lustre to the wretched confines of his new home [At the age of 13 years, Wagner was billeted with the family while his own decamped to Prague in the wake of Rosalie, the breadwinner, who took up an acting position in a theatre in the city.] In order to help his awakening sensuality on its way, he pretended to be 'mindlessly sleepy in order to be put to bed by these girls with all the efforts that this state appeared to require.' But as he was later happy to admit, he was not in fact sleepy at all. He had noticed to his surprise that these attentions brought him 'into direct contact with the female being', and from now on he was regularly overcome by tiredness in Dr Bohme's little parlour' [p. 41].

At this point in Wagner’s life, it would be hard for anyone, including the pre-pubescent Wagner, to know how much eroticism is occurring in Wagner’s psyche, the interesting feature is that the autobiographer, recollecting these early experiences (starting at the age of 52 in 1865, but taking a number of years to complete), had no qualms about analysing his state of mind and emotion in terms that we post-Freudians would recognise as arising from a suggestive borderland between innocence and sexual awareness. It is therefore not surprising that biographers and commentators have taken up Wagner’s own hints and explored them in more detail. How far to take these hints from Wagner’s childhood, and some later material, then becomes the question.

Köhler takes the hints and evidence quite a long way into an account of Wagner’s life that attempts to demonstrate how complex was the interaction between Wagner’s sexual drive and his creativity: not an unusual exercise in these post-Freudian days of psychoanalytical biography. Even though Köhler does not dogmatically use psychoanalytic ideas (both Freudian and possibly either Kleinian or Anna Freudian childhood developmental theory and Jungian archetypes), he is inclined to use one of Freud’s favourite tricks a little too freely.

It is a fascinating exercise to read any text of Freud’s with an eye to the way he uses language – and he is a wonderful writer. Freud regularly speculates on a piece of “evidence” from his practice or literature or history, draws a tentative conclusion, then begins to slide through gentle assertions and declarations to the point where the speculation has slyly become a “fact” because it now fits satisfactorily into the argument Freud is pursuing in the essay: beautifully circular.

Köhler takes a similar line with, for example, the experiences Wagner reports as disturbing him greatly as a child: portraits coming to life, furniture becoming animate, ghosts manifesting around his bed, then elevates these distressing events that many children experience into a “trauma” that “must” drive Wagner’s development as a person and artist. For example, Köhler analyses Johann August Apel’s stories in his *Gespensterbuch* [*Ghost book* of 1810] that includes *Der Freischütz* as they may have affected the young Wagner’s imagination and his alleged root “trauma” of a sense of being untrue to his real identity. After acknowledging that “[I]t is difficult to find in Apel’s ‘naïve ‘folktale’ the potential for fear that it represented for Wagner”, Köhler then boldly asserts that ‘[t]ranslated into Wagner’s private mythology, this [the story] **must mean** that, in order to deprive the hero of both his bride and his inheritance, his enemy persuades him to be untrue to himself’ (*ibid.*, p. 35). A little later, Köhler extends this “evidentiary” chain by noting that “When Wagner spoke of his fear of ghosts in the context of *Der Freischütz*, **it must have been** [the Wolf’s Glen] scene, **above all**, that he had in mind, for his experience in the Thomä House in Leipzig, where dead objects had suddenly come to life, becomes a theatrical reality in the Wolf’s Glen scene” (*ibid.*, p. 37). The fact is that it is rather more Köhler’s myth about Wagner’s life and art that is being bolstered by the “evidence” from the *Der Freischütz* story. Given Wagner’s looseness with the truth in *Mein Leben*, one has to wonder how much the impact of this seminal German opera was exaggerated in hindsight to establish the closest possible links with the venerated Weber and himself? Weber playing the John the Baptist to the coming German musical messiah?

There is much to be gained from examining an artist’s development to see how it influences the artistic works; it is another matter to assert as Köhler does, that these childhood experiences are “traumas” that “must” have manifested themselves in rigid patterns both in the artist’s later life and the artist’s works. Not content with identifying deterministic “traumas” in a Freudian or Kleinian way, Köhler draws on Jungian archetypes as controlling agents that shape all of Wagner’s artistic output, almost as if he were taking dictation from creative daemons that override any conscious artistic intentions on Wagner’s part. One of Köhler’s driving archetypes is engendered by Wagner’s positive interactions with his favourite sister, Rosalie, who becomes, in Köhler’s mythology, the “angel” Similarly, his mother and stepfather form a demonic couple representing all that is ambiguous, ambivalent, unloving, retributive in Wagner’s life: “Just as, in the world of Wagner’s imagination, his mother Johanna and his stepfather Geyer came to embody the

demonic in all its archetypal appallingness, so Rosalie represented that aspect of divine love that brings redemption through self-sacrifice. He discovered his own identity between these two extremes, forever unable to decide which side he belonged to” (*ibid.*, p. 31). Surely one does not really need to invoke archetypes to underline how important disparate and conflicting role models can be to a child?

The difficult thing with this hermeneutic (interpretative) approach taken by analytical and philosophical practices, such as Freudian psychoanalysis, is its inherent circularity. Once the propositions are accepted (by the proposer at least), then the conclusions follow automatically and are virtually impossible to falsify (in a standard scientific way) because one has to step outside the terms of the analysis, but that is to betray the alleged value of the system, as therapy for example.

However, for the purposes of gaining insight into the unique creative processes of an artist, such an approach can be useful as a paradigm that may throw into relief unsuspected connections or thought-provoking patterns. Köhler’s approach, while tending towards the straitjacket, does make one reconsider how powerful childhood experiences can persist into adulthood and both provide grist for the creative mill and shape the very kind of mill that does the grinding. If one takes Köhler’s biography as a paradigm for considering Wagner and his works, it has much value and interest. It certainly prompted me to reconsider many aspects of Wagner’s works.

One of the most suggestive sections of Köhler’s analysis focusses on the musical aspects of Wagner’s childhood. Köhler proposes that, because Wagner was already predisposed to experiencing the world as an eerie, scary place, with ghosts and animated furniture for example, he was totally overwhelmed by *Die Freischütz* that deals with the horrors of the nighttime world, especially if one has also been primed by ghost stories and legends. But Köhler points out how it could be that Weber’s music for the Wolf Glen scene, full of eerie fifths, uncertain harmonies and strange melodies “tuned” not only Wagner’s musical ear, but also his musical psyche to a particular sound world that manifested itself unmistakably for the first time in *Der fliegende Holländer* with its abundant use of open fifths and strange, clashing harmonies, not to mention ghosts!

To return finally to the “cross-dressing”, Köhler acknowledges that Wagner’s erysipelas was a major chronic distress to Wagner and follows Gutman in both acknowledging the value of silks and satins in dealing with the discomfort of the skin condition, but also wondering at the degree to which Wagner employed this “medical” use of fabrics. Gutman puts it quite baldly: “His needs for silks, satins, furs, and perfumes had reached the fetishistic. A strange compulsion forced him to pull on ludicrous travesty. That his skin was extremely sensitive may explain his silk chokers and underwear but hardly those quilted, shirred, bowed, laced, flowered, fringed, and furred gowns he dragged through his private rooms” (*Richard Wagner The Man, His Mind and His Music*, Penguin Books, 1971, p. 554).

In some of the reactions to the proposition that Wagner may have enjoyed dressing in satin and silk undergarments, specially made for him or borrowed from his wives’ wardrobes, there is a hint of idealising puritanism, as if it would be unthinkable for someone of Wagner’s magisterial stature to behave so. (One perhaps only needs to remember the Monty Python sketch of a magistrate at the bench wearing only pink nickers under his robes.) On the other hand, some intimate that such behaviour is not surprising for a person such as Wagner with his extreme egotism, emotional immaturity, self-indulgence and need to compensate for personal and social disadvantages, even though he is also a great artist (the latter sometimes only grudgingly conceded).

Both Gutman and Köhler draw attention to the subterfuges and stratagems that Wagner employed to acquire fabrics, clothes and scents to satisfy his desires and to the excuses and rationalisations he used to explain his behaviour and tastes when allegedly caught *in flagrante delicti*. Köhler proposes the following scenario:

Needless to say, Wagner wore women's clothing only when he was alone, and whenever he was caught in flagrante by his wives, he always had an excuse. When Minna discovered him 'dressed to the nines in a splendid coat',<sup>10</sup> he dismissed it as a charade. And whenever he had clothes of a feminine cut made for him during his years in Bayreuth, he claimed that it was the bemused Cosima who had ordered them. On the one occasion when she criticized his 'passion for silk materials the result was a 'certain amount of ill feeling'.<sup>102</sup>

It was, course, only in his 'beautiful closet' that he wore the silk creations that he had designed for himself - there was invariably one such room in each of the houses he inhabited from the time of his roseate dream in Paris. When his Viennese seamstress Bertha Goldwag was asked whether she had ever seen him wearing silk suits, she emphatically denied it: 'Never. Neither I myself nor anyone else. I can tell you that for certain'. But Bertha knew at first hand the inner sanctum in which Wagner tried on these costumes, as she had furnished the entire apartment for him (*ibid.*, p. 455).

It would be hard to recall any recent biography of an artist or even political figure that has not uncovered some peccadillo or sexual behaviour that some people might classify as “fetishistic” or “aberrant” or “deviant”. It is, however, perhaps one of Freud’s greatest achievements to remind us unequivocally of our “polymorphous perversity” –

that is, capacity for any kind of sexual activity. One could argue that Wagner's willingness to "cross-dress", or to explore his feminine side, if one prefers a more contemporary concept, helped him create some of the opera world's most convincing and powerfully dramatic female characters.

The circumstantial evidence adduced by Gutman and Köhler appears to support strongly their contention about Wagner's tastes; what is less justifiable on the evidence is the implicit tone of censoriousness they adopt in discussing the evidence – Gutman more so than Köhler. For both authors, Wagner's tastes are part of a larger "problem" with the artist: his personal ethical and moral standards in some cases. Most of us would find Wagner's flights from debts, his womanising and his lying to his patron, Ludwig II, and to his wives deplorable ethical practices. I suspect few of us would put the desire to dress in certain fabrics and clothes worthy of moral or ethical condemnation. These days, one hopes, it is possible to be more honest and open about such desires without attracting the raised eyebrow or the snide aside. **The Editor would be delighted to receive any comment or discussion on this matter.** [Editor June 2007]

### **President's Report for the Society's 26<sup>th</sup> year, from 1 January to 31 December 2006, delivered to the Annual General Meeting on 20 May 2007**

Dear Members

I am pleased to present the President's Report for the 26th year of the Wagner Society in New South Wales Incorporated.

#### **Functions**

The Society's 2006 functions held here in the Goethe-Institut included:

- On 19 February, Professor Kim Walker, Dean of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, and Sharolyn Kimmorley conducted a voice coaching class with Catherine Bouchier.
- On 2 April Alan Whelan spoke on the life and works of Siegfried Wagner.
- On 21 May, we held our AGM, recital and Wagner Birthday celebration.
- On 16 July, Terence Watson chaired a thoughtful discussion on the subject of anti-Semitism in Wagner's music.
- On 17 September, those who attended the Bayreuth festival discussed the experience, including the new Ring.
- On 15 October, Alan Whelan gave an illustrated talk on *Rienzi*.
- On 26 November, Nigel Butterley gave a talk entitled "Faust, Mephistopheles – and composers".
- In December, our end-of-year party.

We made a conscious decision two years ago, when we changed our starting time for functions from 1pm to 2pm, not to show videos at meetings except for the Christmas Party in December, and instead we offer videos of interest before each meeting, usually starting at 1pm.

#### **Finances**

The Honorary Treasurer's Report will show that at the end of 2006 our financial position was sound if modest, and that we were able to provide three and a half thousand dollars in grants and donations, in addition to the \$10,000 made available to Jessica Pratt through the generous support of a private donor.

#### **Thanks**

We continue our good relations with the German Consulate, the Consul General, and with the Goethe-Institut, and we thank the Institut's Director, Klaus Krischok, and its officers and staff for their continued help and support. We also continue to provide financial assistance each year to the Bayreuth Scholar, who is selected by Opera Foundation Australia, and are very pleased to be able to support students from the Conservatorium of Music by way of German Language scholarships here at the Goethe-Institut.

There are many people in the Society I wish to thank, and foremost among them special thanks go to the members of your Committee who worked so hard on your behalf throughout 2006 - our Vice President, Julian Block, our Honorary Secretary Mary Haswell, our Honorary Treasurer Michael Moore, and our committee members Dennis Mather, Terence Watson, Gaby Bremner-Moore and Alan Whelan.

Mary Haswell won't be standing as Secretary for the rest of 2007, and I'd like to thank her for work on behalf of the Society, and especially her patience with the name tags, which are so useful to us to wear them but are such a trial for the person who has to sort and organize them.

I'd particularly like to give Terence Watson, our Newsletter editor, special thanks. I regularly receive favourable comments from members, and from Societies within Australia and overseas, and I'd like to commend Terence for his hard work on our behalf.



More thanks are due to Elle Rasink, who catered our afternoon teas for part of 2006 and is catering for this AGM, and to Renata Junkers who, with her husband Herman, has taken over the roll and now provides our afternoon teas at regular functions; to John Studdert, our web master, whose work on the web-site is also the subject of praise from other Societies; to our faithfully Ravens, Camron Dyer and Richard Mason; to Alasdair Beck, our Public Officer; and to those members who come early to functions and lend a hand with the food or the name tags.

### **Future**

2007 has a revival in Sydney of Elke Neidhardt's 1998 production of *Tannhäuser*. Although Glenn Winslade is still shown on the Opera Australia website as singing the title role, one of our members spoke to Richard Berkeley-Steele in London and was told by him that he was coming to Sydney later this year to sing that role. We will have to wait and see. Opera Australia is rumoured to be planning a further production of a Wagner opera in 2008, and the rumours I mentioned last year of the State Opera of South Australia staging a *Meistersinger* in 2008 and a restaging of the Neidhardt Ring in 2010 have not gone away, but to date I have seen no firm details.

### **Finally**

Lastly I would like to thank you, our members, especially those of you who come along and support our functions and other activities, including by coming to this AGM. Your continuing interest and encouragement as members of the Society is the reason we are here today. Thank you all.

Roger Cruickshank , 20 May 2007



## **WAGNER AND THE ART OF THE THEATRE** BY PATRICK CARNEGIE

On 8 May 2007, Patrick Carnegie's book won the Royal Philharmonic Society prize for "creative communication" (an award sponsored by the *Guardian*). According to Stephen Moss, the *Guardian*'s reviewer (on 9 May): "It's not a phrase he likes; best classical music book of the year will do."

Moss's opening gambit indicates something of the approach taken in parts of the review: "Was Wagner a demon? A hero? Both? Neither? The world at last has a definitive history of the German composer's work on stage." Moss continues: "Carnegie, 66, is worryingly sane for a Wagnerian: no obvious tics except for the occasional deep sigh; not unduly besotted with the great man (he recognises the flaws as well as the genius)...." I personally take offence at the suggestion that I am not sane: unfortunately, Moss is given to such *ad hominem* turns that detract from otherwise sensible comments he makes. I guess that is the price of selling newspapers!

Carnegie clearly has good credentials for writing about Wagner: assistant editor of the Times Literary Supplement in the 1970s, music books editor at Faber in the 1980s and dramaturg at the Royal Opera House from 1988 to 1992, as Moss points out. But again Moss cannot resist a dig: "but above all, he has survived 40 years' immersion in the dangerous waters of Wagnerism. Shame the same can't be said for all the crazies who flock to productions of the Ring. Why are Wagnerians so obsessive?" It rather undercuts Moss's claim to be a serious journalist to resort to such wild generalisations and stereotyping and to indirectly insult his interviewee.

Fortunately, Carnegie remains in level-headed contrast when he explains the obvious to Moss: "There is great psychological depth in Wagner. He takes each of us down into parts of ourselves that we perhaps don't very much like, but that we do recognise. Because Wagner goes so much into these dark places - think of all those primeval promptings in the Ring - it's very raw and direct. You can go in knowing that Wagner is grappling with things that have gone badly wrong in the world, and perhaps wrong with you and me as people as well, and work it through."

Taking this small cue from Carnegie, Moss momentarily appears to turn serious: "Those mighty musical epiphanies are important, too - transfigurative outpourings such as the Liebestod in *Tristan und Isolde*, which appear to make sense of the disorder, bind the wounds". But one cannot help wondering if the words are simply paraphrases of Carnegie who is also quoted as saying: "They [the "musical epiphanies"??] are metaphors which produce some sort of consolation, some kind of closure," says Carnegie. "It's Nietzsche's idea: that music and art help the unbearable to be bearable."

Moss notes that Carnegie's work includes a "vigorous defence of 'directors' opera'. He denies that Wagner had a prescriptive view of his work, and applauds those who attempt to mine it for fresh meanings. 'People who say that Wagner knew exactly how he wanted his works produced - so what right have you to stage the Ring on Mars or down a salt mine - are wrong,' he says. "Wagner was precise [in his stage directions] because the theatrical world into which he launched his works was a total mess, and the quality was very poor. The reason he took such trouble was defensive: it wasn't so much that he knew what he wanted, but he jolly well knew what he didn't want."

Carnegie's position will undoubtedly provoke debate with the Wagnerians who prefer a traditional approach to productions of Wagner's works.

Moss quotes Carnegie as saying: "My book is an attempt to answer the question, 'Why is it a good thing that operas can and should be done in very different ways?' Some of these ways are good, some are dreadful. I try to concentrate on those landmark productions which offered something genuinely new and interesting - a way of looking at Wagner that is new, yet which comes from within Wagner."

According to Moss's article, Carnegie's love of Wagner's work, like many other Wagnerians, began with a visit to Bayreuth (in 1967) where he was "bowled over" by Wieland Wagner's radical new Bayreuth style with its use of lighting as propounded by Adolphe Appia in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

Moss also notes that "Carnegie does not attempt to minimise Wagner's anti-semitism, but argues that his music dramas transcend the overtly anti-semitic essays in which he outlined his theories. 'In the end, the art, and especially the music, redeems some of the dross and the manure that goes into the making of it. Any attempt to write off Wagner as nothing but the expression of an absolutely monstrous view of human nature and humankind is totally mistaken.'"

Moss again attempts to demonstrate a superior knowledge of the true situation by asserting: "The argument is not entirely convincing. Wagner's anti-semitism did find its way on to the stage in the characterisation of Beckmesser in *Die Meistersinger* and the Nibelungs in the Ring. The art cannot be wholly divorced from the theorising." While the latter comment is valid in a general aesthetic sense - and Carnegie's earlier comment recognises the relation between manure and flowers - Moss's assertion that Beckmesser and the Nibelungs **are** anti-Semitic characterisations is still the subject of intense debate among honest and thoughtful Wagnerians. Moss again reveals his hand as a petit agent provocateur.

According to Moss, Carnegie's book contains a detailed account of the changing styles of Wagner production, which most Wagnerians would know is intimately entwined with the development of theatrical theory and practice for the last 150 years. For this analysis alone, Carnegie's book would seem to be essential reading for any Wagnerian. Moss, however, points out that Carnegie "identifies no landmarks over the past two decades, perhaps because directors now face a double bind, political as well as aesthetic. Wagner's works, the Ring in particular, are enmeshed in arguments over their association with Hitlerism and anti-semitism. 'Modern productions have got a bit lost,' says Carnegie. 'The overwhelming guilt about Wagner, and the question of whether it's OK to like him, has become a very big thing that people are trying to grapple with on the stage through postmodern takes on it. There is an unease before the vastness of what the Ring is and what it can mean.'" Sadly, there is much truth in Carnegie's comment, but equally sadly it is people like Moss who perpetuate stereotypes and misunderstandings about the relationship between Wagner and later history that contribute disproportionately to the "unease" of directors and audiences in responding to the "vastness of what the Ring is".

Moss attempts to balance the Wagner-Hitler equation a little by acknowledging that "Wagner can't be blamed for the Third Reich" but then undercuts the comment by adding in poor language "even if he did supply the mood music" – supply suggests that Wagner was somehow contracted "avant la lettre" by the Nazis. Moss continues: "But after Hitler, Wagner productions - in Europe, at least - could never be entirely 'guilt free'". He quotes Carnegie's response: "The politics we have to cope with today is simply the fact that Hitler existed, loved Wagner to bits, was there at Bayreuth, and there are all the photographs to prove it. Modern productions have to find ways around that." While that point may be true for the previous and current and perhaps next generations of directors who are closely connected with European history, it is not an historically immutable given. Productions of, for example, the Ring Cycle, in other parts of the world, such as the Kirov's and Adelaide's 2004 productions and, from written reports at least, the 2006 and 2007 Bangkok productions of *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*, suggest that it is possible for a director to extract him or herself with integrity and imagination from this alleged European impasse. The Editor suggests that you do not bother with the review, but read the book as it promises to be informative and stimulating. However, the full review can be read at the *Guardian's* website <http://books.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,329816247-99941,00.html>. Carnegie has also written *Faust As Musician; A Study of Thomas Mann's Novel Doctor Faustus* (published by New Directions). **The Editor would be delighted to publish your review or comments on the book.** [Editor June 2007]

#### **ANOTHER PRODUCTION BY AUSTRALIA'S PERIPATETIC PRODUCER/DIRECTOR, PAUL CURRAN**

Just to keep a tab on the Society's Director member, you may be interested to know that, in Paul's global travels, on Thursday, 31 May 2007, he was in St Petersburg producing the Mariinsky Opera Company's production of *Tosca*. Paul is going from strength to strength and we hope to see him, one day, in Australia producing a Wagner opera.

#### **THE RING CYCLE IN BUDAPEST – JUNE 2008**

In addition to the extensive list of Wagner performances compiled by our global roaming Raven, Camron Dyer, we can add this cycle in Budapest. Unfortunately, it will not be staged in the wonderful Opera House, but the **Béla Bartók** National Concert Hall in the Palace of Arts.

The Cycle will be guided by the conductor **Ádám Fischer** with the Hungarian Radio Orchestra and the cast of singers will include Christian Franz as Siegmund and Loge, László Polgár as Hunding, Linda Watson as Brünnhilde, James Johnson and Thomas Konieczny as Wotan, Judit Németh as Fricka and Michael Schuster as Sieglinde. Direction and set design is by Hartmut Schörghofer and dramaturgy is by Christian Martin Fuchs. Ticket prices range from Ft200 for students with ID, and from Ft1,200 to Ft9,800 for others.

According to the Palace of Arts website, the creative team "do not want to interpret but to recite the story of mythical German heroes. They invite the audience to a joint journey, providing them with the necessary musical experience, spectacle and atmosphere....It knocks on the gates of the shrine that guards the memorable Nibelung performances, experimenting with a new concept and new methods."

The dates: June 19 2008, *Das Rheingold*, June 20 2008, *Die Walküre*, June 21 2008, *Siegfried* and June 22 2008, *Götterdämmerung*.

Ticket can be booked online at [www.mupa.hu](http://www.mupa.hu). If any member attends, the Editor would be delighted to publish your thoughts and reactions to the Cycle.

#### **GLIMMERGLASS OPERA WAGNER: DAS LIEBESVERBOT - COOPERSTOWN, N.Y. 2008 FESTIVAL**

**On its website**, Glimmerglass Opera has "announced that it will present the first complete, fully-staged production in North America of Richard Wagner's opera *Das Liebesverbot* (Forbidden Love) as part of its 2008 Festival Season. Performances will take place in July and August at the Alice Busch Opera Theater next to Otsego Lake in Cooperstown, upstate New York. This early work by Wagner has been

fully staged on a number of occasions in Germany and Ireland, but never before in North America. In 1983, it was performed in concert at the Waterloo Festival in Stanhope, New Jersey, as part of the Wagner centenary celebrations.

*“Das Liebesverbot*, a comic opera inspired by William Shakespeare’s *Measure for Measure*, with libretto by the composer, will be performed during Glimmerglass Opera’s 2008 Festival Season in which all the season’s repertory will be linked to Shakespeare and set on a stage resembling an Elizabethan theater. Glimmerglass Opera will also present new productions of Handel’s *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*, Cole Porter’s *Kiss Me, Kate* and Bellini’s *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*. The productions will run in repertory from July 5 to August 24, 2008, in the Alice Busch Opera Theater in Cooperstown, New York. The 2008 productions are all new to the Glimmerglass Opera stage and will be presented on one set. The set, designed by the company’s Associate Artistic Director, John Conklin, will depict an Elizabethan theater. You can visit their website at [www.glimmerglass.org](http://www.glimmerglass.org) contact Glimmerglass on telephone number (607) 547-2255 or e-mail them at [info@glimmerglass.org](mailto:info@glimmerglass.org).

## GRASSROOTS WAGNER – A MODEL FOR AUSTRALIA?

In an article titled “A bold move, Wagner-style” in the 27 April 2007 St Petersburg Times (that’s St Petersburg USA – on the Gulf side of Florida), Elena Lesley reports a fully staged production in Tampa, Florida, of *Das Rheingold* with a full cast of singers and one grand piano played for all 2½ hours by Constantine Grame “a longtime devotee of Richard Wagner” who “saw his first Met production of *Das Rheingold* via a PBS simulcast when he was 8.” According to Lesley: “Now 24, Grame is an accomplished vocalist, pianist and director. And he is the driving force behind the ambitious scene on City Hall’s stage. For more than a year he has worked toward this night, handpicking singers who could master the German composer’s challenging score, who weren’t intimidated by Grame’s unorthodox and some might say misguided “community Wagner” scheme.”

In case you think that this is just a misguided high school style end of year stunt, “legendary baritone” Sherill Milnes didn’t think so and said, after he attended the dress rehearsal: “‘Given the budget limitations and pool of talent, it’s quite amazing, really,’ Milnes remarked during a break in the action. ‘It’s a noble endeavor.’” Lesley also reports Milnes as saying: “You need more swirling mist and some true Wagner buffs may take issue with *Das Rheingold* on piano. But audience members ‘can still get the meat of Wagner,’ Milnes said.”

You can read the full article at

[http://www.sptimes.com:80/2007/04/27/Northpinellas/A\\_bold\\_move\\_Wagner\\_s.shtml](http://www.sptimes.com:80/2007/04/27/Northpinellas/A_bold_move_Wagner_s.shtml).

In a similar vein, on 26 March 2007, James McQuillen wrote an article for The Oregonian entitled “A dark take on ‘The Flying Dutchman’: Portland Opera’s interpretation of the Wagner work revisits the Third Reich” in which he notes: “Opera composer Richard Wagner and opera director Christopher Alden are, in many respects, kindred spirits -- provocative, divisive and dismissive of tradition. Portland Opera’s current production, which opened Saturday night at Keller Auditorium, features Alden’s direction of Wagner’s “The Flying Dutchman,” and depending on your allegiances, it’s either a meeting of minds or an egregious incidence of iconoclasm. It also happens to be a powerful, arresting production from a company not normally associated with Wagner.” Portland (a city somewhat bigger than Tampa) borrowed the 1996 Canadian Opera production of the opera – something that smaller Australian opera companies are less able to do. Certainly, they have small likelihood of borrowing a Wagner production from Opera Australia as it has so few Wagner operas in its repertoire – borrowing from Adelaide would be more productive.

To give you a taste of the interpretation, McQuillen writes: “In Alden’s vision, however, the opera (and opera in general) is a window onto humanity’s dark recesses, which include -- not to put too fine a point on it -- the Holocaust. See, the legend on which Wagner based his story resembles that of the Wandering Jew, the similarly damned figure from medieval Christian folklore. Given that Wagner was a notorious anti-Semite and darling of Hitler, why not include a mini-Auschwitz below decks and have the Dutchman take off his cloak to reveal the striped, ragged garb of the camp’s prisoners?” McQuillen is more complimentary about the staging and set of the Canadian company’s production: “Allen Moyer’s austere set is striking: a tilted, weathered blue-gray box, it plays with oppositions of interior and exterior, none so striking as in the first-act storm, when the sail rises stage left and blows in toward the sailors.” McQuillen is also very positive about the music: “Conductor David Parry led an uncommonly unified orchestra, and the chorus was excellent both vocally and choreographically; its members pushed the performing envelope as a group, almost to the point of coming unglued from the orchestra in the third act”. It may have helped Portland stage this production that the city also hosts the Flying Dutchman Winery!

You can read the full article at

<http://www.oregonlive.com/entertainment/oregonian/index.ssf?/base/entertainment/1174866926143730.xml&coll=7>.

As an introduction to Wagner, it may be worth encouraging such a “noble endeavour” as Grame achieved in Tampa.

From the article, it would appear that a number of singers responded well to the challenge, the local community reacted with enthusiasm to the performance and Grame might well have set the stage for further Wagner performances. He is on record as intending to mount similar productions of the rest of the Ring Cycle – I just hope that he finds a group of similarly talented and committed pianists to tag-team play, especially for the 5 hours of *Götterdämmerung*!!

Is there a local pianist/producer who would be game to tackle such a project? If not, can we encourage the opera companies in Australian capitals other than Sydney to follow the example of Portland and borrow productions from one another so that we can build on the Wagner productions in Adelaide and, previously, Melbourne to build an Australian tradition of Wagner performance as other countries do as part of their serious approach to opera? [Editor June 2007]

Application Form for Tickets to the Bayreuth Festival 2008 through the Wagner Society in NSW Inc.		
<b>Holding Deposit</b>	<b>\$2,500</b> incl. \$100 handling fee*	<b>\$2,500</b> incl. \$100 handling fee*
	<b>Applicant 1</b>	<b>Applicant 2</b>
<b>Name</b>		
<b>Address</b>		
<b>Phone</b>		
		(day)
		(night)
<b>Membership No</b>		
<b>Signature/s</b>		
<b>Tick the box</b> if you wish to be allocated the <b>less expensive</b> tickets of those allocated to the Society.		
*Based on the average cost of last year's allocation of sets of tickets plus 10% to cover ticket price increases. The Society levies a \$100 charge to cover administrative and related costs.		

At the AGM on 21 May 2006, Members agreed to change the process for balloting the sets of tickets the Society receive from the Bayreuth Festival Office. Preference will now be given to Members of two or more years standing who have not, within the past five years, received tickets to Bayreuth through the Society. Otherwise, the process for applications for sets of tickets for the Festival in 2007 has not changed, and is:

1. any member of the Society may apply for 1 set of tickets in her or his own name and must forward a cheque for \$2,500 with their application form.
2. two members with a shared membership may apply for one set of tickets in each of their names (ie two sets of tickets for the two members) and must forward a cheque for \$5,000 with their application form;
3. application forms and cheques must reach the Society (at its GPO Box address) **by Sunday, 30 September 2007**;
4. in December, the Society expects to receive advice of the number of sets of tickets that have been allocated. If the Society receives all the tickets that were applied for, then a ballot will be held to allocate the seats among the successful applicants as follows:
  - a. Applicants who are members of two or more years standing who have not within the past five years received tickets through the Society will be balloted first;
  - b. other applicants of two or more years standing will be balloted second; and
  - c. the remaining applicants will be balloted last.
5. Cheques from successful applicants will be banked, and each successful applicant notified of their seat numbers (and given a refund or asked for further money as required.).
6. if the Society receives fewer tickets than were applied for, then a ballot will be held to determine which applicants

will be successful, and their seat allocation. The same process will be followed as in "4", except that cheques will be returned to unsuccessful applicants.

#### **ADDRESS**

Please note our permanent address for all correspondence

The Wagner Society in New South Wales Inc

GPO Box 4574 SYDNEY NSW 2001

Telephone: 9357 7631 (Roger Cruickshank, President)

Website: MACROBUTTON HtmlResAnchor <http://www.wagner-nsw.org.au>

Website enquiries: [webmaster@MACROBUTTON HtmlResAnchor wagner-nsw.org.au](mailto:webmaster@MACROBUTTON HtmlResAnchor wagner-nsw.org.au)

(most website addresses used in this Newsletter will be on the Wagner Society's website in the relevant article)

#### **Address for Sunday Functions**

**Goethe Institut**

**90 Ocean Street Woollahra (corner of Jersey Road)**