



WAGNER
SOCIETY
NSW

ISSUE NO 11

138

SEPTEMBER 2015

CELEBRATING THE MUSIC OF RICHARD WAGNER

WAGNER QUARTERLY

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to the third Quarterly for 2015.

This letter will be shorter than usual. I am currently in Bayreuth, the Wagner shrine, for the annual festival, and have met with a number of our members, a few of whom obtained their tickets through the Society.

We are very much hoping that, before too long, considerably more of our members will be able to obtain Bayreuth tickets this way. As a result of a meeting with Herr Horst Eggers, Chairman of the Richard-Wagner-Verband International, during my visit to Bayreuth, I am pleased to tell members that it is now confirmed that next year the Verband will receive an allocation of 2,000 Bayreuth festival tickets for distribution to member societies. The problem is that this is not as substantial as it sounds. Each Ring cycle counts as 4 tickets, so a distribution of tickets to all 7 operas would very significantly reduce the numbers. However, we need to wait to see how this process plays out next year, and whether there are any further developments.

Many of you attended one (or both) of the Sydney Symphony concert performances of Tristan and Isolde on 20th and 22nd June. It was generally agreed that these were highly successful, although many people thought that the film projections were an unnecessary distraction. One thing was certain, namely that the orchestra, under the baton of the dynamic David Robertson, played beautifully. And in my opinion, the orchestra is by far the most important component in any Wagner opera. No matter how great the production and/or the singers might be, if the orchestra is not up to par then it almost inevitably becomes a failed performance.

Many of our members attended the afternoon tea function which we hosted at the Goethe Institute on the Sunday between the two Tristan performances. The occasion provided an unusual opportunity for Wagner lovers from

PRESIDENT'S REPORT *Continued page 3*



Carolyn Watson (left) receiving from Vice-President Leona Geeves a thank you bottle of wine from Brangäne Vineyards, which kindly donates gifts for many of our presenters and musicians (see inside for special offer to Members from Brangäne). See inside also for a report on Carolyn's talk and career. Photo: Mailis Wakeham.

Patron:

Ms Simone Young AM

Honorary Life Members:

Mr Richard King

Prof Michael Ewans

Mr Horst Hoffman

Mr John Wegner

Mr Roger Cruickshank

Dr Terence Watson



RICHARD WAGNER

BEGANN 1834

IN DIESEM THEATER SEINE
DIRIGENTENLAUFBAHN
MIT DER MOZARTOPER
„DON GIOVANNI“

2013 GESTIFTET ZUM
200. GEBURTSTAG
DES KOMPONISTEN

In 1834, in this theatre, Richard Wagner began his conducting career with the Mozart opera *Don Giovanni* (donated in 2013 for the 200th Birthday of the Composer). Photo: Colleen Chesterman.

around the country, as well as New Zealand, to mingle socially. It was a resounding success. Indeed, we have since received very enthusiastic expressions of thanks from both the Victorian and the Queensland Wagner Societies (see Colleen Chesterman's report below).

It was particularly fascinating to hear David Robertson speak about the experience of conducting *Tristan*. He was extremely generous with his time, and answered a number of questions from the floor. One interesting aspect of his talk related to the positioning of the singers behind the orchestra during the performances. A number of audience members commented, after each performance, that the singers should have been at the front of the stage. I thought exactly the same after the first performance, until I heard the maestro's explanation, which is simply this. If the singers are at the front of the stage, then the orchestral players cannot properly hear them, and are entirely dependent upon the conductor as to the volume at which they play. Accordingly, there is a significant danger of the orchestra drowning out the singers. However if the singers are behind the orchestra, then the players can hear when they are singing softly, and can reduce their volume accordingly. This makes a great deal of sense, and many people - including me - changed our attitudes after hearing it.

At our next event, only three weeks later, Sir David McVicar came and answered questions which had been devised by our vice-president, Colleen Chesterman. He also answered numerous questions from the floor. It was another fascinating afternoon, which Colleen has described more fully later in this quarterly. Sir David, of course, was the director of the current Glyndebourne *Mastersingers*, which has had rave reviews. He travels the world to direct opera, but - most interestingly - he refuses to go to Germany. This is because of the overwhelming fad in current German opera to have productions which are way out simply for the sake of being way out. As a result, what is happening on stage often has little to do with the words or the music. This is certainly the case with the current Ring production in Bayreuth. Nevertheless, the orchestra and singers in Bayreuth are still superlative, which is why I am making my pilgrimage there yet again. I shall report back in the next Quarterly.

I cannot, though finish this Letter without mentioning two other important events.

Firstly, our Patron Simone Young has finished her decade as General Manager of the Hamburg State Opera and Music Director of the Hamburg Philharmonic State Orchestra. As President of the Wagner Society in NSW and on behalf of our Members, I want to wish our Patron all the best for the next stage in her career and look forward to having her address the Society during a future visit to her home town. *

Secondly, I would like to extend the Society's congratulations to Member Warwick Fyfe, who has been awarded the Stuart and Norma Leslie Churchill Fellowship in 2015 to obtain tuition in Wagnerian vocal technique from Wagner specialists of international status in Germany, the USA, and the UK. It's certainly a very significant recognition of his talent. We wish

him well with his studies and hope to hear the results in the 2016 Melbourne Ring Cycle.

*According to Andrew Taylor's report in the Sydney Morning Herald of 15-16 August 2105, Simone Young considers that "There have been some very tough times. We had to ride out the financial crisis of 2008 which threw everybody's planning into disarray.... But I am leaving the house both financially and artistically stronger than when I arrived." Taylor also reports Ms Young reeling off "an impressive-sounding set of statistics....500 performances... in the opera house, about 50 new productions, more than 30 different operas performed each year. She has ruled a very large institution, with an orchestra of 128 musicians, a 70 voice chorus, an ensemble of 20 full-time singers plus a revolving door of guest performers. We are...a production house, which means we build all our own sets, we make all our own costumes. We don't outsource any of these things....We're dealing with a workforce of about 700 people." It is also important to remember that our Patron's practical, everyday achievements have been recognised with an impressive range of awards: "Simone Young was awarded an Honorary Doctorate at the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne, the "Chevalier des Arts et Lettres" in France as well as the Goethe Medaille in Weimar and the Brahms Prize in Schleswig Holstein. The magazine "Opernwelt" named her "Conductor of the Year" in October 2006 when she also became Professor at the University for Music and Theatre in Hamburg." (Source: www.hamburgische-staatsoper.de/_biografien/bio_neu.php?id=1265&english=1). Taylor also reports Ms Young as saying of her future: "I'm drastically reducing the amount of opera I do and doing more concerts....I'm also travelling more....So the change of balance between concerts and opera really makes a difference." EDITOR

QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHTS:

DAVID LARKIN'S TWO PART SEMINAR ON <i>TRISTAN UND ISOLDE</i> - Leona Geeves	P.6
DAVID LARKIN REPORTING ON BAYREUTH - The Editor	P.9
THE OPERA PLATFORM WEBSITE FREE OPERA VIDEO	P.10
JAMES ROSER - A TRIUMPH AS BECKMESSER IN ERL	P.11
TYROLER OPERA IN CHINA WITH JAMES ROSER AS BECKMESSER & GUNTHER	P.14

FOR YOUR DIARY

2015		
25, 27 & 29 November	Sydney Symphony with Edo de Waart: Prelude to Act 1 <i>Lohengrin</i> .	Sydney Opera House @ 8pm
2016		
Tuesday, 24 May	Rick's Playlist: "Father" of the Sydney Symphony, Percussionist Rick Miller, will include a piece by Wagner that has "gathered special meaning for him" in this concert.	Angel Place @ 6:30pm
Monday, 21 November to Friday, 16 December	The Melbourne/Armfield Ring Cycle with new singers and singers continuing from 2013: Greer Grimsley - Wotan; Lise Lindstrom - Brünnhilde; Stefan Vinke - Siegfried and Warwick Fyfe - Alberich. Conductor - Pietari Inkinen; Director - Neil Armfield.	Melbourne Arts Centre - State Theatre
Thursday, 1 December	SIMONE YOUNG CONDUCTS WAGNER Parsifal: Excerpts from Act II with Stuart Skelton tenor and Michelle de Young mezzo-soprano and BRUCKNER Symphony No.9	Melbourne Arts Centre - Hamer Hall @ 8pm

COMING EVENTS 2015 - STARTING TIMES MAY VARY

PLEASE CHECK THE SCHEDULE FOR DETAILS.

DATE	Some events may be subject to change and further detail in the next newsletter	TIME & LOCATION
13 September	Andrew Ford , composer, writer and broadcaster: Composers today - Wagner's legacy (Details below) 12:30. DVD - <i>Lohengrin</i> Act 2 Kaufmann, Harteros, Bayerische Staatsoper/ Nagano	Goethe Institut 2PM
11 October	Neil Armfield , theatre, film and opera director: The Melbourne Ring: Looking back. DVD - <i>Lohengrin</i> Act 3 Kaufmann, Harteros, Bayerische Staatsoper/ Nagano	Goethe Institut 2PM
22 November	Xmas concert and party: Soprano Ayse Gökür Shanal in recital accompanied by Patrick Keith: Women; Life and Loves. Please bring a plate! NO DVD PRESENTATION	Paddington Uniting Church, Oxford Street 2PM

Advice about changes to the Program will be emailed to people who have given their email addresses to the Society's Webmaster; the latest updates will also be available on the Society's webpage: www.wagner.org.au.
Admission to each event will be \$20 a Member, and \$25 per non-Member, unless otherwise indicated.

Goethe-Institut address 90 Ocean Street Woollahra (corner of Jersey Road)

COMMITTEE 2014 - 2015

President	Jane Mathews	9360 9822
Vice President	Leona Geeves	9957 4189
Vice President	Colleen Chesterman	9360 4962
Treasurer	Dennis Mather	0413 156 700 or 9560 1860
Secretary	Mike Day	0413 807 533
Membership Secretary	Jenny Edwards	9810 6033
Members	Tony Jones	0412 572 624
	Nick Dorsch	0419 751 694
	Barbara deRome	0411 018 830
	Margaret Whealy	0414 787 199
OTHER FUNCTIONS		
Public Officer	Alasdair Beck	9358 3922
Consultant	Roger Cruickshank	0414 553 282
Newsletter Editor	Terence Watson	8097 9797
Webmaster	John Studdert	wagner_nsw@optusnet.com.au

ANDREW FORD: AFTER WAGNER - SUNDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 2015

Wagner's legacy, musical and otherwise, has long been an unavoidable issue for the composers who followed him. Right from the start, there were those who embraced his example (Bruckner, Schoenberg, Debussy) and those who rejected it (Stravinsky, Satie . . . and Debussy again!). Even today, more than 130 years after Wagner's death, many composers still feel strongly drawn to Wagner and his music or strongly repelled by them.

Andrew Ford is a composer, writer and broadcaster, and has won awards in all three capacities, including the 2004 Paul Lowin Prize for his song cycle *Learning to Howl*, a 2010 Green Room Award for his opera *Rembrandt's Wife* and the 2012 Albert H Maggs Prize for his large ensemble piece, *Rauha*. His music has been played throughout Australia and in more than 40 countries around the world. He was composer-in-residence with the Australian Chamber Orchestra (1992–94), Peggy Glanville-Hicks Fellow (1998–2000), He was an Australia Council Music Board Fellow (2005–06) and resident composer at the Australian National Academy of Music in 2009.

In April 2014, he was Poynter Fellow and Visiting Composer at Yale University. A former academic, Ford has written



widely on all manner of music and published eight books, most recently *Earth Dances: music in search of the primitive* (2015). He has written, presented and co-produced five radio series, including *Illegal Harmonies* and *Dots on the Landscape*, and since 1995 he has presented *The Music Show* each weekend on ABC Radio National.

MAJOR SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS FROM THE WAGNER SOCIETY IN NSW

The Wagner Society committee has decided on its 2 major grants for emerging singers for 2015. We have allocated \$4,500 to sponsor a NSW singer to attend the Lisa Gasteen National Opera School in Brisbane in December. From those who auditioned successfully for the School we have selected Lucy Bailes, soprano. It is particularly appropriate since, in 2014, Lucy received the City of Sydney Eisteddfod German language song prize, which is sponsored by the Wagner Society in NSW.

We have also agreed to sponsor the \$5000 second prize in the 2015 Elizabeth Connell Prize for the second year. The five aspiring dramatic soprano s selected from international auditions include finalists from Italy, Latvia, Netherlands and two from the USA. The finals will be held in Sydney in conjunction with the Bel Canto Award finals on Saturday 19 September at 4pm. Members interested in attending should contact The Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonyngne Foundation, PO Box 880, Leichardt, NSW 2040, Ph: 02 9817 4919; Email: enquiries@jsrbfoundation.com

The Committee would like to thank all Society Members who donated to assist us in supporting emerging singers in 2015.

DONATIONS RECEIVED SINCE JUNE 2015

Marco Belgiorno-Zegna; Paul Bodin & Ana Singer; Bill Brooks and Alasdair Beck; Colleen and Michael Chesterman; Christine Deer; Raymond & Beverly Hollings; Ian Hutchinson; Julie King ; Richard King; Charles Manning; Jane Mathews; William McLeod Johnstone (Bill) and Eva Johnstone; Pam and Ian McGaw; Suzan and Gary Penny; Adrian Read; Lorraine Royds; Ray Wilson OAM

NEW AND RENEWED MEMBERS SINCE JUNE 2015

(1157) Nicole Forrest Green; (1158) Carole Adams; (1159) Matthew Byrne; (1160) Jonathan Rohan Clarke; (1161) Trevor Bailey; (1162) Joan Beatrice Humphreys; (1163) Frank & Judith Robertson; (1164) Mary Ingham; (1165) Peter Henson; (1166) Louise Havekes; (1167) George Polonski; (1168) Gail Huon

DAVID LARKIN'S TWO PART SEMINAR ON *TRISTAN UND ISOLDE*

Report by Leona Geeves

PART 1 - WHAT'S THAT CHORD? *TRISTAN* AND THE HARMONIES OF DESIRE

In an engrossing two part seminar, on Sunday 14th June, Dr David Larkin discussed aspects of *Tristan*, written in the late 1850s, and first performed in 1865. Wagner's music drama was innovative and changed the musical landscape forever. The novelty of the harmonies in *Tristan* was recognised immediately, although not always approvingly.

The musical vocabulary that Wagner inherited is called the tonal system, based on two types of scales, called major and minor, and the idea that the note on which the scale starts and finishes (the tonic), is more important than the others in the scale.

David proceeded to show that the primacy of the tonic is what conveys a sense of key; he then explored the relationship between the tonic and the dominant (the next most important note); the various types of cadence (the stock patterns of chords which are used to indicate closure of varying degrees of strength); and the ways a composer can create harmonic tension and relaxation.

Most of us familiar with the Prelude can grasp the Tristan chords and the unresolved dominant sevenths to which these chords resolve in the famous opening bars.

In the climax of the Prelude the Tristan chord recurs quite a few times, until the shattering high point, when it collapses, and resolves into the familiar E7 chord first encountered at the end of the first phrase.

The ultimate resolution of the Tristan chord is reserved for the very end of the opera, after Isolde sings her final song, and sinks 'transfigured' onto the body of Tristan. The music here is in B major, and appears to be winding down after the cathartic events we've experienced. Suddenly, the mysterious opening phrase oboe sounds recur with the four-note slithering rising figure again, and beneath it the enigmatic Tristan chord.

Instead of resolving the Tristan chord to the dominant 7th, Wagner this time resolves it to an E minor chord which then resolves onto B major, a cadence sounding like 'Amen'.

It's unexpected, but satisfying: Wagner has finally 'solved' the issue of the Tristan chord, and given us emotional relief.

PART 2 - WAGNER THE SCHOPENHAUERIAN: NIGHT, DEATH AND THE PLACE OF MUSIC

In December 1854, when Wagner in exile in Switzerland writing his *Nibelungen* tetralogy, he excitedly wrote to Liszt

"I have now become exclusively preoccupied with a man ... in literary form – *Arthur Schopenhauer*, the greatest philosopher since Kant ... His principal idea, the final denial of the will to live, is of terrible seriousness, but is uniquely redeeming. It is the sincere and heartfelt yearning for death: total unconsciousness ... the only ultimate redemption!"

As an idealist, Schopenhauer believed that the world we perceive could not constitute true reality: all we have access to is the world of phenomena, not the things-in-themselves. This other world would lie outside time, space and reason, but still be part of reality. He called this other level of reality the 'Will'.

His major work, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, alludes to two different levels of reality, *Vorstellung* translates as 'Idea' or preferably 'Representation'. Schopenhauer saw strong parallels to human will here.

Schopenhauer said the only ways of bridging the gap between both the realms are the sexual act, the experience of art, or mystic contemplation. The first two of these only offer temporary stilling of the will. Nonetheless, Music was given a special importance within Schopenhauer's system: 'the effect of music is stronger, quicker, more necessary, and infallible' than other arts, he wrote. He used the fact that music was not a copy of anything in the world (in the way that a painting might be said to be a 'copy' of a landscape, for instance) to suggest that it was a copy of the Will itself.

Wagner was captivated by Schopenhauer's idea of renunciation of the will as the only path to redemption, but certain of the philosopher's tenets clashed considerably with Wagner's

The two most potent metaphors in *Tristan* relating directly to Schopenhauer's ideas are **night** and **death**.

NIGHT

For the two protagonists, day is coded bad, while night is good, a reversal of traditional associations. It is only under cover of night that they can have their trysts. The lovers praise the darkness by singing 'O sink hernieder, Nacht der Liebe' (O sink beneath us, night of love), part of the Act 2 duet.

DEATH

Night is not just the time for love; it is just as much linked to the idea of death and oblivion. Tristan teaches Isolde to look forward to death when he sings 'So stürben wir, um ungetrennt' (then let us die, unseparated). These three master ideas, **love**, **night** and **death** enter into overlapping alliances throughout the opera.

And finally under 'death', the end of the opera - **Liebestod** – **love death**. Wagner called it the **Transfiguration** (**Verklärung**). It was Liszt who called it the Liebestod when arranging it for the piano. Here Isolde returns to imagery of light to describe a glorified Tristan - 'waves of tender radiance'.

Tristan and Isolde achieve communion beyond death. But then, this is art, not philosophy. Moreover, Wagner does seem to have accepted in practice the Schopenhauerian belief that music is the supreme art: in no other of his works does action play a smaller role. The real drama here is conveyed through music: more emotionally suggestive and potent than any ever written.

EMAIL ADDRESSES FOR EASY CONTACT AND ADVICE ON FUNCTIONS AND DEALS!

Regular emails are sent to those members of the Society whose email addresses we have on file. If you have not been receiving these emails, please ensure we have your current email address by filling in the form on the Society's contact web page: www.wagner.org.au/contact-us.

SIR DAVID McVICAR TALKS TO WAGNER SOCIETY

by Colleen Chesterman

Sir David McVicar, the highly praised Scottish opera director, is directing Mozart's three da Ponte operas for Opera Australia, between 2014 and 2016. The Events Committee approached him to speak on directing opera and his experience with Wagner. His agent replied that he could come in July 2015, when rehearsing *The Marriage of Figaro* and asked that we send a list of questions. As it happened, we were given only two weeks' notice, but had excellent attendance, with 65 members and 14 non-members.

Many of those present had seen his 2014 production of *Don Giovanni* and a 2015 restaging of his brilliant Covent Garden *Faust*. Some had seen live productions of *Figaro* at Covent Garden and of *Julius Caesar* and the *Mastersingers* at Glyndebourne. Members had seen last year in 2014 the DVD of his *Mastersingers* prior to meetings of the Society. Many of his productions from Covent Garden and the Metropolitan opera companies have been shown in Live in HD at local cinemas.

McVicar's productions emphasise details which enhance the subject matter—eg the corridors of the palace in the *Marriage of Figaro* with servants eavesdropping; the crowded streets and bars of revolutionary Paris in *André Chénier*, both Covent Garden productions. I asked how important historical accuracy is to him. He explained that he does not slavishly adhere to a period, although with a plot like *André Chénier* the historical details are important. But he often moves the action to a period which may enhance the plot. For example, his Covent Garden *Figaro* is situated in the 19th century to underline the class differences; in Sydney the action will be moved to when Beaumarchais set his play, in his grandfather's time when exercise of the *droit de seigneur* was prevalent. McVicar believes in being as true to the spirit as possible and having trained first in an art college, he values accuracy of sets and costumes. He is known to be opposed to imposition of rigid modernisation.

He has strongly criticised the German emphasis on *Das Konzept* and the way German directors impose their own views on productions. He said that directors there can take days to outline to their casts what the production is about—'we'll set this in a toilet factory'. He calls German opera productions 'dead theatre'. During a *Tristan and Isolde*, which he directed in Tokyo then Vienna, a young German director asked him why he used a boat in the first act; 'this is ironic isn't it?' He answered 'No—it was the only way you could get from Ireland to Cornwall!' He accepts that he will never be asked to direct in Germany! He later said 'I realise my *Konzept* is fidelity to the text.'

He has enjoyed directing Wagner. His Tokyo *Tristan* was in 2010 and he enjoyed working with Stephen Gould and Iréne Theorin. It then moved to Vienna, with a different cast and conductor (Lorin Maazel) who without consultation simply cut parts of the production). He described other difficulties with conductors—those who don't rehearse with the company, others who are brilliant but inflexible (Sir Charles Mackerras).

He has been praised as a master of character development, working closely with singers to inhabit their roles. I had seen *Mastersingers* at Glyndebourne and was impressed by how each of the *Mastersingers* was a distinctive individual; they formed factions and argued with each other, thus avoiding the *longueurs* which often spoil the first Act. He explained that he had cast the singers, all of whom he had worked with, because they had such different styles and would play off each other. He had moved the setting from the 16th to the early 19th century because he wanted to deal with Wagner's Germany, when questions of national identity had come to the fore prior to unification. Johannes Martin Kränzle, playing Beckmesser, was dressed and made up to resemble Meyerbeer, so referencing Wagner's uneasy relationship with him. And McVicar ensured that Beckmesser remained on stage until the end, so that Sachs had to face the fact that he had destroyed the man.

We discussed his production of *The Ring of the Nibelung* at Opera National du Rhin, shown as individual operas between 2007 and 2011. He admires Patrice Chéreau's centenary (1976) Bayreuth production as the best you could imagine, and had tried to focus his on mythic themes from many cultures, using masks and costumes. It received excellent reviews in overseas journals, posts and blogs and *Götterdämmerung* was awarded *le Grand Prix de la Musique du Syndicat de la Critique*. Although it was supposed to be staged as a whole Ring in 2013, it was not programmed. He expressed his frustration and anger that the appointment of an Intendant hostile to Wagner had meant that the full Ring had never proceeded as intended and that cast and crew were never properly informed.

When asked what other Wagner operas he would like to tackle, he unhesitatingly said *Parsifal*. Who would he cast? Jonas Kaufmann as Parsifal—wonderful singer, intelligent and sensitive. He is not a fan of Rene Pape as Gurnemanz - he'd prefer Hans Hotter. And Gwyneth Jones as Kundry. When asked if he would propose it to Opera Australia, he said he could just imagine *Parsifal* on the Harbour!

Is anybody interested in starting a crowd funding initiative on this?

After the event, a first-time visitor to the Society wrote: 'Terrific afternoon with the Wagner Society at the Goethe Institute, listening to opera director David McVicar take questions. An intelligent, amusing, opinionated and very talented man, McVicar spoke for nearly an hour and a half on anything people threw at him. Fascinating on many areas—such as the implications for the Met of deciding to put their whole repertoire out on HD (plummeting sales and increased prices). Really interesting and a good way to spend a very cold afternoon.'

A very welcome afternoon tea was provided by Glen Barnwell, Gabi Bremner-Moore, Colleen Chesterman and Barbara de Rome—our thanks to them.

TRISTAN AND ISOLDE RECEPTION

by Colleen Chesterman

With the SSO's performance of Tristan and Isolde in June drawing Wagner lovers from different areas, the committee decided to invite members from interstate Wagner Societies to a social afternoon at the Goethe Institute. We arranged it on Sunday June 21, between the two performances. With over 30 NSW members and 50 visitors from other Societies, in the fourth row it was much larger than we had anticipated, but very worthwhile, as people who had met each other in Bayreuth, Hamburg or on music tours, remade contact. It was a pleasant sunny afternoon and there was universal praise for the Goethe Society venue, as people moved outside to the balcony with its leafy views.

President Jane Mathews had been at an SSO lunch to celebrate the performances and brought Chief Conductor David Robertson to the event. She called on visitors to indicate where they came from - Canberra, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and New Zealand. Member Hugh Hallard from Renaissance Tours brought a group of 30, most from New Zealand. The next day they were able to meet our public officer, Alasdair Beck, at the Opera Centre where he gave a guided tour.

Invited to say a few words, David Robertson gave a very thoughtful address, indicating his commitment to staging opera performances in the Concert Hall. He responded to the praise of the orchestra who had played with such commitment and passion. He generously answered questions

from the audience. He indicated that for casting he relied on a trusted agent in New York. He believes the use of the visual interpretations by S. Katy Tucker provided powerful atmosphere for the performance.

We received very positive feedback on the event and it was a great opportunity to strengthen our relationship with other states and with the SSO.

Shirley Breese, President of the Victorian Wagner Society wrote afterwards: 'Please pass on to all the team and the committee my congratulations and thanks for the WS of NSW hospitality and initiative in organising the Tristan and Isolde reception. It was an excellent afternoon with a great venue, refreshments and speaker which all combined to foster what we enjoy as members of a big "Wagnerian family". Thank you for all the planning and work.'

Graham Bruce President of the Queensland Wagner Society also wrote with praise for the event.

Recent members Yvonne and Malcolm Pearse tirelessly supervised catering arrangements. Hugh Hallard provided generous supplies of delicious food and wine. Contributions of cakes, dips, cheese and sandwiches came from Barbara Brady, Colleen Chesterman, Rhonda Dalton, Jenny Edwards, Charles Manning, and Yvonne Pearse. Michael Chesterman, Tony Jones, Terence Watson and Margaret Whealy helped with clearing up.

WAGNER SOCIETY MEMBERS - SPECIAL OFFERS AND 10% DISCOUNTS - ASK BEFORE YOU PURCHASE AT:

The Wagner Society Management Committee has negotiated a 10% discount for Wagner Society members: just mention that you are a member!

FISH FINE MUSIC

Fish Fine Music was born in 1982 as two small stores known as The Record Collector. After almost a decade as Sydney's largest classical music retailer, the company expanded to include popular music stores and in 1991 we re-branded ourselves as Fish Fine Music.

Fish Fine Music exists purely because our team has a passion for music. Our policy is to carry the largest classical range of CDs and DVDs in Australia and we remain committed in the long term to the unsurpassed audio quality of the CD format.

We welcome you to both our online store and our two Sydney City locations, and endeavour to bring you the fine music you want with the finest of service.

STORE LOCATIONS:

Level 2, Queen Victoria Building - 9264 6458

The Italian Forum, 23 Norton St,
Leichardt NSW 2040 - 8014 7762

www.fishfinemusic.com.au

DA CAPO MUSIC SECONDHAND AND ANTIQUARIAN MUSIC BOOKSTORE

Upstairs at 51 Glebe Point Road, Glebe, NSW, 2037
Above SAPPHO BOOKS

Website: <http://www.dacapo.com.au>

Please phone Da Capo if you have any queries:
+61 2 9660 1825

Or email Da Capo at: music@dacapo.com.au
or **Meredith Baillie** - on shop@sapphobooks.com.au

The cafe attached to **Sappho** serves great coffee and wine and snacks.

BRANGAYNE OF ORANGE VINEYARD

Brangayne of Orange has kindly agreed to offer Members a 10% discount if they purchase any of their wines. Please call and order by phone (02 6365 3229) and mention your membership of the Wagner Society.

WAGNER MOMENTS IN GERMANY by Colleen and Michael Chesterman

This year we spent three weeks in Germany attending the two Handel Festivals in Göttingen and Halle. But we found opportunities for other musical experiences in culture-rich Germany. We noticed in Camron Dyer's *Ravens Reporting* that Oper Leipzig was celebrating Wagner's birthday week with performances of operas they had in the repertoire. One of these was *Parsifal*. We took trains for four hours from Göttingen. At the Opera House, we found a number of Australians who had been at the Verband meeting in Dessau, including Jane Mathews, Shirley Breese from Victoria and John Mayer President of the WA Society.

This production of the opera had originated in 2006, then had been performed for the Wagner celebrations in 2013, but in 2015 it was receiving only two performances, the other on 3 April. Ulf Schirmer conducted the great Gewandhaus orchestra. The direction by Roland Aeschlimann was very powerful. The sets and lighting were simple but evocative, with soft shades of blue on a scrim at the front of the stage. Scenery was projected behind this—in Act 1 large blocks representing trees, columns and the towering walls of Montsalvat. A dramatic triangle or vortex shape symbolized the Grail. In Act 2 this was shot with rainbow hues, bisected by a jagged red spear slashing across the triangle. In Act 3 the stage had a bare wintry tree and snow covered ground, which was in fact a sheet covering the concealed knights.

We had heard none of the cast before, but they showed German singers' vocal expertise in this repertoire.

Gurnemann was a strong bass, Runi Brattaburg, Amfortas, Mathias Hausmann, was also powerful. Jürgen Kurth's harsh voice suited his presentation of Klingsor. Kundry, Karin Goring, was a compelling animal-like figure in Act 1 and a seductive temptress in a scarlet dress in Act 2. Behind her the flower maidens dressed in glowing satin and blond wigs moved languorously around Parsifal. Only the Parsifal of Daniel Kirch was disappointing; although successful as the young simpleton, he did not grow into power in the subsequent Acts. As a whole we were impressed by the quality of the production; it was a reminder one doesn't need a festival experience or the grand houses. The seats in the fourth row were easy to get and reasonably priced. The house was not full. Indeed 50 free seats had been provided to the Leipzig Goth Festival, which at Pentecost attracts 20,000 visitors, wearing either stylish black formal wear and crinolines or tattoos, safety pinned clothes and spiky hair. They were the most enthusiastic in their applause at the end!

Our only other Wagner moment occurred at an opera performance at the Goethe Theatre, Bad Lauchstadt, about 22kms from Halle. Goethe had designed and part-funded the theatre for his actors' company in 1802 in this beautiful leafy spa town. A plaque on the wall indicated that in 1834, aged 21, Richard Wagner had begun his career as a conductor, with Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and met singer Minna Planer, whose portrait was in a corridor. The plaque was put up in 2013 (see inside front page for the photograph-Editor).

DAVID LARKIN REPORTING ON BAYREUTH (AND MANY OTHER PERFORMANCES) FOR BACHTRACK by The Editor

David will be familiar to Members who are regular attendees of Sunday functions, since he has given us a number of talks over the last few years. His most recent review (as at time of publication) from Bayreuth is entitled: "But what does it all mean? Castorf's visually stylish *Götterdämmerung* brings no resolution." David begins his generally favourable review thus:

"For over four minutes at the end of the performance, the creative team behind the current Bayreuth Ring simply stood in the footlights and let the mixture of applause and very vocal opposition break over them. Taken as a whole, the production probably deserved both bouquets and brickbats: it was by turns infuriatingly indulgent, interestingly provocative, visually beautiful, puzzling and rewarding. The director Frank Castorf's take on *Götterdämmerung* was considerably less anarchic than his *Siegfried*, although the reworking of the ending clearly raised some hackles (and heckles)."

On 26 July 2015, David posted his review of the new production for this year at Bayreuth: "Diffuse new production of *Tristan und Isolde* opens 2015 Bayreuth Festival" of which he said in opening his review:

"They say you never forget your first time. In an ideal world, Katharina Wagner's new production of *Tristan und Isolde* was perhaps not what this reviewer would have chosen for his initial Bayreuth experience, but there were compensations aplenty to be found in some of the singing, and especially in the superlative orchestral playing under Christian Thielemann. Not that the staging was disastrous: there were lots of interesting, at times inspired, ideas but as a whole the underlying conception was diffuse to the point of incoherence.

You can read David's Bayreuth reports at: <https://bachtrack.com/22/270/list-published/944>. →

Another blogger, A C Douglas on Sounds & Fury (www.soundsandfury.com) has a very critical view of Katharina Wagner's interpretation of *Tristan und Isolde*, although he agrees with David about the singing and acting:

“We previously called that staging sophomoric and sophomoric is what it proved to be to which characterization we would now add only how appallingly disconnected it is, emotionally and intellectually, from the transcendent work created by Katharina's great-grandfather; from the sophomoric conceit of Act I's blatant if only tenuously apposite allusion to M.C. Escher's impossible staircases leading nowhere, to the sophomoric and bizarre sci-fi futuristic prison of Act II (yes, this is a Eurotrash staging—what else?—and it has a prison in Act II), and the sophomoric imagined symbolic rightness of the barrenness of Act III, not to again speak of the imbecile close of the music-drama in this staging wherein Isolde is ripped away

from Tristan's corpse and dragged off very much alive by this staging's tyrannical König Marke. We do, however, have to give Katharina credit for cleverly and neatly doing away with the magic love potion thing which magic, after a century-and-a-half since *Tristan's* first presentation in the theater and for almost as long the subject of innumerable articles and books, even those who ought to know better are still wont to lay blame on for the lovers' out-of-control passion for each other.

“While the staging held no surprises for us, what was a surprise — and a welcome and most pleasant one at that — were the performances themselves.”

Douglas notes that an HD video of the production is on Youtube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6Qv5pJkfgQ, at least at the time of publication of the *Quarterly*.

THE OPERA PLATFORM

The Opera Platform is the online destination for the promotion and enjoyment of opera. It is designed to appeal equally to those who already love opera and to those who may be tempted to try it for the first time.

The Opera Platform offers a range of content from the most popular titles to the most innovative:

- an average of one showcase complete opera per month from one of 15 partner theatres
- each showcase opera subtitled in 6 languages and available to enjoy for **free** for a period of 6 months on demand
- tantalising highlights from productions throughout Europe
- curated documentary material setting operas and opera houses within a wider cultural context
- a rich archive bringing history to life for today's audiences

The Opera Platform is a partnership between Opera Europa, representing 155 opera companies and festivals; the cultural broadcasting channel ARTE; and 15 theatres from across Europe. It is supported by the EC's Creative Europe programme. It welcomes contributions from all those committed to sharing opera with a wider public.

LIST OF PARTNERS

Opera Europa (lead partner), ARTE, Wiener Staatsoper, La Monnaie/De Munt Brussels, Finnish National Opera, Helsinki, Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Opéra national de Lyon, Komische Oper Berlin, Staatstheater Stuttgart, Teatro Regio di Torino, Latvian National Opera Riga, Dutch National Opera and Ballet

Amsterdam, Den Norske Opera og Ballett Oslo, Teatr Wielki/Opera Narodowa Warsaw, Teatro Real Madrid, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Welsh National Opera

According to its publicity), (updated by Editor) on Friday 8 May 2015, the online community discovered a new platform entirely dedicated to opera. It aims to attract those who already love opera and those curious to try it for the first time. The Opera Platform... offers **free** content, rich in information: full opera performances and extracts; synopses and background material; artist interviews and behind-the-scenes documentaries. The opera houses of Europe invite you to discover their archives and their current productions.

The European opera season of the platform will add at least one new opera per month, subtitled in six languages - English, French, German, Italian, Polish and Spanish - and available on demand for six months.

The Opera Platform was launched with a live transmission from Madrid's Teatro Real of *La traviata*. In May 2015, extra operas included *Król Roger* from Royal Opera House Covent Garden, *Kullervo* from Finnish National Opera Helsinki and *Valentina* from Latvian National Opera Riga.

As at time of publication, the site has only one Wagner opera available to view *Götterdämmerung* from Wiener Staatsoper. Coming soon are Puccini's *La bohème* (September 2015) and Thomas Adès' *Powder Her Face* (October 2015). The website address is: www.theoperaplatform.eu/en.

LESSONS FROM THE RING - PART ONE: MIME'S SWORD SHOP - A CASE STUDY IN SMALL BUSINESS by Peter Bassett

You remember Mime? He's the brother of Alberich, the Nibelung who stole the gold, renounced love and made the all-powerful ring. The ring of course soon slipped from Alberich's finger—well, it was stolen in fact, by Wotan—and was then claimed by the giants Fasolt and Fafner as payment (in lieu of the goddess Freia) for the building of Valhalla.

No good came of all this ring trading. Alberich cursed it, Fafner killed Fasolt for it and everyone seemed ready to 'do in' everyone else to get their hands on it. Alberich wants it back in order to rule the universe, Wotan needs it to prevent Alberich finishing off the gods, Mime wants to settle old scores with his brother for being brutalised in Nibelheim, and Fafner (now in the shape of an enormous dragon) just wants to sleep on it—the ring, that is.

But back to Mime. Years of sibling rivalry have taken their toll and he's a nervous wreck. Vengeful, sly, ruthless, even murderous he may be, but fearless he most definitely is not. Insider trading is one thing, but taking a gold ring from under the very fangs of an acid-spitting, limb-crushing dragon is quite another. No, Mime needs a fall guy—a trusting, presentable innocent who has no idea what he's letting himself in for and is positively eager to get his hands dirty. Enter Siegfried!

CRADLE-TO-GRAVE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Mime fancies himself at picking staff and has been able to groom Siegfried for a once-in-a-lifetime, cradle-to-grave appointment. Siegfried has been on training programs for

as long as he can remember and Mime assures him that, one day, all this will be his. Frankly, Siegfried couldn't care less. He just wants to enjoy life and has an eye for the birds—and the fish and the deer and the bears.

So what is this family business that Mime is so proud of? He's a master smith by trade, whose expertise is in fancy jewellery and magic helmets. But does he open a magic helmet business? No way—he opts for swords, of all things. This is a big mistake because swords are not really his forte. To make matters worse, he's failed to draw the right conclusions from his quality-control program which is administered enthusiastically by Siegfried. Not a single sword has survived the stringent testing program. Shouldn't that have set him thinking? Fewer swords, more magic helmets?

Mime's second mistake is really hard to fathom. He's established his business in the remotest possible part of a forest, where there are no customers! He went to no end of trouble dragging equipment—forge, bellows, anvil and everything else—to this Wotan-forsaken spot, only to find that his nearest neighbour is a dragon who has no need of swords at all and, indeed, has a positive antipathy towards them. In these circumstances, it's hardly surprising that Mime's Sword Shop has failed to be a thriving business.

How he must wish he had stuck to magic helmets!

For more of Peter's (more serious) writings and his four CD set: *Der Ring des Nibelungen - Explorations*, see: www.peterbassett.com.au.

JAMES ROSER - A TRIUMPH AS BECKMESSER IN ERL

AS PART OF OUR CONTINUING COVERAGE OF THE BLOOMING CAREER OF JAMES ROSER, THE FOLLOWING REPORT FROM JAMES TO OUR VICE-PRESIDENT LEONA GEEVES IS PRESENTED:

Dear Leona,

I hope you are well. I thought you may be interested to know that I had my debut as Beckmesser at the Tiroler Festspiele over the weekend and it went well and was well received. I saw a couple of reviews yesterday and they were positive and thought I'd send a few excerpts as some sort of indication.

'James Roser ist eine idealbesetzung für den Beckmesser. Scharf und schneidend spielt und singt er die Rolle und ist mit beachtlichen Höhen ausgestattet.' Helmut Christian Mayer, 'Opernnetz.de.'

'In the role of Beckmesser, James Roser gave an excellent performance. His portrayal of this very malignant character was just thrilling and very convincing. His performance was surely one of the best of the evening.' Daniel Url, "The operatic musicologist.'

'James Roser ist ein idealer Beckmesser' Ingeborg Muchitsch, 'Kurier.'

'Spannend profiliert der Beckmesser von James Roser', Ursula Strohal, "Tiroler Tageszeitung.'

'Two members of the cast were of international festival standard...The young Australian James Roser made so much of Beckmesser, sung with bright and alluring baritone, that he evoked a degree of sympathy' Anthony Ogus Blogspot.

[See inside back page for two photographs of James in this production and as Gunther in *Götterdämmerung*. See also the information at the end of the Raven's Report about the tour of the Tiroler Festspiele Erl to China in October 2015, with James in these roles - Editor.]

WAGNER SOCIETY IN NSW MEMBERSHIP AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2015

Ms K Abrahams [0966]; Mr T Accola [1055]; Mr D & Mrs V Adamson [1096]; Mr P E Alger [0255]; Ms R Amm [1062]; Mr C Andrew [0772]; Mrs U Armstrong [1061]; Mr L Astle & Mr N Matthews [1015]; Mrs W Atmore [1097]; Dr F J Augustus & Mr K Ryrie [0963]; Ms M Bachmann [1132]; Mr P Bacon [0890]; Mrs C Bailey [0663]; Ms P Baillie [0108]; Mrs R Baker [1090]; Mrs N Barne [0926]; Ms G Barnwell [944]; Prof The Hon Dame Marie Bashir [0798]; Mr C J Baskerville [0817]; Mrs J Bates [0785]; Mr & Mrs P Baumgartner [0393]; Ms B Beasley [1104]; Dr J Beeby [0985]; Ms S Beesley [0759]; Mr M Belgiorno-Zegna [1109]; Ms P Benjamin [0987]; Ms J Berents [1044]; Ms N Berger [1038]; Mrs I & Mr F Beringer [0975]; Ms M Biggs [1130]; Mrs C Bishop [1068]; Mr J & Mrs R Block [0745]; Mr R Bloor [0967]; Ms A Blunden [1043]; Mr T Bond [1099]; Ms J Bowen [0743]; Mr I & Mrs B Brady [0380]; Ms C Brauer [1050]; Mr M Moore & Mrs G Bremner-Moore [0819]; Dr W Brooks & Mr A Beck [0765]; Mr C Brush [1053]; Mr J & Mrs S Buchanan [0423]; Messrs R Buckdale & R H Liu [1095]; Dr R Burek [0982]; Ms C Busby [1087]; Mrs F M Butcher [0918]; Mr N & Dr M Cameron [1059]; Mr R & Mrs H Carr [1031]; Ms J Carroll [928]; Dr J Casey [0114]; Professor M Cashmere [0877]; Miss A Casimir [0501]; Mrs R Cater-Smith [638]; Mr H Charles & Mrs P Alexander [0951]; Dr G & Mrs T Cheshier [0685]; Professor M & Dr C Chesterman [0649]; Dr R T & Mrs J M Clarke [0496]; Mr C G Coffey [0816]; Mr M & Mrs J Connery [0334]; Mrs B Conti [1048]; Dr G Cottee [1105]; Mr R & Mrs R Cottle [0843]; Dr R Cowley [1122]; Mr A Cozzolino [930]; Dr P Craswell [1030]; Mr R Cruickshank [0669]; Dr B & Mrs E Dale [0953]; Mrs R Dalton [1121]; Mrs P Davern [1110]; Mrs C H Davies [921]; Mr M Day [0606]; Miss B de Rome [0207]; Professor C Deer [1064]; Dr J Donsworth [0884]; Dr N & Mrs B Dorsch [0154]; Mrs B & Mr A Dowe [1126]; Mr B C Ducker [0487]; Mrs S & Mr P Dudgeon [0788]; Mr H Ebert [0378]; Professor J Edwards [1034]; Dr L MacCormick Edwards [1125]; Mr K Elvy & Mr P Dunphy [0988]; Ms J Emmerton [1128]; Ms M Eva [1138]; Mr C Evatt [0624]; Prof M Ewans [Honorary Life Member]; Mr S Fargo [0964]; Mrs Kirsten Farren-Price [1151]; Mr I Ferdman [949]; Mrs J Ferfaglia [0045]; Mrs J Ferns [0034]; Mrs C Ford [1088]; Dr J Fortune [1057]; Mr B Foster [0850]; Mr A B Freeman [0986]; Mr Charles Brady & Mr Brian Freestone [0840]; Dr S Freiberg & Mr D Campbell [0585]; Mr V & Mrs K French [945]; Mr W Fyfe [0755]; Mrs D Gallagher [1098]; Mr L Garrick [0971]; Mr R Gastineau-Hills [0068]; Ms L Geeves [0087]; Mr P & Mrs D George [0873]; Ms E George & Mr D Tucha [1008]; Dr R Gillespie [1058]; Mr M & Mrs J Gleeson-White [1085]; Dr M Goodwin & Mr R Duels [1037]; Dr E Gordon-Werner [0878]; Dr A Goy [0723]; Mr R D Graham [904]; Miss N Grant MBE [0120]; Mrs M Gray [1102]; Mr T Green [933]; Dr J Gregory-Roberts [0748]; Mr T Maher [932]; Mrs J E Griffin [0540]; Mr M Grubb [0858]; Mr H Hallard [0799]; Ms H Halley [1007]; Mr A & Mrs W Hamlin [0593]; Mrs J Hanckel [1091]; Mr I Harper [1117]; Mr D Harrison & Mr M Susanto [939]; Mr D & Mrs C Hartgill [1021]; Dr F & Dr P Harvey [0427]; Mrs A Haslam [1092]; Mr S Hatcher [0333]; Mr A Hauserman & Ms J Nash [0876]; Ms Elizabeth Hayllar [1148]; Ms M A Hayton [0757]; Mr R Henderson [1005]; Miss C Hennessy & Miss M Hennessy [0019]; Mr J & Mrs B Hirst [1075]; Ms P S Holgerson [0863]; Dr R & Mrs B Hollings [1036]; Mr T Hudson [0489]; Ms D Humble [1006]; Dr I J Hunter [0744]; Mr I Hutchinson [1103]; Ms A Brejzek & Mr E Insausti [0433]; Mr P Ivanoff [1101]; Professor E Jacka [0898]; Mr D Jamieson [0090]; Dr G Johns [1120]; Mr B Johnson [0779]; Mr W Johnstone & Mrs E Johnstone; Mrs A Jones [0861]; Dr B & Mrs G Jones [0751]; Ms P Jones [1142]; Mr A N Jones & Mr J S Liga [0455]; Mr H & Mrs R Junker [0866]; Mr A & Mrs R Kaldor [0991]; Mrs N Kaldor [0796]; Mr J Kaldor [0996]; Miss I Kallinikos [0596]; Ms C Kaye [1065]; Mr R & Mrs J Kaye [1111]; Mrs A M Kayser [0845]; Mr J Kelleher [0965]; Dr S M Kelly [0004]; Dr H Kestermann [0995]; Mrs M King [1145]; Mr R J King [Honorary Life Member]; Mrs J King [0007]; Ms A Klettenberg [0847]; Mr K Knudsen [0994]; Dr K & Mrs S Koller [0052]; Ms I Kowalski [0536]; The Hon Justice F Kunc; Mrs H Laundl [0962]; Dr M D Leech [916]; Dr J & Mrs C Leigh [0452]; Mr G Linnane [0960]; Mrs J Lockhart [1019]; Ms L Longfoot [922]; Mr K Looser [1124]; Mrs B Mackelden [1069]; Dr I MacKenzie [1003]; Ms Christine Malcolm [1040]; Mr D Maloney & Ms E Flaherty [0952]; Mr C Manning [940]; Mrs J Manton [0718]; Ms L Manuel [0950]; Mr I Marsh [1127]; Mr C W Dyer [0544]; Messrs P Mason & H Burmester [997]; Dr D Mather & Mr J Studdert [0696]; The Hon Justice J Mathews [0622]; Mr David May [1146]; Mrs D McBain [0419]; Dr D McCarthy [0648]; Mr P McEachran [1049]; Mr I & Mrs P McGaw [0548]; Mr J M McGrath [0310]; Ms H Meddings [1114]; Mr N Mercer [0737]; Mr W & Mrs I Merretz [0115]; Ms A-A Merz [1141]; Dr R Mitchell [1014]; Mr P Montoya [0989]; Mrs E Moser [0659]; Messrs P Murray & A Laughlin [0958]; Mr W & Mrs H Naylor [0643]; Mr P & Mrs B Nicholson [0704]; Mrs K Nockels [0981]; Dr J M O'Brien [1119]; Ms Philippa O'Dowd [1150]; Mr A & Mrs M Olave [0735]; Ms O Redmond [1116]; Mrs D Orr [0844]; Mr Malcolm Pearse [1144]; Mrs S & Mr G Penny [1004]; Mr C J Piper [0222]; Mr R N Pollard [0856]; Mrs M Purvis The Hon Dr R N Purvis [0874]; Mr A Read [1077]; Mr K Reed AM [0041]; Mr P Rein [1129]; Mr G Richards [0366]; Dr J Richters & Mr A Whelan [0899]; Ms J Roberts [1140]; Mrs S Robertson [0416]; Ms A Robinson [1143]; Dr M Rodriguez & Ms R Moxhan; Mr R & Mrs P Roesch [1000]; Mr P J & Mrs H E Roland [0855]; M. G et Mmme A Rosenberg [0943]; Prof A & Mrs L Rosenberg [1012]; Ms L M Royds [0823]; Dr J Sanders [0972]; Mrs M Saunders [0683]; Ms J Schwager [1135]; Mrs P Seidler [0781]; Mr D & Mrs D Shannon [1067]; Professor I Shearer AM [0954]; Dr J Sheen [1107]; Mr S Sheffer [0101]; Ms N Siano [0619]; Ms R Silver [1054]; Mr S & Mrs D Simpson [1045]; Mr J Small [915]; Mr E de Zan [0865]; Mr A Smith [1137]; Mr W & Mrs H Spiller [0671]; Dr L St George [0895]; Mr R H Steele [0838]; Mr P Stephens [1046]; Mr N Stoke [1136]; Mr R Stone [0615]; Derek Strahan [1147]; Mr T & Mrs R Strong [1027]; Dr D Sturkey [0902]; Mrs I Sültemeyer [0978]; Dr W & Mrs M Suthers [0014]; Professor H Taylor AC [0990]; Mr L Terracini [0734]; Mr C Terrason [0439]; Dr P & Mr G Thomas [0957]; Mr P Thompson [0746]; Mr J & Mrs M Threlfall [1042]; Mr R Thurling [0830]; Mr G Tipping [1026]; Mr R & Mrs D Toltz [1024]; Mrs I Tornya [0800]; Mr D Triggs [0223]; Mr J Tuckey [1025]; Ms K Vernon [1039]; Ms N Wagner [1100]; Ms M Wakeham [1139]; Dr W & Mrs S Walsh [0956]; Dr T Watson [0657]; Dr G Watters [0892]; Mrs F & Mr Michael Weekes; Mr J & Mrs F Weickhardt [0979]; Mrs Margaret Whealy [1149]; Mr Ross Whitelaw [0527]; Ms D Whittleston & Mr A Gregg [0839]; Ms S Williams [929]; Mr G Wilson [0834]; Mr R Wilson OAM [1072]; Ms K Winkworth [0976]; Mrs D Woodhill [1093]; Mrs J Hickson Wran [1108]; Mr A Zaniboni [946]; Ms S Zelei [937].

This list is usually published in the June 2015 Quarterly after the AGM, but was omitted for space reason - EDITOR.

THE RAVEN'S REPORTING, COMPILED BY CAMRON DYER

There is a regularly updated list on the Society's Website:

www.wagner.org.au/events-performances/performances/ravens-reporting

September 2015

Amsterdam Royal Concertgebouw
Tristan und Isolde - September 12,
[concert performance].

Bochum Ruhrtrienale in Jahrhunderthalle Bochum
Das Rheingold - September 12, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24,
26.
Holländer - September 27.

Bonn *Tristan und Isolde* - September 6, 20.

Dortmund *Holländer* - September 18, 21, 25.

Dresden The Ring - September 12, 13, 15, 17.

Füssen *Tannhäuser* - September 19, 22, 25, 27.

Ghent *Das Rheingold* - September 26.

Kiel *Tristan und Isolde* - September 4.

Ljubljana *Tannhäuser* - September 6, 13, 23.

Meiningen *Das Rheingold* - September 9, 11, 13, 15, 18, 22.

Minden *Götterdämmerung* - September 29.

Nuremberg *Die Walküre* - Sept. 10, 13, 16, 19.

Oviedo Staatsoper

Vienna *Holländer* - September 5, 8, 11.

Wiesbaden *Holländer* - September 25, 29.

October 2015

Antwerp *Tannhäuser* - Oct 4, 7, 9, 11, 14, 17.

Berlin Staatsoper
Die Meistersinger - October 3, 4, 7, 11, 15, 18, 22.
Deutsche Oper
Tannhäuser - October 31.

Bern *Lohengrin* - October 24.

Bielefeld *Tannhäuser* - October 9, 18.

Bonn *Holländer* - October 3, 17, 25, 29.

Dortmund *Tristan und Isolde* - October 3.

Halle The Ring - Oct. 30, November 1, 6, 8.

Karlsruhe *Parsifal* - October 4.

Kiel *Das Rheingold* - October 4, 11.

London Cadogan Hall
Das Liebesverbot - October 25
[concert performance].
Holländer - October 8.

Minsk *Tannhäuser* - October 8, 12, 15, 19, 24, 27, 31.

New York *Götterdämmerung* - October 11, 18, 25.

Nuremberg *Lohengrin* - October 8, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 18, 20.

Sao Paulo New National Theatre

Tokyo *Rheingold* - October 1, 4, 7, 10, 14, 17.
Holländer - October 2, 8, 11, 16, 23.

Wiesbaden *Holländer* - October 2, 8, 11, 16, 23.

November 2015

Berlin Staatsoper
Holländer - Nov. 12, 16, 20, 22, 25.
Deutsche Oper
Tannhäuser - November 15.
Lohengrin - November 1, 7, 15.

Bielefeld *Tannhäuser* - November 1.

Bonn *Holländer* - November 8, 19.

Dortmund *Tristan und Isolde* - November 22.

Frankfurt *Holländer* - November 29.

Halle The Ring - Oct. 30, November 1, 6, 8.

Karlsruhe *Parsifal* - November 1.

Kiel *Das Rheingold* - November 14.

Minsk *Holländer* - November 14.

Modena *Tristan und Isolde* - November 11, 15.

Munich *Die Walküre* - November 28.

Nuremberg *Götterdämmerung* - November 1, 29.

Oslo *Holländer* - November 5, 11, 13, 21.

San Francisco *Meistersinger* - NoV. 18, 21, 24, 27.

Seoul Korea National Opera
Holländer - November 18, 20, 22.

Vienna Theater an der Wien
Holländer - Nov. 12, 14, 17, 19, 22, 24.
Holländer - November 26.

Vilnius *Holländer* - November 26.

Wroclaw *Parsifal* - November 4.

December 2015

Amsterdam Royal Concertgebouw
Lohengrin - December 18, 20

Bern [concert performance].
Lohengrin - December 19, 27, 29.

Bonn *Holländer* - December 25.

Buenos Aires *Parsifal* - December 4, 6, 9, 11.

Frankfurt *Holländer* - Dec. 6, 10, 13, 16, 19.

Karlsruhe *Parsifal* - December 13.

Kiel *Das Rheingold* - December 29.
Die Walküre - December 2, 5.
Götterdämmerung - Dec. 12, 16, 19.
Götterdämmerung - Dec. 13, 20, 27.

Munich *Die Meistersinger* - December 2, 6.

Nuremberg

San Francisco

January 2016

Berlin Deutsche Oper
Lohengrin - January 31.
Lohengrin - January 9, 17, 20, 31.
Holländer - January 8, 24.
Lohengrin - January 22, 28.
Dortmund *Tristan und Isolde* - January 17.

Duisburg *Holländer* - January 28.

Düsseldorf *Lohengrin* - January 9, 24, 30.

Essen *Holländer* - January 9, 16.

Kiel *Das Rheingold* - January 14.

Leipzig *Das Rheingold* - January 23.
Die Walküre - January 24.
Rienzi - January 16, 31.
Götterdämmerung - January 24.
Götterdämmerung - January 28, 31.
Toronto *Siegfried* - January 23, 27, 30.

Vienna Staatsoper
The Ring - January 10, 13, 17, 24.

February 2016

Barcelona *Götterdämmerung* - February 28.

Berlin Deutsche Oper
Lohengrin - February 14.
Rienzi - February 26.
Holländer - February 20.
Lohengrin - February 7, 12.
Die Walküre - February 20, 23, 28.
Holländer - February 5.

Brno *Holländer* - February 14, 18, 21, 27.

Copenhagen *Das Rheingold* - February 20.

Dresden *Die Walküre* - February 20.

Duisburg *Siegfried* - February 21.

Hamburg *Das Liebesverbot* - Feb 19, 22, 25, 27, 28.

Kiel *Götterdämmerung* - February 2, 4.

Leipzig *Parsifal* - February 27.
Siegfried - February 2, 5, 11, 14.
Tannhäuser - February 2, 4.
Holländer - February 26, 28.
Holländer - February 13, 20, 25, 28.

Madrid

Palermo

Stockholm

Toronto

Tourcoing

Warsaw

Zurich

March 2016

Baden Baden *Tristan und Isolde* - March 19, 22.

Barcelona *Götterdämmerung* - March 3, 7, 11, 14, 19.

Berlin Deutsche Oper
Rienzi - March 5, 11.
Tannhäuser - March 24, 27.
Staatsoper
Parsifal - March 20, 25, 28.
Holländer - March 9.

Brno State Opera
Walküre - March 3, 6, 10, 13, 17, 20.

Budapest *Die Meistersinger* - March 19, 27.

Chemnitz *Parsifal* - March 25.

Cologne *Parsifal* - March 25, 28.

Copenhagen *Lohengrin* - March 1, 6, 9, 13.

Duisburg *Holländer* - March 18.

Essen *Holländer* - March 13.

Hamburg *Holländer* - March 1.

Karlsruhe *Tristan und Isolde* - March 20, 27.

Kiel *Die Walküre* - March 12, 25.

Leipzig *Parsifal* - March 25.

Madrid *Das Liebesverbot* - March 3, 4, 5.

Mannheim *Parsifal* - March 25.

Munich	<i>Holländer</i> - March 5, 8, 11. <i>Lohengrin</i> - March 20, 24, 27, 31.	Strasbourg	<i>Liebesverbot</i> - May 8, 13, 17, 19, 22.
Osnabrück	<i>Lohengrin</i> - March 19, 25, 28.	Stuttgart	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - May 29.
Paris	Opera Bastille <i>Meistersinger</i> - March 1, 5, 9, 13, 21, 25, 28.	Tokyo	New National Theatre <i>Lohengrin</i> - May 23, 26, 29.
Poznan	<i>Parsifal</i> - March 11, 13.	Ulm	<i>Lohengrin</i> - May 7, 12, 15.
Salzburg	Osterfestspiele <i>Lohengrin</i> - March 19, 28.	Vienna	Staatsoper <i>Lohengrin</i> - May 10, 14, 18, 21
Stockholm	<i>Parsifal</i> - March 5, 13, 17, 25, 28.	Washington DC	The Ring - April 30, May 2, 4, 6; 10, , 13, 15; 17, 18, 20, 22.
Ulm	<i>Lohengrin</i> - March 24, 29.	Wiesbaden	<i>Holländer</i> - May 1.
Vienna	Staatsoper <i>Parsifal</i> - March 24, 27, 30.	June 2016	
Warsaw	<i>Holländer</i> - March 1.	Berlin	Deutsche Oper <i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - June 5, 12, 18. Staatsoper The Ring - June 11, 12, 15, 19; 25, 26, 30, July 2.
April 2016		Bonn	<i>Holländer</i> - June 9, 16, 29.
Brno	<i>Holländer</i> - April 17.	Cologne	<i>Holländer</i> - June 12, 17, 23, 26, 29.
Chemnitz	<i>Die Meistersinger</i> - April 10, 17. <i>Parsifal</i> - April 24.	Erfurt	<i>Die Meistersinger</i> - June 3, 5, 8, 11.
Cologne	<i>Parsifal</i> - April 3, 10, 17.	Heidelberg	<i>Holländer</i> - June 12.
Dortmund	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - April 17.	Innsbruck	<i>Tannhäuser</i> - June 5, 11, 18, 26.
Frankfurt	<i>Holländer</i> - April 2, 8, 16, 23.	Kaiserslautern	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - June 4, 25.
Hamburg	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - April 22.	Karlsruhe	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - June 26.
Heidelberg	<i>Holländer</i> - April 14, 19, 24.	Kiel	<i>Die Walküre</i> - June 10, 25.
Houston	<i>Siegfried</i> - April 16, 20, 23, 28.	Leipzig	The Ring - June 28, 29, July 1, 3. <i>Das Liebesverbot</i> - June 12.
Kaiserslautern	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - April 9, 30.	London	Royal Festival Hall, Opera North The Ring - June 28, 29, July 1, 3 [concert performance].
Karlsruhe	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - April 3, 17.	Manchester	Salford Quays, Opera North The Ring - June 13, 14, 16, 18 [concert performance].
Kiel	<i>Das Rheingold</i> - April 20. <i>Die Walküre</i> - April 3, 23.	Mannheim	<i>Siegfried</i> - June 5. <i>Götterdämmerung</i> - June 18. The Ring - June 21, 24, 26, July 2.
Landshut	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - April 8, 10, 30.	Meiningen	<i>Tannhäuser</i> - June 28.
Leeds	Opera North The Ring - April 23, 30, May 14, 21 [concert performance]. <i>Götterdämmerung</i> - April 30.	Mulhouse	<i>Das Liebesverbot</i> - June 3, 5.
Leipzig	The Royal Opera	Munich	<i>Die Meistersinger</i> - June 1.
London	<i>Tannhäuser</i> - April 26, 29.	Nottingham	Opera North The Ring - June 6, 7, 9, 11 [concert performance].
Madrid	<i>Parsifal</i> - April 2, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30.	Osnabrück	<i>Lohengrin</i> - June 3.
Mainz	<i>Holländer</i> - April 16, 26, 28.	Stuttgart	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - June 5, 11.
Osnabrück	<i>Lohengrin</i> - April 5, 17, 23.	Ulm	<i>Lohengrin</i> - June 15, 19.
Passau	<i>Tristan & Isolde</i> - April 14, 16, 20, 22.	Tokyo	New National Theatre <i>Lohengrin</i> - June 1, 4.
Straubing	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - April 26.	Warsaw	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - June 12, 15, 18.
Tokyo	<i>Siegfried</i> - April 7, 10.		
Ulm	<i>Lohengrin</i> - April 2, 6, 15, 22, 29.		
Vilnius	<i>Holländer</i> - April 14.		
Washington DC	The Ring - April 30, May 2, 4, 6.		
May 2016			
Berlin	Deutsche Oper <i>Lohengrin</i> - May 5, 8. <i>Holländer</i> - May 16.		
Bonn	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - May 29.		
Dortmund	<i>Lohengrin</i> - May 19, 22, 25, 29.		
Dresden	<i>Meistersinger</i> - May 29 [no other dates].		
Erfurt	The Ring - May 5, 8, 14, 16.		
Frankfurt	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - May 1, 5, 8.		
Hamburg	<i>Holländer</i> - May 14.		
Heidelberg	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - May 14, 17, 20, 25, 28.		
Helsinki	<i>Siegfried</i> - May 1.		
Houston	<i>Tannhäuser</i> - May 14, 21, 28.		
Innsbruck	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - May 15, 21.		
Kaiserslautern	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - May 5, 29.		
Karlsruhe	<i>Die Walküre</i> - May 5, 15.		
Kiel	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - May 5, 26.		
Landshut	Opera North		
Leeds	The Ring - April 23, 30, May 14, 21; 24, 25, 27, 29 [concert perf.].		
Leipzig	The Ring - May 5, 6, 7, 8. <i>Die Feen</i> - May 14, 21. <i>Rienzi</i> - May 15, 22. <i>Das Liebesverbot</i> - May 20.		
London	The Royal Opera <i>Tannhäuser</i> - May 2, 5, 8, 12, 15. <i>Holländer</i> - May 6, 15, 22, 26. <i>Parsifal</i> - May 5. <i>Das Rheingold</i> - May 21, 29. <i>Die Walküre</i> - May 26.		
Mainz	<i>Tannhäuser</i> - May 14, 25.		
Mannheim	<i>Meistersinger</i> - May 16, 22, 26, 29.		
Meiningen	<i>Lohengrin</i> - May 5.		
Munich	Théâtre des Champs-Élysées		
Osnabrück	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> - May 12, 15, 28, 21, 24.		
Paris	<i>Holländer</i> - May 7, 8, 11, 14, 18, 20, 21.		
Seattle			

THE TIROLER FESTSPIELE ERL IN CHINA 2015

Friday, 9th October, 18:30

Beijing Poly Theatre

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg

Sunday, 11th October, 17:00

Beijing Poly Theatre

Tristan und Isolde

Friday, 16th October, 19:30

Shanghai Symphony Hall

Der Ring des Nibelungen-Das Rheingold

Saturday, 17th October, 17:00

Shanghai Symphony Hall

Der Ring des Nibelungen-Die Walküre

Saturday, 17th October, 23:00

Shanghai Symphony Hall

Der Ring des Nibelungen-Siegfried

Sunday, 18th October, 11:00

Shanghai Symphony Hall

Der Ring des Nibelungen-Götterdämmerung

According to James Roser's website (www.jamesroser.com/#!calendar/cnnz) he will be reprising his roles as Beckmesser and Gunther on this tour. You can find some additional information at this website: www.wupromotion.com/en/international-artists/dance-a-theatre/842-tyrolean-festival-erl-austria-2015. It seems possible that a company called Wu Promotion might be arranging tours to this season. You can check their website at www.wupromotion.com/en/international-artists/dance-a-theatre/842-tyrolean-festival-erl-austria-2015. There are two photos of James in performance on the inside back page.



Hagen: Andrea Silvestrelli (left), Gunther: James Roser
 Tiroler Festspiele Erl production of *Götterdämmerung* 2015
 © Tiroler Festspiele Erl / APA-Fotoservice / Xiomara Bender



James Roser (Beckmesser-far left) and Michael Kupfer-Radecky (Sachs) © Tiroler Festspiele Erl / APA-Fotoservice / Xiomara Bender "The Beckmesser James Roser is equally interesting with the excesses controlled - a character part, the pathetic humor is never excessive or vulgar, also served by a very beautiful voice. (Review *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* - Erl "Quatre heures trente qui passent en un éclair" "Four hours thirty pass in a flash" by Jean-Marcel Humbert <http://www.forumopera.com/die-meistersinger-von-nurnberg-erl-quatre-heures-trente-qui-passent-en-un-eclair> - bad translation by Editor)

ADDRESS

Please note our permanent address for all correspondence:

The Wagner Society in New South Wales Inc
GPO Box 4574 SYDNEY NSW 2001

Telephone: 9360 9822 (Jane Matthews, President)

Website: www.wagner.org.au | Website enquiries: wagner_nsw@optusnet.com.au

(All website addresses used in this Newsletter are reproduced in the PDF version of the newsletter on the Wagner Society's website in the relevant article - Members Area)

In a moment of idle curiosity (that turned into a wasted hour or so) your Editor tried to check how many original images (painting, sketches, caricatures, photographs etc) there were of Wagner. An internet search with those terms resulted in what might be politely called a plethora of images. However, it became clear that, without devoting much of one's life to such a project, it was impossible to count the webpages of images that came up, let alone analyse and categorise the images. It was very clear that many were reproductions of originals, alterations of originals (for example, for purposes of advertising, satire, abuse or humour), copies that had been rotated to turn it "back to front" or "left to right" either deliberately or through ignorance. The inescapable conclusion from the exercise was that Wagner was not only one of the most written-about, but also most painted, photographed, caricatured people from the 19th century.



Wagner at the piano in two portraits (at left with King Ludwig II) that your Editor has not been able to identify, despite both portraits being used as covers for CDs: the righthand portrait appearing as the cover to a recording of transcriptions for piano of Wagner's music. As far as your Editor could determine, both are in the public domain.

The Wagner Quarterly is laid out, produced and distributed by the friendly and expert team at BEE Printmail
49 Herbert Street, Artarmon NSW 2064, Ph: 9437 6917, Email: beeprint@printd.com.au

ADDRESS FOR SUNDAY FUNCTIONS

Goethe Institut, 90 Ocean Street Woollahra (corner of Jersey Road)