



WAGNER
SOCIETY
NSW

ISSUE NO 13

140

MARCH 2016

CELEBRATING THE MUSIC OF RICHARD WAGNER

WAGNER QUARTERLY

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2016 - WAS DUE ON 1 JANUARY- FORM AT BACK OF QUARTERLY

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to the first Quarterly for 2016.

Our last event in 2015 was a highly successful one. Our Christmas concert and party was held at the Glebe Justice Centre on 22 November. A positive feast was laid on, both aurally and gastronomically. We were treated to superb singing by the sopranos Laura Scandizzo and Jenny Bonner and the baritone Soonki Park, accompanied on the piano by Mikey Curtain. There's a photo on page 2. The voices rang out in the resonate acoustic, and the enthusiastic audience reaction said it all. Afterwards we indulged ourselves with champagne and a superb choice of food, provided by our members. The raffle was pulled, and the winner of the first prize, the Arthur Rackham books, was our secretary, Mike Day. I promise that it was a legitimate win: I pulled out the winning ticket myself, and I had no idea whose it was at the time. It was a fitting win, though. Mike has done a great deal of work for the Society, and he had purchased a large number of raffle tickets.

For obvious reasons, we had no activities over the festive season. Our first event this year was held at the Goethe Institute on 21 February. Peter Bassett, the eminent Australian Wagner expert, talked about three Wagner productions in Adelaide: the two Ring Cycles in 1998 and 2004, and the Parsifal in 2001. Peter had a great deal of fascinating information about the different organisational background of the two Rings, which provided one of the principal reasons why the 2004 Ring, the Elke Neidhardt Ring, was never performed again, notwithstanding that it had rave reviews from everybody who saw it. Indeed, I am sure that I am not alone in regarding it as one of the best Ring productions I have ever seen. It was a real tragedy that it was a one-off set of performances, and was later scrapped. Peter also treated us to some amazing DVD images of both Rings - extracts from the performances themselves, as well as

peeks at rehearsals, and interviews with people involved in them. All in all, it was an absolutely fascinating afternoon for the 77 people who attended the function. There is a longer report below.

Sadly, I have learned of the death of Julian Block who was a member of the Management Committee of the Society during the presidencies of Barbara McNulty and Roger Cruickshank. On behalf of the Committee and all our members, I wish to extend to his wife Rosemary Block and her children our sincere condolences. I understand that there will be an obituary for Julian in the June issue of the Quarterly. Julian's daughter Jessica has written an obituary for the Sydney Morning Herald at www.smh.com.au/comment/obituaries/obituary-lawyer-julian-block-20160215-gmu4yf.html.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT *Continued page 4*

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



Mikey Curtain, Accompanist; Jane Mathews, President; Soonki Park, Baritone; Laura Scandizzo, Soprano; Jenny Bonner, Soprano - at the Wagner Society in NSW End of Year / St Cecilia's Day function on Sunday 22 November 2015 at the Glebe Justice Centre - see report below.

DER PHILATELISTISCHER WAGNER



FOR YOUR DIARY

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
Sunday, 24 July	<i>A Musical Insight: Wagner, His Contemporaries and Followers</i> Peter Bassett, reading excerpts from letters, journals, memoirs and poetry with Alex Raineri, Australian pianist, playing works by Wagner and his contemporaries and followers. (Single Tickets (On Sale from 15 Jan, 2016) \$95 - other prices available - see website www.sydneyoperahouse.com/whatson/ums16_a_musical_insight.aspx?sitesource=umslp&sitemedium=tile&campaign=wagner16)	Sydney Opera House, Utzon Room @ 3:00pm
Saturday, 19 November	<i>Tristan und Isolde</i> in the Apple Isle: "The most acclaimed <i>Isolde</i> of our times, Swedish soprano Nina Stemme, and superstar tenor Stuart Skelton...perform excerpts from Wagner's sublime <i>Tristan und Isolde</i> under the baton of Marko Letonja." Bookings: 5 October 2015-TSO 2016 Subscribers who purchase a minimum of 8 concerts; 1 to 31 March 2016-TSO 2016 Subscribers who purchase fewer than 8 concerts; 1 April 2016-General public sales	Federation Hall, Hobart @ 7:30 PM
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 2016 - SUNDAY STARTING TIMES MAY VARY

PLEASE CHECK THE SCHEDULE ONLINE FOR DETAILS

DATE	Some events may be subject to change and further detail in the next newsletter	TIME & LOCATION
March 13 @ 2pm	Rosamund Bartlett: Zigrif and Bryungilda: A History of the Great Wagner Singers of Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union	Goethe Institut 12.30pm
April 17 @ 2pm	AGM followed by presentation by Trevor Clark (Wagner Society of Victoria): Richard Wagner and the Visual Arts	Goethe Institut 12.30pm
May 22 @ 2pm	Concert by young singers supported by Wagner Society followed by champagne celebration of Wagner's Birthday	Goethe Institut 12.30pm
June 19 @ 2pm	Andrew Ford: After Wagner	Goethe Institut 12.30pm
July 24 @ 1pm	Graham Bruce: Joachim Herz's <i>Flying Dutchman</i> NB: NO DVD BEFOREHAND AND 1:00 PM STARTING TIME	Goethe Institut 1pm
August 14 @ TBC	Antony Ernst: Nationalism and the North German Music Tradition in Wagner's <i>The Ring of the Nibelung</i>	Venue & Time TBC
Sept 18 @ 1pm	Barbara Brady: Wagner's early operas NB: NO DVD BEFOREHAND AND 1:00 PM STARTING TIME	Goethe Institut 1pm
October 16 @ 2pm	David Larkin: Liszt, Wagner and the audiences of the day	Goethe Institut
November @ TBC	Concert followed by Christmas Party—TBC	Venue TBC

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)

NB: Information about DVDs to be shown before functions will be available before the first function in 2016.

One piece of very positive news is this: that through the Society's membership of the International Association of Wagner Societies (known as "the Verband"), we received a total of 14 tickets to the third Ring Cycle in Bayreuth this year, as well as a few to some of the other operas. This large number might not be repeated. It turned out that some of those 14 tickets had been sent to us in error, but as we had already paid for them by the time this came to light, we were able to keep them. The number of tickets that we receive from the Verband each year depends to a significant extent on the size of our membership, so this provides a very strong incentive

for our members to continue their own membership and also to encourage others to join, thereby increasing the number of Bayreuth tickets we are likely to get each year.

We have a number of fascinating events planned for the year, so I look forward to seeing many of you then. We are now, as you know, dependent upon our members to assist with the catering for these functions. I have been extremely impressed by the quality and quantity of the food thus far. A huge 'thank you' to all who have contributed in this important regard.

THE SYDNEY-BORN HELDENTENOR STUART SKELTON WILL MAKE HIS METROPOLITAN STAGE DEBUT IN THE ROLE IN 2016

Australian heldentenor Stuart Skelton will take the lead in a new production of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* set to open the Metropolitan Opera's 2016 season. The Sydney-born opera star will be the first of his countrymen to play the role at New York's iconic opera house.

Skelton will star opposite Swedish soprano Nina Stemme, an experienced Isolde and probably the world's current leading exponent of the role, while leading German bass René Pape will sing King Mark. The new production will be conducted by Sir Simon Rattle, current Chief Conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic, and staged by Polish director Mariusz Trelinski, whose film noir double bill of Tchaikovsky's rarely performed *Iolanta* and Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle* has recently won considerable praise from critics and audiences alike.

The new production of "Tristan" at the Metropolitan Opera will be a coproduction with the Festspielhaus Baden-Baden (see above) and Teatr Wielki-Polish National Opera, and will premiere at the Baden-Baden Festival in March 2016 and then be performed in Warsaw before arriving at the Met in September.

"The first Australian Isolde at the Met was Marjorie Lawrence who sang the role opposite Melchior in 1944," said Australian Wagner scholar Peter Bassett.

See more at: <http://www.limelightmagazine.com.au/news/stuart-skelton-be-first-aussie-tristan-met#sthash.GiYQEaTR.dpuf>

2016 - THE YEAR OF STUART SKELTON AS TRISTAN

19 MARS 2016 À BADEN/BADEN

TRISTAN & ISOLDE, drame lyrique en trois actes de Richard Wagner, interprété par Eva-Maria Westbroek (Isolde) - Stuart Skelton (Tristan) - Sarah Conolly (Brangäne) - Stephen Milling (König Marke) - Michael Nagy (Kurwenal) - Roman Sadnik (Melot), le Chœur Philharmonique de Vienne et les Berliner Philharmoniker, placés sous la direction musicale de Sir Simon Rattle, la mise en scène étant de Mariusz Trelinski.

TRISTAN AND ISOLDE - NEW PRODUCTION AT THE ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA

Creative team: Conductor, Edward Gardner; Director, Daniel Kramer; Set Designer, Anish Kapoor; Costume Designer, Christina Cunningham; Lighting Designer, Peter Mumford; Video Designer Frieder Weiss

Cast: Tristan: Stuart Skelton; Marke: Matthew Rose; Isolde: Heidi Melton; Kurwenal: Craig Colclough; Brangaene: Karen Cargill; Melot: Stephen Rooke; A Young Sailor: David Webb; A Shepherd: Peter Van Hulle; A Helmsman: Paul Sheehan

Dates 2016: Thu 09 June; Wed 15 June; Sun 19 June; Wed 22 June; Sun 26 June; Wed 29 June; Sat 02 July; Sat 09 July.

Ticket information:

<https://www.eno.org/experience/ways-to-save>

"ENO's first new production of *Tristan and Isolde* since 1996 is directed by 'theatre's most exciting young director' (*Daily Telegraph*) Daniel Kramer, with designs from Anish Kapoor, one of the most influential sculptors of his generation. [...] The exceptional cast is led by the outstanding Wagnerian Heldentenor Stuart Skelton as Tristan, with American dramatic soprano Heidi Melton as Isolde."

NEW AND RENEWED MEMBERS SINCE DECEMBER 2015

Mrs Pat Kirkland [1175], Dr Jeff Bertucen [1176], Ms Rosemary Oxe [1177], Ms Mandy Shaul [1178], Dr Anna von Ruefflingen [1179], Ms D Bredow [1180]

DONATIONS RECEIVED SINCE DECEMBER 2015

No donations received

WAGNER THE COMEDIAN by Peter Bassett

Richard Wagner completed thirteen works for the stage but left another fifteen unfinished. In retrospect, some of the latter can be seen as trial runs or preparatory studies for the finished works of his maturity. Others were discarded because they dealt with historical subjects at a time when myth was proving a more potent and flexible dramatic vehicle. Some proved unsuitable for his evolving musical style. Some were intended to be set to music by other composers, and it comes as a surprise to discover that Wagner's talent as a librettist was occasionally in greater demand than his originality as a composer. But each one of the unfinished works offers a valuable insight into his thought processes and motivations.

In August 1868, two months after the first performance of *Die Meistersinger*, Wagner sketched out an unnamed 'New Year farce' in one act. It appeared during the long hiatus in the composition of *Siegfried* and reveals something of his state of mind at that time. Although nothing came of the farce, it wasn't abandoned straight away. He read it aloud at an evening gathering at Wahnfried on 19 April 1879, within days of completing the second complete draft of the music of *Parsifal*. Such a juxtaposition of the sublime and the ridiculous was typical of Wagner, whom Cosima quoted on 6 August 1878 as saying: 'Oh, that is my salvation, this ability to convert the most serious things into nonsense in a flash - it has always kept me from going over the brink'. The reaction of his friends to the Wahnfried reading was far from enthusiastic (according to Cosima he was irritated by their lukewarm response) and it was probably then that he decided to drop the idea altogether.

This one act farce, sketched out in the so-called *Brown Book* of 1865-1882, is a slight affair concerned with life in a theatrical troupe of the provincial kind that Wagner had known as a young man. It hints at the 18th century comedies of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, such as *The Critic*, or a tragedy rehearsed, a burlesque on stage acting and theatrical production conventions. Sheridan's plays were available in German editions by the beginning of the 19th century, although it is unclear whether Wagner had read any of them. However, *The Critic* and its source play, George Villiers's *The Rehearsal*, had used the precedent of *The Frogs* of Aristophanes to examine contemporary tragedy through the lens of parody, something that appealed strongly to Wagner. Aristophanes' *The Birds* became Wagner's model for *Eine Kapitulation* of 1870 for which he adopted the hardly subtle nom de plume Aristop Hanes. He had known and admired the plays of Aristophanes from as early as 1847.

Sheridan's *The Critic* includes such characters as the dramatist Sir Fretful Plagiary, the vicious but ignorant critics Mr Dangle and Mr Sneer, and an Italian with the unlikely name of Signor Pasticcio Ritornello. Wagner's characters have similarly absurd and decidedly un-Wagnerian names. There is Barnabas Coolwind (the prompter), Caspar Scribely (a student gone to seed, and novice actor), Lorenz Pimper (the stage doorman), David Bubes (the stage manager)

and Napoleon Baldachin (the leading actor). There is also Coolwind's daughter Hermine.

The action begins on the morning of New Year's Day in Coolwind's bedroom. The prompter, still asleep, is tossing restlessly in bed while his daughter Hermine fusses around. She is drawing the bed curtains when the student Scribely appears at the door. The previous night's performance had been a particularly trying one for Coolwind who, despite warnings, had taken a great deal of snuff and, consequently, had a sneezing fit at just the point when Baldachin, playing the hero, needed him most. The resulting confusion had led to an uproar. The actor was furious, and now Coolwind was faced with imminent dismissal. Scribely and Hermine are alarmed by this turn of events and discuss what is to be done. Their conversation is interrupted by the sleeping man's loud snores and, when he stirs, by a fresh bout of sneezing.

The stage doorman Pimper enters with a draft of the new season's theatre brochure. He needs an extra article about the sneezing debacle, which Scribely promises to deliver. Suddenly there is an explosion of sneezing from the bed, which promptly collapses. Everyone rushes to Coolwind's aid and he is extricated from a tangle of bedclothes and timber frames. He then proceeds to dress himself behind one of the curtains while Scribely gets to work on a sneezing anecdote for the brochure. Breakfast coffee follows while a very depressed Coolwind laments his plight, and the others discuss how he might avert impending misfortune. Scribely anticipates a bright future for himself as an actor and comforts Coolwind, promising to take care of his family if he can have Hermine's hand in marriage. Coolwind doesn't share Scribely's confidence in his theatrical prospects,

QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHTS:

KOSKY TO DIRECT <i>MEISTERSINGER</i> AT BAYREUTH IN 2017	P.4
WAGNER & PARODY - Peter Bassett	P.5
THE ERL RING - June Donsworth	P.6
CHRISTIAN THIELEMANN, <i>MY LIFE WITH WAGNER</i> - Colin Baskerville	P.8
IN MEMORIAM: JON VICKERS - 1926-2015 - Terence Watson	P.10
THE DENIS CONDON COLLECTION AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY - Robert Mitchell	P.12
A DAY WITH THE RING - SEMINARS IN MELBOURNE 2016	P.16

since the young man has absolutely no talent as an actor. He is certainly good at remembering his lines - in fact he has an extraordinary memory - but in delivering them he never pauses and just rattles them off too quickly. It doesn't matter whether the author is Schiller, Goethe or Shakespeare, no one can understand a word he says. Only by pausing meaningfully and expressively can an actor hold the audience's attention. On many occasions Coolwind had helped Baldachin to make a fine impression on stage but now, for his trouble, he had become the target of plots. He is filled with fear of dismissal and resulting family penury.

Hermine decides to call on the secretary of the Court Theatre who is on friendly terms with the Cabinet Secretary. She hopes to secure a good pension for her father. While Scribely and Coolwind continue their discussion, stage manager Bubes enters in a solemn mood. It seems that dismissal is inevitable. Scribely asks about his prospects for an acting part but is told that there is little chance of this. Indeed, Baldachin is reportedly threatening to resign if Scribely is engaged. The latter's phenomenal memory enables him to memorise a part between morning and evening, and Baldachin feels threatened by this. If he, as the troupe's leading actor, were ever unprepared for a performance, Scribely might step in at short notice, and this could become a permanent arrangement. After the disastrous New Year's Eve performance, Baldachin had sought Coolwind's dismissal, and now he has been seen prowling around the house, waiting for Bube to come out. Scribely calls down to him from a window and invites him to come up and talk. Unwillingly, Baldachin agrees and a tense meeting ensues. The actor is keeping his cards close to his chest, waiting to find out what management has in store. He has been scheming to have Scribely made prompter, which would put an end to his acting ambitions. Pimper interrupts, bringing with him a revised proof of the sneezing article in preparation for the brochure's printing. Then Coolwind receives a letter from the theatre secretary asking him to vacate his position. Scribely is pressed by Bubes and Baldachin to become the new prompter. All but Coolwind and Scribely leave, and the two men express their desire for revenge against Baldachin and the whole sorry theatrical business.

Hermine returns from her meeting with the Cabinet Secretary to proclaim that a full pension has been offered to her father if he makes way for a new prompter: Scribely, who obviously enjoys the confidence of the cast. What's more, Scribely has also been offered a chance to become a reviewer and even a writer and poet for a theatrical journal which, when all is said and done, is his true vocation. Henceforth, says Scribely, he will regard the prompt box as being like the point from which Archimedes said he could move the whole world. At the street corners, the new season's brochure has started selling briskly, and Pimper has arrived with a bottle of New Year's wine. Even Coolwind hesitantly joins in the celebrations although, when clinking glasses and toasting the success of the new prompter, he sneezes violently and spills his wine. This is interpreted as an auspicious omen by Scribely who, to top off the celebrations, announces that he

and Hermine are to be married. Thus ends this curious little Wagnerian comedy of 1868.

If Wagner had lived as long as his contemporary, Giuseppe Verdi who completed *Falstaff* at eighty, he might have amused himself producing operatic farces and burlesques - which is a tantalizing, if rather disturbing thought.

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.

MATHILDE MARCHESI AND HER WAGNERIAN PUPILS

by Roger Neill

[This is the first part of Roger Neill's article. The second part, featuring Australian students of Marchesi will be published in the June 2016 Quarterly.]

For me, one of the greatest surprises to emerge from researching *Divas of the Golden Age: Mathilde Marchesi and her Pupils** was the number of top-flight singers of Wagner that surfaced. After all, Marchesi did not hold back in her criticism of Wagner's later operas, which she (correctly) believed sacrificed her beloved *bel canto* in favour of the orchestra - and also over-strained young voices. This latter problem still plagues leading women singers of starring roles in *Tristan und Isolde*, *Parsifal* and the *Ring* cycle.

The first of Marchesi's pupils to make a mark as a Wagnerian was one of her earliest - Gabrielle Krauss, who became a prima donna at the Opéra in Paris over several decades. She graduated from the Conservatoire in Vienna in 1859 and, in her first season as a professional, at the Court Opera in Vienna, she was Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser* and Elsa in *Lohengrin*. These were roles that she was to repeat in Paris and at La Scala, Milan.

Also from that generation of Marchesi pupils, the Croatian soprano Ilma di Murska (who toured Australia to great acclaim in 1875 - the first of Marchesi's pupils to do so), was Senta in the first production of *Der fliegende Holländer* in England in 1870-71. Indeed it was the first Wagner opera to be seen in Britain.

From the succeeding generation of Marchesi pupils, the German soprano Louise Radecke was to become the first to be something of a Wagner specialist. The heart of her career was in Munich, where, supported by King Ludwig II, Wagner was to centre his activities from 1864. It was in 1873 that she took the position which was to establish her as a major star - at the Court Opera. There, she became a leading performer of Wagner's operas - Senta in *Der fliegende Holländer*, Elsa in *Lohengrin*, Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser*, Eva in *Die Meistersinger* and Brünnhilde in the *Ring*. By the time that Louise arrived in Munich, the Court Opera had already become the main centre for the performance of Wagner's works (four of them having had their première there between 1865 and 1870). The Bavarian king, Ludwig II, was passionately interested in the composer and his work, a devotion that started when he first saw *Lohengrin* at the age of 15½. The two finally met in May 1864 and the king provided Wagner with a residence in Switzerland where he could compose in relative seclusion. It was into this highly-charged atmosphere that Louise Radecke arrived. She must have reported her experiences to her former teacher, for Mathilde included this in her memoirs:

After a performance of *Lohengrin*, when she had been greatly applauded in the leading part, [she] received from the King

of Bavaria a very valuable drawing by Koalbach, representing Lohengrin's farewell to Elsa, which regal present was brought to her in the middle of the night, when the whole household was asleep. Louise could never tell me enough about the King's eccentricities...

Mathilde's daughter Blanche, in her later memoirs, expands the scene:

[The singers] never knew when they would be called, and it often happened that he made [Louise] rise at two or three or four o'clock in the morning, sending a carriage to her to come for an immediate private performance to the castle. She would then have to rush to the palace in town or country, and would sing for him scenes from Wagner's operas, always hidden behind a screen, as he disliked to see the people who were singing.

Sometimes she had to sing on the roof of one of his palaces, on which he had installed a lake. On this lake he was rowed in a boat, himself standing upright, dressed as Lohengrin, clad in full armour, sword in hand.

The arrival of Wagner's operas in Vienna stirred up 'great strife', according to Mathilde: 'Families quarrelled; friends became enemies; there was a general uproar.' Mathilde wrote that his chief followers in the city were initially mostly students who 'idolised their master, and would allow no one to find fault with his music.' Most of the Viennese public, Mathilde maintained, remained devoted to 'the light and flowing melodies of Mozart, Weber, Flotow, Lortzing, Donizetti, Bellini, Rossini etc.' Nevertheless,

... by degrees, growing calmer, they began to listen with more attention to the new music, discovering beauties in it... and began to appreciate the innovations and changes which the great master had made.

Mathilde Marchesi met Wagner when he came to Vienna (probably in 1875, when he was in Vienna to rehearse *Tannhäuser* at the Court Opera). She had

... a long discussion with him on matters relating to singing, but there was one point on which we did not agree. He was of opinion that every voice should be at the composer's command. I, on the contrary, held that the composer must take into consideration the compass of the different voices, by which interpretation, pronunciation, and declamation must naturally benefit.

One may imagine that Wagner was not impressed by this blast from the past, as he would have seen it. Of course, one of the central issues that concerned Mathilde was that Wagner's vocal writing would lead to voices being ruined - a problem that

remains prevalent to this day. Paradoxically, Wagner always valued the special skills of *bel canto* training, and preferred his singers to be fully equipped with them, summing up his adherence to the whole business in *Mein Leben*:

Nowadays, one hardly ever hears a really beautiful and technically perfect *trillo*; very rarely, flawless *mordents*; very seldom, a rounded *coloratura*, a true, unaffected *portamento*, a perfect equalization of all the registers, and absolute maintenance of intonation through all the various nuances of crescendo and diminuendo.

Did Wagner say all this to Mathilde? It is a complete paraphrase of what Mathilde stood for. A consequence of Mathilde's response to Wagner's music is that throughout her teaching career, although a number of Mathilde's pupils chose to focus their careers on Wagner's operas, some becoming leading practitioners, when she wrote about them, one senses always an ambivalence in her attitude, just as there is in her attitude to the music itself and its composer.

Just five years after Louise Radecke's time with Marchesi came the Austrian soprano Elise Wiedermann. Not only was she briefly a leading Wagnerian of her generation, but, having moved to Australia in 1883, she also taught a new generation of great Australian Wagnerians, including Elsa Stralia and Florence Austral.

In 1882 she came with the Hamburg Opera to perform a season at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane in London. This was a watershed year for opera in England, marking the arrival (at the flood) of Wagner's revolutionary operas. First, in February-March, Carl Rosa's company gave in English four earlier works at Her Majesty's Theatre: *Rienzi*, *The Flying Dutchman*, *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*. Then came the impresario Angelo Neumann with a troupe of Bayreuth singers under Anton Seidl, bringing the full *Ring des Nibelungen* cycle (its first four outings in England), also at Her Majesty's starting in early May. And finally, opening just two weeks later, there arrived at Drury Lane full casts from Hamburg under Wagner's trusty lieutenant Hans Richter for a series of twenty-four performances of German opera, including Beethoven's *Fidelio* (with Elise as Marzelline), Weber's *Euryanthe* (Elise as Berthe), Wagner's *Tannhäuser* (Elise as Venus) and *Die Meistersinger* (Elise as Eva).

As Herman Klein wrote: 'The artistic interest that both [companies] excited was enormous.' In short, those few months in 1882 marked the start of the decline of Italian and French *bel canto* opera in Britain in favour of the new German through-composed approach initiated by Wagner. Elise's Venus was 'commended' by *The Era*, her Marzelline described as 'sprightly'. The Leonore in *Fidelio* at Drury Lane was the great German soprano Therese Malten, but this London season was to be close to the end of Wiedermann's performing career.

Two years earlier, in 1880, Elise had become engaged to an Austrian businessman and economist, Carl Pinschof. In 1879 he had been appointed honorary secretary of the Austrian commission to the Sydney International Exhibition, and, on

a preparatory trip to Australia that year, he passed through Melbourne and decided that he would settle in that city. He and Elise moved to Melbourne in 1883 and were married at Hawthorn in August. Two years later, Carl was appointed honorary consul for Austria-Hungary in the State of Victoria, the Austrian government making it clear that it would not be appropriate for his wife to continue with her public singing career.

However, the fact that Elise could no longer perform professionally meant that she could devote her life to supporting the arts and artists in Melbourne, and, within a year, she wrote a letter to Mathilde Marchesi in Paris that was to have a profound effect. In Melbourne, Elise had come to know the Mitchell family, whose eldest daughter, Nellie, was starting out as a singer. Nellie had been taught initially at school by a pupil of Manuel Garcia II, Ellen Christian, then by the Italian tenor Pietro Cecchi. Already married to Charles Armstrong and with a young son, George, Nellie was performing around Victoria (and in Sydney) as 'Mrs Armstrong'. Nellie had persuaded her father David Mitchell to take her, her husband and her son to London, where Mitchell had been appointed to be a commissioner representing Victoria at the Grand Indian and Colonial Exhibition in London. Elise was clearly familiar with Nellie's work and wrote a letter of introduction and recommendation for Nellie that she could use to set up an audition with Marchesi. It is well known that Melba was to become the leading prima donna on her generation. Her passion for Wagner is less understood. More on that later.

After Louise Radecke, the Hungarian Katharina Klafsky was the next Marchesi pupil to make a career from singing leading roles in Wagner's operas. In 1876 she was hired by the impresario Angelo Neumann, then director of the City Opera in Leipzig - hired for a small fee to be in the chorus and sing small roles. Then in 1879 she sang for the first time Wellgunde in *Das Rheingold* and Venus in *Tannhäuser*. By 1882 she was Brangäne in the first performance in Leipzig of *Tristan und Isolde*, and that same year she toured the capitals of Europe in Neumann's company giving first performances in each city of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (initially as Waltraute, Wellgunde and Third Norn, then later as Sieglinde and Brünnhilde). One of those cities was London, to which she returned in 1892 with the Hamburg Opera and its young director, Gustav Mahler.

Writing later of that season, Herman Klein noted that 'the genius of Klafsky [was] brought into relief by her wonderful Brünnhilde,' also praising in the *Fidelio* 'the same gifted soprano in her unforgettable embodiment of Leonore.' Katharina had moved on from Neumann and Leipzig to take leading roles at the State Opera in Hamburg around 1880, and there she remained until, after a brief interlude at the Court Opera in Vienna, she departed for America in 1895 to perform with the Damrosch Opera Company. She was hired by the Metropolitan Opera in New York for their 1896-97 season, but, tragically, at the peak of her powers, she died of a brain injury before being able to take up the commitment. In summary, Herman Klein writes that she had 'proved her title to rank with the greatest of her tribe.'

Mezzo-soprano Gisela Staudigl made her professional debut in September 1882 as Amneris in *Aida* at Hamburg, before going to the Court Theatre at Karlsruhe, followed by Berlin, then Dresden. During the summer seasons, she sang for seven years at Bayreuth. It was early in her career at Karlsruhe that she became an accomplished singer of Wagner. She sang Brangäne in the first performance of *Tristan und Isolde* at Bayreuth in 1886.

In 1881, after twenty seven years teaching, mostly in Vienna, Marchesi moved her centre of activities to Paris. In was there in Paris that arguably the greatest of her Wagnerian pupils was taught by Marchesi (and by her daughter Blanche). Ellen Gulbranson made her debut as a concert singer in Stockholm in 1886. Five years later, at the Royal Opera in Copenhagen, she sang her first Brünnhilde in *Die Walküre*, a role which was to become her own for a generation. She was first scheduled to sing at Bayreuth in 1892, but for whatever reason this did not happen and she made her debut there in 1896, singing Brünnhilde in all three operas - *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung*. Together with Kundry in *Parsifal*, Brünnhilde was a role that she was to sing at Bayreuth over twelve seasons until 1914 - a record never equalled, before or since. She also sang Wagner around the major houses of Europe, including Brünnhilde in three *Ring* cycles at Covent Garden.

**Divas of the Golden Age: Mathilde Marchesi and her Pupils* is to be published by NewSouth Publishing in September 2016. It will feature some 90 of Marchesi's pupils from around the world, among them several Australians, including Nellie

Melba, Frances Saville, Frances Alda, Amy Sherwin, Ada Crossley, Amy Castles, Eda Bennie and Evelyn Scotney. © Roger Neill, 2016

Roger Neill is an arts historian who lives on the Oxfordshire/Northamptonshire border in England. In recent years his work has focused on Australian and New Zealand singers, musicians, artists and writers, particularly those of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 2000 he curated an exhibition of the work of the Australian portrait photographer H Walter Barnett for the National Portrait Gallery in Canberra. He helped Sam Wanamaker to rebuild Shakespeare's Globe in London and was active in the restoration of the 19th century concert hall at Blackheath, London. He was founding chairman of Docklands Sinfonietta (Sinfonia 21) and chairman of Endymion Ensemble for a decade. He helps the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment with people, organisational and strategic issues. He lived and worked in Sydney in the 1980s, where he was chairman of the advertising agency Lintas. All being well, alongside the publication of *Divas of the Golden Age* in September, there will also be the issue of a four CD set from Decca Eloquence entitled *From Melba to Sutherland: Australian Singers on Record*, which will feature 75 leading Australian singers.

You can follow Roger Neill's blog at <http://www.rogerneill.blogspot.com.au/>.

PETER BASSETT: RECALLING THE ADELAIDE RINGS AND PARSIFAL

Peter had had close and varied involvement with the Adelaide Rings of 1998 and 2004, and Parsifal of 2001 and drew on this experience in providing insights into the productions themselves and, most importantly, the political and administrative environments in which they were created. He noted that, prior to the 1998 Ring performances, eighty-five years had passed since the last staging of the complete cycle by the touring Quinlan company in Sydney in 1913. The political incentive for embarking on Adelaide's 'Wagner Decade', together with the unique status of the State Opera of South Australia as a statutory body, explained the State Government's close involvement in the project and, ultimately, the significant level of government intervention in the latter years of preparations for the 2004 Ring. Ultimately, management and budgetary issues would influence Commonwealth and State funding bodies in their attitudes towards a remount of that production. Nevertheless, the first Australian-produced and designed Ring of 2004, like the earlier Ring and Parsifal had been a considerable success in artistic terms and as a cultural tourism venture.

Peter gave the audience interesting financial reports for all three Adelaide Wagner performances. The 1988 Ring cost nearly \$8M to stage, but brought an economic benefit

of some \$10M to South Australia and attracted 56% of the audience from interstate and overseas. The 2001 *Parsifal* cost a "mere" \$2.3M, produced an economic benefit of about \$2.4M and attracted 30% of its audience from interstate and overseas. The fabulous 2004 Niedhardt Ring Cycle, however, cost over \$15M, and brought an economic benefit of a little over \$14M, and attracted about 65% of its audience from interstate and internationally. The difference in costs for the two Ring Cycles is largely because the 1988 production was brought in from France; "our" production—Australia's first home-grown full production, was developed and built in Australia, using far more spectacular scenery, among other things.

Peter showed documentary clips of all three productions, including back-stage technical preparations, rehearsals and the performances themselves. These brought back powerful memories of three historic Wagnerian events. Touching segments with the late Elke Neidhardt, and with Jeffrey Tate, Asher Fisch, John Wegner (as both Wotan and Alberich), Lisa Gasteen at the height of her career, Daniel Sumegi in his debut as Hagen, Liane Keegan as Erda, Warwick Fyfe as Fasolt and numerous other artists, made this an afternoon to remember.

WAGNER'S RING: FORGING AN EPIC: EXHIBITION AT THE MORGAN LIBRARY & MUSEUM - 29 JANUARY-7 APRIL 2016 by The Editor

Anyone lucky enough to be in New York City early this year will have the chance to see this exhibition. The Morgan Library's website describes it:

“Wagner's Ring: Forging an Epic explores the challenging creation of Wagner's epic, and the staging of its 1876 premiere in Bayreuth and its 1889 American debut at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York. The exhibition includes rare music manuscripts, personal letters, books, costumes and stage designs, photographs, and historical artifacts. A number of the items are on loan from the Richard Wagner Museum in Bayreuth and have never before been on public display. Additional material comes from the Morgan's music holdings, the Metropolitan Opera Archives, Columbia University, and from several private collections.”

Of the many attractions, one in particular might appeal:

“Many of the highlights on view belong to the museum, but perhaps most significant items (and, for New Yorkers, the least familiar) are series of composition drafts, on rare loan from the Wagner Museum in Bayreuth, that give a sense of the confidence with which Wagner sketched his ideas. Compressed into just a few scrawled inches is the brilliant beginning of “Das Rheingold” — the opening of the cycle — a long, gradual expansion of a low E flat.”

In his 28 January 2016 review ‘In ‘Wagner’s “Ring”: Forging an Epic, Valkyries on Their First Flight’ Zachary Woolfe introduced the exhibition by painting an impression of American Wagner enthusiasm:

“When the cycle finally arrived in this country in the late 1880s, it toured to jam-packed houses: Mr. Horowitz writes that in St. Louis, it was promoted as “The Greatest Operatic Attraction in the World” and packed the 3,500-seat Music Hall with an overflow crowd of 4,000.”

Of the exhibition itself, Woolfe wrote:

“The exhibition provides tantalizing glimpses of this heady era of Wagner performance in America: the cover of Harper's Weekly, depicting the Rhinemaidens' scene at the Met in 1889; the costume Olive Fremstad wore as Brünnhilde in “Die Walküre” in 1911. Audio and video clips of the cycle, distributed generously through the installation, open up the memorabilia and scores like air in a balloon, endowing mere paper with reminders of the boldness and loftiness that so astonished Wagner's early audiences.”

Unfortunately, the exhibition closes before the Washington Ring Cycle opens (16—23 May 2016.) There is no information about whether the exhibition might travel to Washington to coincide with the production. The Morgan Library and Museum is at 225 Madison Avenue at 36th Street, New York, NY1001 6 and the website address is: www.themorgan.org. Woolfe's full review is at the New York Times: www.nytimes.com/2016/01/29/arts/music/review-in-wagners-ring-forging-an-epic-valkyries-on-their-first-flight.html?_r=0.

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.

COMMITTEE 2015 - 2016

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

WAGNER SOCIETY IN NSW MEMBERS AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2015

Ms K Abrahams [0966]; Mr T Accola [1055]; Dr Carole Adams [1158]; Mr D & Mrs V Adamson [1096]; Mr P E Alger [0255]; Ms R Amm [1062]; Mr C Andrew [0772]; Mrs U Armstrong [1061]; Ms Marje Asitworth [1173]; Mr L Astle & Mr N Matthews [1015]; Dr F J Augustus & Mr K Ryrie [0963]; Ms M Bachmann [1132]; Mrs C Bailey [0663]; Mr Trevor Bailey [1161]; Mrs R Baker [1090]; Ms G Barnwell [944]; Sir Nicholas & Lady Shehadie [0798]; Mr C J Baskerville [0817]; Mrs J Bates [0785]; Prof & Mrs Baumgartner [0393]; Ms B Beasley [1104]; Dr J Beeby [0985]; 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]; Mrs R Block [0745]; Mr R Bloor [0967]; Ms A Blunden [1043]; Mr P Bondin & Dr A Singer [1155]; Mr T Bond [1099]; Ms J Bowen [0743]; Prof Denise Bradley and Dr Bruce King [1172]; 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]; Messrs R Buckdale & R H Liu [1095]; Dr R Burek [0982]; Ms C Busby [1087]; Mrs F M Butcher [0918]; Mr Matthew Byrne [1159]; Mr N & Dr M Cameron [1059]; Mr R & Mrs H Carr [1031]; Dr J Casey [0114]; Professor M Cashmere [0877]; Miss A Casimir [0501]; Mrs R Cater-Smith [638]; Mr H Charles & Mrs P Alexander [0951]; Professor M & Dr C Chesterman [0649]; Dr R T & Mrs J M Clarke [0496]; Mr Jonathan Clarke [1160]; Mr M & Mrs J Connery [0334]; 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]; Mr Greg Ellis [1174]; Mr K Elvy & Mr P Dunphy [0988]; Ms J Emmerton [1128]; 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]; Ms Nicole Forrest Green [1157]; 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 Helen Gillam [1170]; 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]; Mrs M Gray [1102]; Mr T Green [933]; Dr J Gregory-Roberts [0748]; Mrs J E Griffin [0540]; Mr M Grubb [0858]; Mr Patrick J Timbs Hall [1169]; Mr H Hallard [0799]; Ms H Halley [1007]; Mr A & Mrs W Hamlin [0593]; Mr Florian Hammerbacher [1171]; Mrs J Hanckel [1091]; Mr I Harper [1117]; Mr D Harrison [939]; Dr F & Dr P Harvey [0427]; Mr S Hatcher [0333]; Mr A Hauserman & Ms J Nash [0876]; Mrs Louise Havekes [1166]; Ms Elizabeth Hayllar [1148]; Ms M A Hayton [0757]; Mr R Henderson [1005]; Miss C Hennessy [0019]; Miss M Hennessy [0019A]; Mr Peter Henson [1165]; 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]; Mrs Joan Humphreys [1162]; Dr I J Hunter [0744]; Dr Gail Huon [1168]; Mr I Hutchinson [1103]; Mrs Mary Ingham [1164]; 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]; Mrs E Johnstone [1131]; Mr A N Jones & Mr J S Liga [0455]; Dr B & Mrs G Jones [0751]; Mrs A Jones [0861]; Ms P Jones [1142]; Mr H & Mrs R Junker [0866]; Mrs N Kaldor [0796]; Mr A & Mrs R Kaldor [0991]; Mr J Kaldor [0996]; Miss I Kallinikos [0596]; Ms C Kaye [1065]; Mr J Kelleher [0965]; Dr S M Kelly [0004]; Mr Aaron Kernighan [1153]; Dr H Kestermann [0995]; Mr R J King [Honorary Life Member]; Mrs M King [1145]; 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 [999]; 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]; 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 Merrett [0115]; Ms A-A Merz [1141]; Dr Greg Millin [1154]; Dr R Mitchell [1014]; Mrs E Moser [0659]; Mr W & Mrs H Naylor [0643]; Mr Matthew Nicholson [1156]; 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]; Dr Malcolm & Mrs Yvonne Pearse [1144]; Mrs S & Mr G Penny [1004]; Mr C J Piper [0222]; Mr George Polonski [1167]; 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]; Mr F and Mrs J Robertson [1163]; Ms A Robinson [1143]; Dr M Rodriguez & Ms R Moxhan [1134]; Mr R & Mrs P Roesch [1000]; Mr P J & Mrs H E Roland [0855]; Ms L M Royds [0823]; Dr J Sanders [0972]; Mrs M Saunders [0683]; Mr D & Mrs D Shannon [1067]; Professor I Shearer AM [0954]; Mr S Sheffer [0101]; Ms N Siano [0619]; Ms R Silver [1054]; Mr S & Mrs D Simpson [1045]; Mr E de Zan [0865]; Mr A Smith [1137]; Mr W & Mrs H Spiller [0671]; Dr L St George [0895]; Mr R H Steele AM [0838]; Mr N Stoke [1136]; Mr R Stone [0615]; Mr T & Mrs R Strong [1027]; Dr D Sturkey [0902]; Mrs I Sültemeyer [0978]; Mrs M Suthers [0014]; Professor H Taylor AC [0990]; Mr L Terracini [0734]; Dr P & Mr G Thomas [0957]; Mr P Thompson [0746]; Mr R Thurling [0830]; Mr G Tipping [1026]; Mrs I Tornya [0800]; 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 [1133]; 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];

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

March 2016

Baden Baden *Tristan und Isolde* - March 19, 22.
 Barcelona *Götterdämmerung* - Mar 3, 7, 11, 14, 19.
 Berlin Deutsche Oper
Rienzi - March 5, 11.
Tannhäuser - March 24, 27.
 Staatsoper
Parsifal - March 20, 25, 28.
 Brno *Holländer* - March 9.
 Budapest State Opera
Die Walküre - March 3, 6, 10, 13, 17, 20.
Die Meistersinger - March 19, 27.
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 27.
 Kiel *Die Walküre* - March 12, 25.
 Leipzig *Parsifal* - March 25.
 Madrid *Das Liebesverbot* - March 3, 4, 5.
 Mannheim *Parsifal* - March 25.
 Munich *Holländer* - March 5, 8, 11.
Lohengrin - March 20, 24, 27, 31.
 Osnabrück *Lohengrin* - March 19, 25, 28.
 Paris Opera Bastille
Die Meistersinger - March 1, 5, 9, 13, 21, 25, 28.
 Poznan *Parsifal* - March 11, 13.
 Salzburg Osterfestspiele
Lohengrin - March 19, 28.
 Stockholm *Parsifal* - March 5, 13, 17, 25, 28.
 Ulm *Lohengrin* - March 24, 29.
 Vienna Staatsoper
Parsifal - March 24, 27, 30.
 Warsaw *Holländer* - March 1.

April 2016

Brno *Holländer* - April 17.
 Chemnitz *Die Meistersinger* - April 10, 17.
Parsifal - April 24.
 Cologne *Parsifal* - April 3, 10, 17.
 Dortmund *Tristan und Isolde* - April 17.
 Frankfurt *Holländer* - April 2, 8, 16, 23.
 Hamburg *Tristan und Isolde* - April 17, 22.
 Heidelberg *Holländer* - April 14, 19, 24.
 Houston *Siegfried* - April 16, 20, 23, 28.
 Kaiserslautern *Tristan und Isolde* - April 9, 30.
 Karlsruhe *Tristan und Isolde* - April 3, 17.
 Kiel *Das Rheingold* - April 20.
Die Walküre - April 3, 23.
 Landshut *Tristan und Isolde* - April 8, 10, 30.
 Leeds Opera North
The Ring - April 23, 30, May 14, 21
 [concert performance].
 Leipzig *Götterdämmerung* - April 30.
 London The Royal Opera
Tannhäuser - April 26, 29.
Parsifal - April 2, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30.
Holländer - April 16, 26, 28.
 Osnabrück *Lohengrin* - April 5, 17, 23.
 Passau *Tristan und Isolde* - April 14, 16, 20, 22.
 Straubing *Tristan und Isolde* - April 26.
 Tokyo *Siegfried* - April 7, 10.
 Ulm *Lohengrin* - April 2, 6, 15, 22, 29.
 Vilnius *Holländer* - April 14.
 Washington DC *The Ring* - April 30, May 2, 4, 6.

May 2016

Berlin Deutsche Oper
Lohengrin - May 5, 8.
Holländer - May 16.
 Bonn
 Dortmund *Tristan und Isolde* - May 29.
 Dresden *Lohengrin* - May 19, 22, 25, 29.
 Erfurt *Die Meistersinger* - May 29.
 Frankfurt *The Ring* - May 5, 8, 14, 16.
 Glyndebourne *Die Meistersinger* - May 21, 25, 29.
 Hamburg *Tristan und Isolde* - May 1, 5, 8.
 Heidelberg *Holländer* - May 14.
 Helsinki *Tristan & Isolde* - May 14, 17, 20, 25, 28.
 Houston *Siegfried* - May 1.
 Innsbruck *Tannhäuser* - May 14, 21, 28.
 Kaiserslautern *Tristan und Isolde* - May 15, 21.
 Karlsruhe *Tristan und Isolde* - May 5, 29.
 Kiel *Die Walküre* - May 5, 15.
 Landshut *Tristan und Isolde* - May 5, 26.
 Leeds Opera North
The Ring - April 23, 30, May 14, 21; 24, 25, 27, 29
 [concert perf.].
The Ring - May 5, 6, 7, 8.
Die Feen - May 14, 21.
Rienzi - May 15, 22.
Das Liebesverbot - May 20.
 London The Royal Opera
Tannhäuser - May 2, 5, 8, 12, 15.
Holländer - May 6, 15, 22, 26.
Parsifal - May 5.
Das Rheingold - May 21, 29.
Die Walküre - May 26.
Tannhäuser - May 14, 25.
Die Meistersinger - May 16, 22, 26, 29.
 Osnabrück *Lohengrin* - May 5.
 Paris Théâtre des Champs-Élysées
Tristan & Isolde - May 12, 15, 28, 21, 24.
Holländer - May 7, 8, 11, 14, 18, 20, 21.
Das Liebesverbot - May 8, 13, 17, 19, 22.
Tristan und Isolde - May 29.
 Seattle New National Theatre
Lohengrin - May 23, 26, 29.
 Strasbourg *Lohengrin* - May 7, 12, 15.
 Stuttgart Staatsoper
Lohengrin - May 10, 14, 18, 21
 Tokyo *The Ring* - April 30, May 2, 4, 6; 10, 11, 13, 15; 17, 18, 20, 22.
 Wiesbaden *Holländer* - May 1.

June 2016

Berlin Deutsche Oper
Tristan und Isolde - June 5, 12, 18.
 Staatsoper
The Ring - June 11, 12, 15, 19; 25, 26, 30, July 2.
Holländer - June 9, 16, 29.
 Bonn *Holländer* - June 12, 17, 23, 26, 29.
 Cologne *Die Meistersinger* - June 3, 5, 8, 11.
 Erfurt *Die Meistersinger* - June 2, 7, 11, 15, 19, 23, 27.
 Glyndebourne *Holländer* - June 12.
 Heidelberg *Tannhäuser* - June 5, 11, 18, 26.
 Innsbruck *Tristan und Isolde* - June 4, 25.
 Kaiserslautern *Tristan und Isolde* - June 26.
 Karlsruhe *Die Walküre* - June 10, 25.
 Kiel *Das Rheingold* - June 30.
 Leipzig *The Ring* - June 28, 29, July 1, 3.
Das Liebesverbot - June 12.
 London ENO
Tristan und Isolde - June 9, 15, 19, 22, 26, 29.
 Royal Festival Hall, Opera North
The Ring - June 28, 29, July 1, 3
 [concert performance].

Manchester Salford Quays, Opera North
The Ring - June 13, 14, 16, 18 [concert performance].
 Mannheim *Siegfried* - June 5.
Götterdämmerung - June 18.
The Ring - June 21, 24, 26, July 2.
 Meiningen *Tannhäuser* - June 28.
 Mulhouse *Das Liebesverbot* - June 3, 5.
 Munich *Die Meistersinger* - June 4.
 Nottingham Opera North
The Ring - June 6, 7, 9, 11 [concert performance].
 Osnabrück *Lohengrin* - June 3.
 Stuttgart *Tristan und Isolde* - June 5, 11.
 Ulm *Lohengrin* - June 15, 19.
 Tokyo New National Theatre
Lohengrin - June 1, 4.
 Warsaw *Tristan und Isolde* - June 12, 15, 18.

July 2016

Baden Baden *Die Walküre* - July 7, 10, 25, 28 [concert performance].
 Bayreuth *Parsifal* - July 25.
The Ring - July 26, 27, 29, 31.
Holländer - July 30.
 Bergslagen Opera på Skäret
Holländer - July 30, 31.
 Berlin Staatsoper
The Ring - June 25, 26, 30, July 2.
Holländer - July 2, 9.
 Cologne *The Ring* - July 14, 15, 16, 17.
 Erl *The Ring* - July 8, 10, 15, 17.
 Frankfurt *Holländer* - July 4.
 Heidelberg *Tannhäuser* - July 2.
 Innsbruck *Das Rheingold* - July 9, 14, 20.
 Karlsruhe *Das Rheingold* - July 8.
 Kiel *Die Walküre* - July 9.
 Leipzig *The Ring* - June 28, 29, July 1, 3.
 London ENO
Tristan und Isolde - July 2, 9.
 Royal Festival Hall, Opera North
The Ring - June 28, 29, July 1, 3
 [concert performance].
 Mainz *Holländer* - July 9.
 Mannheim *Götterdämmerung* - July 28.
The Ring - June 21, 24, 26, July 2.
 Munich *Lohengrin* - July 2.
Holländer - July 19, 22.
Die Meistersinger - July 28, 31.
 Newcastle Sage Gateshead, Opera North
The Ring - July 5, 6, 8, 10 [concert performance].
 Stuttgart *Tristan und Isolde* - July 3, 9.

August 2016

Bayreuth *Parsifal* - August 2, 6, 15, 24, 28.
The Ring - August 7, 8, 10, 12; 20, 21, 23, 25.
Tristan und Isolde - August 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, 22.
Holländer - August 3, 14, 18, 26.
 Bergslagen Opera på Skäret
Holländer - August 4, 6, 7, 11, 13, 14, 20, 21, 27, 28.

September 2016

Minden *Die Walküre* - [no actual dates].
 New York *Tristan und Isolde* - [no actual dates].

October 2016

Chicago *Das Rheingold* - Oct 1, 5, 9, 13, 16, 22.
 Dresden *The Ring* - October 15, 16, 18, 22.
 New York *Tristan und Isolde* - [no actual dates].
 Tokyo *Die Walküre* - Oct 2, 5, 8, 12, 15, 18.

November 2016

Melbourne *The Ring* - November 21, 23, 25, 28; 30, December
 2, 5, 7.
 Minneapolis *Das Rheingold* - November 12, 15, 17, 19, 20.
 Seoul *Lohengrin* - November 17, 20.
 Weimar *Die Meistersinger* - November 5, 13.

December 2016

Karlsruhe *Die Walküre* - December 11 [no other dates].
 Melbourne *The Ring* - November 30, December 2, 5, 7; 9, 12,
 14, 16.
 Weimar *Die Meistersinger* - December 4, 25.

February 2017

New York *Rheingold* - Feb 18 [no other dates].
 Toronto *Götterdämmerung* - February 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 25.
 Weimar *Die Meistersinger* - January 7.

April 2017

Berlin Deutsche Oper
The Ring - April 1, 2, 5, 9; 13, 14, 15, 17.
 Houston *Götterdämmerung* - April 22, 25, 29.
 New York *Holländer* - [no actual dates].
 Tokyo *Siegfried* - April 1, 4.

May 2017

Houston *Götterdämmerung* - May 4, 7.
 New York *Rheingold* - May 5 [no other dates].
Holländer - [no actual dates].
 Stockholm *The Ring* - May 17, 18, 20, 22; 24, 25, 27, 29.
 Wiesbaden *The Ring* - [no actual dates].

June 2017

Düsseldorf *Das Rheingold* - June 23 [no other dates].
 Karlsruhe *Siegfried* - June 10, [no other dates].
 Tokyo *Siegfried* - June 1, 4, 7, 10, 14, 17.

September 2017

Minden *Siegfried* - [no actual dates].

October 2017

Karlsruhe *Götterdämmerung* - October 15, [no other dates].

November 2017

Chicago *Die Walküre* - [no actual dates].

2018/19 Season

New York *The Ring* - [no actual dates].

January

Düsseldorf *Die Walküre* - January 28, [no other dates].

April

Düsseldorf *Siegfried* - April 7, [no other dates].
 Enschede Nederlandse Reisopera
Holländer - [no actual dates].
 Karlsruhe *The Ring* - [Easter][no actual dates].

May

Karlsruhe *The Ring* - [Pentecost][no actual dates].

September

Minden *Götterdämmerung* - [no actual dates].

October

Düsseldorf *Götterdämmerung* - October 27, [no other dates].

November

Chicago *Siegfried* - [no actual dates].

September

Minden *The Ring* - [no actual dates].

2020

March

Chicago *Götterdämmerung* - [no actual dates].

April

Chicago *The Ring* - 3 cycles [no actual dates].

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2016

1. Please provide your name, address and membership number

Name
Address
	City..... State..... Postcode.....
Membership Number

2. Please renew my/our membership from 1 January to 31 December 2016 on the following basis *(please tick one)*

.....	Single member \$65 (single pensioner member \$36)	
.....	Shared members \$95 (shared pensioner members \$56)	
.....	Students \$25 <i>(include a copy of your current ID Card)</i>	\$

3. I/We wish to donate the following amount to the Society.
(Donations of \$2 or more are tax-deductible, and receipts will be issued. All donations are acknowledged in our Newsletter by name, not amounts.)

	\$
--	----------

4. Total

Please complete this form and post it to:

**The Treasurer
The Wagner Society in NSW Inc
GPO Box 4574
Sydney NSW 2001**

	\$
--	----------

4(a). Renewing by cheque or money order - *Please include your cheque or money order, made payable to The Wagner Society, when you post this form.*

4(b). Renewing by bank account transfer - *Please use your bank's internet banking facilities to send your payment electronically to:*

Please use your bank's internet banking facilities to send your payment electronically to

Westpac Banking Corporation, Paddington NSW Branch
Account Name: The Wagner Society
BSB: 032040
Account Number: 911323
Payee Reference: Your surname, initials and membership number
 (These will be printed on the Wagner Society's bank statement)

4(c). There is a new facility on the Society's Home page (www.wagner.org.au) for credit card payments using PayPal.

6. Signatures

 Signature Signature
...../...../2016 Date renewed Name in BLOCK LETTERS Name in BLOCK LETTERS

A DAY WITH THE RING PETER BASSETT

If you are going to be in Melbourne during Opera Australia's Ring cycles in November/December next year, you won't want to miss one of the full-day symposia A Day with the Ring being held between the performances of *Die Walküre* and *Siegfried* in each cycle, on Thursday 24 November, Saturday 3 December and Tuesday 13 December 2016.

Conceived and chaired by Peter Bassett on behalf of Renaissance Tours, these symposia will feature sessions on The Evolving Stage, dealing with the changing focus of Ring productions since Wagner's time, including filmed reconstructions of the 1876 performances; Visions of the Ring, the relationship between the Ring and the visual arts; the *Götterdämmerung* Choruses; What happened to Siegfried, the changing place of Siegfried at the heroic centre of Wagner's drama, and the most celebrated performance of a great Victorian-born Brünnhilde, Marjorie Lawrence. There will also be conversations with singers from the Melbourne production and with musicians of the Ring orchestra, and distinguished panelists will share their views on the production. The symposia will be held in the conference centre of the monumental State Library of Victoria, and the day will include a buffet lunch and morning and afternoon teas.

Joining Peter will be art expert, author and curator Christopher Menz; Opera Australia Chorus Master Anthony Hunt, and ABC presenter and author Christopher Lawrence as well as special guests from the production, from academia and the media. For further details and booking information see the Renaissance Tours website at <http://renaissancetours.com.au/tours/opera/a-day-with-the-ring>. Admission is open to the general public.

Renaissance Tours

Level 4, 47 York Street, Sydney NSW 2000
| GPO Box 5068, Sydney NSW 2001

1300 727 095 (Australia) | 0800 403 621
(New Zealand) | phone +61 2 9299 5801
| fax +61 2 9299 5805 | email info@renaissancetours.com.au



The Rhinedaughters and "Sea of Humanity" in *Das Rheingold* in Opera Australia's 2013 Ring Cycle in Melbourne
(Photo: <https://opera.org.au/melbourne/ring-cycle>)



Arthur Judd as Fafner and the Dragon in *Siegfried* in Opera Australia's 2013 Ring Cycle in Melbourne
(Photo: <https://opera.org.au/melbourne/ring-cycle>)

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)

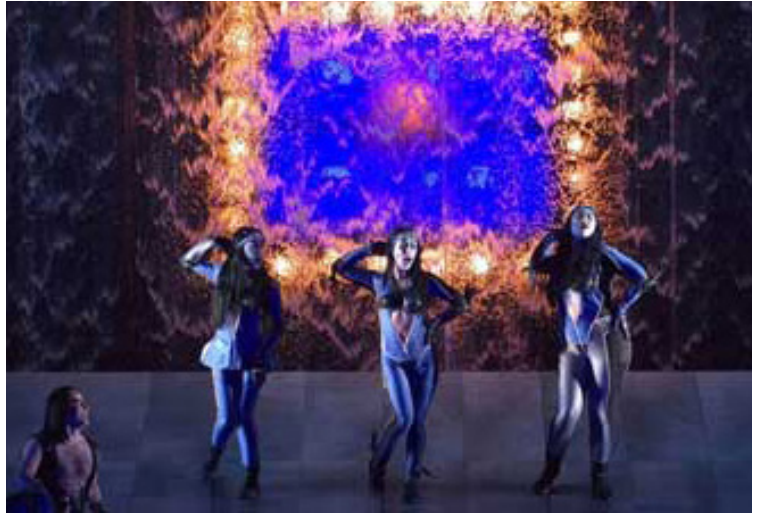
Website: www.wagner.org.au | Website enquiries: wagner_nsw@optusnet.com.au

(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)

THE THREE WAGNER PRODUCTIONS IN STATE OPERA OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S WAGNER DECADE - THE SUBJECT OF PETER BASSETT'S TALK TO THE WAGNER SOCIETY IN NSW'S FUNCTION ON SUNDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2016 (SEE REPORT INSIDE).



John Wegner in State Opera of South Australia's 1998 staging of Pierre Strosser's production of *The Ring Cycle* from the Théâtre du Châtelet



The State Opera of South Australia's 2004 production of Wagner's *The Ring Cycle* - Alberich John Wegner, and Rheindaughters: Woglinde Natalie Jones, Wellgunde Donna-Maree Dunlop, Flosshilde Zan McKendree-Wright [Photo: <http://inkpot.com/concert/adelaideringpage1.html>].



The Flower Maidens from the 2001 production of *Parsifal* by State Opera of South Australia

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)
