

The Wagner Society



NEWSLETTER No. 96, May 2004

IN NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

President's Report

Dear Members

Your committee

I'm pleased to advise that Mary Haswell is our new Secretary. We have been without a secretary since Barbara McNulty resigned from the position at the July 2003 AGM, and I know you will join with me in welcoming Mrs Haswell to the committee, and in thanking her for making her time and energy available for our Society.

Elsina Rasink, who has been our treasurer for the past 3 years, will be resigning at the May AGM. If you have a knowledge of MYOB (or similar software) and can spare a few hours each month to keep our financial records up-to-date and attend our meetings and functions, please contact me or any other member of the committee.

Recent Society Events

On Sunday 15 February, we held a "post mortem" discussion on the Opera Australia production of The Flying Dutchman.

In our last Newsletter, based on subscriber information from OA, I said that this would be a restudied production of Barrie Kosky's 1996 Flying Dutchman for OA, which had been made possible by a bequest from the estate of Dr Leonard Hanson, the first president of our Society. This turned out not to be the case, and what we saw was a new production by director Cathy Dadd, although the programme acknowledged that elements of Michael Anderson's design for the Kosky production were used.

There was general agreement at the meeting on the glories of the performance – Lisa Gasteen's Senta (although her death by being mysteriously crushed in the stage machinery which raised and lowered the Dutchman's vessel prompted one member of the audience to shout out "Where is Senta?", and seemed more appropriate to last year's production of Salome where Ms Gasteen sang the title role), Jay Hunter Morris's Erik, and the male chorus of OA.

Overall, the meeting was not unreservedly enthusiastic about the new Sydney production, for two main reasons. First, many saw the production itself as a dumbing down of Mr Kosky's far more challenging and controversial interpretation in 1996. Second, there were health and vocal problems with other members of the cast. Arend Baumann was replaced by Daniel Sumegi as Daland before the first performance, and Jonathan Summers was replaced as the Dutchman by Warwick Fyfe after four performances. Opinions were divided on Warwick Fyfe's performance, which some felt was more wooden than the producer required.

For me, Summers' Amfortas was one of the highlights of the production of Parsifal in Adelaide in 2001, and I was disappointed that he was unable to repeat this triumph as the Dutchman. I am a sort of Warwick Fyfe groupie, and make a point of trying to see at least one performance of everything he sings with OA (although I failed to catch his Papageno, as the performance I booked was cancelled because of fumes in the pit.) At the time he took over the role of the Dutchman, Mr Fyfe was also singing the elder Germont in

PRESIDENT'S REPORT continued p.3

PATRON:	Sir Charles Mackerras
HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS:	Prof Michael Ewans Mr Richard King Mr Horst Hoffman Mr Joseph Ferfaglia

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

Coming Events	P2
Presidents Report - continued	P3-4
Update on the Adelaide Ring Cycle	P5
List of Financial Members at 31 December 2003	P6
AGM - President's report and draft annual accounts	P7-9
Ravens Report	P12

Meetings **Dates** & Coming **Events**

DATE	EVENTS - 2004	LOCATION
Saturday May 22	Annual General Meeting - followed by a recital by the four Sydney Conservatorium opera students who we have sponsored in German language courses at the Goethe Institut this year - Erin O'Connor, Emily Garth, Rebecca Hilder and Jessica Pratt, accompanied by Sharolyn Kimmorley. Meet these young rising stars at the catered afternoon tea to celebrate Wagner's birthday.	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM
June	No function	
Sunday July 18	Launch of the book "The Once and Future Ring" by Dr Antony Ernst, TBC	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM
August	No function	
September, October & November	There will be three more functions during the rest of 2004, on Sundays September 19, October 17 and November 14, and details of these functions will be in your August Newsletter	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM
December	No function - Adelaide Ring Cycle	
2005		
February	Post- Adelaide Ring Cycle discussion	
Goethe-Institut address 90 Ocean Street Woollahra (corner of Jersey Road)		

Where videos and DVDs are shown, we endeavour to use subtitled performances only. As not all recordings include them, please feel free to bring a libretto to help you to follow the performance.

COMMITTEE **2004**

President and Membership Secretary	Roger Cruickshank	9357 7631
Vice President	Barbara McNulty OBE	9487 1344
Vice President	Julian Block	9337 6978
Treasurer	Elle Rasink	9369 1779
Secretary	Mary Haswell	
Members	Sandy Dudgeon	9489 0570
	Dennis Mather	9560 1860
Newsletter Editor	Terence Watson	9517 2786
Public Officer	Peter Nicholson	9436 1097

New Members

The following people have joined the Society since the last Newsletter -

Welcome to:

John Byrne (906)

Edith and Hans Freeman (907)

John Pearce (908)

Jorge Rodrigues (909)

Tony Bonin (910)

Robert McHugh (911)

Mary Meppem (912)



President's Report continued

Traviata and Papageno, and at one point sang these 3 roles over 4 nights, which would tax the vocal resources of a saint. Having to sing his big solo number – the recitative and aria / monologue “Die Frist ist um” – without the chance to warm up on stage didn't help either. I'm sure that if Mr Fyfe can conquer his nervousness, we will see and hear an artist who will make us all sit up and take notice.

Last weekend (8/9 May) I went to Melbourne to see the final Dutchman performance there. First, it had a completely different cast – Elizabeth Whitehouse (Senta), John Wegner (Dutchman), Arend Baumann (Daland) and the amazingly-named and physically impressive Thomas Studebaker as Erik. And, more importantly, the production was significantly altered from the Sydney one – Ms Dadd had listened to her critics.

We started with the same silly swirling mists and illuminated Dutchman's head during the overture, at the end of which – because this was the so-called Paris Version - the jolly burghers of Melbourne clapped their little hearts out. The larger space available on the Arts Centre stage meant that there were a few minor adjustments in the first scenes, but the first significant change came when John Wegner arrived with Daland to meet Senta for the first time. Here was a Dutchman with a swagger and real sexual magnetism, someone Senta could fall in love with for himself and not just because of her fixation with his portrait. The lovers' duet was no longer a static affair but a rapturous encounter full of movement. Bewilderingly, at two crucial moments, Whitehouse's voice disappeared altogether, the only vocal blemishes in a searing encounter which put memories of the Sydney performances and production far behind. Even George Albrecht, whose conducting in Sydney had been somewhat pedestrian, seemed to revel in the wonderful music-making on-stage.

Ms Dadd's biggest change was in the final scene. Eric does not bring a gun onstage, allowing Senta to fend off her father and friends to disappear under the stage machinery as in Sydney. Instead, when the Dutchman climbs the stairs into the belly of his ship, Senta is at first restrained by her friends, but then breaking free and rushing after him, she is encased in the arms of the overwhelming Erik, who kills her and lowers her lifeless body tenderly to the stage. The scene is now in darkness, except for Mary, who is sitting alone on the packing cases at the left front of the stage, and picks up Senta's book and starts leafing it.

Then, as Mary too fades into darkness, the Dutchman is seen on the deck of his boat, holding Senta's lifeless body in his arms. Senta is his angel, and he is redeemed by her true love – and so is Ms Dadd's production. What Melbourne saw was a consistent, literal interpretation which, whatever your reaction to it, was true to itself and to its type. Given the 8 years that passed between the Kosky and Dadd productions in Sydney, and the mediocre paying audiences the Dutchman attracted in Sydney, we may not see the “Melbourne Version” here. But if it is ever revived in Sydney, it is well worth a second look.

I have one final quibble about something vile in both the Kosky and Dadd productions. In the musically astonishing “dueling matelots” scene, the Norwegian Chorus is on stage, frightened, singing their four-square C-major shanty, and the Dutchman's crew is ... is nowhere. Instead, they were pre-recorded (by the Norwegians!) and are coming to us in an unearthly manner over the loud speakers, along with the special effects and the wind noise! Live opera doesn't come via pre-recorded performances over loud speakers! I assume that this is done for economic reasons, so that OA doesn't have to pay for a second male chorus to sit around all night just to sing for a few minutes at the end of the opera, but it is a sad state of affairs for opera performance in any country when local productions are forced to use pre-recorded singers, and live singers become a luxury that only overseas companies supported by heavy government subsidies can afford. Not happy, Barry and Cathy!

I'm pleased to report that Cathy Dadd has been nominated by Opera Foundation Australia as the 2004 Bayreuth Scholar. We congratulate Ms Dadd on this achievement and, if her nomination is confirmed by the German government, we will as usual provide the return airfare to Europe.

On Sunday 21 March, Robert Gay spoke on Berlioz and Wagner. Mr Gay regularly lectures on music in Sydney and throughout Australia, and had just completed a series of eight lectures for the University of Sydney's Continuing Education programme, entitled “Wagner and the music of his time”, in which he had explored the influences of Wagner's contemporaries on his musical development. Mr Gay may have ruffled a few feathers by suggesting that Wagner borrowed material from Berlioz, but he provided musical examples to illustrate his point. Mr Gay plans a series of six advanced lectures as part of the Continuing Education programme starting in October, which will function as an introduction to the Neidhardt Ring which starts in Adelaide in November, and we'll let you know how to apply when this series is formally announced.



President's Report continued

On Sunday 18 April, Margaret Whitlam talked about moments musical and Wagnerian that have permeated her distinguished life. This was then followed (after our usual battle with technology) by a screening of one of Mrs Whitlam's favourite "chunks", the love duet from Act 2 of Tristan and Isolde. Although we chose a DVD which showed a romantic and traditional interpretation of the two lovers, it was generally remarked that, putting aside the sumptuous sounds of their singing, both were simply too large to allow anyone to suspend their disbelief and imagine for a moment that any form of passion or union was possible.

I'm sorry to report that, after 10 years of preparing and serving our afternoon teas at each function, Shirley Robertson retired at our April meeting. Unless someone else volunteers to take over organising our refreshments, I regret that we will not be able to maintain the high the Shirley has provided for all these years. Anyone who is interested in taking over these functions, with support from committee members, should contact me or any other member of the committee.

Forthcoming Events

On Saturday 22 May, Wagner's birthday, we will hold our AGM, followed by a recital by the four Sydney Conservatorium opera students whom we have sponsored in German language courses at the Goethe Institut this year - Erin O'Connor, Emily Garth, Rebecca Hilder and Jessica Pratt, accompanied by Sharolyn Kimmorley, the Bayreuth Scholar for 2003. They will then be our guests at a catered afternoon tea to celebrate Wagner's birthday, which will take the place of the annual luncheon we have enjoyed at The Women's Club over the past few years. A formal notice of AGM was posted out with proxy and nomination forms, which I hope that all members have received. The important thing to remember is that this is being held on a Saturday, which is not a traditional day for our meetings.

On Sunday 18 July, after a number of false starts for which I apologise, we will launch Doctor Antony Ernst's book on the Ring entitled "The Once and Future Ring", which the Society is publishing. A few weeks ago Antony was awarded his Doctorate for a thesis on Janacek, and we congratulate him on his success. The book contains sections on each of the Ring operas, and is loosely based on a series of talks Antony gave to the Society in 1998 before the first Adelaide Ring, which have been significantly revised and rewritten with substantial new material.

As well as launching his book (which will cost \$25 and which I'm sure Antony will be delighted to autograph) Dr Ernst will give a talk on another aspect of the Ring, as part of our preparation for the Neidhardt Ring in Adelaide in November.

Our 25th Anniversary

In our last Newsletter, I mentioned that in 2005 we will celebrate the Society's 25th year and the 100th edition of our Newsletter, and I asked whether anyone had copies of old membership lists or other details of our membership history, or know of anyone who had records from the early years of the Society, so that we could publish a complete list of our members from 1980 onwards. Alas, no-one has responded. If you can think of any way that we can reconstruct our past membership, please call me.

A footnote on Wagner performances

2004 is book-ended by two Australian Wagner performances, The Flying Dutchman at the start of the year, and the Neidhardt Ring at the end. Now that the Dutchman (in both its versions) is behind us, we have only 6 months to prepare before the second Adelaide Ring is unveiled. Whatever its fate, this second Adelaide Ring will almost certainly be the last we will see for at least the next six years, and we owe it to the performers and the artistic team, and to ourselves, to make sure that we are as prepared as we can be for this magnificent experience.

Roger Cruickshank 10 May 2004

For Your Diary

The Ring Cycle	State Opera of South Australia - Adelaide 2004	Adelaide 17 Nov to 11 Dec
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Donations

The Society welcomes all donations and they can be addressed to the Secretary, Wagner Society in NSW Inc, GPO Box 4574, Sydney NSW 2001. Such donations help us to carry out our objectives of promoting the performance of Wagner's works. Receipts are issued for all donations, and donations for \$2 and over are tax-deductible.

Donations have gratefully been received from the following members:

Barbara and Ian Brady, Carole Bailey, Rae and Russ Cottle, Alan Hauserman and Janet Nash, Vanessa King, Anthony Jones, Jennifer Ferns, Annie Marshall, Brian Ducker, Neville Mercer, William Felbel, Lorna Martin, Janet and Hugh Wayland, David and Sabina Full, Jeffrey Smart and Ermes de Zan, Harry and B Littman, Rosemary and Julian Block, Terry and Greg Chesher, Ann Weeden, Clare Hennessy, Margaret Hennessy, Cherry Jackaman, Shirley Robertson, Heinz Ebert, Ian Maxwell, Richard Buckdale and Murray Johnstone, Patricia Moore, and Judy Ferfaglia.

The Ring Cycle, State Opera of South Australia, Adelaide 2004

For those of you not attending or who have not seen the latest Valhalla newsletter from the State Opera of South Australia, here is a summary of the General Manager's, Stephen Phillips', update:

- Ring bookings have passed the \$5 million mark, ie 90% of available seats - so get in quick if you are thinking of going
- Rehearsals are progressing well with many artists already in Adelaide
- The set has been installed in the Festival Theatre and passed its tests over a number of weeks. "The magnificent stage designs...dominate the large auditorium...in a way that will totally engage the audience from start to finish. Many of the extraordinary special effects and complicated items of stage machinery were tested, including the amazing water curtain, fire effects, pyrotechnics, hydraulics and automated items."
- "...the entire production will be re-installed in mid-September...for further sage rehearsals and fine-tuning of technical operations."

Stuart Skelton: "the finest Siegmund of our time"

[Yorkshire Post on Act I of
Die Walküre at Opera North)

The Valhalla newsletter also carried a report of a great success by Stuart Skelton - one of our special guests at the 2002 AGM, along with Lisa Harper-Brown and Francis Greep and Michael Black at the piano. Stuart's performances of Winterstürme wichen dem Wonnemond from Die Walküre and Allmächt'ger Vater, blick herab! from Rienzi foreshadowed for the lucky audience the reviews that he has now received as a result of standing in for Peter Seiffert in a concert in the Leipzig Gewandhaus in February. On a recent trip to Europe I was lucky enough to hear Peter Seiffert both in the title role of Lohengrin in Bayreuth and paired with Deborah Polaski in Mahler's Das Leid von der Erde with the Berlin Philharmonic under Simon Rattle. I was very impressed with Seiffert's rich, ringing Heldentenor voice. I also heard a concert in the Gewandhaus and was overwhelmed by the outstanding acoustics of this communist designed and built hall.

The critics, according to Valhalla, gave Stuart bouquets galore: "Note the name. And if it appears in an opera programme anywhere, go there", effused Peter Korfmacher for the Leipziger Volkszeitung!

So, if you have not booked for Adelaide - you now MUST, if only to hear "The last minute replacement tenor [who] puts an end to the hero shortage (Korfmacher)"!! Opera Australia has a copy of the full Leipzig review on

its web-site at:

<http://www.opera-australia.org.au/opera/oaweb.nsf/Wf-framesmaker2?readform&loc=http://www.opera-australia.org.au/opera/oaweb.nsf/lookups/111-SPECIALOFFERS?opendocument&blk=3>

Stuart's next appearance that I found on the web was for Saturday 13 March 2004, 8.00pm, in Bern Cathedral, Bern, Switzerland (if you happen to be in the vicinity!): The Dream of Gerontius, Stuart Skelton - tenor; Pavel Daniluk - bass; Marie-Claude Chappuis - mezzo-soprano; Bern Oratorio Choir; Bern Symphony Orchestra conductor - Laurent Gendre.

[Ed.]



Financial Members of the Society as at 31 December 2003

Mary Adelstein, Paul Alger, Jessie Anderson, Carl Andrew, Philip Bacon, Sybil Baer, Carole Bailey, Patricia Baillie, Ewe and Armand Bartos, Marie Bashir, Colin Baskerville, Peter Bassett, Janette Bates, Marlene Baumgartner, Margareta Baxter, Sandra Beesley, Patricia Bellamy and Carolyn Bloch, Rosemary and Julian Block, Jessica Block, Bruce Boman, Jan Bowen, Barbara and Ian Brady, Noelene Brasche, Gabriella Bremner-Moore and Michael Moore, Ruth Bridges, Bill Brooks and Alasdair Beck, Susan and James Buchanan, Richard Buckdale and Murray Johnstone, Margaret Budge, Margot Buttrose, Mary Jo and Lloyd Capps, Stephen Carroll, Arthur Carter, John Casey, Maurice Cashmere, Ann Casimir, Alexander Cater and Rosemary Cater-Smith, Terry and Greg Chesher, Colleen and Michael Chesterman, Julie and Terry Clarke, Christopher Coffey, Aviva and Alec Cohen, Gertraud and Richard Cohen, Adrian Collette, Daryl Colquhoun, Susan Condon, Jennifer Condon, Joan and Maxwell Connery, Susan Conrade, Rae and Russ Cottle, Moya Crane, Monica Craston, Roger Cruickshank, Michael Day and Philip Cornwell, Barbara de Rome, Gretchen Dechert, Lorenza dei Medici, David Delany and Alister Wong, Charlotte and Hartmut Derichs, Ian Dicker, Clyde Dominish, Harry Donaldson, Brenda and Brian Donovan, June Donsworth, Barbara and Nicholas Dorsch, Barbara and Andrew Dowe, Brian Ducker, Sandy and Phil Dudgeon, Helen Dunlop, Heinz Ebert, Eloise Evans, Clive Evatt, Michael Ewans (Honorary Life Member), William Felbel, Alexander Feld, Judy Ferfoggia and Joseph Ferfoggia (Honorary Life Member), Jennifer Ferns, Michele and Onofrio Ferrara, Nancy Fleming, Elizabeth Fletcher, Bob Foster, Murray Fraser, Brian Freestone, Stephen Freiberg and Donald Campbell, David and Sabina Full, Warwick Fyfe, Ingrid Garofali, Richard Gastineau-Hills, Leona Geeves, William Gillespie, Sue Gillies, Maire Glacken, Elizabeth Gordon-Werner, Andrew Goy, Robert Graham, Nance Grant, Kevin and Helen Grant, John Gregory-Roberts, Joan Griffin, Maxwell Grubb, Helen and Peter Hall, Hugh Hallard, Wendy and Andrew Hamlin, Robert Hampshire, Miriam Harris, Siss Hartnett and Britt Hartnett, Pat and Frank Harvey, Mary Haswell, Simon Hatcher, Alan Hauserman and Janet Nash, Melinda Hayton, Diana Heath, Clare Hennessy, Margaret Hennessy, James Henningham, Jennifer and Maxwell Herford, Winifred Hinds, Marie Hiscock, Patricia and Roy Hodson, Horst Hoffmann (Honorary Life Member), Pauline Holgerson, Theo Hudson, Cynthia

Hughes, Lydia and Irvine Hunter, Ian Hutchison, Esteban Insausti, John Iredale, Elizabeth Jacka, Cherry Jackaman, Judith Jacks, Douglas Jamieson, Esther Janssen, Peter Jenkins, Brett Johnson, Elizabeth Jones, Anthony Jones, Colin Jones and Paul Curran, Gillian and Brian Jones, Anne Jones, Erika Jumikis, Renate and Herman Junker, Naomi Kaldor, Despina Kallinikos and Iphygenia Kallinikos, Angela Kayser, Susan Kelly, Julie and Denis King, Richard King (Honorary Life Member), Vanessa King, Anna-Lisa Klettenberg, Sylvia and Karl Koller, Ira Kowalski, Paul Lehmann, Jim Leigh, Harry and Britta Littman, Robert Lloyd, Elizabeth Long, Bruce Love, Joan MacKenzie, Charles MacKerras (Patron), Colin and A B Mackerras, Jennifer Manton, Annie Marshall, Alastair Martin and Julian Lockyer, Lorna Martin, Richard Mason and Camron Dyer, Dennis Mather and John Studdert, Jane Mathews, Ian Maxwell, Diana McBain, Marie McCann, David McCarthy, Tony McDonald, Pam and Ian McGaw, John McGrath, Barbara McNulty, Neville Mercer, Irene and Wolfgang Merretz, Michael Millard, Judi and Trevor Mitchell, Patricia Moore, Elsie and James Moore, Elizabeth Moser, Judith Mulveney, Desmond Murphy, David Mutton, Helen and Bill Naylor, Barbara and Peter Nicholson, Margery and Geoffrey Nicoll, Walter Norris, Monica and Aliro Olave, Diana-Rose Orr, Colin Piper, Neville Pollard, Marian and Rodney Purvis, Elle Rasink, Kenneth Reed, Garry Richards, Juliet Richters and Alan Whelan, Shirley Robertson, Heather and Peter Roland, Lorraine Royds, Alan Salter, Mitzi Saunders, Cecilia Segura, Penelope Seidler, Samuel Sheffer, Sir Nicholas and Lady Shehadie, Nizza Siano, Gunter Slamer, Jeffrey Smart and Ermes de Zan, Michael Smyth, John Snelling, Hannah and Willi Spiller, Lourdes St George, Ross Steele, Andre Stein, Meredith Stokes, Richard Stone and John Thomson, Douglas Sturkey, Jean Louis Stuurop, Margaret and William Suthers, Susan and John Sutton, Annemarie Swebbs, Charles Terrason, Pauline Thompson, Peter Thompson and Alynn Pratt, Robert Thurling, Isolde Tornya, David Triggs, Susan Upton, John Vallentine, Mary Wallach, Jane and Barry Walters, Diana Wang, Edna and Will Watson, Terence Watson, Greg Watters, Janet and Hugh Wayland, Ley Webster, Ann Weeden, Ross Whitelaw, Margaret Whitlam, Deanne Whittleston and Anthony Gregg, Gary Wilson, and Anna Ziegler.



President's Report for the financial year **1 April 2003 to 31 December 2003**

To be delivered to the Annual General Meeting to be held on **22 May 2004**

Dear Members

I am pleased to present the 24th Annual Report of the Wagner Society in New South Wales Incorporated, for the nine months from 1 April 2003 to 31 December 2003.

Functions

- Looking back at the Society's activities over that period, they included
- In April, a talk on Parsifal by Antony Ernst, which produced a passionate response from Cecilia Segura which we published in our December Newsletter.
- In May, our dinner to celebrate Richard Wagner's 190th birthday, with Bill Gillespie OAM, acknowledged as the father of the Australian Ring, as guest speaker
- In June and July, two seminars organised in conjunction with the re-staged production of Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg at the Capitol Theatre, which marked Simone Young's farewell Wagner performances as musical director of Opera Australia. One seminar was organised jointly with the Art Gallery of New South Wales, with speakers Antony Ernst, art historian Arthur Lawrence, and Jungian Dr Sally Kester. The second seminar was a talk by Professor Heath Lees, president of the Wagner Society of New Zealand, at the State Library, which preceded a performance of Meistersinger attended by members of both the New Zealand and New South Wales Societies
- In September, a master class by the renowned Wagnerian bass, Sir Donald McIntyre, which we sponsored jointly with the Conservatorium of Music. The students at the master class included Jessica Pratt and Opera Australia's Warwick Fyfe
- In October, Dr Terence Watson's talk entitled "Wagner and Power – Part 2 – Gesellschaft und Gemeinschaft" (Society and Community)
- In November, a function at the home of Mr Denis Condon, a passionate conservator of mechanical and player pianos and their rolls, at which we heard "live" performances by long-dead pianists which were more immediate and intimate than most recordings on LP or CD
- and in December, prior to our end-of-year party, a short film about two passionate people who pursued without compromise for over 50 years their dream of a private opera company - Sally and Anthony Amato.

We organised a theatre party for Edo de Waart's final Wagner performance with the Sydney Symphony, the Siegfried Idyll and a rapturous concert performance of the third Act of Die Walküre with Elizabeth Connell and Bruce Martin, and we pursued the strange story of the Richard Wagner Steinway, which appeared in

the foyer of the Angel Place Recital Hall for a few days in late May, and then was gone.

Finances

The Honorary Treasurer's Report will show that our financial position is sound and that in addition to meeting all our normal costs we provided almost \$17,000 in sponsorships over this nine month period.

Thanks

We continue our good relations with the German Consulate, the Consul General, and with the Goethe Institut, and we thank their officers and staff for their continued help and support.

We are also pleased to continue to provide financial assistance to the Bayreuth Scholar, who is nominated to the German government each year by Opera Foundation Australia.

There are many people in the Society I wish to thank, and foremost among them special thanks go to the members of your Committee who work so hard on your behalf. To our two Vice Presidents, Barbara McNulty and Julian Block, our new Honorary Secretary Mary Haswell, our Honorary Treasurer Elle Rasink, who resigns at this AGM from this position to pursue her own dreams overseas, to Terence Watson, who is also the Editor of our Newsletter, to Sandy Dudgeon and to Dennis Mather.

Special thanks also to Shirley Robertson, who provides our afternoon teas; to John Studdert, our web master; to our faithfully Ravens, Camron Dyer and Richard Mason; and to Peter Nicholson, our Public Officer.

Future

2003 saw the departures of Edo de Waart, chief conductor and artistic director of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, and Simone Young, musical director of Opera Australia. Both championed Wagner's work in Sydney and beyond, and we are waiting to see whether their replacements, Messrs Gelmetti and Hickox (who takes up his post in 2005) will share their passion.

Finally

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

Roger Cruickshank 22 May 2004



DRAFT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2003**The Wagner Society in New South Wales Inc****Revenue and Expenditure Statement**

for 9 months to 31 December 2003

2002-03		9 Months to 31 December 2003		
\$	Membership and Activities	\$	\$	\$
11887	MEMBERSHIP - Revenue		8438	
	LESS Administration Costs			
2521	Newsletter	3768		
1561	Stationery, postage etc	423		
850	Insurance	872		
447	Subscriptions			
330	Website fees	350		
231	Postbox rental			
133	Statutory and other fees	159		
69	Member gifts, awards etc30			
16	Bank charges			
5729	MEMBERSHIP SURPLUS (DEFICIENCY)	<u>5602</u>	<u>(5602)</u>	2836
	ACTIVITIES			
4185	Lectures and functions	9089		
3120	Wagner Birthday			
2900	Cost: Wagner birthday			
4098	Lectures and functions	<u>-8985</u>	104	
1796	Theatre parties	3960		
1716	Cost: Theatre parties	<u>-3744</u>	216	
1462	Bayreuth tickets			
2395	Competitions		1128	
120	Publications and advertising	50		
120	Cost: Publications	<u>-38</u>	12	
42	Bank interest			
	ACTIVITIES SURPLUS (DEFICIENCY)			1460
Donations and Sponsorships				
4106	Donations received		6457	
-12069	LESS:Sponsorships (Note 1)		<u>-16815</u>	
(7963)	SPONSORSHIP SURPLUS (DEFICIENCY)			<u>(10358)</u>
2052	TOTAL SURPLUS (DEFICIENCY) FOR PERIOD			(6062)

Note 1: Sponsorships

State Opera of South Australia:	Sir Donald MacIntyre visit and masterclass	2,000
	Stuart Skelton, Siegmund, 2nd Instalment	3,333
	Jennifer Barnes, Grimgerde, 1st Instalment	2,500
Bayreuth Scholar 2003 - Sharolyn Kimmorley		2,073
Sydney Conservatorium	Production of Figaro	1,000
	German Language Scholarships - Erin O'Connor, Rebecca Hilder, Jessica Pratt and Emily Garth	1,909
Miriam Gordon Stewart: Tuition fees, Europe		2,000
Opera Australia: Flying Dutchman		<u>2,000</u>
		<u>16,815</u>



Balance Sheet

as at 31 December 2003

2003 (\$)		2003(\$)	(2003 -\$)
	Current Assets		
	CASH		
16023	Cash at bank	5950	
891	Public Donation Account	189	
131	Investment Account		
	INVENTORY		
143	Publications, stationery	90	
	EQUIPMENT (filing cabinet & urn)		
285	Equipment at cost	285	
(285)	Equipment, accumulated depreciation	(285)	
17188	Total assets		6229
	Current Liabilities		
4596	Bayreuth tickets	(4188)	
169	Prepaid membership	<u>4056</u>	
(4765)	Total Liabilities	(132)	<u>132</u>
12423	Net Assets	6361	
	Analysis of Net Assets		
10371	Previous year surplus retained	12423	
<u>2052</u>	Plus current year surplus (deficiency)	<u>(6062)</u>	
12423	Total Surplus	6361	6361

Victorian Symphony Orchestra all-Wagner concert

On Thursday 9 and Friday 10 September, the Victorian Symphony Orchestra is giving an all-Wagner concert at the Victorian Arts Centre, Melbourne. The programme is:

Tannhäuser - overture

Tristan und Isolde - Prelude and Liebestod

Die Walküre - Act 1

Artists are Larissa Shevchenko, Glen Winslade and Bruce Martin.

The Wagner Society of Victoria has arranged for subscriber discounts to be available to members of the Wagner Society in NSW. If you're interested, call (03) 9685 2444 telling them that you are a member of the Wagner Society and you will be given the Subscribers discount.

Tristan and Isolde - not the opera but possibly an interesting film!

Below is an edited version of a press release for a film about Tristan and Isolde that may be on your local cinema screens this year - or it may go straight to video! There is still no more later information that I can track, but the screenings are scheduled for 2004.

"Thursday 4th September 2003: Tristan & Isolde Update:

"Filming has begun in Galway, Ireland on Scott Free's TRISTAN & ISOLDE, a tale set in the Dark Ages, of a princess and young warrior's love affair which threatens to tear apart an uneasy peace between England and Ireland, it was announced today by Scott Free Productions.

"TRISTAN & ISOLDE is directed by Kevin Reynolds (The Count of Monte Cristo, Waterworld, Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves) and written by Dean Georgaris (Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life, Paycheck, Mission Impossible 3). It stars James Franco (Tristan), Sophia Myles (Isolde)



and Rufus Sewell (Lord Marke). The film is being produced for Scott Free by Lisa Ellzey (The Gathering Storm), Giannina Facio (Matchstick Men), Moshe Diamant (A Sound of Thunder) and Elie Samaha (The Whole Ten Yards). "Ridley Scott (Black Hawk Down, Gladiator, Blade Runner), Tony Scott (Spy Game, Enemy of the State, Top Gun), Jim Lemley (We Were Soldiers) and Frank Hubner serve as executive producers. Co-producing are Anne Lai and Jan Fantl.

"This has long been a passion of ours and we look forward to collaborating with the wonderful team we have assembled for this film," says Scott Free. James Franco is best known for his title role in TNT's 'James Dean'. Sophia Myles will next be seen as Lady Penelope in Thunderbirds. Her other films credits include Underworld (on show in Sydney). Rufus Sewell will next be seen in a TV adaptation of 'Charles II.' His many film credits amongst others include A Knight's Tale, and Kenneth Branagh's."

The press release and the update (below) come from http://www.aboutrufus.com/tristan_and_isolde.htm, which also includes a link to some photographs of some of the sets and standards used in the film.

**Tuesday 23rd September 2003:
Tristan & Isolde Update:**

Just received word today that the filming on Tristan & Isolde has finished it's exterior filming in Ireland and has moved to Prague for six weeks for exterior filming. After that they will then move to studios for 4 weeks of filming. [There is no mention of who is composing/compiling the music. However, one contributor to the newsgroup opined that "Richard Wagner's music is a classical and ballet favourite" - must be the infamous Venusberg orgy ballet! Ed]

The newsgroup also says that TRISTAN & ISOLDE will be released domestically (US) by 20th Century Fox with Franchise Pictures serving as international sales agent. The film shoots in Ireland and Prague through early December 2003. There is also, apparently another version of Tristan and Isolde that Rupert Wainwright will direct for Davis Films and Intermedia.

The story is not based on Richard Wagner's opera, but appears to be an amalgamation of a number of sources. If you have access to the Web, you can see a summary of the sources at <http://www.timelessmyths.com/arthurian/tristan.html>.

Days with the Wagner Society In Adelaide

The Richard Wagner Society of South Australia Inc in association with the Elder School of Music is organising three days of entertainment on pause days during each of the cycles of the Adelaide Ring.

Each day's entertainment will be different. Speakers include Speight Jenkins (Seattle Opera), Bill Gillespie (Sydney), Heath Lees (Auckland), Hans Vaget (Massachusetts), Sally Kester (Perth), Margaret King (Adelaide) and Andrew Riemer (Sydney). Singers and members of the orchestra will also drop in, and students of the Elder School of Music will perform the *Siegfried Idyll* in period costume on two of these days, but you'll have to book to find out who is going to be there on your pause days. Just complete the details below and mail with your cheque to:

Days with the Wagner Society
The Richard Wagner Society of South Australia Inc
P O Box 307
NORTH ADELAIDE SA 5006

Name:			
Address:			PostCode:
Phone Home	Phone Work		
CIRCLE THE DAYS YOU WISH TO ATTEND			
Cycle 1 Sunday 21 November	Cycle 2 Sunday 28 November	Cycle 3 Wednesday 8 December	
Number of places required	@ Cost \$	= Total Cost \$	
COST	ONE DAY	TWO DAYS	ALL 3 DAYS
Wagner Society members	\$60	\$110	\$160
Non-members	\$70	\$120	\$170



The Raven's Reporting, Compiled by Camron Dyer

You can check the regularly updated comprehensive list on the Society's Website <http://www.wagner-nsw.org.au>.

May 2004

Amsterdam	Die Walküre - May 1, 5, 9, 13, 16, 21, 2004.
Augsburg	Tannhäuser - May 2, 8, 22, 2004. International Richard Wagner Kongress - May 20-23, 2004.
Barcelona	Siegfried - May 16, 26, 2004. Götterdämmerung - May 23, 29, 2004.
Bielefeld	Die Meistersinger - May 1, 9, 20, 23, 28, 31, 2004.
Bremen	Tannhäuser - May 2, 21, 23, 2004
Budapest	Lohengrin - May 2, 5, 8, 15, 2004.
Copenhagen	Die Meistersinger - May 20, 23, 26, 29, 2004.
Cottbus	Das Rheingold - May 18, 2004.
Düsseldorf	Die Meistersinger - May 2, 9, 30, 2004.
Essen	Die Meistersinger - May 20, 2004.
Florence	Die Meistersinger - May 4, 7, 2004.
Hamburg	Die Meistersinger - May 2, 9, 16, 31, 2004.
Liège	Siegfried - May 14, 18, 22, 26, 30, 2004.
London	ENO Die Walküre - May 8, 11, 15, 18, 22, 26, 29, 2004.
Mannheim	Tristan und Isolde - May 31, 2004. Lohengrin - May 20, 2004.
Melbourne	Holländer - May 5, 8, 2004.
Munich	Lohengrin - May 3, 9, 16, 20, 2004.
New York	The Met The Ring - April 26, 27, 29, May 1; 3, 4, 6, 8, 2004.
Palermo	Holländer - May 18, 20, 23, 25, 27, 30, 2004.
Vienna	Staatsoper Tristan und Isolde - May 9, 13, 16, 20, 2004. Siegfried - May 30, 2004.

Wroclaw

Opera Dolnoslaska in Hala Ludowa [People's Hall]
Die Walküre - May 29, 2004.

June 2004

Augsburg	Tannhäuser - June 9, 2004.
Barcelona	Siegfried - June 2, 4, 8, 10, 18, 26, 30, 2004. Götterdämmerung - June 6, 12, 14, 16, 22, 2004.
Bielefeld	Die Meistersinger - June 6, 10, 13, 2004.
Bremen	Tannhäuser - June 13, 19, 2004.
Brussels	Tannhäuser - June 9, 13, 16, 22, 25, 27, 30, 2004.
Chemnitz	Tristan und Isolde - June 19, 27, 2004.
Copenhagen	Die Meistersinger - June 1, 2004.
Cottbus	Das Rheingold - June 17, 2004.
Dresden	Tannhäuser - June 13, 17, 2004. Holländer - June 14, 16, 18, 2004.
Düsseldorf	The Ring - June 6, 10, 13, 26, 2004.
Essen	Die Meistersinger - June 10, 2004.
Frankfurt	Holländer - June 25, 27, 30, 2004.
London	ENO Die Walküre - June 5, 2004.
Longborough	The Ring [shortened version] - June 18, 19, 25, 26, 2004.
Mannheim	Tristan und Isolde - June 16, 27, 2004. Lohengrin - June 6, 2004. Parsifal - June 10, 2004.
Moscow	Bolshoi Theatre Holländer - June 20 [no other dates].
Munich	Die Meistersinger - June 29, 2004.
Nuremberg	Die Meistersinger - June 13, 20, 27, 2004.
Vienna	Staatsoper Holländer - June 5, 8, 12, 15, 2004. Parsifal - June 23, 26, 30, 2004.



Wiesbaden **Die Walküre** - June 27, 2004 [no other dates].

Wroclaw **Opera Dolnoslaska in Hala Ludowa [People's Hall]**
Die Walküre - June 4, 5, 6, 2004.

Zurich Die Meistersinger - June 13, 27, 2004.

Summer 2004

London **The Proms**
Die Walküre - [no actual date].

July 2004

Barcelona **Götterdämmerung** - July 3, 7, 2004.

Bayreuth **Parsifal** - July 25, 2004.
Tannhäuser - July 26, 2004.
The Ring - July 27, 28, 30, August 1, 2004.

Bremen **Tannhäuser** - July 2, 2004.

Erl **Tiroler Festspiele**
The Ring - July 10, 11, 13, 15; 17, 18, 20, 22, 2004.

Essen **Die Meistersinger** - July 18, 2004.

Frankfurt **Holländer** - July 2, 5, 8, 11, 2004.

Hagen **Holländer** - July 3, 7, 17, 2004.

Longborough **The Ring [shortened version]** - July, 23, 24, 30, 31, 2004.

Mannheim **Tristan und Isolde** - July 18, 2004.
Tannhäuser - July 3, 25, 2004.
Lohengrin - July 11, 2004.

Munich **Nationaltheater**
Die Meistersinger - July 2, 7, 11, 31, 2004.
Tannhäuser - July 25, 29, 2004.
MunichPhilharmonic
[Philharmonic Hall in Gasteig]
Parsifal [concert] - July 10, 12, 2004.

Nuremberg **Die Meistersinger** - July 4, 11, 2004.

Savonlinna **Holländer** - July 7, 14, 16, 20, 2004.

Seattle **Lohengrin** - July 31, 2004.

Stuttgart **Tristan und Isolde** - July 4, 7, 18, 21, 25, 28, 2004.

August 2004

Baden-Baden **Parsifal** - August 4, 6, 8, 2004.

Bayreuth **Holländer** - August 2, 5, 14, 17, 27, 2004.
Parsifal - August 3, 6, 18, 26, 2004.
Tannhäuser - August 4, 13, 16, 19, 28, 2004.
The Ring - July 27, 28, 30, August 1; 7, 8, 10, 12; 20, 21, 23, 25, 2004.

Helsinki **The Ring** - August 6, 15, 22, 28; 30, September 1, 4, 7, 2004.

Seattle **Lohengrin** - August 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 2004.

September 2004

Helsinki **The Ring** - August 30, September 1, 4, 7, 2004.

Liège **Götterdämmerung** - September 24, 28, 2004.

Sanitago **Holländer** - September 20, 23, 25, 2004.

October 2004

Chicago **Das Rheingold** - October 2, 5, 8, 13, 17, 21, 25, 2004.

Cologne **The Ring** - October 15, 16, 19, 21; 24, 26, 29, 31, 2004.

Dortmund **Konzerthaus**
Götterdämmerung - October 17, 2004.

Geneva **Parsifal** - October 24, 27, 29, 31, 2004.

Liège **Götterdämmerung** - October 2, 7, 10, 2004.

Vienna **Staatsoper**
Holländer - October 1, 4, 7, 10, 2004.

Wroclaw **Opera Dolnoslaska in Hala Ludowa [People's Hall]**
Siegfried - October 16, 22, 23, 24, 2004.

November 2004

Adelaide **The Ring** - November 16, 17, 19, 22; 26, 27, 29, December 2, 2004.

Chicago **Das Rheingold** - November 3, 6, 2004.

Dresden **Die Walküre** - November 25, 2004.



Geneva **Parsifal** - November 2, 4, 6, 2004.
 Houston **The Ring** - [no actual dates].
 London **ENO**
Siegfried - November 6, 10, 13, 17,
 24, 27, 2004.
 Munich **Die Meistersinger** - November 1, 7,
 2004.
 Rome **Holländer** - November 19, 20, 21,
 3, 24, 25, 26, 27, 2004.
 San Francisco **Holländer** - November 10, 14, 17,
 20, 23, 26, 2004.
 Vienna **Siegfried** - November 1, 2004.

December 2004

Adelaide **The Ring** - November 26, 27, 29,
 December 2; 6, 7, 9, 12, 2004.
 Dresden **Die Walküre** - December 1, 4, 2004.
 Hamburg **Die Meistersinger** - December 26,
 29, 2004.
 London **ENO**
Siegfried - December 3, 2004.
 San Francisco **Holländer** - December 1, 2004.
 Zurich **Holländer** - [no actual dates].

January 2005

Hamburg **Die Meistersinger** - January 2, 2005.
 Milan **Tannhäuser** - [no other dates].
 Toronto **Siegfried** - January 27, 30, 2005.

February 2005

Toronto **Siegfried** - February 2, 5, 8, 11,
 2005.
 Trieste **Lohengrin** - February 5 to March 22,
 2005 [no other dates].

March 2005

Berlin **Staatsoper Festtage**
Parsifal - [no actual dates].
 Chicago **Götterdämmerung** - March 19, 26,
 2005.
The Ring - March 28, 29, 31, April
 2, 2005
 Trieste **Lohengrin** - February 5 to March 22,
 2005 [no other dates].

Spring 2005

London **ENO**
Götterdämmerung - [no actual
 dates].

April 2005

Berlin **Staatsoper Festtage**
Parsifal - [no actual dates].
 Chicago **The Ring** - March 28, 29, 31, April
 2, 4, 5, 7, 9; 11, 12, 14, 16, 2005
 Mexico City **Festival of Mexico in the Historical
 Centre**
Siegfried - April 7, 10, 12, 14, 2005.

May 2005

Berlin **Deutsche Oper**
Holländer - May 22, 29, 2005.
 Copenhagen **Siegfried** - May 7, 2005. [no other
 dates].
 Hamburg **Die Meistersinger** - May 5, 2005.
Lohengrin - May 16, 22, 2005.
 Vienna **Staatsoper**
Holländer - May 6, 10, 14, 2005.

June 2005

Berlin **Deutsche Oper**
Holländer - June 1, 5, 2005.
 Frankfurt **Tristan und Isolde** - June 26, 30,
 2005.
 Hamburg **Die Meistersinger** - June 5, 2005.
Lohengrin - June 12, 2005.
 Wroclaw **Opera Dolnoslaska in Hala
 Ludowa [People's Hall]**
Götterdämmerung - June 18, 24,
 25, 26, 2005.

July 2005

Bayreuth **Tristan und Isolde** - July 25, 31,
 2005.
 Frankfurt **Tristan und Isolde** - July 3, 9, 14,
 17, 2005.

August 2005

Bayreuth **Tristan und Isolde** - August 7, 12,
 18, 26, 2005.
 Seattle **The Ring** - August 7, 8, 10, 12; 15,
 16, 18, 20; 23, 24, 26, 28, 2005.



Tokyo *Die Meistersinger* - [no actual dates].

2005-6 Season

Paris *Chatelet*
The Ring - [no actual dates].

September 2005

Liège *The Ring* - September 17, 24,
October 1, 8, 2005.

Tokyo *Die Meistersinger* - [no actual dates].

October 2005

Liège *The Ring* - September 17, 24,
October 1, 8; 12, 15, 19, 22, 2005.

London *The Royal Opera*
Siegfried - October 3, 7, 10, 14, 18,
22, 2005.

Wroclaw *Opera Dolnoslaska in Hala*
Ludowa [People's Hall]
The Ring - October 6, 7, 8, 9, 2005.

January 2006

Toronto *Götterdämmerung* - [no actual dates][6 performances Jan/Feb]

Vienna *Die Walküre* - January 8, 2006.

February 2006

Copenhagen *Götterdämmerung* - February 10,
2006 [no other dates].

Toronto *Götterdämmerung* - [no actual dates][6 performances Jan/Feb]

March 2006

Mexico City *Festival of Mexico in the Historical*
Centre Götterdämmerung - March
16, 19, 21, 23, 2006.

Spring 2006

Cardiff *Holländer* - [no actual dates].

Helsinki *Die Meistersinger* - [no actual dates].

April 2006

Copenhagen *The Ring* - [no actual dates]

Frankfurt *Parsifal* - April 23, 26, 30, 2006.

London *The Royal Opera*
Götterdämmerung - April 17, 22,
27, 30, 2006.

Vienna *Tristan und Isolde* - April 17, 21, 25,
2006.

May 2006

Copenhagen *The Ring* - [no actual dates]

Frankfurt *Parsifal* - May 14, 20, 25, 28, 2006.

London *The Royal Opera*
Götterdämmerung - May 3, 6,
2006.

June 2006

Barcelona *Lohengrin* - June 30, 2006.

Frankfurt *Parsifal* - June 5, 2006.

July 2006

Barcelona *Lohengrin* - last performance July 30,
2006 [no other dates].

Bayreuth *The Ring* - Lars von Trier new Ring
begins [no actual dates].

September 2006

London *The Royal Opera*
The Ring - 1 cycle [no actual dates].

Toronto *The Ring* - 3 cycles over Sep/Oct [no actual dates].

October 2006

London *The Royal Opera*
The Ring - 2 cycles [no actual dates].

Toronto *The Ring* - 3 cycles over Sep/Oct [no actual dates].

Members' Market

We have been contacted by a member who has a bound volume of Richard Wagner's *Siegfried*, printed in Dutch, which he would like to sell. The copy is dated 1912 and is number 253 of a limited edition (although it does not say how many were in the edition.) The volume is printed on a heavy parchment with individual prints of drawings by Arthur Rackman, but the binding is as it was when the book was acquired some 30 years ago, somewhat worn. The owner has had an expression of interest from a print collector who wanted the volume for the Rackman prints only, but this offer was declined. The owner is confined to his home through illness, and anyone who is interested in discussing the acquisition of this book should contact Roger Cruickshank, (02) 9357 7631, so that they can be put in touch with the vendor.



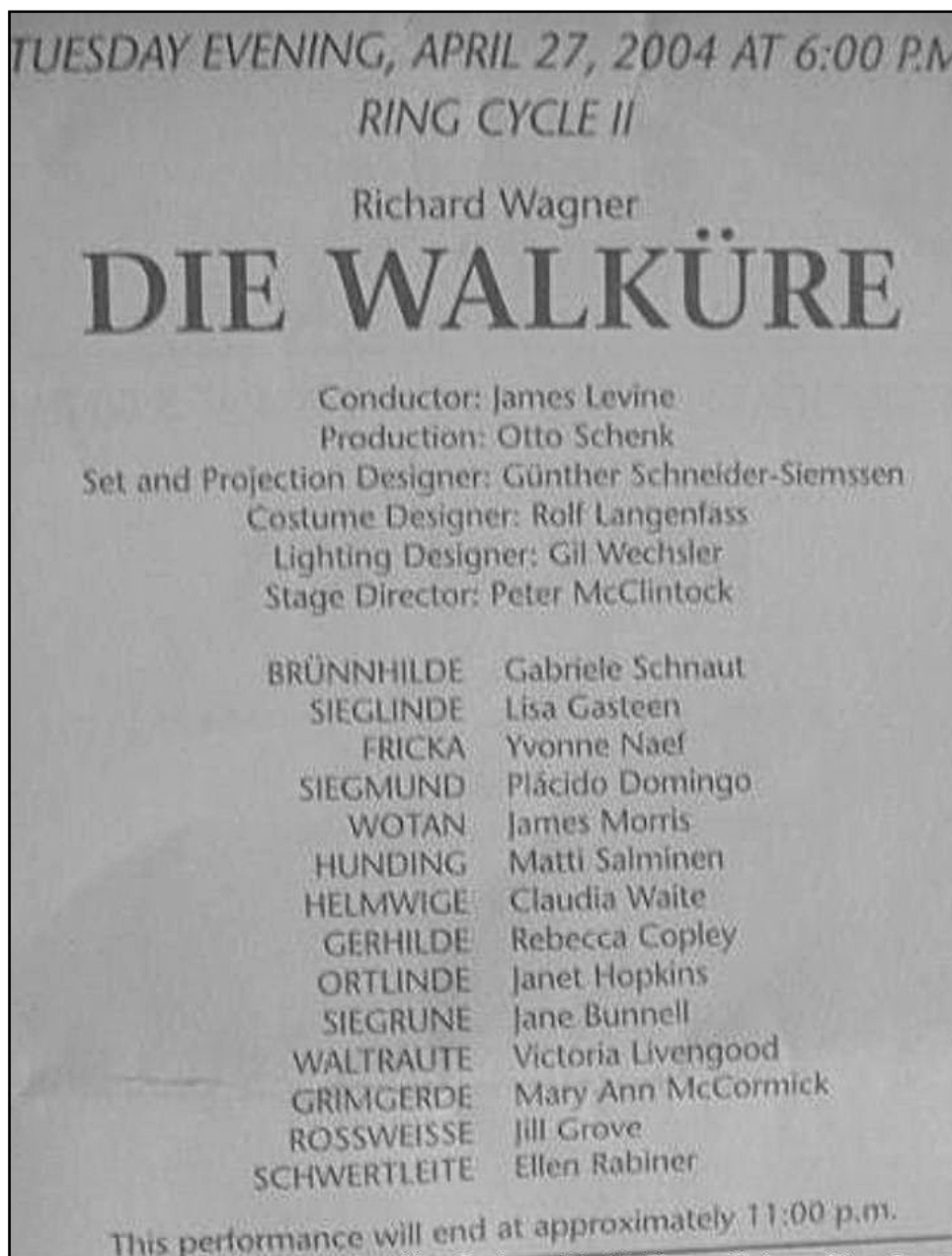
Ms Lisa Gasteen's Metropolitan Opera debut as Sieglinde

If the rapturous applause and standing ovation that greeted Lisa Gasteen's debut in the Metropolitan Opera's production of *Die Walküre* on Tuesday, 27 April 2004 is any guide, Ms Gasteen has quite a career ahead in the Met as well as world-wide signing Wagnerian heroines.

Being chosen to partner Plácido Domingo, still in wonderful voice himself, was itself a signal honour. However, the Met audience was more than happy to endorse this choice of a (to them) unknown quantity, although I'm sure many of the Wagner aficionados were aware of her highly commended appearances in recent Wagner performances in London, Stuttgart and Sydney. Ms Gasteen seemed completely at home in the role and on the vast Met stage and interacted with Mr Domingo in a way that made the dawning love between the characters tangible and credible. Following on so successfully from such notable predecessors in this production of the Ring as Jessye Norman and Deborah Voight is surely a good omen.

My personal high point for experiencing this opera must, so far, be the electrifying performance between Mr Domingo and Waltraute Meier in the 2000 Ring Cycle at Bayreuth. While Ms Meier's voice was showing some strain, the intensity of the acting between these two was burned into my memory.

I have to admit, however, to more than just a chauvinistic thrill at the sight of a Met standing ovation for Miss Gasteen. I had spoken briefly to Ms Gasteen after the dress rehearsal for Opera Australia's New Year's Eve 2003 concert to thank for her wonderful singing of extracts from Richard Strauss's *Elektra* and the Liebestod from *Tristan und Isolde* and to say how much I was looking forward to hearing her at the Met as



As a small memento, below is a photo of the advertising poster for this performance.

Sieglinde. I am delighted to put on record my excitement at both the quality of her singing and acting and her reception and to wish Ms Gasteen all the best for greater successes in her career singing Wagner.



ADDRESS

Please note our permanent address for all correspondence

The Wagner Society in New South Wales Inc

GPO Box 4574 SYDNEY NSW 2001

Telephone: 9357 7631 (Roger Cruickshank, President)

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

Website enquiries: webmaster@wagner-nsw.org.au

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

Wagner Society in New South Wales Inc

GPO Box 4574 SYDNEY NSW 2001

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