



The Wagner Society

(Patron — Sir Charles Mackerras)

Registered Office: 141 Dowling Street, Woolloomooloo 2011
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NEWSLETTER NO. 7

1st JUNE 1982

Patron:	Sir Charles Mackerras	
President:	Leonard Hansen	<u>Committee:</u>
Vice President:	Sue Kelly	Michel Arnould
Secretary:	Clare Hennessy	Ian Hopkins - Co. Editor
Treasurer:	Richard King	Margaret Suthers - Co. Editor
		Jean-Louis Stuurrop
		Janet Wayland
Honorary Life Member:	Werner Baer M.B.E.	

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

The 2nd Annual General Meeting of the Society was held on 21st May, with 75 members in attendance. My first thought was to thank all the members for their participation in the great new venture that the Wagner Society has been, especially those Foundation Members who supported the Society so generously, placing it on a sound financial footing from the start. It was explained however that not a lot of money was being generated from the various functions that are arranged, as these are provided at near cost. This is done so that no member or interested person would be prevented from attending for financial reasons. The only way left open to the Society to raise money to carry out it's aims and objectives, is to actively seek donations. Making donations to the Wagner Society - through the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust on the proper form supplied - should be an attractive proposition to most people as it is a tax deductible procedure. In fact, an annual donation of \$100.00 works out much less than buying a daily newspaper throughought the year! So please give to the best of your ability, to enable your Society to grow and take it's place beside the bigger and more established musical bodies.

An election was held for Committee members, but as no new nominations were received, the existing Committee was re-elected, except for Dr. Cedric Falconer, who has retired due to ill health. Many thanks Cedric for your help in the past, and best wishes for a speedy return to good health.

Cedric's place on the Committee has been taken by Mr. Michel Arnould. Welcome Michel! To the other members of the Committee I would like to express my sincere thanks for the work they have done in the last year, especially to Richard King and Murray Smith for the use of their premises, telephone and valuable time.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2nd ANNUAL DINNER

The re-elected President, Leonard Hansen, welcomed 100 members and their friends, along with special guests Mr. Patrick Veitch and his wife Kathleen Norris, and Mr. & Mrs. Hans Baecker from the Concordia Club. Apologies were received from Miss Rita Hunter, Donald Shanks, John Shaw and Bruce Martin who were all in Melbourne for the Opera season. A toast was proposed to the Society's Patron; Sir Charles Mackerras, who is still overseas.

Amid great excitement Miss Norris then prepared to draw the winning raffle tickets from the barrel. The first prize, the new digital recording of the Boulez Centenary Ring was won by Committee-man Jean-Louis Stuurup, and deservedly so, for not only does he work so hard for the Society arranging the record afternoons, but he made and presented to the Society that night an enormous birthday cake, decorated appropriately with the "Ring motif" in chocolate piping over a rich cream frosting. No happier prizewinner could have been found, and he promised to let us all hear the records at the Sunday "Alternative Bayreuth" sessions. Amazingly, another of Jean-Louis' tickets was drawn out as second prize. This time he typically held a Dutch auction selling the "Parsifal" recording for the Society's benefit to the highest bidder, Mr. Gareth Evans. We are very grateful to Jean-Louis and Gareth for their generous action. Third prize was won by Mr. Lobowski. Happy reading!

Mr. Patrick Veitch was then introduced and came forward to give a most informative and entertaining speech, a synopsis of which follows.

It appears that since the age of 12 Patrick Veitch wanted to become the General Manager of the Metropolitan Opera, being inspired by that great administrator and personality, Rudolf Bing. Having got himself into the Company, and up to the level of Marketing Director, he responded to the call of the Australian Opera Company, so has at this stage achieved at least half his ambition. Once settled into his new position, he was aware of the lack of the really great masterpieces of opera in the Company's repertoire, either through lack of planning or fire, and Wagner was high on the list. The Ring was perhaps the most glaring omission, probably because of the difficulties involved in its production. However, Mr. Veitch was determined it should be done, and done in the Opera Theatre, despite the restricted orchestra pit, and less than optimum acoustics. The Concert Hall apparently would not be available often enough, and sets made to fit it would not be suitable for touring.

In discussing the style of production, Mr. Veitch felt the world was ready for a return to literalism, and this would suit the newcomers to the Ring, as he feels the majority of Australians are. To help achieve this picturesque, child-like quality in the depiction of the mythology - low on heavy symbolic overtones - Mr. Veitch has engaged not Walt Disney whom he once felt would be the ideal interpreter of Wagner's drama, but Andrew Sinclair (Producer), Allan Lees (Designer), and Desmond Digby (Costumes) - an all Australian team.

As Conductor is the undaunted Carlo-Fellici Cillario, and the singers are Rita Hunter, Margareta Elkins (Sieglinde!), Lauris Elms (Fricka), Bruce Martin (Wotan), with Siegmund still to be announced, although like Hunding (Shanks/Grant) he will be a shared role. The Valkyrie will be staged first to take advantage of Miss Hunter's residency in Australia, the other parts of the cycle following in order, till completed in 1986. In 1987 all will be revived throughout the year and finally in 1988, presentation in tight cycle form will be achieved. The German language will be used at all times. Not until after 1988 does Mr. Veitch envisage any other of Wagner's operas being staged.

To end his talk Mr. Veitch suggested a project for the Wagner Society: to fund the A.O.'s acquisition of the scores and orchestral parts for the Ring, an exercise costing in the vicinity of \$20,000. A practical and significant contribution such as this would see the Society recognised as one of the major donors to the enormous undertaking the Company is taking upon itself, largely at the behest of the vocal minority, that we are.

At this stage Mr. Veitch invited questions from the dinner guests, and a lively repartee followed, covering many aspects of Mr. Veitch's and the Company's work and philosophy. In thanking him for his attendance at and participation in the activities of the dinner Dr. Leonard Hansen, on behalf of the Wagner Society, presented Mr. Veitch with a cheque for \$2,000 for the Australian Opera, to aid in this year's performances of "Tristan & Isolde". It would, Mr. Veitch said, greatly reduce the expected deficit of the production and he was very grateful for the donation which came - visibly - as a complete surprise to him.

Then followed Mr. Werner Baer's musical entertainment. His first task however, as already seated at the piano he was dramatically revealed to the dinner guests by the disappearing wall which had hidden him from the dining room, was to play for the Birthday Toast to Richard Wagner, and the suitably grand theme of the Mastersingers rang forth. After that he gave us an incredible display of his capabilities in composition and improvisation, as well a demonstration of the gift of perfect pitch. His finale was an amazing arrangement of 5 themes, as varied as "Three Blind Mice" to "The Magic Fire Music", into a harmonious and smooth flowing rhapsody. His audience responded with a resounding ovation.

With the time well after midnight, and nearly all of the delicious giant birthday cake having been devoured, everyone set off for home, declaring the evening a great success.

BAYREUTH 1983:

Neutral Bay Travel Agency is planning a group tour to attend the Ring in Bayreuth in 1983. It would be a three weeks package tour, but rather flexible in itinerary. Theatre tickets are of course not yet available, nor guaranteed to be so. Interested people should contact Mrs. Valerie Murray on 909.8644 or write to her at the Agency at 93 Military Road, Neutral Bay, 2089.

ROBERT GARD RECITAL:

The Wagner Society, in collaboration with the South Pacific Liszt Society, is promoting a Recital by Robert Gard on Saturday, August 28th, at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Accompanied by John Champ, Robert Gard will sing the "Wesendonk Lieder" of Wagner, Chausson Poems, and Liszt Sonnets. More details will be given out in August, but please reserve this night, not only for a unique musical experience, but to ensure a successful function.

AN INTRODUCTION TO "TRISTAN & ISOLDE":

The Opera Guild, as part of its members' education programme, is presenting a lecture on "Tristan & Isolde", given by Mr. Alistair Mackerras, Miss Rita Hunter, and others to be held on Monday, 26th July at 6p.m. in the Recording Hall of the Sydney Opera House. Entrance costs \$10.00 to non-members of the Guild, who are very welcome to attend. Enquiries should be addressed to the Opera Guild on telephone number 231.2300.

AN INTRODUCTION TO WAGNER OPERAS:

Mr. Werner Baer M.B.E., under the auspices of the W.E.A. will give a series of nine lectures on the six "non Ring" music dramas of Wagner, starting in August. Any member who would like to attend the series, and at the same time help Mr. Baer with the operation of the cassette player each evening, should ring him on 95.5308. Members wishing to attend the lectures should contact the W.E.A. office on 264.2781.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL:

There are still some year one members who have not renewed their membership. Please use the application forms for new members attached to the last two newsletters. If you have no form, just send your name and membership number with the appropriate subscription fee - the same as last year - to the Treasurer, 141 Dowling Street, Woolloomooloo, 2011.

"THE ALTERNATIVE BEYREUTH":

A few changes are being made to the Sunday afternoon record programmes.

Timing: 27th June "Rheingold", 2.00 p.m. start
 25th July "Die Walkure", 1.00 p.m. start
 22nd August "Siegfried", 1.00 p.m. start
 19th September "Götterdämmerung", 1.00 p.m. start

The recordings to be heard throughout the cycle will be the new digital version, under Pierre Boulez, from the Bayreuth Centenary performance. Much controversy arose around this musical and dramatic interpretation, so members will have an ideal opportunity to form their own opinions on the work.

BOOKS FOR SALE TO MEMBERS AT 20% DISCOUNT:

	<u>Reg. Price</u>
Wagner's Ring - An Introduction by Alan Blyth (Paperback)	\$14.50
Richard Wagner by Hans Gal (Hardcover)	16.50
The Wagner Companion by R. Mander & J. Mitchenson (Hardcover)	20.50
The Diary of Richard Wagner (The Brown Book) translated by George Bird (Hardcover)	26.50
Wagner, The Man & His Music by John Culshaw (Hardcover)	7.95
Richard and Cosima Wagner - A Biography of a Marriage by Geoffrey Skelton (Hardcover) (To be released late June)	33.00
The Wagner Family Album by Wolf Siegfried Wagner (Hardcover)	6.50

- The above prices less 20% -

These books may be purchased at:

Wagner Society Registered Office - 141 Dowling Street,
 Woolloomooloo, 2011
 Tuesday to Saturday 11.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. (Sorry, no mail orders)

Future newsletters will contain reviews of these and other books relating to Wagner's Life and Works.

INTRODUCING THE WAGNER INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTION:

Wagner International Institution, Inc., is a non-profit, tax-exempt cultural organization with the primary purpose of fostering appreciation and support for the works of Richard Wagner. For this purpose, the Institution organizes and sponsors numerous special events, including lectures, recitals, symposia, and receptions. The Institution is also dedicated to high artistic standards of singing and stagecraft, and to this end, seeks to abet the development and careers of performing artists of special promise.

The Institution publishes a newsletter, the *International Wagnerian*, and intends to publish a scholarly journal entitled *The Wagner Review*, to be devoted to significant studies of the works of Richard Wagner, as well as many of his most important contemporaries. Translation of Wagner's own writings will be an important aspect of this work. The Institution also seeks to establish a Wagner Archive in the United States.

Membership Benefits: Members are entitled to -

- * Attend free of charge regularly scheduled activities (lectures, seminars, musicales, concerts and receptions).
- * Receive the regular publication, *International Wagnerian*.
- * Discounts on Institution related publications and recordings.
- * Invitations to special events.
- * Travel on Institution charters and music tours, including Bayreuth and Seattle.

The Institute is based in New York, and non-resident Membership would cost US\$15.00. Please contact the Secretary for further details if you are interested.

"TRISTAN & ISOLDE" CONCERT:

TICKET APPLICATION FORM

I would like to apply for.....(no.) A Reserve tickets as follows:

Thursday 5th August, 6.00 p.m.	tickets @ \$20.80
Saturday 7th August, 4.30 p.m.	tickets @ \$20.80

I enclose cheque/M.O. for \$..... and a stamped self addressed envelope.

NAME: MEMBERSHIP NO.:

ADDRESS: