



WAGNER
SOCIETY
NSW

CELEBRATING THE MUSIC OF RICHARD WAGNER

WAGNER QUARTERLY

ISSUE NO 27

154

SEPTEMBER 2019

VALE

The Honourable Jane Mathews AO

19.12.1940 - 31.8.2019

President of the Wagner Society in NSW - 2010 - 2017



Photo taken in Bayreuth after a performance of *Parsifal* on 22 August 2017

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This report will express sorrow because of the recent death of our immediate past President, the Honourable Jane Mathews.

Jane discovered Wagner and his music several decades ago and was keen to share her enthusiasm for his operas amongst her numerous friends. She had a number of records, particularly of the Ring, and held many parties which would feature sessions listening to Wagner's music. Guests would provide contributions of food and of course there was also wine to increase their enjoyment.

She enjoyed going to Bayreuth to meet other enthusiasts in the network of Wagner-lovers. She was elected President of the NSW Wagner Society in recognition of her commitment. Her contacts in Australia and around the world were always encouraged to come and talk to our Society. Jane had been ill for a period and her death is a relief from pain. We will remember her as a great enthusiast for music, a long-term supporter of organisations such as the Sydney Symphony and Opera Australia, an extremely generous donor to music in Australia and a committed lover of Wagner's operas. We will miss her contributions deeply.

Meanwhile the Wagner Society has been very active. Antony Ernst gave a very thought provoking view of *Parsifal* in early July. Two weeks later we were very fortunate to have Stuart Skelton come to speak to us about his career. He was in Sydney to sing in *Peter Grimes*; it was a wonderful performance and very well attended by members of the Wagner Society who had heard him speak. His career overseas is flourishing. In a recent email to me he mentioned that in forthcoming months, he will be singing twice at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, as Verdi's *Otello* and as Siegmund in *Valkyrie*.

In August, our patron Simone Young came to talk to us about her career. She outlined the demands on her attention in Hamburg where she had so many levels of responsibility. Now she has embarked on a free-lance career and is enjoying the experience of moving between conducting orchestras and contributing to other music, be it opera or symphonies.

President Colleen Chesterman

VALE THE HONORABLE JANE MATHEWS AO



Jane with the Hon. Chief Justice Susan Kiefel AC and the Governor of NSW the Hon. Margaret Beazley AO QC at the SSO tribute concert



Jane with Jonas Kaufmann after *Parsifal* Dinner at SOH, August 2017

VALE THE HONORABLE JANE MATHEWS AO

Email received by the Wagner Society from **Emma Dunch, CEO of Sydney Symphony** on 2 September 2019

Dear colleagues,

I am sorry to inform you that our dear friend and supporter, The Honourable Jane Mathews AO, passed away peacefully in her home on Saturday evening, surrounded by friends and family, after a short battle with aggressive cancer.

Jane was a passionate music lover, a great Australian, and a trailblazer for women in the legal profession: she was one of the first 10 women to study law at the University of Sydney and be admitted to the NSW Bar in the 1960's, the first woman to be appointed Crown Solicitor in 1978, the first woman to be appointed Judge in NSW, in 1980, and the first woman to be appointed Judge to the NSW Supreme Court, in 1987. Throughout her career, she was a champion of anti-discrimination legislation and a universally respected jurist throughout Australian legal circles.

Jane's father was a union leader at the Port Kembla Steel Works and her mother trained as a pianist and instilled an early and deep love of music. In fact, at age 14, Jane won a national essay competition on the subject of "becoming an artist" and had determined to pursue a piano career - until a classroom film about a lawyer protecting a disadvantaged man influenced her towards a legal career instead. And the rest is Australian legal and feminist history, as she subsequently proved.

Jane maintained a passionate love of classical music and opera across her lifetime, attending Sydney Symphony Orchestra concerts since childhood, commissioning Australian composers for the SSO and others, supporting musicians directly and indirectly, and traveling the world to see 68 different productions of Richard Wagner's "Ring" Cycle. We deeply appreciated Jane's early support of Sydney Symphony Orchestra Chair patronage, most recently supporting the Chair of Timothy Constable, percussion.

Earlier this year, we joined with Jane's many friends in the Australian legal community, led by our now-Governor of NSW, Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AO QC, and Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia, The Hon. Chief Justice Susan Kiefel AC, [photo with Jane attached] in presenting a musical concert honouring Jane at City Recital Hall. We were very glad that Jane was able to be present, surrounded by friends and family, for speeches and celebrations both musical and oratory. Jane was particularly touched that those present saw fit to underwrite another Orchestral Chair; that of Associate Principal Trumpet and Jane's great friend, Paul Goodchild, in her honour that evening—a gift that will live on.



Jane receiving acclamation at the SSO tribute concert on 30 April in the City Recital Hall

I am attaching two photos from the celebration concert earlier in the year and invite you to take a moment today to honour and celebrate an extraordinary Australian in a way that is personally meaningful for you. May she rest in peace, surrounded by the music that she loved so dearly.

Email received by the Wagner Society from **Laura Dee, Director of Philanthropy Opera Australia** on 2 September 2019

We are deeply saddened to hear of the death of Jane Mathews over the weekend.

Jane was incredibly passionate about music...most particularly Wagnerian opera. A self-described "Ring-nut", she had travelled the globe to 63 cycles of the four operas lasting some 16 hours that comprise Wagner's Ring Cycle. Over the years attending these Wagner epics near and far, Jane made many friends who shared her enthusiasm for the art form. It all began in the 1980s with a series of simulcasts by the ABC on Sunday nights of the Bayreuth centenary production. Jane was hooked and saw her first Cycle at Bayreuth in 1990.

Jane was a generous and enlightened philanthropist. She was one of our most dedicated and long-term donors and was one of the principal supporters who provided crucial funding for Opera Australia's productions of the Ring Cycle in 2013 and 2016. She was very excited about the prospect of Opera Australia's new production of the Ring premiering in Brisbane next year. In addition to her support of Opera Australia, she supported many other Arts organisations and was a true champion of the arts in Australia.

CEO Rory Jeffes said 'Jane Mathews was a brilliant legal mind, a generous philanthropist, a music and opera enthusiast and a great friend to many. She will be sorely missed.'

Our sincere condolences go to Jane's family and her many friends and colleagues.

Laura Dee

FOR YOUR DIARY (Refer also to The Ravens Reporting later in the Quarterly)

2019/20

23, 25, 26 Oct	Donald Runnicles conducts SSO in R Strauss and Faure	Sydney Opera House
2 November	Nina Stemme and John Lundgren in gala all Wagner concert with TSO	Hobart
2,3 November	<i>Die Walkure</i> Act 1 semi-staged performance at North Melbourne Meat Market	Melbourne
5 Jan 2020	<i>Die Walkure</i> with Warwick Fyfe as Wotan, Singapore	Singapore
16 – 29 May 2020	<i>Lohengrin</i> . New OA/La Monnaie co-production conducted by Johannes Fritsch	Melbourne
August 2020	Melbourne Opera presents <i>Das Rheingold</i> conducted by Anthony Negus	Melbourne
28, 31 Oct 2020	Opera Queensland presents semi-staged <i>Tristan und Isolde</i> at QPAC	Brisbane
Nov 2020	Opera Australia presents 3 cycles of a new Ring at QPAC	Brisbane

COMING EVENTS 2019 - 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	LOCATION
29 September	12.00pm - DVD: The Searchers of the Grail 2.00pm - Members report back from Bayreuth and other performances seen in 2019	Goethe Institut
27 October	1.00pm - DVD: SOH Opening Gala all Wagner concert 1973 2.00pm - Robert Mitchell talks to us	Goethe Institut
17 November	2.00pm - Christmas concert	St Columba

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 \$25 a Member, and \$30 each non-Member, \$10 (Full-time students) Seminar/Concert \$40 (m), \$45 (n-m), \$20 (fts).

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

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Dear members, I hope you enjoy this September edition, despite the sad news of our past President Jane Mathews' passing. I remember very fondly walking down the green hill with her and other friends to her hotel after performances in the Festspielhaus and staying up until the early hours swapping stories of great Wagnerian evenings. She was a great enthusiast. I took the photo on the cover of this issue after a superb performance of *Parsifal* in Bayreuth two years ago.

I wish to thank Alan Mulhern for the first of his two articles, written specifically for the Quarterly. Thank you to the members who contributed reports on performances attended this year. Profound apologies to Stuart Skelton and Minnie Biggs for spelling typos in the last edition.

Mike Day

QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHTS:

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REPORTS ON RECENT MEETINGS

7 JULY SEMINAR: ANTONY ERNST ON *PARSIFAL*

This talk was the eighth that Antony has given to the society, over a period of 16 years, on many aspects of Wagner's work and was, as usual, full of wisdom and wit, amplified with musical examples and slides. I will attempt to summarise a few key elements of his nearly 4 hour presentation, which gave original insight into *Parsifal*, the most enigmatic of Wagner's works, through a Jungian lens. He observed that *Parsifal* was much misunderstood when it premiered – it didn't speak to the older generation and it was only accepted many years later when Mahler, Sibelius, Reger, Hugo Wolff and Debussy all acknowledged its profound influence on their work.

Antony started with the historical background of the time when the work was written. Everyone was affected by the rapid changes due to the Industrial Revolution – the transformation of nature by industry and the rise of Prussia to military dominance. In 1870 Prussia integrated all the German states to fight France. Prussian culture was brutal and rigid and its leader, Otto von Bismarck, ruthless, authoritarian and cynical. (Alberich? Trump?)

In 1877 the first Ring Cycle was performed but Wagner was disillusioned as he considered that the Ring had failed in its aims to change society. *Parsifal* was the only opera written after the Ring, and all the big changes in society, and Wagner wanted to produce a work to counter militarism.

Antony observed that *Parsifal* is its own self enclosed world; it takes you out of the everyday conscious world into a dream, which you need to interpret, and he proposed undertaking a Jungian analysis – based on Jung's teaching of the need for balance – the need to integrate all aspects of the self.

An important aspect of Jung's understanding is *shadow projection* – rejecting in others what you don't like in yourself - and Antony suggested that the German Self at the time Wagner was writing *Parsifal* was unbalanced – the new German empire was stoic, masculine and disciplined but devoid of feeling and compassion. *Parsifal* is a critique of the German empire – it's about the search for self, compassion, the feminine principle and the acknowledgement of the unacknowledged. The Knights are pure, virtuous and chaste but embody toxic hyper-masculinity, rejecting femininity.

Antony talked us through the opera, scene by scene, explaining the symbolism of the key elements: the Grail is a symbol of enlightenment, allowing yourself to be who you truly are; the Spear is a witness, not a weapon, it shows us what is; the Grail needs the Spear to be complete; the never-healing Wound – the uncontrolled emission of what is inside; the unacknowledged elements that the knights don't want to come out.



He then analysed the key characters in accordance with Jung's ideas of **Self** (Titirel, awaiting transformation); **Ego** (Amfortas); **Anima** (Kundry, a messenger bringing things from another world – the unconscious); **The Shadow** (Klingsor - Amfortas' shadow) and **Mana** (Gurnemanz, the spirit guide). Parsifal is the only character who *feels* - the other characters *think*. He has no self-knowledge – he is formed by experience.

Antony concluded by summarising ACT 1 as having no energy, because of Amfortas' wound; ACT 2 as bursting with Klingsor's sensual energy and ACT 3 as transcendental when the incomplete Amfortas ceases to be needed as an independent entity and is integrated into the Self which is symbolised by Parsifal at the end. Wagner is telling a story about the need for compassion – Parsifal needs to gain experience in the world so he can care enough to ask what is wrong. Then the wound is cured.

Antony sees *Parsifal* as a parable for our times – we are at peril if we don't acknowledge what we don't like about ourselves – referring to the perversion of German virtues in 1933 and suggesting that President Trump is America's Shadow.

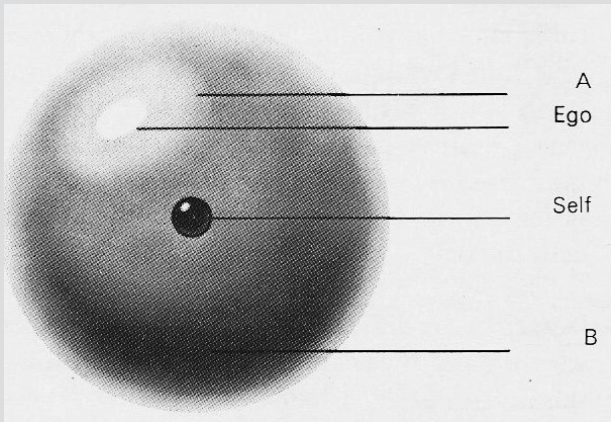
A wonderfully stimulating talk.

Mike Day

Further reading: Jung's "Amfortas' Wound": Psychological Types Revisited John Ryan Haule www.jrhaule.net

JUNG'S SELF

Excerpted from *Man and His Symbols*, an introduction to Carl Jung's psychology:



The psyche can be compared to a sphere with a bright field (A) on its surface, representing consciousness. The *ego* is the field's centre (only if "I" know a thing is it conscious). The *Self* is at once the nucleus and the whole sphere (B); its internal regulating processes produce dreams.

Since this psychic growth cannot be brought about by a conscious effort of will power, but happens involuntarily and naturally, it is in dreams frequently symbolized by the tree, whose slow, powerful, involuntary growth fulfils a definite pattern.

The organizing centre from which the regulatory effect stems seems to be a sort of "nuclear atom" in our psychic system. One could also call it the inventor, organizer, and source of dream images. Jung called this centre the "Self" and described it as the totality of the whole psyche, in order to distinguish it from the "ego," which constitutes only a small part of the total psyche.

Throughout the ages men have been intuitively aware of the existence of such an inner centre. The Greeks called it man's inner *daimon*; in Egypt it was expressed by the concept of the *Ba-soul*; and the Romans worshiped it as the "genius" native to each individual.

The Self can be defined as an inner guiding factor that is different from the conscious personality and that can be grasped only through the investigation of one's own dreams. These show it to be the regulating centre that brings about a constant extension and maturing of the personality. But this larger, more nearly total aspect of the psyche appears first as merely an inborn personality. It may emerge very slightly, or it may develop relatively complete during one's lifetime. How far it develops depends on whether or not the ego is willing to listen to the messages of the Self.

The individuation process is more than a coming to terms between the inborn germ of wholeness and the outer acts of fate. Its subjective experience conveys the feeling that some supra-personal force is actively interfering in a creative way. One sometimes feels that the unconscious is leading the way in accordance with a secret design. (pp. 161-162).

This relation of the Self to all surrounding nature and even the cosmos probably comes from the fact that the "nuclear atom" of our psyche is somehow woven into the whole world, both outer and inner. In ways that are still completely beyond our comprehension, our unconscious is similarly attuned to our surroundings—to our group, to society in general, and, beyond these, to the space-time continuum and the whole of nature. Indeed, many of our dreams are concerned with details of our outer life and our surroundings..... (pp. 207-208)

<https://chechar.wordpress.com/2015/09/18/my-tree/>

LETTER FROM JUNG TO SERGE MOREUX - 20 January 1950

Dear M. Moreux,

While I thank you for your kind letter, I must tell you that unfortunately I am obliged to limit my activity for reasons of age and health, and so it will not be possible for me to write an article for the projected number of *Polyphonie*.

Music certainly has to do with the collective unconscious—as the drama does too; this is evident in Wagner, for example.

Music expresses, in some way, the movement of the feelings (or emotional values) that cling to the unconscious processes. The nature of what happens in the collective unconscious is archetypal, and archetypes always have a numinous quality that expresses itself in emotional stress.

Music expresses in sounds what fantasies and visions express in visual images.

I am not a musician and would not be able to develop these ideas for you in detail. I can only draw your attention to the fact that music represents the movement, development, and transformation of motifs of the collective unconscious. In Wagner, this is very clear and also in Beethoven, but one finds it equally in Bach's "Kunst der Fuge." The circular character of the unconscious processes is expressed in the musical form; as for example in the sonata's four movements, or the perfect circular arrangement of the "Kunst der Fuge," etc.

I am with best regards,

Yours sincerely,

C.G. Jung.

Carl Jung, Letters Vol. 1, Page 542

21 JULY STUART SKELTON TALKED ABOUT SINGING ON THE WORLD STAGE

We were privileged to host Stuart Skelton, who was accompanied by his wife the violinist Asa Gudjonsdottir, on Sunday the 21st of July. Stuart was in Sydney for a couple of performances of Benjamin Britten's "Peter Grimes" with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra the following week.

The format of the event was informal and relaxed, much like the man himself. Our President Colleen Chesterman briefly introduced our guest who made some general remarks about the state of opera at the moment (it's healthy and will continue to live for a while longer) after which the floor was opened for questions from the large number of attendees. The questions and topics were wide ranging. From conductors and directors to modern productions to where he resides and how he relaxes in preparation for the next gig.

Stuart's responses were generous, humorous and sometimes insightful. He explained the difference between a good conductor and a great one with an anecdote about Daniel Barenboim. Barenboim invited Stuart to participate in a rehearsal of "Tristan und Isolde" at the Staatsoper in Berlin. He had not sung the role on stage yet and there was a particularly difficult phrase that he broke up into several breadths but somehow Barenboim had picked up that he could do it in one. Just before that phrase Barenboim faced Stuart, the only time he made eye contact, and made an arc with his right hand meaning "do it in one breadth". Stuart's response was "well if Barenboim wants it one I better do it", which he did. Point being that the conductor knew what was possible before the singer knew. Stuart repeated several times during the conversation that he was "blessed" by having both the opportunity and good fortune to work with some great conductors, including some conductors familiar to Australian audiences such as David Robertson, Simone Young and Asher Fisch.

His views on directors and productions were more circumspect. Not so much in that he prefers a certain type of production but rather that he has very firm views on the roles he takes on. I believe Mr Skelton would be a formidable personality to deal with as a director but also a lot of fun. He admits that he always aims to sing beautifully and doesn't



Stuart Skelton with Brangayne wine, Colleen Chesterman and Leona Geeves

hold back. For those of us that saw and heard his Grimes the following week this was a true statement. I remember his Grimes in the Armfield production for Opera Australia which was astonishing but with the SSO under David Robertson we were privileged to see and hear someone at the top of their game. Even though there was no set the performances were so rich physically and vocally that there was no need for scenery. With Stuart Skelton what you see is what you get - big, honest, intense, intelligent, beautiful singing and interpretations that comes from a position of understanding of both the technical and psychological/dramaturgical aspects. Based in Florida where he is hours away from major US and European opera houses, he is enjoying his work and life (being recently married) and tax status. Personally, on top of his gifts as an artist, a man that relaxes with a good cigar and even better rum is one that commands my respect.

Stuart came across as a great raconteur, generous, intelligent, personable with no airs and graces, very disciplined and very much across the current issues of contemporary opera making. The conversation lasted for well over an hour and was insightful, delightful and very entertaining. We hope he will back in Australia soon. A great afternoon.

19 AUGUST PATRON MAESTRO SIMONE YOUNG RECEPTION AND TALK

The society hosted a 'bubbles and nibbles' evening reception for our esteemed Patron Simone Young at the Goethe Institut. Simone talked about being a 'baton for hire' since leaving Hamburg and answered many questions from an enthusiastic audience of nearly 60 members and guests about a wide range of topics – from her 'beat', future performances, and where she and her family are based (the south of England). She was very warm and chatty and most entertaining, with witty insights into various controversial productions, plus some lovely backstage gossip.



Mike Day

WAGNER, MENDELSSOHN AND QUEEN VICTORIA

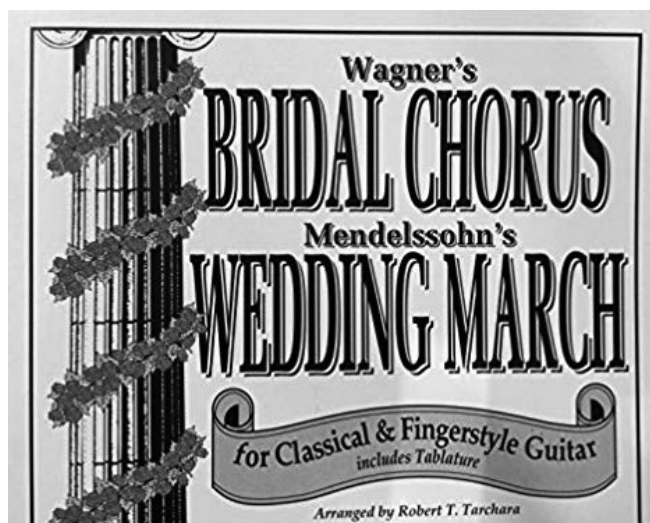
Together with Prince Albert, Queen Victoria attended the penultimate Philharmonic concert on 11th June 1855 and was introduced to Wagner during the interval. She noted afterwards in her diary:

We dined early with Feodore, her girls, our boys, and all the ladies and gentlemen going to the Philharmonic where a fine concert was given, under the direction of the celebrated composer Herr Richard Wagner. He conducted in a peculiar way, taking Mozart's and Beethoven's symphonies in quite a different time to what one is accustomed. His own overture to Tannhauser is a wonderful composition, quite overpowering, so grand, and in parts wild, string and descriptive. We spoke to him afterwards. He is short, very quiet, wears spectacles and has a very finely developed forehead, a hooked nose, & projecting chin. He must be about 34. (Actually Wagner was 42).



For his part Wagner describe the queen as *'not fat, but very small and not at all pretty, with, I am sorry to say, a rather red nose. But there is something uncommonly friendly and confiding about her and though she is by no means imposing, she is nevertheless a kind and delightful person.'*

In 1858 Queen Victoria's daughter 'Vicky' was married to Kaiser Frederick III. The Bridal Chorus (i.e. Here Comes the Bride) from *Lohengrin*, which premiered in 1850) was chosen, along with Mendelssohn's Wedding March from his incidental music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. This Wagner and Mendelssohn double act has played a part in millions of weddings since then.



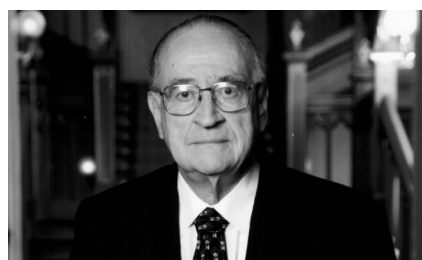
IN MEMORIAM



ROGER COVELL

Musicologist and critic, Emeritus Professor Roger Covell died in Sydney on 4 June at the age of 88.

Roger's contribution to Australian music was invaluable, including his professorship at UNSW, co-founding of the Australia Ensemble, the establishment of UNSW Opera in 1968 and the commissioning of dozens of Australian works for opera and chamber ensemble performance. As a long-term critic for the *Sydney Morning Herald*, Roger was also instrumental in educating the general audience through his regular reporting of Sydney's concerts.



DAVID GYGER

The respected Australian arts journalist and opera critic David Gyger died on August 8 at the age of 87. Born in Maine, David moved to Australia in 1956 and joined *The Australian* in 1966 as a music critic. He established the quality monthly newspaper *Opera Australia* in 1978 – changed to *Opera-Opera* in 1996 – which played an important role in the Australian opera community until 2008.

FUTURE WAGNER SOCIETY EVENTS

29 SEPTEMBER

12.00PM DVD: THE SEARCHERS OF THE GRAIL



A documentary by Tony Palmer. (1997) Starting with a Kirov Opera production of *Parsifal* conducted by Valery Gergiev and starring Plácido Domingo in the title role, Violetta Urmana as Kundry, Nikolai Putulin as Klingsor and Matti Salminen as Gurnemanz the film takes us to the gardens of the Villa Rufolo in Ravello, Italy, which had been a principal source of inspiration

for Wagner; on to the actual stage in Bayreuth for a rare interview with Wolfgang Wagner, the composer's grandson, and finally to Hollywood and Steven Spielberg's "Indiana Jones". In an impressive way, Palmer weaves together documentary, fiction and the everlasting spell of the myth of the Holy Grail.

2.00PM MEMBERS REPORT BACK

Please come along for a Bavarian beer, sauerkraut and sausage and join with other members to informally talk about this year's Bayreuth Festival and other memorable performances attended in 2019



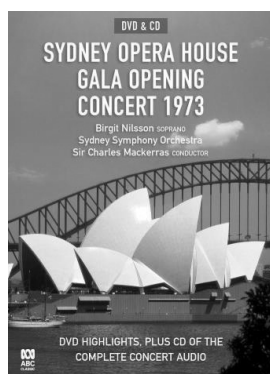
Anna-Lisa Klettenberg and Ermes De Zan at Bayreuth



Marie Leech with Stefan Vinke in Budapest

27 OCTOBER

1.00PM DVD: THE OPENING CONCERT IN THE SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE



Australia's musical landscape changed forever on the evening of 29 September 1973, when the brand-new Sydney Opera House opened the doors of its Concert Hall to the public for the first time. In front of a packed, emotion-charged house, the great Australian conductor Sir Charles Mackerras made a triumphant homecoming in an all-Wagner concert that sent the critics

searching for superlatives. Featuring the greatest Wagnerian soprano of the 20th century, Birgit Nilsson, as soloist, this was an electrifying opening for the iconic building.

Program (45mins)

1. Introduction
2. Siegfrieds Rheinfahrt (Siegfried's Journey to the Rhine)
3. Trauermarsch (Siegfried's Funeral March)
4. Schlussgesang der Brünnhilde (Brünnhilde's Immolation Scene)

2.00PM DR ROBERT MITCHELL TALKS TO US

A veteran of over 5,200 performances in more than 120 operas, baritone Robert Mitchell first sang with Opera Australia at the opening of the Sydney Opera House in 1973 and made his last appearance with the OA chorus in the

2017 concert performances of *Parsifal*. Having principally undertaken chorus responsibilities during those 44 years, his final principal role with OA was as The Captain in the world premiere seasons of Kate Miller-Heidke's *The Rabbits*. Robert's other roles included Spalanzani: *Les contes d'Hoffmann*, Lillas Pastia/Guide: *Carmen*, Antonio/Annibale: *The Gondoliers*, Liberto: *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, Maître d'Hôtel: *The Merry Widow*, Diener: *Lulu*, Government Whip: *The Eighth Wonder*, Officer: *Der Freischütz*, Messenger: *La Traviata*, Penizek: *Countess Maritza*, Frère Jean: *Roméo et Juliette*, Polish Gentleman/Soldier: *Death in Venice*, and others in *La Bohème*, *The Mikado*, *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Manon Lescaut*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Boris Godunov*, *Yeomen of the Guard*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Capriccio*.

Robert has also been a soloist for the Sydney and Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Festivals, Australian Brandenburg



Dr Robert Mitchell

Orchestra, Chamber Soloists of Sydney and the Warringah and Wollongong Symphonies and has broadcast for ABC Classic FM. In 2015 he gave the first performance of Australian composer Gordon Kerry's song cycle 'Jean à Jean' which Robert commissioned in memory of his late partner Denis Condon.

After completing the Diploma of Music Education, for his Master of Creative Arts (University of Wollongong) Robert undertook a survey of the work of French singer/teacher

Pierre Bernac. For his PhD (University of Sydney) he prepared a critical edition of Offenbach's five-act operetta *La Vie Parisienne*. A past State and National President of the Australian National Association of Teachers of Singing (ANATS), Robert has taught at Macquarie and Western Sydney Universities. He has lectured to music interest groups and written articles on a wide variety of musical subjects, teaches singing privately and is currently chairman of the Opera Australia Benevolent Fund.

17 NOVEMBER

2.00PM CHRISTMAS CONCERT

With Rebecca MacCallion, Bradley Kunda and other young singers TBC
St Columba, Ocean St, Woollahra. Join us for song, wine, food, raffle prizes and Christmas cheer.



WASO

Tristan und Isolde

3-CD Set On Sale Now!

Relive the magic of the Helpmann Award-winning concert! A landmark new live recording of *Tristan und Isolde* featuring WASO Principal Conductor **Asher Fisch**, **Stuart Skelton** (Tristan) and **Gun-Brit Barkmin** (Isolde).

The recording was captured live in concert in August 2018 at Perth Concert Hall, with performances referred to as "revelatory" (Daily Review), "superlative" (BachTrack) and "unforgettable" (Australian Book Review).

The deluxe 3-CD release set of *Wagner: Tristan und Isolde* including full libretto is available through ABC Classics.

DONATIONS RECEIVED SINCE JUNE 2019

Anna-Lisa Klettenberg, Barbara Dorsch, Richard Mason, Camron Dyer

Our thanks for the generous donations to help the Society's objectives.

BRISBANE RING DONATIONS

34 members sent the Society a donation of \$500 each, which we forwarded to Opera Australia for the Wagner 2020 Syndicate. Donors were entitled to priority booking and have already received their tickets for the Ring in November/December next year.

WE WARMLY WELCOME NEW MEMBERS WHO JOINED SINCE JUNE 2019:

Elizabeth Yashadhana and Zane Saunders (1229), Robyn Bradbury (1230), Lyndall Foldvary-Khoury (1231), Robert Dingley and Clara Lawson (1232), Vivien Reed (1233), Kristine Neill (1234), Alexandra Nugent (1235), Robin Shand (1236), Stephen Yu (1237), Steven Bowden and Edward Liew (1238)

The membership number as of 4 September was 291, comprising; Financial - 261 (155 single, 106 joint); Unfinancial - 24 (16 single, 8 joint) and Honorary Life Members - 6.

Patron:

Ms Simone Young AM

Honorary Life Members:

Mr Richard King

Prof Michael Ewans

Mr Horst Hoffman

Mr John Wegner AO

Mr Roger Cruickshank

Dr Terence Watson

Dr Dennis Mather

WAGNER: FROM REVOLUTIONARY TO MYSTIC - PART 1

by Alan Mulhern - Jungian Analyst

The journey to explore the meaning of the *Ring Cycle* takes many years. But every step is worthwhile. Here, I concentrate briefly on Wagner's dilemmas as he conceived, wrote and composed the *Ring Cycle*. In this next article I shall outline its philosophy and metaphysics for this work is music that transformed from a political critique to a myth of creation and the destiny of humanity.

The libretto for the *Ring Cycle* was written between 1848 and 1852 when Wagner was a utopian socialist and conceived as an instrument of political and social change. His early philosophical conception of the *Ring Cycle* was deeply influenced by many traditions: the anarchism of Proudhon, the political radicalism of the Utopian Socialists, the political destructiveness of Bakunin, and most importantly Feuerbach with his argument that all religions and myths were human projections yet were "truthful" expressions of the deep psyche. Behind these were the influences of Greek tragedy, the legends and sagas of Northern Europe, a determination to revolutionise opera, as well as the emerging ambition to create a myth for his/our time

By 1849, Wagner at 36 did not believe in a transcendental realm or Gods and superior beings - these were all projections and illusions though profoundly revealing. Morality did not come from on high but was created by humans. Human relations can be reordered from their present state of oppression to one of freedom and love and in accord with nature – and our own nature. For this to happen there must be a revolution. The greatest experience of humans is love which gives meaning to life and is the true motivator. *The Ring Cycle* was meant to inaugurate revolution, advocate free and genuine love, and promote the overthrow of capitalism which misappropriated the fruits of the earth and enslaved other humans.

The plot and libretto of the *Ring Cycle* were written backwards – starting with *Götterdämmerung*, written (not composed) in 1848; this then extended backwards to tell the story of *Siegfried*; then, next, the life of Brunhilde (*Die Walküre*); and finally the context for the whole trilogy, the story of Wotan and the origin of the world (*Das Rheingold*). Thus, he conceived a tetralogy – a four part cycle of enormous dimensions and complexity. It also evolved into a mythology which was eventually to transcend materialist concerns.

The composing of the four operas of the Ring, although considerably interrupted, took place in the reverse manner, first *Das Rheingold*, second *Die Walküre*, third *Siegfried*, and finally *Götterdämmerung* - i.e. the sequence of how they are actually performed. This whole process took 26 years begun in 1848 and ending in 1874. But during this time Wagner

changed enormously. The plot and libretti were written when he was a revolutionary socialist but by the time he finished what really mattered was something inward and timeless.

Breakdown and Breakthrough

After the failure of 1848/49 revolutions Wagner spent 13 years in exile (1849-1862) and abandoned his early political views. He fell into a depression and composed no music for 5 years. His circumstances were exceptionally difficult – not only in his outer world but also his inner. *The Ring Cycle*, thought by many to be the greatest artistic accomplishment in history, was written and composed under extraordinary

stress and pressure. In 1853 he began to struggle out of the depression and composed *Das Rheingold*. Then, in 1854 he discovered Schopenhauer's philosophy which he devoured and by so doing was reborn. To his astonishment on re-reading his own libretti for the *Ring Cycle* he realised that his conscious, political, revolutionary intentions had been unconsciously undermined by his artistic intuition. The unconscious had been allowed to have the upper hand shaping the plot despite his apparent wishes. Wagner writes:

"Meanwhile, I plunged deeply into my work ... I completed the score of *Das Rheingold* and also became acquainted with a book ... which was to assume vast importance for me. This was *The World as Will and Representation*. For here, the annihilation of the will and complete self-abnegation are represented as the only true means of redemption from the constricting bonds of individuality. For those seeking in philosophy their justification for political and social agitation on behalf of the so-called free individual, there was no sustenance whatever here, where what was demanded was the absolute renunciation of all such methods of satisfying the claims of the human personality ... At first, this didn't sit well with me at all ... It was this insight into the essential nothingness of the world of appearances that lies at the root of all tragedy ... I looked at my poems, the libretti of the four Ring operas, and recognised to my amazement that the very things I now found so unpalatable in the theory were already



King Ludwig II and Richard Wagner, caricature (from Der Floh, Vienna)

known to me in my own poetic conception. Only now did I understand my own Wotan myself and, greatly shaken, I went onto a close study of Schopenhauer. From now on this book never left me entirely through the years. Its gradual effect on me was extraordinary and decisive for the rest of my life ... In addition to the studies I continued with the composition of the music for the *Valkyrie*.”

The youthful philosophy of the utopian socialist now passed and Wagner was forging his more mystical conception of the human condition. Schopenhauer expressed in words what Wagner’s musical and spiritual development was heading towards: a belief that our true selves do not belong to this world, that our titanic efforts to create civilization are an injury to the original state of ourselves in nature, that social and political revolutions are destined to fail, and that it is our inherent mystical and mythical dimensions that carry our truth. Wagner was never to abandon Schopenhauer’s philosophy but he did, amazingly, abandon the *Ring Cycle* – for a long period.

Wagner began work on the third Ring opera, *Siegfried*, probably in September 1856, but by June 1857 he had completed only the first two acts. He decided to put the work aside to concentrate on other operas. By 1864 Wagner, at age 51, was at his nadir. He had abandoned *Siegfried* mid-opera. This meant he had also abandoned *The Ring* two thirds of the way through. He had composed and written three of the world’s finest operas, *Tristan and Isolde*, *Rheingold*, and *The*

Valkyrie without seeing any of them performed. *Tannhäuser* was a flop in Paris in 1861. He was heavily in debt and he had ended a bitter marriage and finally broken from his first wife. His life was an incredible mess.

Then a fairy tale happened. It was at this point that King Ludwig of Bavaria who was enchanted with the early operas of Richard Wagner, rescued him and became his extraordinarily generous patron without whom the later operas would probably never have been composed and certainly the opera house at Bayreuth would have remained a dream. Wagner rocketed to international fame and finished the *Ring Cycle* (completing *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung*). Central to this was his conviction that underneath the apparent surface meaning of the plot and libretti was another more profound, initially unconscious, artistic meaning that emerged in spite of his conscious intention.

As well as music of extraordinary creativity and beauty Wagner created an immense myth for the post-enlightenment period – our age. The main ingredients of this myth will be explored in the next article.

Alan Mulhern PhD is a Jungian analyst who works in London UK. He is the director of the Quest Series – a programme examining the world’s great visionaries – for more details see www.alanmulhern.com. He is also giving a podcast series on the same theme which will include in 2020 a mini-series on Wagner – see below:

WAGNER’S RING CYCLE:

FROM SOCIAL REVOLUTION TO INNER TRANSFORMATION

Alan Mulhern | Podcast Lecture Programme www.alanmulhern.podbean.com

October 2019 Lecture: *Early influences upon Wagner*

When the *Ring Cycle* was conceived Wagner was a utopian socialist and deeply influenced by many traditions of the anarchism of Proudhon, the political radicalism of the Utopian Socialists, and most importantly Feuerbach with his argument that all religions and myths were human projections yet were “truthful” expressions of the deep psyche. Behind these were the influences of Greek tragedy, the legends and sagas of Northern Europe as well as the ambition to create a myth for his/our time and revolutionise opera. Advance listening: *Das Rheingold*

November 2019 Lecture: *Psychological appraisal of The Ring*

The *Ring* has many interpretations: that it is a socialist tract, or an anti-Semitic fabrication, or a pre-Nazi propaganda programme. The latest are here presented: a Jungian view of the archetypal foundation of the psyche as a perspective on the four part opera series; and a gender understanding with the *Ring Cycle* representing the collapse of the patriarchy (Wotan and Siegfried) and the saving of the world by a feminine force (Brunhilde). The impact of this German tradition upon Jung and Freud will be examined. Advance listening: *Die Walküre*

December 2019 Lecture: *The influence of Schopenhauer, late Wagner and the Ring Cycle*

Fortunately, Wagner left many writings concerning the influences upon him so we are left in no doubt that Schopenhauer had an enormous and lasting impact on his thinking, philosophy and upon the *Ring Cycle* itself. The youthful philosophy of the utopian socialist was now passing and Wagner was forging his more mystical conception of the human condition. Advance listening: *Siegfried*

January 2020 Lecture: *The mystical philosophy of the Ring*

Schopenhauer philosophy deeply influenced the late Wagner: that our true selves do not belong to this world, our titanic efforts to create civilization are an injury to the original state of ourselves in nature, social and political revolutions are destined to fail, and that it is our inherent mystical and mythical dimensions that carry our truth. As well as music of extraordinary creativity and beauty Wagner created an immense myth for our period – our age. What are the main ingredients of this myth? Does it make sense? And is it relevant to the 21st century? Advance listening: *Götterdämmerung*

MEMBERS' REVIEWS

TRIUMPH OVER ADVERSITY *DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER*

Malmö, Sweden - March 27 & 31 by Robert Mitchell

The busy opera company in Malmö, Sweden's third largest city, presented 10 performances of a new production of *Der Fliegende Holländer* in February and March 2019. The opening performances were conducted by American Steven Sloane. Making her European conducting debut, Australian Jennifer Condon conducted the majority of the rehearsals and led the final two performances to thunderous applause from both audience and cast.

Jennifer will be remembered by many long-term members of the Wagner Society from the 2010 Hamburg *Ring* symposium and her Sydney presentation on her preparation of the score and subsequent recording of Peggy Glanville-Hicks' as-yet-to-be staged opera *Sappho*.

The *Holländer* season also included fellow Australian bass baritone Daniel Sumegi, making his debut in the title role, having previously sung Daland with Opera Australia and other companies.

Also making her role debut was Swedish lyric dramatic soprano Cornelia Beskow and at these final performances there were two different tenors portraying the jilted Erik: Croatia Tomislav Mužek (27/3) and Hungarian Zoltan Nyári (31/3). Completing the truly international principal cast and creatives were Russian bass Nikolay Didenko as Daland, local mezzo Karin Lovelius as Mary and American tenor Timothy Fallon as the Steersman.

To both greater and lesser effect, the production by Dutch director Lotte de Beer takes advantage of the 1930s-built opera house's wide letterbox stage and its original revolve to create two very distinctive worlds. Designed by Austrian Christof Hetzer (who also designed the costumes), the dark and menacing world of the Dutchman is represented by an eerily lit (by Frenchman Jean Kalman) curved black wall. During the overture the wall splits open to reveal Senta as a child in her father Daland's cheerfully bright house engrossed in her obsession with the legend of the Dutchman. With each reopening of the wall Senta is older and more fascinated by darkness, even hanging curtains in a final attempt to shut out the light. A gust of wind blows them down in a gesture portentous of the psychological storm that is about to enter her world.

The massive dominating wall, which curves back from downstage centre, means that the first sailors' scene with the Steersman, Daland and the chorus of sailors, takes place on a



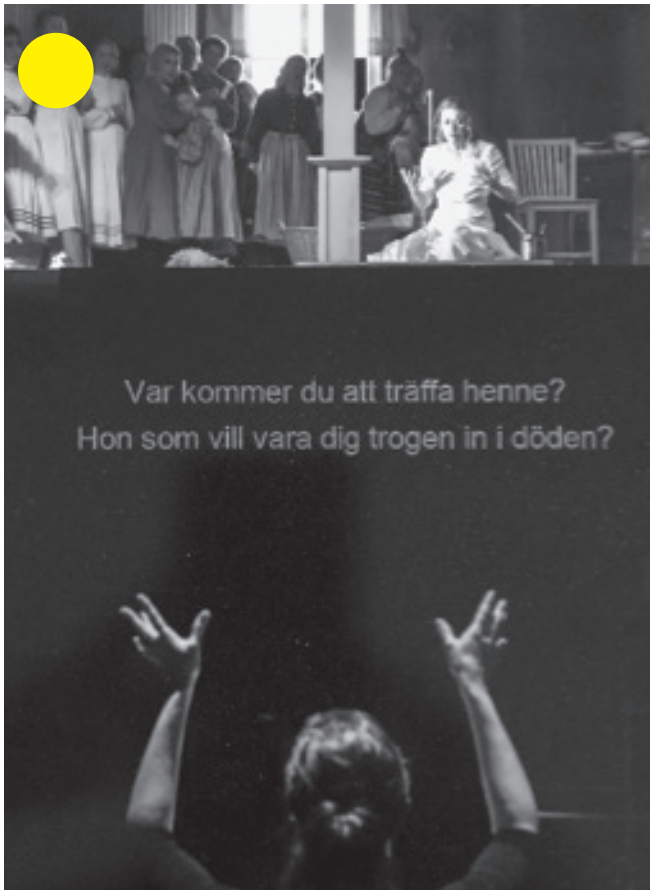
Cornelia Beskow and Daniel Sumegi

section of jetty protruding into a cramped corner of the stage. Mr Fallon, ideally suited to the Steersman's role with its wide-ranging leaps, sang clearly and lustily in his opening stanzas (*Mit Gewitter und Sturm*) and with more subtle modulation as sleep fell upon him. The gentlemen of the chorus made a fine sound despite many of them being virtually off stage owing to the limited space allowed them by the set.

Forced to break through the 'fourth wall', the Dutchman is first revealed on the opposite side of the theatre to sing his opening monolog (*Die Frist ist um*) from the auditorium. Mr Sumegi's darkly vibrant voice rang out clearly as he moved around the stalls. But I fear that for many in the audience, especially in the circle, the scene would have been heard coming from a disembodied voice.

In his first encounter with the Dutchman, Mr Didenko's richly round bass had sufficient steel to express the duplicitousness of the money-hungry merchant willing to sell his beloved daughter to a stranger in exchange for a handsome treasure-trove.

As he and the Dutchman disappear into the wings, the centre of the wall opens to again reveal the room in Daland's house that we have already seen. With the absence of spinning wheels, the members of the ladies' chorus are reduced to mop-and-duster-wielding house cleaners, which makes no sense of Wagner's text or rhythmically evocative music. While this decision led to some rather overacting from several of the ladies, their singing was full-throated and suitably rhythmic.



Jennifer Condon conducting

Refusing to be involved in the housework, Senta distracts the company with her famous ballad (*Traft ihr das Schiff*). Ms Beskow sang with relish and great intensity that led perfectly into the closing duet in which she makes her decision to be faithful to the Dutchman until death.

At this point, for the second time during the opera, the monumental set disadvantages the production. Disappointingly, the change from Daland's house in Act 2 into the expansive village green in Act 3 necessitates an interval. Consequently, the unrelenting momentum that Ms Condon skillfully paced had to be interrupted.

Following an interval of upwards of 30 minutes, the set for the short Act 3 seemed unrelated to the former scenes. Most distracting were the cut-out trees that could not be secured to the stage floor, since on the arrival of the Dutchman's crew (pre-recorded and unseen) in the confusion the terrified chorus had to spin them around to become threatening black silhouettes, while others cleared the stage of tables and benches and set a black monolith upstage centre, presumably representing the Dutchman's ship.

One of the great scenes in Act 3 is Erik's aria *Willst jenes Tag's du nicht*, in which he attempts to dissuade Senta from her decision to join the Dutchman. At her first performance, Ms Condon had the challenge of working with Mr Mužek, who had arrived the previous day and had minimal rehearsal. (Mr Nyári, who sang all the other performances, replaced the originally cast tenor during the rehearsal period but was unavailable for the penultimate performance.) Luckily,

conductor and tenor had worked together on *Holländer* in Bayreuth and the result was a splendid performance of the aria and, indeed, portrayal of the whole role, totally at one with the production both musically and physically.

It should also be noted that Ms Condon faced yet another challenge in the final performance. Ms Beskow had developed a cold between performances and the only solution was to have local soprano Liine Carlsson standing by – literally: in the wings with music on stand. (She has sung the role many times but was totally unfamiliar with this production.) In both Acts 2 and 3, on a signal from Ms Beskow, Ms Carlsson did have to step forward onto the edge of the action to complete Senta's line in the climactic ensembles with an impressive quality of voice and assurance.

The old adage may be that 'it's not over until the fat lady sings.' Well, neither of the Sentas in this production were fat. But in the case of *Der Fliegende Holländer*, it is not over until well after the lady has sung. There have always been questions about Wagner's intentions during the orchestral apotheosis. Here Ms de Beer chose what could only be interpreted as a feminist ending. Having disappeared into the blackness of the monolith with the Dutchman, suddenly Senta reappears alone and signals with gestures that her lifelong obsession was foolish and misguided. (This is reminiscent of the final moments for Eva in the Kasper Holten ROH/OA *Meistersinger* in which she storms off, disillusioned at Walter's decision to join the masters.)

To this writer's knowledge, there is nothing in the text or the libretto's stage directions to indicate that Senta has anything but obsessive tunnel vision when it comes to the Dutchman. Did her actions in the final moments detract from the impact of the closing chords? Somewhat. But in the end it was Wagner's wonderful early romantic music that won the night through excellent singing and orchestral playing under the baton of a conductor with a clear vision for the opera.

COLIN BASKERVILLE GOES TO A NEAR PERFECT CONCERT

Believe it or not I went to a near perfect concert recently at the Sydney Opera House concert hall. Susan Graham sang a selection of Canteloube's *Songs of the Auvergne*. Her performance was impeccable, understanding and delivery of the highest musical order. David Robertson conducted the Sydney symphony orchestra in Chabrier's *Espana-Rhapsody*—long a favourite of mine. The organist Joseph Nolan performed in Saint-Saens's *Symphony No.3 in C minor, Op.78*. The entire concert was performed to exceptional, musical, standards. It was good enough to have been recorded. Our orchestra could perform credibly in the great venues of our time such as Carnegie Hall

Monday, 29 July 2019

JOHN BANNER TELLS US ABOUT HIS AUGUST TRIP

Just back from my August trip where I attended the Munich and Salzburg festivals. Here are some of the points of interest.

Before Munich I travelled to Würzburg where they were doing *Götterdämmerung* at the Mainfrankentheater. As a smaller company they don't do the Ring but just the operas individually. Next year they are doing Rheingold..

It was an interesting production with some ideas I liked and one that I hated. It was set in a museum where the exhibits were the main characters who come out of their glass cases when required. They were all in traditional armour costumes. The Gibich were not in the museum and were in modern dress so Siegfried and Brunhilde stood out when they arrived though Siegfried changed into modern dress and got a haircut before fetching Brunhilde.

In the Norns scene, there was a young boy listening to them who turned out to be Hagen because Alberich also turned up. Later when Siegfried was telling of his time with Mime another young boy who was Siegfried came on stage with Mime. At the end after everything was destroyed young Siegfried and Hagen came out happily playing seemingly having inherited the new world together. Not my idea of an appropriate ending.

I also saw their production of the Waits/Burroughs *The Black Rider* which I thought was better than the Malthouse version.

The other Wagner opera I saw was *The Mastersingers* at Munich. While the cast and particularly the orchestra were fantastic I didn't like the production much. Perhaps having seen the Kosky and Holten productions recently, which were both excellent, it was hard to compete but David Bösch the director seems to like the grungy side of life. It was set in a sort of East German style concrete apartment slum. Han's shoe shop was an old van and the contest took place in a boxing ring. Bosch also did a grungy production of *The Bartered Bride* which featured a live pig, a tractor and the poor soprano having to wear the least flattering dress I have

seen in recent times. The Mastersingers will be repeated in their festival next year this time featuring Jonas Kaufman. Other operas at Munich I saw were an excellent production of *Andrea Chenier* and the mandatory Kosky production which was *Agrippina* very well done.

I then went to the Venice biennale which this year I thought was very good. For opera people who are going to go (it's on till October), look for the Lithuanian pavilion where they perform a continuous opera in English about the beach. You look down on the cast below who are in bathing costumes on a sandy beach. The opera is in English and the Barrier reef and the Gold coast get a mention.

Finally Salzburg, which in the year before its 100th anniversary, had what the New York Times critic described as "Six excellent new opera productions this year". I was only able to see five as I couldn't get a ticket to the Peter Sellers production of *Idomeneo*. The vague theme was Greek mythology and my standout production was Australian director Simon Stone's production of Cherubini's *Medée*. I was curious to see how he would do opera as when he does theatre he completely rewrites the play. While the libretto was unchanged as the opera had been updated seamlessly to the present day he replaced the spoken exposition with his own voicemails from Medee left on Jason's phone.

(Simon Stone's production of *Die Tote Stadt* which was at Salzburg last year will be at Munich next year featuring Jonas Kaufman).

The mandatory Kosky was Offenbach's *Orphée aux Enfers*, which was very funny. It will be on at the Komische in Berlin next year. One clever feature was how he handled the spoken dialogue given a cast from 8 countries including the USA and Russia. The German actor playing Jack Styx did all the dialogue in appropriate accents also with sound effects. Achim Freyer's staging of Enescu's *Oedipe* was something else again. In the Rock Riding School with its vast stage he conjured up a Freudian nightmare. The other operas I saw were *Alcina* with Cecilia Bartoli and *Simon Boccanegra* which were also very good.

TERRY CLARKE REVIEWS *DAS RHEINGOLD* at Longborough Festival Opera

Set in the heart of the English Cotswolds, Longborough is a country house opera festival which increases its stature year by year. They are now building their second Ring having completed a cycle in 2013. It is a relatively small opera house made from a converted chicken shed with an audience of about 500 and a small pit so that the orchestra for Wagner is cut down to about 80 players.

Where the previous production of the Ring was very dark, this *Rheingold* was full of light. In fact, light was almost a theme. There was a round platform on the stage with a large screen at the back which effectively projected images consistent with the mood of the moment.

All the cast were young and enthusiastic singers with special mention of the Wotan of Darren Jeffery, a bear of a man with a fine voice. Mime was unusually strong and tall and not the snivelling wretch we normally see. Loge was the ringmaster and the Tarnhelm was a top hat.

There was the, by now, familiar ambivalence of Freia towards Fasolt and instead of a rainbow bridge the Gods came down stage and stared at the audience.

On the whole Director, Amy Lane, has produced an imaginative, sensible and comprehensible rendering of the story and Conductor, Anthony Negus, gave us tremendous music with his well-trained orchestra.

The Ring at Longborough is now so popular that tickets are almost impossible to obtain and even the list of Wagner subscribers has been closed. There is talk of increasing the number of seats in the theatre or perhaps the Graham family, who own and run the festival, will put on a few more performances as the years go by. It was, as ever at Longborough, a superb night at the opera even as the wind and rain raged outside.

JENNY FERNS WAS ALSO IN MUNICH AND REVIEWS *DIE MEISTERSINGER VON NURNBERG* at Munchner Opernfestspiele, Saturday 27 July 2019 - Nationaltheater

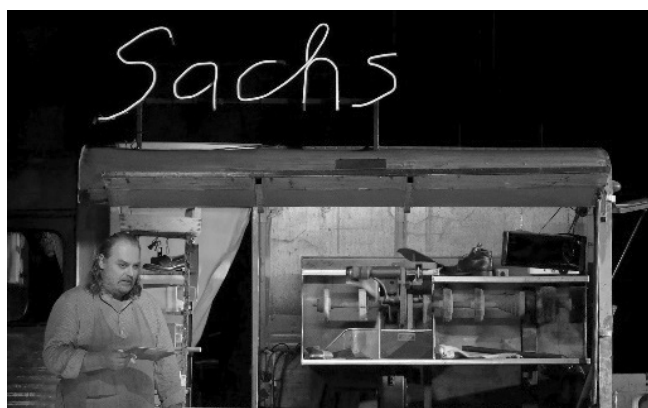
Conductor: Kirill Petrenko | **Inszenierung:** David Bosch
Hans Sachs: Wolfgang Koch | **Sixtus Beckmesser:** Martin Gantner
Walther von Stolzing: Daniel Kirch | **David:** Allan Clayton
Eva: Sara Jakubiak | **Magdalene:** Okka von der Damerau

Viewed from the middle of the stalls (Parkett), the conductor could be seen quite clearly, adding an important detail to the entire experience. The non-traditional setting is of a backstreet neighbourhood of suburban grey and dowdy apartment blocks and a small square in 1960's Nurnberg. This required quite an adjustment to my expectations.

The setting included Hans Sachs's workshop as the "back of a truck" parked in the side of the small square. In the course of the evening all kinds of vehicles provided distractions to the "action" of the opera. Motor cars, pushbikes, motor bikes, wheelchairs, fork-lift as well as a police patrol car and a limousine all contributed to the time-warp situation contrary to the expectation of the traditional setting.

The disappointment of a late cast change, the result of the indisposition of Jonas Kaufmann also created a new perspective. The substitute Walter von Stolzing was played by German singer Daniel Hirsh, a newcomer to the role. His introduction to this production required rehearsal interruptions for fellow performers in order to accommodate the late change. Occasion uncertainty of stage placement and the co-operation of other performers created a degree of uncertainty. The Chorus of the Staatsoper under the direction of Soren Eckhoff brought the stability of solid reliability and pleasure especially the offstage contribution at the beginning of Act I.

Sixtus Beckmesser, as usual, is portrayed as a pedantic, uncooperative, bungling, pitiable character. He bears the brunt of all, despite the alleged objective towards achievement of a unified goal of communal harmony in respect of perfection of an admired formal art form. Here played by Martin Gantner in a fairly youthful manner, using a ukulele rather than a lute to accompany his mostly misdirected singing, despite being the "marker," he who best must show and know the rules and the craft of good singing in conformity for Mastersinging trials. His victimisation and brutal physical abuse at the hands of David as well as the crowd of brutish onlookers, surely could only be suggested by Wagner in a most indirect way. Here the direction is overdone.



The female roles in this opera are very subservient and type-cast with the main contributions of Eva and Magdalene being their parts in the famous and most beautiful quintet in Act III with Stolzing, Sachs and David. This was achieved by all contributors gaining top marks. As usual, the Hans Sachs, here played and sung with paternal warmth by Wolfgang Koch, brought together all protagonists with compassionate and well-respected avuncular strength. Even his 1960's style, now thinning, long hair, was to-day almost anachronistic, but was appropriate for the period of the setting of this production.

The ugliness and clutter of some aspects of this production (reminiscent of the Castorf *Ring* of past years in Bayreuth) together with the distracting video images in many scenes made this viewer yearn for a more traditional representation along the lines of Wagner's wishes. As it turned out, despite mostly above average singing and acting, this performance, in delving into a mid-20th century West-German setting seemed anachronistic and contrived.

This occasion was planned to be the highlight and goal of my 2019 European travels. Unfortunately, the opportunity to see Jonas Kaufmann as Walther von Stolzing in his hometown, Munich, was too good to be true. As it proved to be. Happily, those at home in Sydney who had the chance to see him in performance a week later, in Sydney, as Andrea Chenier had better experiences.

FOUR DAYS IN BUDAPEST by Terry Clarke

Why do musical directors perform the Ring in four consecutive days? Is it because Wagner did it in 1876 and Cosima and successive directors slavishly followed his lead? There seems to me to be no good reason for doing so and many disadvantages. It is hard on the orchestra; the major roles are frequently doubled thus losing continuity. Even the redoubtable Stefan Vinke said he was daunted by doing the two Siegfrieds on successive nights. It is also hard on the audience, especially when the upholstery on the seats is losing its resilience.

Nonetheless this is how Adam Fischer likes to do it in Budapest and we attended this year's production in June, where there were many members of the NSW Wagner Society.

The production takes place, not in the bijou Budapest Opera House but in the larger, modern, Palace of Arts which stands at the Pest side of the Rákóczi Bridge over the Danube. This was a semi-staged performance with the cast in evening clothes in front of a set of screens upon which could

be displayed a variety of effects from see through glass to shadow play and projected images.

The shallow stage and the excellent acoustic of the hall made the orchestral sound and the singing particularly impressive and we were treated to some of the finest exponents of these roles particularly Catherine Foster, fresh from Bayreuth, who totally masters the role of Brünnhilde and Stefan Vinke as Siegfried. Johan Reuter was a commanding Wotan and Gerhard Siegel is, reputedly, the best Mime at present. Camilla Nylund and Stuart Skelton as the Walsung twins were particularly moving.

There was a certain amount of disquiet in the audience regarding the production. Although Wotan carried a spear for much of the time there was no sword and if Stefan Vinke hadn't provided his own wedding ring there would have been no ring either. There were also a group of dancers dressed as flies or ants who writhed around the stage from time to time for no reason one could ascertain.

The main criticism, however, was directed at the screen projections. Occasionally they were relevant to the action but frequently they were unhelpful. The Rhinemaidens had a backdrop of dirty water into which, at one point, a dead dog was dropped followed by half clad females with bad eczema swimming. Presumably to draw our attention to the pollution of the world's rivers. Screen projection is a great resource, but infelicities were multiple and opportunities were squandered.



Wagner Society members attending the Budapest Ring

Surtitles were in Hungarian and German so first timers could be forgiven for finding some of the action incomprehensible.

Of great interest to the Australian Wagnerians was the appearance of Alison Oakes as the Brünnhilde in *Siegfried* as she is currently cast in Brisbane in 2020. This was her first attempt and it must be hard to shine in this comparatively short role against the strength of Catherine Foster. We look forward to seeing her next year.

Musically this Ring could not be bettered, however, I do not think we will go to a four-day Ring again.

THE METROPOLITAN OPERA RING CYCLE APRIL - MAY 2019

Postscript to Review (issue 153) by Minnie Biggs - *Die Walküre*

Clearly two performances at the Met were not enough. How lucky are we in AU to have the Met HD cinema version arrive a month later?

Of course the theatre /opera house/MET are better, much better, but there are real advantages to watching it close up on the small(er) screen. And, for me, at the hokey Mt Vic Flicks there were times when the orchestra and the singing filled that space to the overflowing of my heart. There were also times when I heard the orchestra telling the story, way ahead of the words, and far clearer than words. Just as we know it does, and just as we do not always recognise it happening.

Some of the singers and details one really wants to see bigger than life, others not so much. Hunding sings out of the side of his mouth, to look cruel and mean, quite scary, that mouth, close up!

The only cast member different from my beloved gang at the Met was Greer Grimsley as Wotan. Was not crazy about him in the past and less so this time. He has one of those voices that wobbles, and while it is pleasant to see a slim Wagnerian singer, his handsome face is somehow grim. Grim Grimsley. When he sings of his love for his daughter, not a trace of joy or love is on that face. A good moment to be far away in the upper circles- of the theatre or heaven singing.

The high moment, and one not visible to any but those in frontmost seats was that of Sigmund dying. He lays on the

ground looking up at Wotan/Walse, his father, and gently nods his head, and dies. Achingly beautiful.

Mixed emotions about the interval features, a lot of time spent hearing about how wonderful Debby Voight was as both Sieglinde and Brunhilde - oh yes, she knows all about how hard it is.

But an interview with The Infamous Le Page about The Machine was helpful. It seems he was inspired by the Edda myths, and Iceland and...its tectonic plates. So the Machine is meant to simulate movement of those plates. Having been told that, one can see how the lighting and movement of the planks look like plates, sometimes, and that helps to explain that iceberg I wondered about. But Wagner and the Edda and tectonic plates? Tectonic plates are about Iceland. The Edda come from Iceland, but are they connected?

Then I wondered- leap of imagination- might he be referring to the literal tectonic shifts in the music and drama and philosophy of Wagner? But the movement of the planks did not connect with the music as such. Just an imaginative leap. I wonder if an imaginative complicated set should tell its story by itself or does it need explaining, like learning about LePages's images of Iceland volcanos and shifting ice? For 17, or is it 23 million dollars? There were great shots of the cast of 24 backstage lifters, one for each plank. Really. Who knew?

Minnie Biggs July 2019

RECENT GRANTS TO YOUNG SINGERS

BRADLEY COOPER



Bradley Cooper is a dynamic performer and educator, equally excited to engage in a wide range of genres. Brad studied at the Sydney Conservatorium, the National Opera Studio, London and with Marilyn Horne at the Music Academy of the West, California. He has been asked to cover Lohengrin for the OA Melbourne Autumn season and has obtained financial help from the Wagner Society in NSW in obtaining coaching since the main singer is coming out very close to the start of the opera. Brad is hoping to have coaching in Vienna with David Aronson, in Berlin with Siegfried Jerusalem and in London with Tony Legge.

UPDATE FROM JESSICA HARPER

Dear Wagner Society in NSW,

I am writing to thank you so much for the support you have afforded me in the last few months as I have been paving my way to an international career here in Dresden. Your scholarship has provided ample resources for me, of which I have been able to take full advantage.

I have attached a letter from Herr Cadenbach for your reference, confirming that we have been working together, along with my Goethe certificate.

My initial breakdown of funding had budgeted for two Goethe Institut courses (B1 and B2). Once I sat the placement test, however, I was assigned to the B2 class, negating my need to do the B1 level altogether. As such I have budgeted the remaining money to continue my singing lessons when I return to Dresden in November and have taken up private German tuition lessons with Cordula Dreyer, which I am finding to be an excellent use of time, and money. We will continue to do private lessons over skype while I am travelling to Austria this European summer. I had hoped to do the B2.2 at the Goethe course in June, but this class did not run due to lack of interest, hence why I sought private tuition.

The class at the Goethe Institut was a wonderful experience and I learned an enormous amount there. The certificate confirming my attendance and completion of the B2.1 level is also a priceless possession in terms of applying for work at opera houses.

I had also budgeted for singing lessons to be at 70.00 – 80.00 euro per session, but Herr Cadenbach has graciously accepted a ‘cash in hand’ rate, giving me ample extra funds to continue working with him. Thanks to my work with Herr Cadenbach I have seen great progress with my singing and overall performing.

This progress is evident in that I was placed in the



Semi Finals of the 4th International Adam Didur Vocal Competition. This competition takes place in Katowice, Poland, and is only run every four or five years. The prize pool is enormous, and it is very well covered on YouTube and social media platforms. Coming to Europe this year I had absolutely no expectation of making the Semi Finals, or even possibly live rounds of a competition this well renowned. It was a wonderful experience that I will always remember, and for which I will always be deeply grateful.

I have also been successful back home in Sydney this year, as I was awarded *The Opera Foundation for young Australians* Dalwood-Wylie American Institute of Musical Studies award and the AIMS Sundell Study Award for 2019. As this takes place in Graz, Austria and Vienna respectively, the need to speak intermediate-advanced German is all the more prevalent. I feel so prepared for this summer course and period of study and am not remotely worried about getting by in Graz with the level of German I have achieved thanks to the sponsorship of the Wagner Society of NSW.

Before I land in Austria I am going to Lucca, Italy for five days to compete in the Nicola Martinucci International Vocal Competition. I have been invited to compete in the

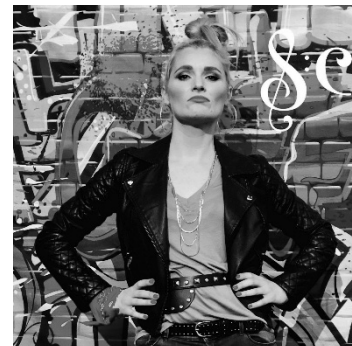
live rounds of this competition, after successfully passing the video selection stage. I have been working with Herr Cadenbach on this specific repertoire and I feel extremely prepared to represent myself, and Australia, very well in this prestigious competition. I could not have done this without the support of the Wagner Society NSW.

Thank you so much for your investment in my education. I am looking forward enormously to performing for the Society at the soonest available opportunity and speaking further about my international experience.

Jessica Harper June 2019

BRIEF UPDATE FROM SAMANTHA CRAWFORD

- 21 October Samantha will be performing *The women in Czech operas* with pianist Lada Valešová at The Club at the Ivy.
- 25 October Samantha will be performing at the London Song Festival with Celebrating Australian Music at St. George Hanover Square.



Samantha as Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* for Garsington Opera and The Lord Mayor's Appeal.
© Bernadette Roberts

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THE RAVEN'S REPORTING, COMPILED BY CAMRON DYER

There is a regularly updated list on the Society's Website www.wagner-nsw.org.au that takes the list to 2024.

September 2019

Berlin Staatsoper
The Ring – September 7 - 29.
Coburg *Das Rheingold* – September 29
Cologne *Tristan und Isolde* – Sept 21, 28
Eisenach Wartburg – Meininger Staatstheater
Tannhäuser – September 3, 8, 29
Hamburg Opernloft
The Ring – September 20, 21
Helsinki *Das Rheingold* Sep 3, 7, 10, 14, 18
Kassel *Siegfried* – September 14, 21, 28, .
Klagenfurt *Tannhäuser* – September 1, 19, 22, 25, 28, 2019.
Lviv *Lohengrin* – September 13, 14
Minden *The Ring* – September 12, 15, 19, 22, 26, 29, October 3, 6, 2019
Oviedo *Götterdämmerung* – September 10, 14, 17, 21, 2019.
Paris Philharmonie
Parsifal – September 22, 2019.
St Petersburg Concert Hall
Tannhäuser – September 19, 2019.
Vienna Volksoper
Holländer – September 22, 25, 28,

October 2019

Coburg *Das Rheingold* – October 3, 8, 20
Cologne *Tristan und Isolde* – October 3, 6, 11, 13, 19.
Copenhagen *Tristan und Isolde* – October 27, 9.
Ekaterinburg *Holländer* – October 1, 2019.
Kassel *Siegfried* – October 5, 26, 2019.
Klagenfurt *Tannhäuser* – October 2, 5, 11, 15
Leipzig *Tristan und Isolde* – Oct 5, 12
Holländer – October 10, 17, 2019.
Eisenach Wartburg – Meininger Staatstheater
Tannhäuser – October 3, 2019.
Minden *The Ring* – Sept 26, 29, Oct 3, 6
Riga *Holländer* – October 11, 2019.
St Petersburg Concert Hall
Tannhäuser – October 9, 2019.
Mikhailovsky Theater
Holländer – October 22, 2019.
Vienna Volksoper
Holländer – October 2, 8, 12, 2019.

November 2019

Amsterdam *Die Walküre* – November 16, 20, 24, 27, 2019.
Bloomington Indiana University Opera
Parsifal – November 10, 13, 16, 9.
Coburg *Das Rheingold* – November 1, 20
Copenhagen *Tristan und Isolde* – Nov 3, 14
Cottbus *Holländer* – November 8, 28
Dortmund *Lohengrin* – November 30, 2019.
Duisburg *The Ring* – Nov 12, 13, 15, 17
Dusseldorf *Das Rheingold* – November 2,
Ekaterinburg *Holländer* – November 28, 2019.
Gothenburg *Die Walküre* – [no actual dates].
Halberstadt Nordharzer Städtebundtheater
Holländer – November 9, 2019.
Hildesheim *Tristan und Isolde* – Nov 16, 24
Karlsruhe *Tristan und Isolde* – Nov 17
Leipzig *Tristan und Isolde* – Nov 10
Holländer – November 2, 24, 2019.

Munich *Lohengrin* – November 21, 24, 30
Prague National Theater
Lohengrin – November 9, 23,
Quedlinburg Nordharzer Städtebundtheater
Holländer – November 24, 2019.
Riga *Holländer* – November 16, 2019.
Salzburg Landestheater
Lohengrin – November 2, 5, 14, 16, 20, 24, 29, 2019.
St Petersburg Mariinsky
Tristan und Isolde – November 5
Holländer – November 12, 2019.
Concert Hall
Tannhäuser – 7, 2019.

December 2019

Amsterdam *Die Walküre* – December 1, 4, 8
Berlin Deutsche Oper
Tristan und Isolde – Dec 1, 8
Coburg *Das Rheingold* – December 4
Cottbus *Holländer* – December 1
Dortmund *Lohengrin* – December 8, 14
Dusseldorf *Das Rheingold* – December 21
Die Walküre – December 8, 22
Gothenburg *Die Walküre* – December 1, 7, 15, 21, 29, 2019.
Halberstadt Nordharzer Städtebundtheater
Holländer – December 7, 28, 2019.
Hamburg *Lohengrin* – December 22, 26, 29
Salzburg Landestheater
Lohengrin – December 3, 7, 2019.
Riga *Tannhäuser* – December 15, 2019.
Tallinn *Holländer* – December 18, 21

January 2020

Bilbao *Holländer* – January 18, 21, 24, 27
Bologna *Tristan und Isolde* – Jan 24, 26, 28, 29, 31
Chemnitz *Das Rheingold* – January 31
Coburg *Das Rheingold* – January 9, 31
Dortmund *Lohengrin* – January 12, 2020.
Dresden *Die Meistersinger* – January 26, 30
Ekaterinburg *Holländer* – January 25, 2020.
Frankfurt *Tristan und Isolde* – Jan 19, 25
Gothenburg *Die Walküre* – January 3, 11, 19
Hamburg *Lohengrin* – January 3
Opernloft *The Ring* – January 11, 12, 2019.
Leipzig *The Ring* – January 15, 16, 18, 19
Prague National Theater
Lohengrin – January 31, 2020.
St Petersburg Concert Hall
Tannhäuser – January 18, 2020.
Strasbourg *Parsifal* – January 26, 29, 2020.
Stuttgart *Lohengrin* – January 12, 15, 19
Toulouse *Parsifal* – January 26, 28, 31
Vienna *Lohengrin* – January 9, 12, 16, 19
Wolfenbüttel Nordharzer Städtebundtheater
Holländer – January 26, 2020.

February 2020

Chemnitz *Lohengrin* – February 1, 22, 2020.
Die Walküre – February 23, 2020.
Dresden *Die Meistersinger* – Feb 2, 10, 16
Ekaterinburg *Holländer* – February 25, 2020.
Erfurt *Lohengrin* – February 8, 26, 2020.

Frankfurt
Halberstadt *Tristan und Isolde* – Feb 1, 9, 14, 23, 29
Nordharzer Städtebundtheater
Holländer – February 7, 23 2020.

Hamburg
Madrid *Holländer* – February 18, 21, 27
Die Walküre – February 12, 14, 16, 18, 21, 23, 25, 27, 28, 2020.

Mulhouse
Prague *Parsifal* – February 21, 23, 2020.
National Theater
Lohengrin – February 2, 2020.

Rheine Nordharzer Städtebundtheater
Holländer – February 18, 2020.

St Petersburg Mariinsky
Parsifal – February 10, 2020.
Lohengrin – February 28, 2020.

Strasbourg *Parsifal* – February 1, 4, 7, 2020.

Tallinn *Tannhäuser* – February 6, 8, 2020.

Toulouse *Parsifal* – February 2, 4, 2020.

Wiesbaden *Holländer* – February 6, 16, 2020.

March 2020

Arnstadt Nordharzer Städtebundtheater
Holländer – March 28, 2020.

Barcelona *Lohengrin* – Mar 19, 22, 25, 28, 31

Chemnitz *Lohengrin* – March 15, 2020.

Dortmund *Lohengrin* – March 22, 2020.

Duisburg *Lohengrin* – March 8, 11, 18

Erfurt *Lohengrin* – March 1, 2020.

Hamburg *Holländer* – March 1, 2020.

Kassel *Götterdämmerung* – Mar 7, 14, 22

Landshut Landestheater Niederbayern
Die Walküre – March 15, 22, 28
Tristan und Isolde – March 14.

Leipzig *Die Walküre* – March 12, 15, 2020.

Lisbon *Holländer* – March 7, 14, 19, 2020.

Lüneburg *Holländer* – March 27, 29, 2020.

Meiningen *Holländer* – March 2, 6, 10, 14, 18, 21, 24, 27, 2020.

New York *Die Walküre* – March 7, 14, 21, 28

Stockholm Mariinsky
Das Rheingold – March 24, 2020.
Die Walküre – March 25, 2020.

St Petersburg Landestheater Niederbayern
Die Walküre – March 24, 2020.

Straubing *The Ring* – March 15, 18, 22, 28

Vienna *Holländer* – March 5, 2020.

Wiesbaden *Das Rheingold* – March 14, 21, 29

Würzburg

April 2020

Barcelona *Lohengrin* – April 3, 5, 2020.

Berlin Deutsche Oper
Holländer – April 19, 30, 2020.

Budapest *Parsifal* – April 10, 13, 16, 1

Chemnitz *Lohengrin* – April 5, 2020.
The Ring – April 9, 10, 11, 13

Chicago *Götterdämmerung* – April 4, 11
The Ring – April 13, 14, 16, 18, 20, 21, 23, 25; 27, 29, May 1, 3

Darmstadt *Lohengrin* – April 4, 2020.

Dortmund *Lohengrin* – April 10, 2020.

Dusseldorf *The Ring* – April 7, 9, 11, 13, 2020.

Eisenach Wartburg – Meininger Staatstheater
Tannhäuser – April 24, 2020.

Hamburg *Parsifal* – April 12, 19, 25, 2020.

Kassel *Götterdämmerung* – April 4, 2020.

Landshut Landestheater Niederbayern
Die Walküre – April 11, 2020.

Leipzig *Parsifal* – April 10, 2020.

Lincoln *Parsifal* – April 11, 18, 2020.

London Royal Opera
Tristan und Isolde – April 27, 30
Holländer – April 3, 17, 21, 2020.
Parsifal – April 10, 26, 2020.

Lüneburg *Holländer* – April 11, 19, 25, 2020.

Mannheim *Tannhäuser* – April 23, 26, 30

Meiningen *Parsifal* – April 12, 16, 19, 2020.

Milan *Die Meistersinger* – April 25, 2020.

Munich *Die Meistersinger* – April 18, 26

Oslo Opéra Bastille
Das Rheingold – Apr 2, 5, 8, 11, 15

Osnabrück *Die Walküre* – April 5, 2020.

Paris Mariinsky
Parsifal – April 4, 2020.
Siegfried – April 11, 2020.
Götterdämmerung – April 12

Stockholm Landestheater Niederbayern
Die Walküre – April 7, 2020.

St Petersburg *Tristan und Isolde* – April 30

Tallinn *Tannhäuser* – April 25, 2020.
Parsifal – April 9, 12, 15, 2020.

Vienna *Holländer* – April 11, 2020.

Wiesbaden *Das Rheingold* – Apr 5, 12, 18, 28

Würzburg

May 2020

Berlin Deutsche Oper
Tannhäuser – May 1, 10, 2020.
Holländer – May 15, 29, 2020.
Parsifal – May 17, 21, 30, 2020.
Tristan und Isolde – May 24, 31

Budapest *Parsifal* – May 28, 30, 2020.

Chemnitz *The Ring* – May 20, 21, 22, 24

Chicago *The Ring* – April 27, 29, May 1, 3

Darmstadt *Lohengrin* – May 2, 21, 2020.

Dortmund *Lohengrin* – May 22, 2020.

Duisburg *Holländer* – May 24, 31, 2020.

Helsinki *Die Walküre* – May 15, 20, 23, 27

Leipzig *The Ring* – May 20, 21, 23, 24
Holländer – May 30, 2020.

Lincoln *Parsifal* – May 3, 10, 16, 21, 2020.

London Royal Opera
Tristan und Isolde – May 3, 8, 11
Holländer – May 24, 27, 2020.
Parsifal – May 21, 2020.

Lüneburg *Holländer* – May 6, 31, 2020.

Mannheim Opera Australia
Lohengrin – May 16, 20, 23, 29
Tannhäuser – May 3, 7, 10, 24, 27

Meiningen *Die Meistersinger* – May 2, 6, 11, 16, 19, 23, 2020.

Milano *Die Meistersinger* – May 2, 15, 21, 29, 31

Oslo Opéra Bastille
Die Walküre May 5, 10, 15, 19, 27

Osnabrück Landestheater Niederbayern
Die Walküre – May 17, 24, 26

Paris Mariinsky
Parsifal – May 11, 2020.

Passau *Tristan und Isolde* May 3, 10, 21, 24

St Petersburg *Holländer* – May 1, 3, 6, 9, 12, 14, 16
Tristan und Isolde – May 1, 21, 31
Holländer – May 20, 23, 2020.

Toronto *Das Rheingold* – May 10, 15, 28

Wiesbaden

Würzburg

June 2020

Berlin Deutsche Oper
Das Rheingold – June 12, 16, 19, 22, 25, 27, 2020.

Staatsoper
Holländer – June 18, 20, 23, 26.
Lohengrin – June 14, 28, 2020.

Darmstadt
Dusseldorf
Eisenach
Wartburg – Meininger Staatstheater
Tannhäuser – June 10, 19, 2020.
Tristan und Isolde – June 12, 20, 28
Die Walküre – June 3, 2020

Frankfurt
Helsinki
Leipzig
Linz
Longborough
Lüneburg
Mannheim
Meininger
Munich
Oldenburg
Osnabrück
Sofia
Tallinn
Tokyo
New National Theatre
Die Meistersinger – June 21, 24, 27, 30
Tristan und Isolde – June 11, 2020.

Wiesbaden
Würzburg
Zurich
Das Rheingold – June 7, 2020.
Lohengrin – June 28, 2020.

July 2020

Berlin Staatsoper
Holländer – July 2, 4, 2020.

Eisenach
Wartburg – Meininger Staatstheater
Tannhäuser – July 7, 2020.
Tristan und Isolde – July 2
Tristan und Isolde – July 5, 2020.
Siegfried – July 26, 29, 2020.

Munich
Oldenburg
Die Meistersinger – July 25, 29
The Ring – June 26, 28, July 1, 4

Sante Fe
Sofia
Wiesbaden
Zurich
Tristan und Isolde – Jul 18, 22, 31
Die Walküre – July 2, 2020.
Tristan und Isolde – July 5, 2020.
Lohengrin – July 2, 5, 8, 11, 2020.

August 2020

Sante Fe
Tristan und Isolde – Aug 6, 12, 18

September 2020

Oldenburg
The Ring – September 18, 20, 23, 26, 2020.

October 2020

Brisbane
Oldenburg
Paris
Tristan und Isolde – Oct 28, 31
The Ring – October 2, 4, 7, 10
Opéra Bastille
Siegfried – October 10, 14, 18

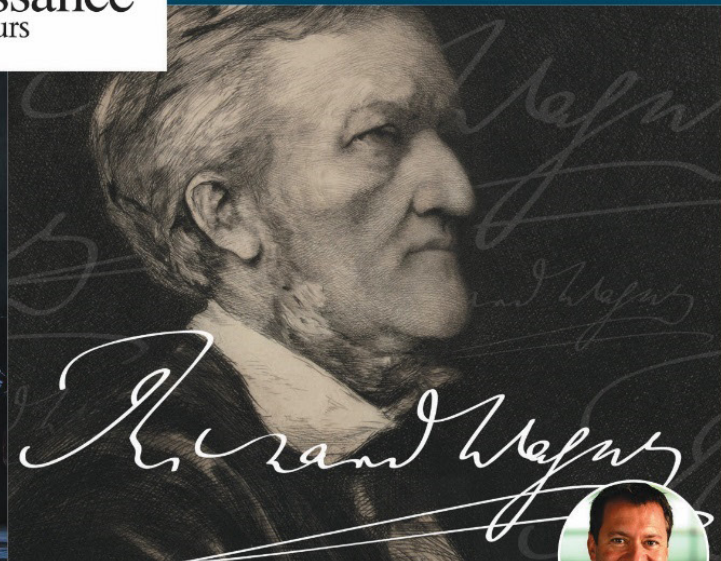
November 2020

Brisbane
Opera Australia
The Ring – November 10, 12, 14, 16; 19, 21, 24, 26, 28, Dec 1, 3, 5



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The Chicago Ring

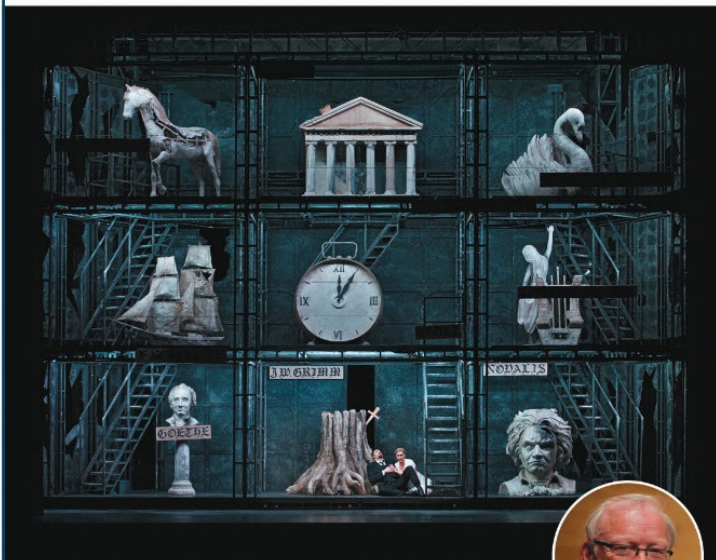
Guaranteed Category One Main Floor Prime Seating with Scott Curry
26 April – 04 May 2020 (9 days)

Travel to Chicago in 2020 for the gripping new production of the *Ring* by the city's Lyric Opera under the baton of Sir Andrew Davis and directed by David Pountney.

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Paris, Lucerne, Leipzig, Dresden and Berlin with Damien Beaumont
15 May – 01 June 2020 (18 days)

Follow in the footsteps of the great master of opera and enjoy performances of his major operatic works in Germany, France and Switzerland.



Lohengrin in Melbourne

at Arts Centre Melbourne with Heath Lees
22–24 May 2020 (3 days)

Join international Wagner expert Heath Lees for a fully-staged production of Wagner's romantic masterpiece *Lohengrin* by Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie and Opera Australia at Arts Centre Melbourne.

The Paris Ring

Guaranteed 'Optima' Category Seating with Antony Ernst
22–29 November 2020 (8 days)

Join leading Wagner authority Antony Ernst in the city of lights for what promises to be one of 2020's seminal new productions of the *Ring*.

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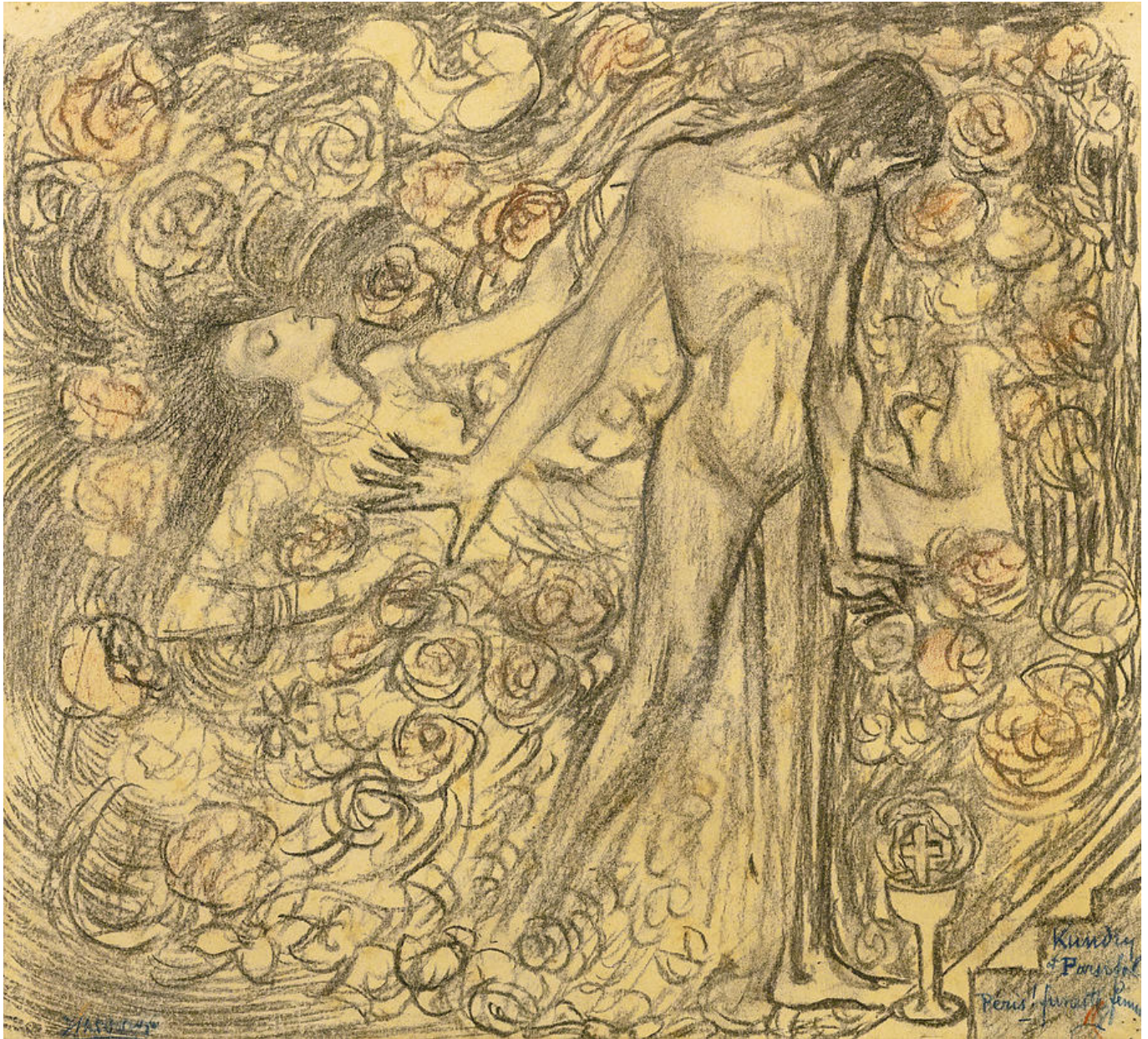
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Website: www.wagner.org.au | Website enquiries: wagner_nsw@optusnet.com.au

(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)



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

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