

The Wagner Society

IN NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

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Newsletter

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COMING EVENTS

Sun Dec 13th	Christmas Party The Goethe Institute	2.30
Sun Feb 21st	Professor John Hughes illustrated talk the Kupfer Bayreuth production of <i>Der Ring</i> The Goethe Institute	2.00pm
Sun Mar 21st	<i>Lohengrin</i> Video The Goethe Institute	1.00pm

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NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

In October we were fortunate to hold a very successful seminar on *Tristan und Isolde*, co-organised with the Friends of the Australian Opera. It was a most interesting day and a great financial success as well! We are now going to have another "co-production" in April 1993 on *Salome*.

Our latest journal, *Wagner in Australia*, Volume II, containing the texts of the talks delivered during the 1989 and 1990 Seminars, is now available from the Society at \$15 a copy. Please write to the Society for your copy. Copies will also be on sale at the Christmas Party. We are also engaged in publishing various papers from the 1991/92 Seminars and propose combining them with the 1993 Seminar on *Salome*. In due course these will also be published.

There is an order form for tickets for Bayreuth on Page 7. If you wish to be considered for tickets for 1993 (on receipt of our allocation), please fill in the form and post it to the Society (address on front page).

Sad news - we have been contacted by both Stephen Bennett and the Opera Foundation - he is unable to take up the Wagner Travelling Scholarship awarded to him earlier this year due to voice problems. He is hopeful that these will be overcome in due course and we wish him well.

November's attendance at the Goethe Institute for the CD of *Parsifal* was not large and we are wondering whether we should concentrate on future on videos. If you have an opinion please let us know by letter or at the next meeting, the Christmas Party. However, it is good news that we have confirmed all our dates at the Goethe Institute up to and including July 1993.

Olive Coonan, President

1992 CHRISTMAS PARTY

Our Christmas Party is back at the Goethe - come and bring your friends!
Raffle prizes, Christmas cake, champagne....

It's always a fun occasion and the balcony overlooking the gardens is a splendid place for a party.

Good company, good music, good food.

Sunday 13th December at 2.30pm

Entry \$5 for members, \$6 for non-members

THE BAYREUTH TEN

Last October Australia became part of a world-wide distribution of the "Bayreuth Ten". Philips have marketed here their recordings of Wagner's stage works from *fliegende Holländer* to *Parsifal*, all in Bayreuth performances, and in the three home-entertainment formats that pertain to the 1990s - CD, videotape and laserdisc. These Bayreuth performances thus enshrined span the years 1962 to 1990, so some digital refurbishing of sound and image has been necessary.

The CD sets are sold at mid-price, \$20 per disc, but take note that within the "Bayreuth Ten" package there are some discrepancies. Five of the CD performances differ from their telerecorded counterparts in regard to the particular cast involved, for example, the *Tannhäuser* (CD 1962 festival; video/laserdisc 1978 production), or *Lohengrin* (the CD from the current production but the video/laserdisc from 1982). The other three similarly diverging issues are *Tristan*, *Meistersinger* and *Parsifal*. Consequently, casts and productions are fully uniform across the three formats being marketed for only half of the "Bayreuth Ten". Nonetheless, this is an exciting issue for Wagner enthusiasts. The upgraded sound and/or image command our respect, even if all but one of the sound recordings have been available on vinyl or CD before now. The one exception is the new *Lohengrin*, recorded at the 1990 festival, which has Paul Frey and Cheryl Studer as the leads, and Peter Schneider as conductor. Arguably this set is an improvement on the corresponding telerecorded cast of 1982, and Wagner lovers will happily recall Paul Frey from the 1988 *Meistersinger* in Sydney.

A detailed review of this 1990 Bayreuth *Lohengrin* on CD is printed elsewhere in this issue.

Philips have marketed an attractive CD sampler with ten tracks, drawn one apiece from the ten complete works in the Bayreuth package. Each track is a musical entity, such as Anja Silja's impassioned "Dich, teure Halle" or Paul Frey's nobly-phrased Narration from Act III of *Lohengrin*. There are four familiar extracts from the Centenary *Ring* but perhaps only the *Rheingold* closing scene or Siegfried's death and funeral march convey the dramatic spark of that renowned cycle. The sampler CD ends with Peter Hoffman's wavery account of "nur eine Waffe taugt" (from the 1985 *Parsifal* under Levine), an interesting comparison with the glowing and more incisive rendition by Siegfried Jerusalem in the telerecording of 1980 (Horst Stein conducting).

Best of all, this sampler - a mere \$10 - comes with a splendid, English-edition booklet, under the title "Wagner in Bayreuth - a documentary", and highly commendable reading it is for any Wagnerite.

Wolfgang Wagner has written a foreword, but the booklet's thrust lies in its three major essays. First, Peter Emmerich recounts Wagner's creative life succinctly in 42 pages, with a fine bevy of illustrations to match. A second essay of equal length comes from the world Wagner authority, Dr Oswald Bauer. "I didn't think you'd

succeed" - words of the German Emperor to Wagner in 1876 - serve as the essay's title. Dr Bauer recounts how Wagner's aspirations gradually came to be realised on the "little green hill" (albeit not without the aid of today's theatre technology!). Bauer treats the eras of Cosima and Winifred Wagner with a strong sense of archival objectivity and there are some telling contrasts to be observed here. The succession of the two grandsons since 1951 is sympathetically appraised. Going into more extensive detail, Dr Bauer cogently explains how "fidelity to the work" has remained Bayreuth's touchstone through (and despite!) the widely diverse productions he has witnessed since Wieland Wagner's day.

Dr Bauer also contributes musical background notes to each of these (separate-purchase) CDs and telerecordings. This booklet runs to a hefty 142 pages - informative reading, excellent value. With this sampler's help, Wagnerites can choose from among the 30 individual music issues that comprise the "Bayreuth Ten". You'll find them in Sydney shops now. Our copy of the sampler (Philips CD 434.979-2) was kindly supplied by Michael's Music Room.

PHILIPS' NEW *LOHENGRIN*

Lohengrin	Paul Frey	Elsa	Cheryl Studer
Ortrud	Gabriele Schnaut	Telramund	Ekkeharde Wlaschiha
Heinrich der Vogler	Manfred Schenk	Der Heerrufer	Eike Wilm Schulte
	Bayreuth Festival Chorus and Orchestra		
	Conductor - Peter Schneider		

A highlight of the Philips' Bayreuth Festival Edition is a wonderful *Lohengrin* that was recorded prior to the 1990 Festival. This recording is the only new recording in the Edition and the most recent release from Bayreuth.

The most exciting vocal work is done by Cheryl Studer with her lovely gentle timbre. Her Elsa strongly contrasts with Schnaut's Ortrud. The other villain, sung by Wlaschiha, is superbly dark and menacing, particularly in the dramatic Minster scene.

Paul Frey (our wonderful Walther in 1988) leads this cast with a lovely honey-toned voice, projecting a suitably stately character and with exemplary diction in the all-important Narration.

Peter Schneider directs a well-trained chorus and orchestra, bringing out much detail and some startling moments, particularly with the brilliant brass.

UNEXPECTED APPEARANCES

Patrice Chéreau, of Centenary *Ring* fame, makes an appearance as the Marquis de Montcalm in the new film version of *The Last of the Mohicans*, starring Daniel Day-Lewis and opening in Sydney in January.

THE WAGNER SOCIETY PRESENTS

Your Society broadcasts its own program on 2MBS-FM at 1pm on the fourth Sunday of each month. Tune in to 102.5 megahertz on FM band. The schedule of the next 12 *Wagner Society Presents...*, for 1993, is below.

December	1992	"Begging your pardon, Bayreuth...."
January	1993	A centenary salute to Forence Austral, Soprano
February	1993	<i>Parsifal</i> , Act I
March	1993	<i>Parsifal</i> , Act II
April	1993	<i>Parsifal</i> , Act III
May	1993	"Richard's Birthday Concert"
June	1993	<i>Götterdämmerung</i> , Act I
July	1993	<i>Götterdämmerung</i> , Act II
August	1993	<i>Götterdämmerung</i> , Act III
September	1993	To be announced
October	1993	José Van Dam in recital
November	1993	Unfamiliar songs and overtures

OBITUARY - SIR GERAINT EVANS, CBE

In a career that spanned 36 years, beginning and ending at Covent Garden where he made his debut as the Nightwatchman in *Die Meistersinger* and said farewell as Dulcamara in Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*, this great artist will be remembered chiefly for his comedy roles.

He was unsurpassed as Verdi's Falstaff and excelled as Beckmesser, the role which brought his American debut in San Francisco in 1959. He is known to have said that he built his characters from the feet up - shoes a bit too tight for the crotchety Beckmesser, boots a size too big for the lumbering Wozzeck. His performances were always memorable.

VIENNA BONBONS

The production team of Harry Kupfer and Hans Savanoch (the 1988-92 *Ring cycle* at Bayreuth) have recently launched a musical in Vienna based on the life of Elizabeth of Austria to capacity audiences.

ORDER FORM BAYREUTH 1993

- Only orders placed on this form and signed will be accepted.
- Orders will be filled according to time received.
- We will apply for tickets for performances towards the end of August (2nd or 3rd cycle).
- You are responsible for the price of the tickets once they are received. Unfortunately, because of the nature of the dealings with the Festival Box Office, we require payment, even if you are unable to use the tickets. We will not return tickets to the Bayreuth Box Office because there is a risk that such a move may prejudice future orders from the Society. However, if you were unable to go, after paying for the tickets, it is extremely probable that we would be able to find someone else to take them over.
- If we obtain tickets we will endeavour to arrange a tour group with an agent but, if unable to do so, you are responsible for your own travel arrangements.
- *The Ring* is not performed in 1993. The operas scheduled are *Dutchman*, *Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin*, *Tristan* (new) and *Parsifal*. Tickets will be sold as a package of five only (subject to availability).
- Please indicate the number of seats that you want. We cannot guarantee that the seats will be next to each other.
- We will add a service charge of 20% to the tickets to cover the Society's expenses in ordering the tickets.
- Please make sure that your order reaches us before 31st December 1992.

.....

Send to
Wagner Society
141 Dowling Street, Wollomooloo 2011.

Telephone inquiries 387 6403.

Number of Seats: _____ If there is a choice, would you prefer _____ expensive, _____ less expensive seats?

SIGNATURE	
NAME	
ADDRESS	
PHONE (WK & HOME)	

AN AUSTRALIAN EXPORT TO BAYREUTH

A project inspired by a spectacular sculpture has taken a circular route from Germany to Australia and back again as a result of a fruitful collaboration between Australian composer, Moya Henderson, and the CSIRO in developing a new musical instrument, the alamba.

Henderson's teacher, Herr Kagel, urged her to write a piece for 27 triangles, after seeing the sculpture by Helfried Hagenberg.

The alamba uses large computer-designed triangles connected to a resonating chamber to produce the remarkable bell tones and has attracted the attention of conductors like Sir Charles Mackerras and the Opera House in Bayreuth for the bells in *Parsifal*.

Sydney Morning Herald 24.10.92

RONALD DOWD SUMMER SCHOOL FOR SINGERS

Now in its sixth year, this Summer School, at Charles Sturt University, Bathurst, is inviting participation in some of its new programs and masterclasses in January '93. Tutors will include Geoffrey Chard, guest tutor; Victor Morris, Head of Auditions, English National Opera; Bernt Benthak; Paul Arthur, Movement and Dance Director; Janet Delpratt, Chairman, Vocal Department, Queensland Conservatorium. Enquiries: The Convenor, Ronald Dowd Summer School for Singers, PO Box 842, Bowral, 2795.

AUSTRALIA DAY 1993

Members who are visiting England in January 1993 may enjoy attending an Australia Day gala concert at the Royal Opera House on Sunday 31st January. José Carreras leads an all-star cast including Joan Carden, Leslie Howard, Suzanne Johnston, Yvonne Kenny, James Morrison, Jonathan Summers and John Williams. The Conductor is Sir Charles Mackerras. Prices range from £1.50 to £75.

INTERNATIONAL WAGNER CONGRESS - BREGENZ - 6th to 9th MAY 1993

Mention was made in the last Newsletter of this important forthcoming event. Business is usually conducted in German but doesn't stop the UK Society from sending a sizeable contingent. The 1991 Lyons Congress attracted 300 participants, the 1992 Regensburg had some 900! Details of next year's program are on page 11 but for registration write to:

Vorarlberger Richard Wagner Verband,
Festspiel und Kongresshaus,
Platz der Wiener Symphoniker I,
A-6900 BREGENZ, VORARLBERG, AUSTRIA

MEMBERS WRITE IN

Response to the Andrew Porter Article on Translation

It was interesting to read Andrew Porter's words on the translation of Wagner's librettos into English. I understand German and recently read a short history of the language.

The essential point to grasp is that it was not until 1898 with the publication of Theodor Siebs' *Deutsche Bühnenaussprache* (German Theatre Language) that a common German language existed. This book, favouring North German pronunciation and grammar, was accepted as the authoritative text by theatres as it stems from a special gathering in Berlin of linguists and officials of the theatrical society. The current edition is also used by broadcasters.

In 1880 Konrad Duden published the first edition of what we know in English as a pronouncing dictionary. Alas, confusion still prevailed about grammar during Wagner's lifetime. Even today, one encounters grammatical eccentricities south of Frankfurt. Bavarians and Austrians are the worst offenders. As Wagner lived mainly in Switzerland and Bavaria he was influenced by what are now considered aberrant linguistic propensities.

John Drew

Response to the Seminar

Having spoken to many people who attended the *Tristan und Isolde* seminar, I find that there is a general consensus of opinion that this function was an unqualified success.

Not only was this our most ambitious undertaking but, more importantly, our first joint venture.

It must be gratifying to all who contributed to the occasion that the Wagner Society proved in all respects a worthy partner with the Friends of the Australian Opera.

Should further opportunities for joint undertakings arise we should embrace them, always provided, of course, that our autonomy is not prejudiced.

My congratulations to all involved.

Reg Maloney

ANSWERS TO LOGE RITHMS

1.3 2.2 3.1 4.3 5.2 6.3 7.4 8.3 9.2 10.3 11.0 - *Siegfried*, Act I

LOGE RITHMS

♪ ♪ ?? ♪ ♪ ?? ♪ ♪ ?? ♪ ♪ ?? ♪ ♪ ?? ♪ ♪ ?? ♪ ♪ ?? ♪ ♪ ?? ♪ ♪ ?? ♪ ♪ ??

- 1 Which of these characters defies one of Wotan's decrees?
 - 1.1 Mime
 - 1.2 Froh
 - 1.3 Waltraute
 - 1.4 Loge
- 2 Her family name was Fawaz, but she became world famous as... ?
 - 2.1 Frida Leider
 - 2.2 Florence Austral
 - 2.3 Eileen Farrell
 - 2.4 Hildegard Behrens
- 3 Which of these famous opera directors has not produced *Der Ring* at Bayreuth?
 - 3.1 Götz Friedrich
 - 3.2 Peter Hall
 - 3.3 Heinz Tietjen
 - 3.4 Harry Kupfer
- 4 "Look after the short notes, the long will take care of themselves". Famous advice to singers from... ?
 - 4.1 Siegfried Wagner
 - 4.2 His mother
 - 4.3 His father
 - 4.4 His elder son
- 5 Which character in Wagner's works is the daughter of a duke and at the centre of a political storm?
 - 5.1 Elisabeth
 - 5.2 Elsa
 - 5.3 Senta
 - 5.4 Cosima
- 6 In which direction from the Valkyries' rock are we told the cave of Fafner lies?
 - 6.1 North
 - 6.2 South
 - 6.3 East
 - 6.4 West
- 7 A *leitmotif* is...
 - 7.1 The Wagnerian mating call
 - 7.2 A musical directive to sing softly
 - 7.3 The lamp carried by Sieglinde around Hunding's hut
 - 7.4 A musical idea
- 8 Who only wants to "lie and possess"?
 - 8.1 Hunding
 - 8.2 Kundry
 - 8.3 Fafner
 - 8.4 Beckmesser
- 9 Which of the Mastersingers during the Act I rollcall reports in as "ill, unable to attend"?
 - 9.1 Schwarz
 - 9.2 Vogel
 - 9.3 Foltz
 - 9.4 Nachtigall
- 10 "Liebestrank" is very important to which of these Wagner characters?
 - 10.1 Siegmund
 - 10.2 Amfortas
 - 10.3 Brangäne
 - 10.4 Hagen
- 11 In which Wagner work do 2 principals sit down to play a game of "ask me another"?
 - 11.1 *Die Walküre*
 - 11.2 *Die Valkyrie*
 - 11.3 *Die Walküre*
 - 11.4 *Die Walküre*

CHRISTMAS MEDLEY

Our editor has found a selection of rhymes and poems for Christmas, one of which even relates to Wagner's music. We hope you enjoy these squibs in the spirit in which they were written. The first poem was written by Rupert Brooke, after a visit to the Queen's Hall, London, in 1908 (no prizes for guessing which opera is being attended); the others are NOT by Rupert Brooke.

WAGNER

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Creeps in half wanton, half asleep,
One with a fat wide hairless face,
He likes love-music that is cheep;
Likes women in a crowded place;
And wants to hear the noise they're
making.

"Take a seat in the parlour"
Said Mahler
"While I dash off the final section
Of my Symphony no 2 in C minor (The
Resurrection)".

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

His heavy eyelids droop half-over;
Great pouches swing beneath his eyes.
He listens, thinks himself the lover,
Heaves from his stomach wheezy
sighs;
He likes to feel his heart's a-breaking.

John Philip Sousa
Spent much of his time in the boozier.
A doctor writes: The incessant
composing of marches
Parches.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

The music swells. His gross legs
quiver.
His little lips are bright with slime.
The music swells. The women shiver.
And all the while, in perfect time,
His pendulous stomach hangs a-
shaking.

Johannes Brahms
Always vacationed in Glamis
"Having wonderful time, weather
splendid" he wrote in a postcard to
Schumann
"And *no sign of Ernest Newman.*"

PROGRAM AT THE INTERNATIONAL WAGNER CONGRESS BREGENZ 1993

- Thu 6th May: Registration and issue of passes; Civic Reception with items from the 1993 Bregenz Festival being presented on the lakeside stage.
- Fri 7th May: Main Assembly of Wagner Society delegates, followed by sight-seeing. The evening is devoted to Maurice Bejart's acclaimed *Ring um den Ring* by the Ballet of the German Opera, Berlin.
- Sat 8th May: Götz Friedrich addresses the Congress on "A Solemn Musical Setting"; Congress Midday Banquet; Evening Concert - Vorarlberg Symphony Orchestra.
- Sun 9th May: Festal Mass - St Gallus' Church - Mozart's Coronation Mass; Farewell Luncheon.

THE RAVENS REPORTING

Here we offer advance short items/performance news of interest to Wagner lovers.

- Dortmund *Advanced Warning!* A *Ring Cycle* will be performed at Dortmund in 1995 - *Das Rheingold* on 12th April and 19th May; *Die Walküre* on 14th April and 21st May; *Siegfried* on 17th April and 25th May; and *Götterdämmerung* on 23rd April and 28th May.
- Budapest *Advanced Warning III.* Budapest Spring Festival (Mar 12-28 1993) includes *Das Rheingold* with the complete cycle coinciding with Expo '96.
- Bologna *Götterdämmerung.* The Teatro Comunale's new production is conducted by Riccardo Chailly with Sabine Hass, Gabriele Maria Ronge, Florence Quivar, Siegfried Jerusalem, Bodo Brinkmann, Hartmut Welker and Matti Salminen.
- The Met *Die Meistersinger.* A new production opens in January by their *Der Ring* team of producer Otto Schenk, director Günther Schneider-Siemssen, costumes Rolf Langenfass and lighting Gil Wechsler. Karita Mattila sings Eva, Birgitta Svenden, Magdalene, Francisco Araiza/Ben Heppner, Walther, and Bernd Weikl, Hans Sachs with James Levine conducting. Jan 14, 18, 23, 26, 30, Feb 2, 6, 10.
- Arizona *Die Walküre* in Tucson, Jan 14, 16 and Phoenix Jan 19, 22, 24 (m).
- Amsterdam *Der fliegende Holländer.* A new production is to be staged by De Nederlandse Opera with many dates to choose from. MariAnne Häggender makes her Dutch debut as Senta and Wolfgang Schöne is Holländer. Other cast members are Hebe Dijkstra, Thomas Sunnegårdh, Glen Winslade and Arthur Korn. The conductor is Hartmut Haenchen, producer Richard Jones and director Nigel Lowery. Jan 25, 28, 31, Feb 2, 5, 8, 11, 15, 18, 21.
- Oslo *Das Rheingold.* Norwegian Opera's first in a *Ring Cycle* to be completed in 1996. The conductor is Heinz Fricke, producer Mike Ashman and director Kathrine Hysing. Jan 30, Feb 4, 9, 13.
- Cardiff *Tristan und Isolde.* A new production by Welsh National Opera. Anne Evans and Jeffrey Lawton take the lead roles with Della Jones, John Harris, Peter Rose, Richard Paul Fink/Phillip Joll and Sir Charles Mackerras conducting. The producer is Yannis Kokkos making his WNO debut. Feb 13, 20, Mar 6. Tour dates: Bristol (Mar 13), Liverpool (Mar 20), Oxford (Mar 27), Southampton (Apr 3), Birmingham (Apr 17), and Covent Garden (Apr 19 & 22).
- Toulouse *Der fliegende Holländer.* José Van Dam takes the title role. Feb 19, 21 (m), 23, 26, 28 (m).
- Munich *Der Ring.* Bayerische Staatsoper does one cycle. Feb 25, Mar 1, 3, 8.