

The Wagner Society



NEWSLETTER No.86, December 2001

IN NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

In Memoriam: Mrs Betty Maloney

On 22 September, about 200 family and friends of Betty Maloney met in the Stoney Range Flora Reserve in Dee Why to participate in a memorial service in the sanctuary which Betty had been instrumental in returning to something like its original condition. It was a fitting setting for the commemoration, particularly with the tall trees meeting over the top, forming a natural cathedral, with, I'm sure, many birds also singing Betty's praises for the wonderful green and cool world she had helped create for them.

Mr Don Burke was the MC for the occasion - reflecting Betty's high standing in the botanical community in NSW. Betty's sister, Jean Walker, and other family members paid their tributes to a much-loved person. Many other people from societies and community groups, such as the thimble collectors, and quiltmakers shared with the participants their experiences of Betty and her infectious enthusiasm and unbounded energy.

Mr Murray Sandlands spoke on behalf of the Wagner Societies of Victoria and New South Wales and related a typical story of his first encounter with Betty and Reg who took pity on him after he had fallen into a roadside ditch on his way home from the Aldeborough Festival many years ago and remained close friends.

Many participants had stories about their first meeting with Betty and Reg or about their long-standing friendship. Some memories were sad, some amusing, but all reflected Betty's warmth, generosity and openness.

All the members of the Wagner Society in NSW appreciate Betty's support in setting up the Society as a founding member and for attending nearly all Society meetings since its inception. Her enthusiasm for Wagner's music and her interest in discussing aspects of his work and thought was always an inspiration for her fellow members.

Our sympathy and thoughts also go out to Reg Maloney for his loss of a marvellous partner and companion.

President's Report

Dear Members,

Since our last meeting we have enjoyed the recent Lohengrin performances. It was wonderful to hear Glen Winslade in such good voice after so many years and to welcome back Bernadette Cullen and John Wegner both of whom sang wonderfully. Lisa Harper-Brown sang her first Elsa well and acted the part very convincingly though many members found her voice a little 'thin' particularly in the second act. Those of us lucky enough to be at the final performance heard the role of Elsa sung by Nicole Youl and were delighted to hear a richer, fuller voice which we had missed earlier.

A few nights ago we also enjoyed the Wagner Concert given by the Ballet and Opera Orchestra conducted by Simone Young. Lisa Gasteen, Bernadette Cullen and Horst Hoffmann sang excerpts from Tristan and Isolde and we realised how long it is since we have seen this opera. We congratulate everyone concerned. It was a great concert and we really enjoyed the encore Valkeries in full cry.

PATRON: Sir Charles Mackerras
HONOURARY LIFE MEMBERS: Prof. Michael Ewans,
Mr Richard King,
Mr Reg Maloney,
Mr Horst Hoffmann,
Mr Joseph Ferfaglia

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Wagner Spectacular P9

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Coming Events

DATE	EVENTS - 2001	LOCATION
21 October	Discussion led by members who attended the 2000 and 2001 Bayreuth Festivals and the Adelaide Parsifal	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM
18 November	Ms Marie Bashir, Governor of NSW, with Dr Boman and Dr Freiberg: "Psychological Aspects of the Major Characters in Wagner's Ring of the Nibelungen"	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM
9 December	Annual Society Christmas Party Wagner in Hollywood - Movie/Music Quiz	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM

DATE	EVENTS - 2002	LOCATION
January	No function	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM
February 17	Anthony Ernst on Die Feen and Das Liebesverbot	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM
March 24	Parsifal Easter	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM
April 21	To be advised	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM
May 26	Wagner's Birthday Function	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM
June	No function	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM
July 21	22nd Annual General Meeting	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM
August	No function	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM
September 15	Gotterdammerung final installment of the Kupfer/Barenboim production from Bayreuth	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM
October 20	To be advised	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM
November 8	To be advised	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM
December 8	To be advised	Goethe Institut 1.00 PM
Goethe Institut Address	90 Ocean Street Woollahra (corner of Jersey Road)	

Committee 2000-2001

President	Barbara McNulty	9487 1344
Vice President	Vacant	
Treasurer and Membership Secretary	Roger Cruickshank	9357 7631
Secretary	Dennis Mather	9560 1860
Members	Lindsay Knight	9550 3290
	Julian Block	9337 6978
Newsletter Editor	Terence Watson	9517 2786
	Sandy Dudgeon	9489 0570
Public Officer	Peter Nicholson	9436 1097

For Your Diary

<i>Tristan and Isolde</i>	Opera Australia. Cast: <i>Tristan</i> , Horst Hoffman; <i>Isolde</i> , Lisa Gasteen; <i>Brangane</i> , Bernadette Cullen; <i>Kurwenal</i> , Daniel Sumegi; <i>König Marke</i> , Bruce Martin. Conductor Simone Young; Director Neil Armfield.	November. Tues 13, Sat 17, Tues 20, Fri 23 - Melbourne
The Ring Cycle	State Opera of South Australia announces the production team for Wagner's Ring Cycle - Adelaide 2004	Adelaide 17 Nov to 11 Dec



President's Report continued

Many of us went to Adelaide for Parsifal and the consensus was that they were excellent performances. Musically and vocally they left nothing to be desired and if some had minor problems with some of the production details these did not detract from the overall pleasure of our first Australian Parsifal - we have waited a long time. We congratulate the State Opera of South Australia and all involved and are very proud to have been able to have played a small part in their success.

Sadly we record the death of Betty Maloney, one of our Foundation Members, who had fought a long battle against cancer. She was an inspiration to all who knew her and will be very sadly missed. Our deepest sympathy goes to her husband, Reg and sister, Jean Walker. A report on her Memorial service, by Terence Watson, will be found in this Newsletter.

I particularly want to thank all those Members who have made donations. These are the basis of the help we are able to offer to Opera Companies and Orchestras performing Wagnerian works and as we are always asking for more performances it is essential that we build up our donation account, particularly with a Ring Cycle to look forward to in 2004.

The support of all our members through the last few months has been very heartening and there is no doubt that our Society will survive despite our difficulties. I regret to report that there has been no recovery of the missing funds and the investigation is continuing.

I hope to see a large audience at our November meeting when Professor Bashir assisted by three other psychiatrists will examine the psychological profiles of a number of Ring characters. And of course our Christmas party in December when we will once again ask you to come and bring a plate.

Barbara McNulty October 2001

Bayreuth News

18 October 2001, The Associated Press carried a report that Lars von Trier has been chosen to produce the 2006 Ring Cycle. Wolfgang Wagner is reported as saying that von Trier has "a particular affinity and artistic relation with this work". Christian Thielemann will be the Conductor. Von Trier's films include "The Kingdom", "Breaking the Waves", "The Idiots" and "Dancer in the Dark."

Sir Andrew Davis will be the Conductor for the 2002 *Lohengrin*. There will also be a new production of *Der fliegende Holländer* in 2003. The Conductor will be Marc Albrecht, the Director Claus Guth, the staging and costumes will be by Christian Schmidt. A new *Parsifal* will be presented in 2004.

Donations

The Society welcomes all donations and they can be addressed to the Treasurer, Wagner Society in NSW Inc at the GPO address above. Such donations help us to carry out our objectives of promoting the performance of Wagner's works. Donations are tax-deductible and receipts will be issued.

Donations have gratefully been received from the following members: Gregg and Terry Chesher, Pam and Ian McGraw.

New Members

R Neville Pollard (856)

Parsifal - Adelaide

September/October 2001

Judging by the critical and popular reception, the South Australian Opera Company has scored a tremendous achievement with its Australian premier stage production of *Parsifal*. The critics of the major Australian newspapers generally applauded the production, although most had some reservations ranging from the less convincing production values of Act III to some of the scenic icons such as the Grail (red laser light through billowing smoke). All commended Poul Elming in leading a very satisfying cast of good singers/actors. Jonathon Summers pleading with God/Parsifal near the end of Act I was electrifying in the intensity of Summers' pleading and his sudden total collapse as Amfortas realises that his hope for Parsifal as the "pure fool" seems to have been completely misguided.[Ed]

Christmas Party - Wagner Movie Quiz

See how many movies you can identify that have extracts from Wagner's music as part of their soundtracks. You would be surprised at the number - some obvious, some obscure, all of them fun to look at from this perspective. Join the fun!



Bayreuth 2001

I was first smitten by Wagner's music at the age of twelve when my best friend's mother played me Sigmund's and Sieglinde's 'spring night'. The passion of this scene has inspired me all my life and I always keenly anticipate a *Walküre* performance. The Bayreuth 2001 *Walküre* was the 8th (and 2nd Bayreuth) production I have seen and the 'spring night' was one of the most thrilling – for me the highlight of this year's Ring.

Unfortunately, nothing else was of the same musical or emotional standard as *Walküre* Act 1. I enjoyed all four evenings and I found the production stimulating, intelligent, clear, human, sympathetic, full of fresh insights and there were some excellent performances (especially Loge and Fricka, and the marvellous men's chorus) - BUT - the music never soared, the hairs on the back of my neck never stood up, my heart didn't pound, I didn't forget to breathe. I expect all of the above from a great 'Wagner Night'. Maybe conductor Adam Fischer was following the Director's anti-heroic/corporate interpretation and deliberately trying not to thrill – but I thought the orchestra was lacklustre and there was some sloppy solo playing at crucial moments. The lighting was generally bad – not enough and in the wrong places, but the sets were always interesting and thought-provoking. Siegfried and Brunhilde sang well enough but were unconvincing as lovers – he looked like a car mechanic and she like his mother.

Parsifal was almost the opposite – pedestrian staging, laughable special effects, and no new insights but superb, radiant, orchestral playing under Christian Theilman and wonderful singing, especially from the chorus. It was hard to believe it was the same orchestra that played in the Ring.

Meistersinger was very traditional but well acted and beautifully played. The final scene was glorious – all on stage were living every moment, completely immersed in their culture - a truly life-enhancing night in the theatre.

Lohengrin was a lovely surprise to me – I normally find the story dreary and some of the music rather rum-te-tumpty but this production was full of such wonderful insights and stunning stage pictures that I was completely caught up in the drama. The lighting was very dramatic and the image of Gottfried trapped in a glass cube suspended high up above a misty pool and casting a shadow of the Grail Dove was stunning. Elsa sang superbly and was very beautiful, ethereal and totally hysteric. Lohengrin was a little stiff, but sang very high and sweet and the orchestra was thistledown light. I came out floating.

To sum up – Bayreuth 2001 was wonderful - despite some musical disappointments, unbearably hard seats and too much beer and sausage. I wouldn't have missed a second of it and can't wait to go again.

Michael Day October 2001

Inside the Clouds: *Parsifal* in Adelaide - A Personal View

Adelaide has become an amazing place of silver linings for lovers of Wagner's music. I love every inch of Adelaide. Who would have thought that, when Jeff Kennett poached the Grand Prix for Melbourne, Adelaide's revenge would be to stage such a successful Ring back in 1998?

Or that when sufficient corporate sponsorship wasn't forthcoming for a production of *Parsifal* in the Star City Casino as part of the Sydney Festival in 2000, the State Opera of South Australia would swoop on the abandoned ideas and properties, and stage Australia's first complete production of Wagner's last work so successfully? Or that they could twice attract a conductor of the stature of Jeffrey Tate and that he would devote so much time to rehearsals with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra with such amazing results?

Or that they would snare the foremost exponent of the title role, Poul Elming? Or that Margaret Medlyn, who most of us knew as *Wellgunde* and *Rossweisse* in the 1998 *Strosser Ring*, would be his equal vocal partner as Kundry? Or that Elke Neidhardt, whom many old school Wagnerians will never forgive for her *Tannhäuser*, would produce such subtle and startling images for us? I certainly didn't!

When the first notes of the Prelude welled up and the music began to weave its spell, I marvelled at the sound these musicians made-and at the cruelly slow tempo Jeffrey Tate had chosen! These musicians, nurtured by Tate so carefully for so long, gave performances that, for me, place them at the forefront of orchestral musicianship in this country.

Elke Neidhardt can stir one's passions, and she didn't disappoint with this *Parsifal*. Punters partial to seeing a dead swan in Act 1 were to be disappointed. No spring for Amfortas to bathe in, no dead swan (just a painted backdrop which was a waste of time), no Easter forest in Act 3, no blooms for the *Zaubermädchen*, no nature at all to speak of, other than what was hinted at, and no visible heavenly chorus of any kind. These things didn't bother me, but they obviously bothered some of the audience. But for me this *Parsifal* worked overwhelmingly well without many of the props, and perhaps because it didn't have them.

The "dead swan" crowd was also troubled that Kundry spent a lot of time lolling about in a small quarry at the front of the stage-and then didn't sink lifeless to the ground at the end of Act 3, as the Meister decreed. (Perhaps she will be Lohengrin's mother?) To keep the ledger in balance, it is Amfortas who instead joins his father in death. Did we get a chalice as our Grail? No we didn't. Did anyone understand why a large book was dragged across the table when the Grail was revealed? Does that really matter?



Wagner Society in NSW Inc.

Tristram Cary (*The Australian*) gave this crowd a rallying cry when he wrote that he found Kundry's "Jean Harlow wig" embarrassing. I rather liked Kundry's full-length leather coat, and thought she looked a lot like an androgynous Side-show Bob, which isn't surprising if she has been Herodias, and a lot of other women, in her previous lives.

I think that it was the start of Act 2 that enraged the "dead swan" brigade. The curtain rose on Daniel Sumegi reclining on a bed (with Kundry under the sheets, we later discovered) with a rather oversized red spear thrusting skywards from his self-diminished loins. For a moment I wondered how many of the embarrassed titters were caused by Daniel's bravely bared torso and how many by the projecting red relic. I think the relic won.

This short-lived tableau didn't augur well for the arrival of the *Zauber mädchen*. Tristram Cary called them "an Esther Williams bathing beauty affair", and John Slavin (*Sydney Morning Herald*) "a delightful bevy of Normal Lindsay bonbons". A more modern eye might have detected a touch of the Madonnas (she of "Like a virgin", not His Mother.) But they were plentiful, and "underwearing" in a very bold way.

I think we can politely dismiss many of the quibbles thrown up by the old guard. For me, the production was unashamedly about compassion, showing *Parsifal* more as a Buddhist and nihilist work, cocooned within Christian surfaces. Parsifal, in this case a real hero, experiences suffering for the first time directly through Amfortas, and out of compassion seeks the cure for the suffering for both of them.

It used to be more fashionable to depict the Grail Knights as devout men, yearning for the sustaining power that comes from the revealing of these most precious relics. These were unashamedly the Spear that pierced the side of Christ at His crucifixion, and the Chalice He used at the Last Supper when He changed wine into His most sacred blood. The vintners of South Australia might have appreciated that image more than our Grail, which was a rock manifested through a laser, if I understood the programme notes.

In this production, that fashion has gone and we see the Grail Knights as a more malevolent force. They too are witnesses to the agony Amfortas endures when he reveals the Grail at the end of Act 1, but they do not suffer with him, or feel compassion. Instead, like spiritual vampires, their thoughts are only for themselves. They seek only to strengthen themselves with the Grail's power. Perhaps even Gurnemanz shares this corruption? Only Parsifal feels anything for the suffering stranger whom he watches perform the rite at the end of Act 1.

The violence, with which, in Act 3, Amfortas hurled his chair across the stage towards the silent opening from which his father's voice had come in Act 1, shocked me. This was not a king wallowing in self-pity, but a strong man driven by pain and guilt to demand his death at the hand of one of his Knights.

The weakened Knights do not oblige, and as they turn their backs on their king the changing pattern of light on the back wall

transforms into the face of a man - Titarel? - or perhaps the face from the shroud of Turin? This was not what we expected from a producer who wrote, in her programme note, that she was "strongly opposed to any overtly Christian interpretation"!

Nor did we expect to see, at the end of Act 2 when Parsifal retrieves the spear from Klingsor, Daniel Sumegi draped on the spear like a Christ crucified on a crossbar, or perhaps more like one of the sinners crucified with Him? These were powerful images, and powerfully spiritual. Neidhardt did not disappoint!

It was a pleasure to watch the work unfold, not just listen with my eyes closed. I may not always have liked what I saw, but it rarely seemed to me to be out of sympathy with the music or with the actions of the singers.

And what singing! Poul Elming, often disconcertingly wandering about the stage in his jumper with a look of quizzical bemusement, seemed more relaxed, and sang with more power and command of his role than in the performance I saw in Bayreuth. His long rejection in Act 2, first of Kundry's kiss and then of her eloquent but curiously non-sexual seduction, produced the finest singing I have heard in Australia. He and Margaret Medlyn were in magnificent voice, and sang effortlessly and naturally to create something rare-the fusion of stage, music and voice that makes live opera magical.

Daniel Sumegi's Klingsor had physical presence and vocal menace, but for me lacked the harder edge that a little more volume could have given. Manfred Hemm's enduring Gurnemanz, a formidable stage presence, was the glue that held the outer Acts together, faltering perhaps only when he recognises first Parsifal and then the spear, and cries out in joy: "O Gnade! Höchstes Heil! O Wunder! Heilig hehrstes Wunder!"

I particularly liked Jonathan Summers' Amfortas. Like the Rhinemaidens, a careless guardian of sacred treasure, undone by his pride, he is the cause of our story. He was always vocally a strong king and, while his pain was real, he never allowed his voice to descend into self-pity. He did not beg his Knights to slay him to end his pain; he demanded that they do it. In the end it is Parsifal who gives him his wish.

How do you measure something like this Adelaide *Parsifal*? I am still working through my experience of this silver lining in Adelaide. During the past month, when music has suddenly filled my head unbidden, it has been from this *Parsifal*. I doubt that we will see another "*Parsifal*" in Australia for a long time. Like the prisoners in *Fidelio*, we have walked about in sunlight, but now return to our subterranean cells to dine on *Tales of Hoffmann* and *Sweeney Todd*. We must look to Adelaide (and Ms Neidhardt) in 2004 to challenge us again with another "*Ring*". I'm looking forward to it already.

Roger Cruickshank October 2001

[The full version of this review can be read on the Wagner Society's website - Ed.]

Bayreuth (& Adelaide *Parsifal*) Debrief

On Sunday, 21 September, a number of members who had been to the Bayreuth Festival in either or both 2000 and 2001 met to share their impressions and interpretations of the new Ring Cycle with each other and with other members who had not seen the Ring production. Since many members had also recently been to Adelaide for the very successful production of *Parsifal* we went on to give our views on this production as well.

The following is a summary of some of the many comments made about the Bayreuth Ring Cycle

- Most people seemed to find the production generally interesting and the singing good, with some notable exceptions in the premiere performance [Wolfgang Schmidt and Gabrielle Schnaut in particular],
- Jurgen Flimm [Director] used such things as the acting, stage business, and scenic images to give the audience a guide to what is happening and what is meant by the drama.
- Flimm managed to create real people in this people - whom one cared about.
- Flimm's creation of a corporatised form of relationship made everything a little uncomfortable so that Siegfried and Brünnhilde were not able to express their emotions very effectively.
- It was not clear that the conductor [Adam Fischer] was in control of the orchestra all of the time, especially in comparison with *Parsifal* [conducted by Christian Thielemann].
- The old ending for *Götterdämmerung* with its future referring imagery had been replaced by a new final stage image that was variously interpreted as "optimistic", "confrontational" and "disturbing". [The original ending had used a young child dressed as Parsifal standing alone in the vast space of the Bayreuth stage to link, according to Flimm, the self-abnegating nature of Brünnhilde's final act with the concept "mitleid" or compassion that Wagner developed in *Parsifal*. In this year's

version, Brünnhilde's immolation takes a backseat to throngs of people dressed in street clothes walking towards the audience, standing, then turning to the back of the stage as the huge backdoors of the Bayreuth stage open up and large spotlights flood the audience with intense white light (described by some as a "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" ending.)

Here are some of the comments on the Adelaide *Parsifal*.

- There was a refreshing sense of movement on the stage in Adelaide compared with the very static Bayreuth version [now retired, with a new production due in 2003].
- Elke Niedhart's directions and Jonathon Summer's acting and singing made one feel for Amfortas, unlike Bayreuth where he comes across as a "whinger".
- Some were a little disappointed with [different] aspects of the production, but some thought that Elke Niedhart was "holding herself" back [in comparison to her production of *Tannhäuser* in Sydney].
- Some found the slow tempi distracting and disturbing, while others found that it either had no impact (because the production, singing, acting and orchestral playing was so good) or that it enabled the music to breathe and develop a sense of disembodiment and lightness.
- All agreed that the State Opera of South Australia should be commended for its achievement. [Ed]



Raven's Reporting, Compiled by Camron Dyer

This list is not cumulative and should be read in conjunction with Newsletters Nos.79 and 80. There is also a comprehensive list in chronological order on the Society's Website. The Website also contains dates and advance notices for performance from January 2003 to August 2013.

November 2001

Augsburg *Holländer* - 16, 23, 30.
 Berlin Staatsoper
Parsifal - 4, 7, 11.
 Dresden *Die Walküre* - 11, 14, 18..
 Houston *Tannhäuser* - 3, 6, 9, 11.
 Kiel *The Ring* - 11, 21, 25, 11.
 London ROH *Parsifal* - [no actual dates].
 Melbourne *Tristan and Isolde* - 13, 17, 20, 23.
 New York *Die Meistersinger* - 17, 20, 24, The Met 27.
 Stockholm *Lohengrin* - 17, 24, 28.
 Vienna *Die Walküre* - 3.
 Zurich *Siegfried* - 18, 22, 25, 29.

December 2002

Augsburg *Holländer* - 8, 16, 20, 27.
 Bonn *Lohengrin* - 29.
 Bremerhaven *Holländer* - 25, 28.
 Cologne *Die Walküre* - 16, [no other dates].
 Dresden *Die Walküre* - 2, 9.
 Duisburg *Holländer* - 8, 10, 16, 19, 22, 30.
 Kiel *The Ring* - 11, 21, 25, 11.
 Linz *Tannhäuser* - 17, 26.
 London ROH *Parsifal* - 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 22.
 Munich *Lohengrin* - 9, 13, 16.
 New York *Die Meistersinger* - 1, 5, 8.
 The Met
 Nuremberg *Die Walküre* - 2, 15, 22, 29.
 Stockholm *Lohengrin* - 8, 14.
 Vienna *Götterdämmerung* - 9.
 Zurich *Siegfried* - 2, 8.

January 2002

Augsburg *Holländer* - 19, 2002.
 Bremerhaven *Holländer* - 4, 9, 12, 19, 29, 31.
 Chemnitz *Holländer* - 26, 29.
 Cologne *Die Walküre* - 2, 5, 8, 12, .
 Dallas *Götterdämmerung* - 10, 13, 16, 19.
 Dresden *Die Meistersinger* - 6, 12.
Holländer - 30.
 Duisburg *Holländer* - 4, 6.
 Hamburg *Tannhäuser* - 13, 20.
 Linz *Tannhäuser* - 6, 16, 27.
 London ENO *Die Walküre* - 24, 27.
 Vienna *Parsifal* - 13, 16.

February 2002

Amsterdam *Lohengrin* - 2, 6, 10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 26.
 Augsburg *Holländer* - 3.
 Berlin Deutsche Oper
Tannhäuser - 7, 10, 14.
 Bonn *Lohengrin* - 3.
 Chemnitz *Holländer* - 8.
 Chicago *Parsifal* - 2, 6, 9, 13, 18, 21, 26.
 Darmstadt *Lohengrin* - 10, 13, 27.
 Dresden *Holländer* - 2, 6, 10, 15, 17.
 Düsseldorf *Holländer* - 1, 3, 8, .
 Hamburg *Holländer* - 7, 10, 13, 16.
 Linz *Tannhäuser* - 23.
 London ENO *Die Walküre* - 23.
 Malmo *Holländer* - 9, 13, 15, 26.
 Munich *Das Rheingold* - 24, 28.
 Oslo *Lohengrin* - 2, 5, 9, 12, 16, 26.
 Paris Theatre des Champs-Elysees
Rienzi - 16.
 Vienna *Siegfried* - 23, 28.

March 2002

Antwerp *Die Meistersinger* - 23, 26, 29.
 Berlin Deutsche Oper
Holländer - 6, 15, 20.
 Staatsoper
Holländer - 24.
Tannhäuser - 25.
Lohengrin - 26.
The Ring - 28, 29, 31, April 2.
Lohengrin - 23, 31.
 Bonn *Holländer* - 22, 24, 27, 29.
 Bordeaux *Holländer* - 9, 31.
 Chemnitz *The Ring* - 24, 26, 29, April 1.
Parsifal - 1, 5, 9.
 Chicago *Lohengrin* - 9, 15.
 Darmstadt *Tristan and Isolde* - 17.
 Dresden *Parsifal* - 29.
 Düsseldorf *Parsifal* - 24, 29.
 Hamburg *Tannhäuser* - 24, 29.
 Kiel *The Ring* - 5, 7, 13, 23.
 Leipzig *Tristan and Isolde* - 24.
 Linz *Tannhäuser* - 24, 31.
 London ENO *Die Walküre* - 2.
 Malmo *Holländer* - 3, 9.
 Munich *Das Rheingold* - 6, 10, 14.
Parsifal - 28, 31.
Lohengrin - 2, 5.
 Oslo *Tristan and Isolde* - 23, 31.
 Prague *Parsifal* - 23.
 Salzburg New National Theatre
Die Walküre - 26 to April 7.
 Tokyo *Parsifal* - 28, 31.
 Vienna



April 2002

Antwerp
Berlin
Bordeux
Chemnitz
Darmstadt
Dresden
Düsseldorf
Geneva
Ghent
Kaiserslautern
Leipzig
London ROH
Melbourne
Munich
Nancy
Palm Beach
Paris Bastille
Salzburg
Stockholm
Tokyo
Toulouse
Vienna

Die Meistersinger - 1, 4.
Staatsoper
Holländer - 13.
Tannhäuser - 14.
Parsifal - 6, 28.
Lohengrin - 15.
The Ring - 28, 29, 31, 2; 17, 18, 20, 22.
Tristan and Isolde - 4, 26.
Die Meistersinger - 5, 27.
Holländer - 2, 5.
Holländer - 14.
The Ring - 24, 26, 29, 1.
Lohengrin - 26.
Parsifal - 1.
Die Meistersinger - 28.
Parsifal - 7.
Götterdämmerung - 22, 25, 28, 30.
Die Meistersinger - 11, 14, 17, 20, 23.
Lohengrin - 7, 13, 21, 27.
Tristan and Isolde - 1, 7, 14.
Tristan and Isolde - 5, 8, 12, 15, 18, 21.
Lohengrin - 26.
Parsifal - 3.
Tannhäuser - 21, 24, 28.
Tannhäuser - 12, 13, 14, 15.
Holländer - 30.
Parsifal - 1.
Tannhäuser - 20, 23, 27.
New National Theatre
Die Walküre - March 26 to 7.
Die Meistersinger - 10, 14, 17, 21, 24.
Das Rheingold - 1.
Parsifal - 4.
Die Walküre - 7.
Siegfried - 14.
Götterdämmerung - 20.
Die Meistersinger - 26, 30.

May 2002

Bonn
Copenhagen
Cologne
Chemnitz
Darmstadt
Dresden
Duisburg
Düsseldorf
Frankfurt
Geneva
Linz
Madrid
Melbourne
Nancy

Lohengrin - 9, 26.
Lohengrin - 24, 26, 29.
Parsifal - 12, 16, 20, 25, 30.
Holländer - 1, 26.
The Ring - 5, 7, 9, 11.
Lohengrin - 12, 30.
Die Meistersinger - 1.
Tristan and Isolde - 20, 26.
Tristan and Isolde - 26.
Die Walküre - 9, 12, 19, 30.
Die Meistersinger - 26, 30.
Götterdämmerung - 3, 5, 8.
Tannhäuser - 14, 21.
Das Rheingold - 28, 30.
Lohengrin - 1, 4, 7, 10.
Tannhäuser - 2, 5.

Nuremberg
Paris Chatelet
Bastille
Prague
San Diego
Stockholm
Vienna
Zurich

Siegfried - 4, 25.
Tristan and Isolde - concert performance, 24.
Holländer - 3, 6, 10, 12, 15, 21, 24.
Tristan and Isolde - 26, .
Holländer - 11, 14, 17, 19, 22, .
Tannhäuser - 6, 9, 14, 20, 24, .
Die Walküre - 9, 12, .
Die Meistersinger - 5, .
Tannhäuser - 26, 30, .
Götterdämmerung - 20, 23, 26, 29.

June 2002

Barcelona
Berlin
Bonn
Cassel
Copenhagen
Darmstadt
Dresden
Duisburg
Düsseldorf
Frankfurt
Longborough
Mainz
Madrid
Munich
Nuremberg
Vienna
Zurich

Tristan and Isolde - 11, 15, 18, 20, 22, 26, 28, 30.
Deutsche Oper
Parsifal - 9, 16.
Lohengrin - 9, .
Parsifal - 16, 21, 26.
Lohengrin - 2.
Lohengrin - 7, 28.
Tannhäuser - 6, 9, 19.
Tristan and Isolde - 15.
Die Walküre - 2.
Die Meistersinger - 9, 22, 30.
Die Meistersinger - 2, 7, 13, 16, 23, 26, 29.
The Ring - mid-June.
Lohengrin - 2, [no other dates].
Das Rheingold - 1, 4, 7, 11, 13, 15.
Die Walküre - 30.
Siegfried - 2, 9.
Tannhäuser - 2.
Götterdämmerung - 9, 16.
The Ring - 1, 2, 6, 9.

JULY 2002

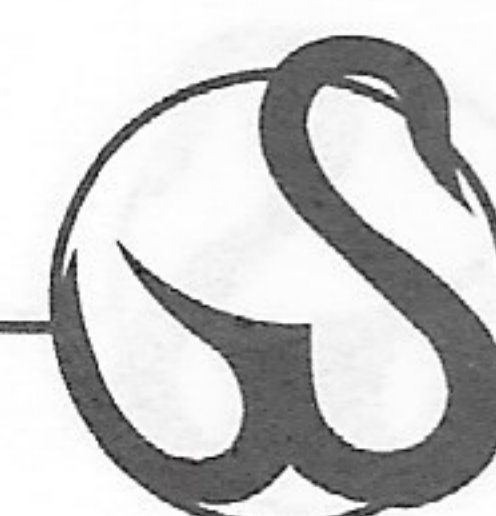
Barcelona
Bayreuth
Bonn
Cassel
Longborough
Munich
Stuttgart
Tokyo

Tristan and Isolde - 2, 4, 6, 8.
The Ring - 27, 28, 30, August 1.
Lohengrin - 7.
Parsifal - 3, 6.
The Ring - mid-July .
Die Walküre - 4, 7.
Die Meistersinger - 31.
Rienzi - 7, 12, 16.
Nikikai Opera
Die Meistersinger - 27, 28.

August 2002

Bayreuth
Birmingham
Limerick

The Ring - 27, 28, 30, 1, 6, 7, 8, 11, 21, 22, 24, 26.
National Youth Orchestra of Ireland - concert performance
The Ring - 12, 13, 16, 18.
National Youth Orchestra of Ireland - concert performance
The Ring - 5, 6, 8, 10.



Tokyo
Nikikai Opera
London ENO
Die Meistersinger - 3, 4.
The Ring - concert performances

September 2002

Dresden
Munich
Das Rheingold - 27, .
Die Walküre - 18, 21, 24.

October 2002

Dresden
Das Rheingold - 3.

November 2002

Dresden
London ROH
Munich
Siegfried - 10, 13, 17, 20, 24.
Die Meistersinger - [no dates].
Siegfried - 3, 7, 13, 17.

December 2002

January 2003

February 2003

Dresden
Das Rheingold - February 11, 21.
Die Walküre - February 9, 16.

March 2003

Dresden
Siegfried - March 2.
Götterdämmerung - March 23, 26.
The Ring - March 28, 30, April 3, 6.

New York
The Met

Parsifal
Die Meistersinger

April 2003

Dresden
The Ring - March 28, 30, April 3, 6, 25, 27, May 1, 4.

May 2003

Dresden
Los Angeles
The Ring - April 25, 27, May 1, 4.
Das Rheingold

June 2003

Liège
Die Walküre - June 15, 18, 21, 24, 27.

July 2003

August 2003

London ENO
Seattle
Das Rheingold
Parsifal

September 2003

Los Angeles
Die Walküre

October 2003

November 2003

December 2003

March 2004

Los Angeles
London ENO
New York
The Met
Siegfried
Die Walküre
The Ring
Tristan and Isolde

May 2004

Liège
Siegfried - May 16, 19, 22, 25, 29, 2004.

Los Angeles
London ENO
Götterdämmerung
Siegfried

June 2004

July 2004

August 2004

September 2004

Liège
Götterdämmerung - September 24, 28, 2004.

October 2004

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

November 2004

Adelaide
The Ring - November 16 - 22; 26, 27, 29,

December 2, 2004

Houston
The Ring -

December 2004

Adelaide
The Ring - November 26, 27, 29, Dec 2, 6 - 12, 2004.

London ENO
Götterdämmerung

July 2005

Aix en Provence
Das Rheingold
New Sir Simon Rattle Ring

August 2005

Seattle
London ENO
The Ring - 3 cycles.
The Ring

2006

Salzburg
Easter Festival
The Ring - first of the Ring operas with a full cycle in 2009.

July 2006

Aix en Provence
Die Walküre

July 2007

Aix en Provence
Siegfried

July 2008

Aix en Provence
Götterdämmerung

July 2009

Aix en Provence
The Ring

August 2009

Seattle
The Ring - 3 cycles.

August 2013

Seattle
The Ring - 3 cycles.



Publications Received:

The Society acknowledges with thanks receipt of the following publications from Wagner Societies and related organisations:

Wagner Society of New Zealand
Richard Wagner Verband International e. V
Wagner Society of New York
Internationaler Richard Wagner Kongress

Toronto Wagner Society
Richard-Wagner-Verband
The Wagner Society of New Zealand
The Richard Wagner Society of South Australia Inc
The Wagner Society of Northern California

Newsletter Vol 3 No. 10 August 2001
2 Jahrbuch 1995-200 May 2001
Wagner Notes Vol. XXIV No.4 Summer 2001
Invitation and Program - 24-28 May 2001 Freiburg
Kulturchronik Nr 3 2001
Wagner News Vol13, No 1 August 2001
Opera programs for Europe and application forms.
Newsletter: Vol 4 No 1 October 2001-10-24
Newsletter: No 146 Sept-Oct 2001
News and Notes: Vol VI No 3 September 2001 and
Journal Leitmotive: Vol15 No 2 Summer 2001

Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra "Wagner Spectacular"

For possibly the first time in any of its past and present manifestations, the Australian Opera And Ballet Orchestra presented a concert from the stage, rather than the pit. The only comparable event that I am aware of was Opera Australia's recent [and very successful] performance of Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* when the Orchestra was on stage **behind** the action. This time the Orchestra was the action with thrilling performances of extracts of Wagner's operas.

The concert began with a performance of the stirring overture to *Rienzi* in which it was clear that both the conductor, Simone Young, and the Orchestra were having a lot of fun. Big, brash, formulaic the opera may be, but this performance showed why *Rienzi* is regularly performed in Europe and the USA. Perhaps we should start lobbying for Opera Australia to stage it. I'm sure that it would attract a wide audience happy to "cross over" between Wagner, French "Grand Opera" and early Verdi.

In a dramatic contrast, Ms Young guide the Orchestra through a delicate performance of the *Siegfried Idyll*, arranged for small orchestra. This strikingly showed the intimate, reflective, even happy Wagner in contrast to the younger Wagner attempting to storm the citadels of French Grand Opera.

Soprano Lisa Gasteen joined the orchestra for the Prelude and Liebestod from *Tristan and Isolde* and took us through an exquisitely ecstatic experience with a subtly nuanced accompaniment from Ms Young and the Orchestra. Ms Gasteen's voice has developed strength and depth since I first heard her in Victoria many years ago.

The highlight of the night (at least the one most of the audience was expecting) was a long extract from Act II of *Tristan and Isolde*, in which Tenor Horst Hoffmann joined Ms Gasteen. There was clearly a warmth between these two singers, no doubt a result of rehearsals for the fully staged performances in Melbourne in November. In addition, Ms Gasteen brought an intimacy and joy to her performance that balanced the reserve and caution that Herr Hoffmann brought to his character. It will be interesting to see and hear these two in Melbourne. Ms Young kept the Orchestra up to the emotional level being set by the singers and produced a rich, balanced sound with only a few blemishes in the brass intruding into the ecstatic mood.

As if this was not enough, after a long and loud ovation of some 15 minutes, Ms Young brought out a score and I'm sure many audience members were attempting to guess the encore. The first notes made it clear - the "Ride of the Valkyries" - and we all settled down to listen to a strongly rhythmical, fast version of the potboiler, but Ms Young had another surprise in store. Down the side aisles of the stalls came, two by two, the Valkyries themselves, launching into full battle cry and startling the people towards the front of the stall who were not aware of their presence. The Valkyries were clearly enjoying themselves; the Orchestra and Ms Young were also enjoying themselves after finishing the main work of the night, and the audience expressed its enjoyment of this bonus conclusion to a wonderful concert with another prolonged ovation. Congratulations to all - watch out the SSO!

[Ed October 2001]



Opera Australia and Renaissance Tours

tour to the Wagner Cycle in Berlin

with Peter Bassett 12 – 29 April 2002

Wagner Society members will have heard of the extraordinary "once-in-a-lifetime" operatic event in March / April 2002 when Wagner's 10 major operas will be staged over a two-week period in two cycles in the Staatsoper unter den Linden in Berlin. Maestro Daniel Barenboim will conduct the ten operas, with production by Harry Kupfer and a stellar international cast including John Tomlinson (Wotan, Hagen), Waltraud Meier (Sieglinde, Isolde, Ortrud), Deborah Polaski (Brünnhilde), Christian Franz (Siegfried, Tristan, Parsifal), Peter Seiffert (Lohengrin), Falk Stuckmann (Hans Sachs, Holländer), Rene Pape (Fasolt, Hunding, Heinrich, Marke and Veit Pogner), Robert Gambill (Siegung, Tannhäuser) and Angela Denoke (Elizabeth / Venus) to name but a few.

Hidden behind the Berlin Wall for so many years, the Staatsoper unter den Linden in Berlin has regained its pre-eminence as one of Germany's leading opera houses in the past decade since Barenboim took the reins as music director and chief conductor. In 1996 Barenboim inaugurated the annual Festtage - Easter Festival - devoted to the works of Richard Wagner. As if this unique cycle of operas wasn't enough in its own right, Berlin currently has an excitement and dynamism like no other city in the world. After a decade of re-unification and reconstruction, the city has re-emerged as the new political, economic and cultural capital of Europe.

Renaissance Tours and Opera Australia are offering a tour to each cycle in Berlin. The tour to the first cycle (23 March – 07 April) – to be led by Mrs Barbara McNulty OBE, President of the Wagner Society in NSW – is already sold out. A limited number of places remain on the tour to the second cycle (12 – 29 April) which will be led by Wagner expert Peter Bassett.

Category 2 tickets (equivalent to "A" reserve in the Opera Theatre of the Sydney Opera House) for the complete cycle of ten operas cost AUD 3,422. Return airfares on Luda are available at \$2,000 (economy) and \$4,800 (business). An 18-day accommodation and tours package costs from \$4205 per person, twin-share (single supplement \$1,695) and includes:

- 15 nights bed and breakfast at the luxury Westin Grand Hotel*****, a few minutes from the Staatsoper
- Special welcome dinner and farewell lunch
- A comprehensive program of tours of East and West Berlin and day trips to Potsdam and Leipzig.
- Pre-performance talks and discussions with Peter Bassett
- 2 nights at the deluxe Radisson SAS Gewandhaus Hotel***** in Dresden
- Three-day program in and around Dresden, including a performance at the legendary Semperoper, a visit to Wagner's house in the countryside at Graupa (where he composed Lohengrin), and a visit to the perfectly preserved old town of Meissen.

For a brochure and further information, please contact Renaissance Tours on (02) 9299 5801 or visit www.renaissancetours.com.au.



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(all website addresses used in this newsletter are on the Wagner Society's website)

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